Celebrating 55 Years

CSPDC

Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission

YEAR IN REVIEW FY 2025

Proudly Celebrating 55 years of Regional Partnerships



Mission

To help communities and agencies within the Central Shenandoah Valley work together by providing high quality planning technical assistance and facilitation services that address local, regional, and state needs in an innovative, timely, and cooperative manner.



The ***Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission*** represents and serves the local governments of Augusta, Bath, Highland, Rockbridge, and Rockingham counties and the cities of Buena Vista, Harrisonburg, Lexington, Staunton, and Waynesboro as well as the 11 towns within the Central Shenandoah region.

CSPDC Commission Membership

AUGUSTA COUNTY
Pam Carter
Julia Hensley
Butch Wells

BATH COUNTY
Lynn Ellen Black

BUENA VISTA
Tyson Cooper*

HARRISONBURG
Nasser Alsaadun
Laura Dent*
Adam Fletcher

HIGHLAND COUNTY
Henry Budzinski, Vice Chairperson*

LEXINGTON
Frank Friedman, Chairperson*

ROCKBRIDGE COUNTY
Jay Lewis*
Chris Slaydon

ROCKINGHAM COUNTY
Joel Hensley
Sallie Wolfe-Garrison
Rachel Salatin
Kim Sandum

STAUNTON
Sharon Angle*
Brad Arrowood

WAYNESBORO
Terry Short, Treasurer*
Leslie Tate

** Denotes Executive Committee Member*

Harrisonburg Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization

Staunton Augusta Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization

Afton EXPRESS

brite

Table of Contents

4 | Letter from the Chairman, Frank Friedman
6 | CSPDC Achievements & Year in Review
9 | CSPDC By the Numbers
10 | **HOUSING:** Program Area News
16 | **TRANSPORTATION:** Program Area News
18 | **RESILIENCY:** Program Area News
22 | **TRANSIT:** Program Area News
26 | **COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:** Program Area News
30 | **LOOKING AHEAD:** Executive Director, Ann Cundy
32 | CSPDC Organizational Chart





HOUSING:
SPARC Funding for New Affordable Homes



TRANSPORTATION:
SAWMPO Long Range Transportation Plan



RESILIENCY:
Watershed Implementation Plan

COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:
Goshen Revitalization Efforts



TRANSIT:
Lewis Street Transit Hub Completion, Staunton

Celebrating 55 Years
CSPDC
Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission

LETTER FROM THE CHAIRMAN



As Chairman of the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission since 2016, I have witnessed firsthand the power of regional collaboration. Our communities span diverse landscapes and economies, yet we achieve our greatest successes when we work together — which is precisely what the CSPDC enables.

This ***Fiscal Year 2025 Annual Report*** showcases remarkable progress during a year of institutional growth. Executive Director Ann Cundy has completed her first full year, assembling a dynamic team of skilled urban planners and administrative professionals who are driving our mission forward with renewed energy.

While this report details our comprehensive accomplishments, I want to spotlight several transformative achievements:

Addressing Our Housing Crisis: Our Regional Housing Study represents two years of intensive collaboration with partners across the region. This groundbreaking analysis not only identifies our housing challenges but provides actionable strategies for diverse housing markets. We're already seeing results, convening task forces around the region, and working directly with developers to bring new housing opportunities to our communities.

Connecting Communities: The renovated Lewis Street Transit Hub reopened in Staunton last August, creating a modern gateway for BRITE transit service and downtown parking. Beyond its practical benefits, this accessible facility features Garden Club of America award-winning native landscaping that reflects our commitment to thoughtful, sustainable development.

Bridging the Digital Divide: Rockbridge County secured two VATI broadband grants, partnering with internet service providers to deliver high-speed internet to 1,269 units, including 86 businesses. This connectivity will unlock economic opportunities and improve quality of life for residents and entrepreneurs alike.

Strengthening Local Communities: Through the Community Development Block Grant Program, we supported communities region-wide with planning studies and implementation grants. Projects in Bridgewater, Buena Vista, Dayton, Goshen, Lexington, and Rockingham County are expanding healthcare and childcare services, creating safer downtown streets, and conducting crucial housing and infrastructure assessments to guide future investments.

This year marked our 55th Anniversary — a milestone we celebrated with a promotional video featuring the voices of our regional partners. At just two and a half minutes, this piece captures the essence of what makes our work vital. When I watch it, I'm reminded that regionalism isn't just a planning concept—it's a spirit of collaboration and mutual understanding that strengthens every community we serve.

As we face evolving challenges, from housing affordability to infrastructure needs, the importance of working together has never been clearer. The achievements outlined in this report demonstrate what's possible when we combine local knowledge with regional vision, individual initiative with collective action.

I invite you to explore the full report and discover how the CSPDC continues to build a stronger, more connected Central Shenandoah region for all who call it home.

Frank Friedman
CSPDC Board Chairman



I invite you to explore the full report and discover how the CSPDC continues to build a stronger, more connected Central Shenandoah region for all who call it home.

Frank Friedman

CSPDC Board Chairman

Executive Leadership Honor

Former Executive Director Bonnie Riedesel was honored with the James Madison University (JMU) Career Achievement in Public Service Award for 2025. This prestigious recognition was conferred on April 22, 2025, as part of JMU'S celebration of the national Public Service Recognition Week.

The award program, administered through JMU's Master of Public Administration program, acknowledges exceptional contributions to public service throughout the Shenandoah Valley region. Recipients are selected through a peer nomination and evaluation process, with honorees celebrated at the university's annual Public Service Reception.

Ms. Riedesel's nomination was submitted by the Alliance for the Shenandoah Valley, a valued regional partner. The nomination cited her distinguished 29-year tenure and service to the region, her leadership in developing innovative programming initiatives, and her exceptional commitment to collaborative partnerships across sectors.

The nomination stated, "Bonnie set an example statewide for the true meaning of regional collaboration – across communities, agencies, the public and private sectors. Bonnie's motto was, ***'We never say no, we find a way.'***"



> ***Bonnie set an example statewide for the true meaning of regional collaboration – across communities, agencies, the public and private sectors. Bonnie's motto was, "We never say no, we find a way."***

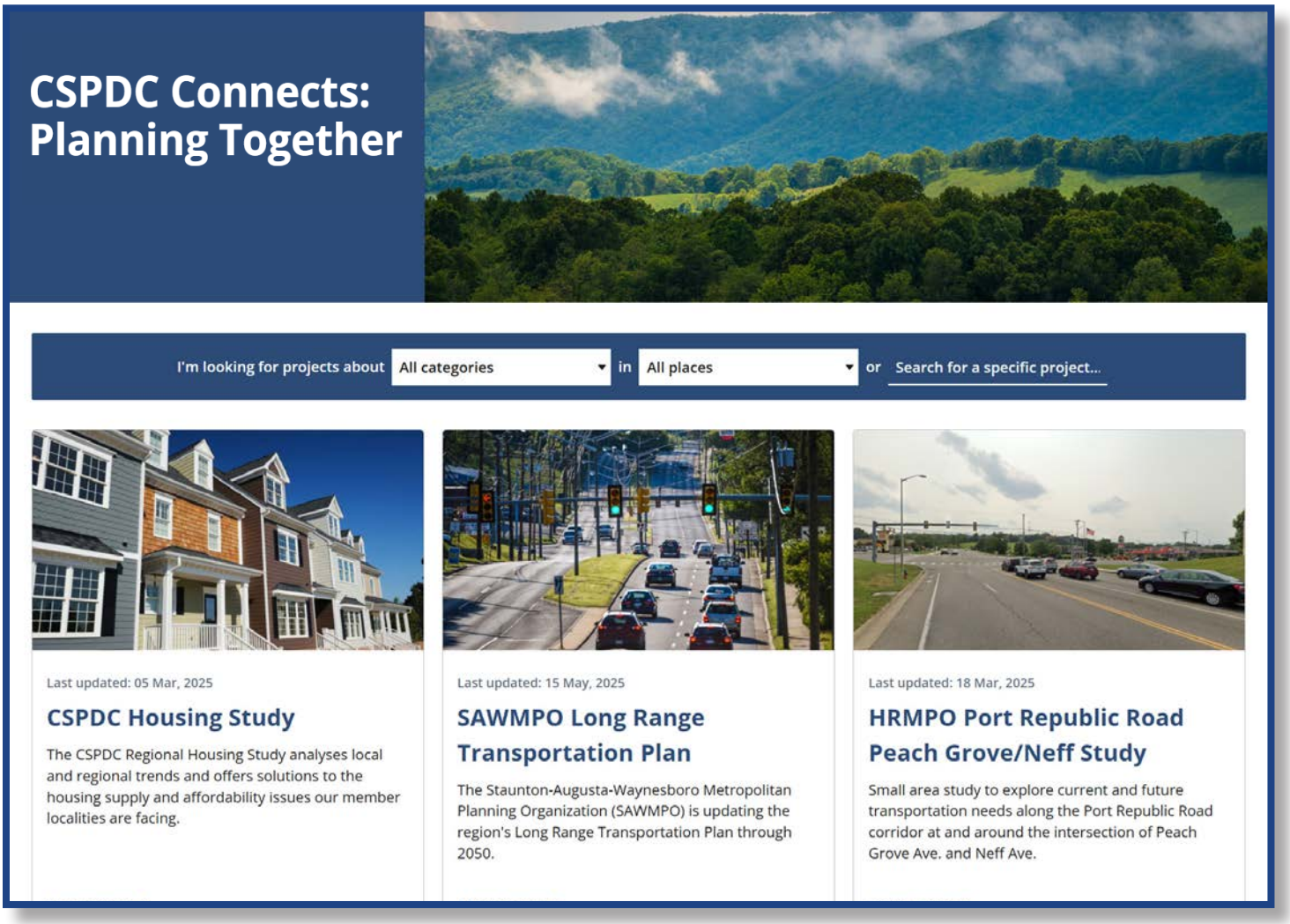
Photo Credit: Michelle Krone, JMU

CSPDC Connects: Planning Together

This year, the CSPDC launched its new community engagement platform, CSPDC Connects: Planning Together, powered by Social Pinpoint technology. This digital hub fosters meaningful public participation across the Central Shenandoah region by providing accessible updates on regional projects, studies, and planning activities. The platform features multilingual capabilities to make information accessible to everyone in our diverse community.

In spring 2025, CSPDC used the platform for public engagement on two transportation planning projects. The survey and mapping features enabled residents to provide location-specific comments directly within the interactive map tool. This innovative approach enhanced the quality and precision of community feedback.

CSPDC Connects will serve as a key engagement tool for planning work and projects that require public participation, making it easier for residents to participate in regional planning processes and stay informed about important community initiatives.



https://connect.cspdc.org

55 Years of Regional Partnerships & New Anniversary Video

In 1968, Virginia lawmakers had a bold vision: bring communities together through regional planning. What started as an idea in the General Assembly became reality when CSPDC held its first meeting in 1969, launching over five decades of collaboration across our region.

Fast-forward to October 2024 when we celebrated 55 years of meaningful partnerships that have shaped our communities. Rather than simply marking the date on a calendar, we decided to capture the heart of what makes CSPDC special—the people, programs, and partnerships that define our work.

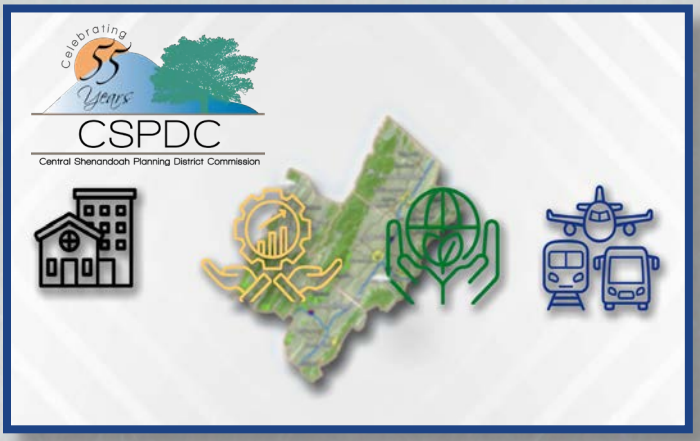
The celebration culminated in a reception at Shenandoah Valley Airport where commissioners, partners, and community leaders gathered to watch **our new anniversary video** for the first time. The film weaves together the voices of our partners, showcasing the tangible ways we've helped bring our region together—just as those visionary legislators intended back in 1968.

What began as a one-night celebration has evolved into an ongoing storytelling tool. The video (QR code below) now serves as our digital ambassador, sharing CSPDC's story with new audiences across our website and social media platforms, ensuring that our 55-year legacy continues to inspire future partnerships and possibilities.

"The Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission brings our region together."







CSPDC Brings Our Region Together

Video QR Code

Video link: https://vimeo.com/1022614937?&login=true#_=_

CSPDC BY THE NUMBERS

Record-Breaking Investment Returns Fuel Regional Growth

FUNDING SECURED FY24

$35.5M

SECURED SINCE 2021

$93M

RETURN ON INVESTMENT

for every ***$1*** *invested*

we delivered ***$98*** *in return.*

ROI = *9,800%*

TRANSPORTATION

$69.6M

ECONOMIC DEV.

$18.4M

ENVIRO./DISASTER

$3.2M

HOUSING

$2.5M

CSPDC's annual Investments in the Region report showcases the tangible difference we are making across our communities. This comprehensive analysis tracks four years of partnership building and grant writing excellence, demonstrating how we transform local collaboration into substantial state and federal investments. The results speak for themselves—and they tell a remarkable story of regional growth and opportunity.

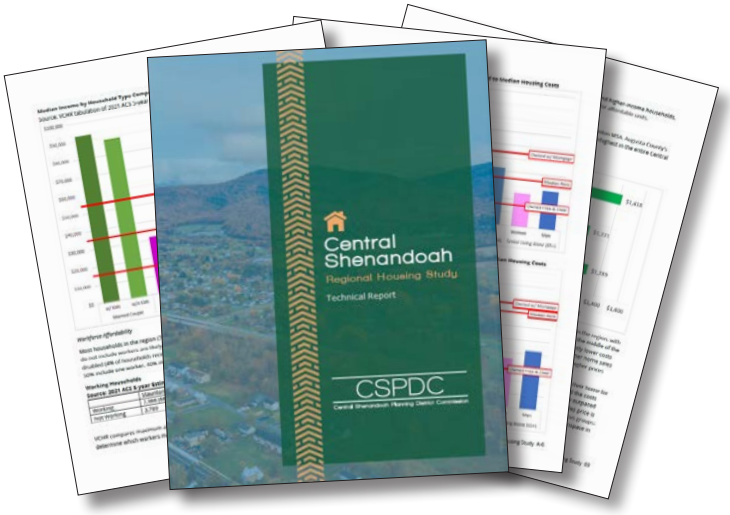
Since 2021, the CSPDC has secured over $93 million in external funding for our region, with an exceptional $35.5 million arriving in FY24 alone. This translates to an extraordinary return: ***for every $1 our member localities invested in CSPDC, we delivered over $98 in state and federal resources back to the region.*** This achievement represents the highest investment total we have recorded since beginning to track this metric in 2010—a testament to our team's dedication and expertise.

This surge in regional investments was distributed among five key program areas. **Transportation and transit** projects comprised the majority of the investment portfolio, capturing 74.3% of total funding at $69.6 million. **Economic development** initiatives secured the second-largest allocation at 19.7% ($18.4 million), followed by **environmental and disaster mitigation** projects at 3.4% ($3.2 million), **housing** programs at 2.6% ($2.5 million), and facilities improvements representing a minimal portion.

These investments represent more than numbers—they are proof of what we can accomplish when communities work together toward shared goals. We are energized to continue this momentum, building on our success to serve our localities and strengthen our region for years to come.

CSPDC Publishes Regional Housing Study

The **CSPDC's *Regional Housing Study*** was the culmination of a collaborative effort to address our region's housing challenges through comprehensive data analysis and community outreach. Funded by Virginia Housing and developed by industry experts at Virginia Tech's Center for Housing Research and Housing*Forward* Virginia, this detailed study provides tailored solutions for our region's five distinct housing markets.



Our team worked closely with local staff and regional stakeholders, engaging in extensive outreach to ensure the strategies align with local goals and build on existing community plans and interests. The result is more than just research—it's a strategic blueprint that will guide our region's housing efforts for years to come.



The study serves as both a data resource and an implementation guide. Available as a Consumer Report summarizing key findings and recommended strategies, plus a comprehensive Technical Report with detailed data analysis and actionable steps, it provides our localities with the evidence-based framework needed to tackle complex housing challenges systematically.

The regional solutions developed by the study will shape how we approach workforce housing development, affordable housing initiatives, and market-rate inventory expansion across all five sub-regions. By identifying specific market challenges and tailoring solutions to local conditions, the study ensures our future housing efforts are both strategic and responsive to community needs, creating a foundation for housing stability throughout the Central Shenandoah region.



CSPDC provides $1.66M for Affordable Housing Virginia Housing Grant

Since 2022, the CSPDC has awarded $1.66 million in gap funding to six housing developers to support the **construction of forty-eight affordable units** in the Central Shenandoah. With funding through the Virginia Housing PDC Housing Development Grant, the six projects represent a range of ownership and rental options, a spectrum of income levels, and varying sizes that accommodate households from single-earners to families.



Affordable Housing in Harrisonburg supported by the CSPDC.

Project	Developer	Award Amount	Total Project Cost	# of Units	Type	Status
Block House Apartments (Harrisonburg)	Our Community Place	$118,106	$102,950	2	Rental	Completed (2023)
Fairfax Hall Renovation (Waynesboro)	South River Development Corporation	$200,000	$14,364,351	2	Rental	Completed (2024)
Foley Road Efficiencies (Harrisonburg)	Foley 11 LLC	$350,000	$800,000	11	Rental	Completed (2023)
Greenhouse Village Neighborhood (Rockbridge County)	Rockbridge Habitat for Humanity	$270,000	$1,207,796	8	Homeownership	Target completion: 2025
Pump Street Apartments (Staunton)	Valley Supportive Housing	$325,000	$635,000	6	Rental	Completed (2023)
Suter Street Neighborhood (Harrisonburg)	Friendly City Development LLC	$325,000	$3,200,000	19	Homeownership (13); Rental (6)	Target completion: 2025

Affordable Housing Highlights: FY2024 Funding Allocations for affordable housing supported by the CSPDC and their project status.

Fairfax Hall Completion

In FY25, two housing units funded by the Housing Development Program were completed within the historic Fairfax Hall. This project stands as a compelling example of how historic preservation can contribute to addressing current housing challenges. Originally built in 1890 as a resort hotel in Basic City, Fairfax Hall was designed by Washington, D.C. architect William M. Poindexter in the distinctive Queen Anne shingle style, complete with a central cupola and corner towers.

Over the years, Fairfax Hall has undergone many transformations, serving as a girls' junior college, a training center, and now, a cornerstone of Waynesboro's affordable housing efforts. Today, the building provides 54 high-quality, affordable homes for senior citizens.

The CSPDC contributed $200,000 to support the construction of two accessible and affordable housing units within this landmark structure. Fairfax Hall remains one of the Valley's **most successful examples of how historic preservation and affordable housing** can intersect to promote both heritage and housing solutions.



HOUSING

> ***Fairfax Hall remains one of the Valley's most successful examples of how historic preservation and affordable housing can intersect to promote both heritage and housing solutions.***



Making Homeownership Affordable Through VA Housing SPARC Funds

In July 2024, Virginia Housing provided the CSPDC with $3 million as part of its ***Sponsoring Partnerships & Revitalizing Communities*** **(SPARC)** program. SPARC offers eligible borrowers a 1.00% reduction below standard interest rates on eligible loan products, significantly improving mortgage affordability for first-time homebuyers seeking to find a home in the Central Shenandoah region.

In collaboration with four local mortgage lenders, the CSPDC successfully helped eleven first-time buyers achieve homeownership in FY25. Of these, seven purchased homes in Rockingham County, three in Harrisonburg, and one in Waynesboro, with an average sales price of $243,650.

Our role as a sponsor of SPARC underscores the CSPDC's ongoing commitment to extending opportunities for homeownership throughout its footprint.

In addition to being a SPARC sponsor, the CSPDC also provided down payment assistance through the Department of Housing and Community Development's (DHCD) HOMEownership Down Payment and Closing Cost Assistance program (DPA), a program the CSPDC has offered since 2014, to four first-time homebuyers in calendar year 2024 to help close on homes in Waynesboro and Rockingham County, providing a total of $44,000 in down payment assistance and showcasing the different ways the CSPDC supports first-time homebuyers in the region.



New SPARC homes in Harrisonburg (image credit: Central Valley Habitat for Humanity)



I am a huge fan of SPARC funding and have encouraged my affiliate partners to apply for these funds every year because helping people achieve homeownership is our primary goal. In this market area, a 1% SPARC rate reduction equates to an average savings of $160 - $200 per month for our homebuyers! One of the most crucial factors to building generational wealth is homeownership and SPARC can help make that attainable.

JoDee Lambert
Senior Mortgage Loan Officer
United Bank Mortgage

SAWMPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

The Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro Metropolitan Planning Organization (SAWMPO) is updating its ***Long Range Transportation Plan*** **(LRTP)** to address the region's current and future transportation needs and develop a list of prioritized transportation projects for all modes of transportation over a 25-year period to 2050. The plan must be updated every five years to ensure that MPO priorities reflect current and future transportation issues. SAWMPO staff anticipate that the plan will be approved in December 2025.

The update process includes multiple phases of public engagement to assist the MPO with identifying the region's top transportation planning goals and also gauge the level of support for each project. The SAWMPO Policy Board, which is comprised of local elected officials and senior-level staff, identified six different transportation planning goals based on the public input and also the specific needs of each locality.

Overall, safety is the MPO's number one goal to address identifying which transportation projects to study and potentially fund over the next 25 years. The project list includes 22 new transportation projects that the SAWMPO and localities may choose to further study or potentially fund.



LRTP public engagement meetings in Staunton.

Port Republic Road 2024-25 Small Area Study

In 2024 and 2025, the Harrisonburg-Rockingham Metropolitan Planning Organization (HRMPO) and the CSPDC conducted a comprehensive small area study of the intersection of Port Republic Road, Peach Grove Avenue, and Neff Avenue, and surrounding corridor in the City of Harrisonburg. The intersection area experiences the **highest crash rate in the HRMPO region,** with 148 crashes recorded between 2019-2023, while facing significant development pressure from approximately 800 approved residential units and additional mixed-use projects.

The study team conducted extensive operational and safety analysis, traffic data collection, and future condition modeling for five key intersections in this rapidly developing area. The study team worked closely with City staff, Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), James Madison University, and Rockingham County staff, along with community stakeholders to evaluate existing constraints and develop improvement alternatives. The preferred alternative includes lane widening at Devon Lane and the primary Neff/Peach Grove Avenue intersection for additional turn lanes, along with multimodal improvements including a new shared use path along Port Republic Road.

CSPDC staff have continued to work with the City, VDOT, and regional partners to identify and prepare for funding opportunities to support implementation of the recommended improvements and design.

Rural EV Charging Site Assessment

In FY25, the CSPDC conducted a comprehensive ***Rural Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Study*** to address growing electric vehicle adoption across the region. The region currently serves 1,850 battery and plug-in electric vehicles on local roads, plus thousands more external EVs that travel through the CSPDC region. By 2035, this number is projected to grow to 23,400 vehicles representing approximately one in ten cars on the road regionally, while statewide EV adoption will reach nearly one in four cars.

Working with Virginia Clean Cities (VCC), the VDOT Office for Transportation Sustainability, and local jurisdictions, the study team conducted data collection and site analysis to assess infrastructure needs for both current and projected EV populations.

The results provided a ranked assessment of 120 proposed sites for EV charging infrastructure that balance geographic coverage, electrical infrastructure capacity, and community accessibility to serve both residents and visitors. Since the study's completion, CSPDC staff worked with VCC to connect localities with opportunities to install free chargers across the CSPDC region and provide assistance with grant opportunities and technical support.

EV charger in Raphine.

Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) Program

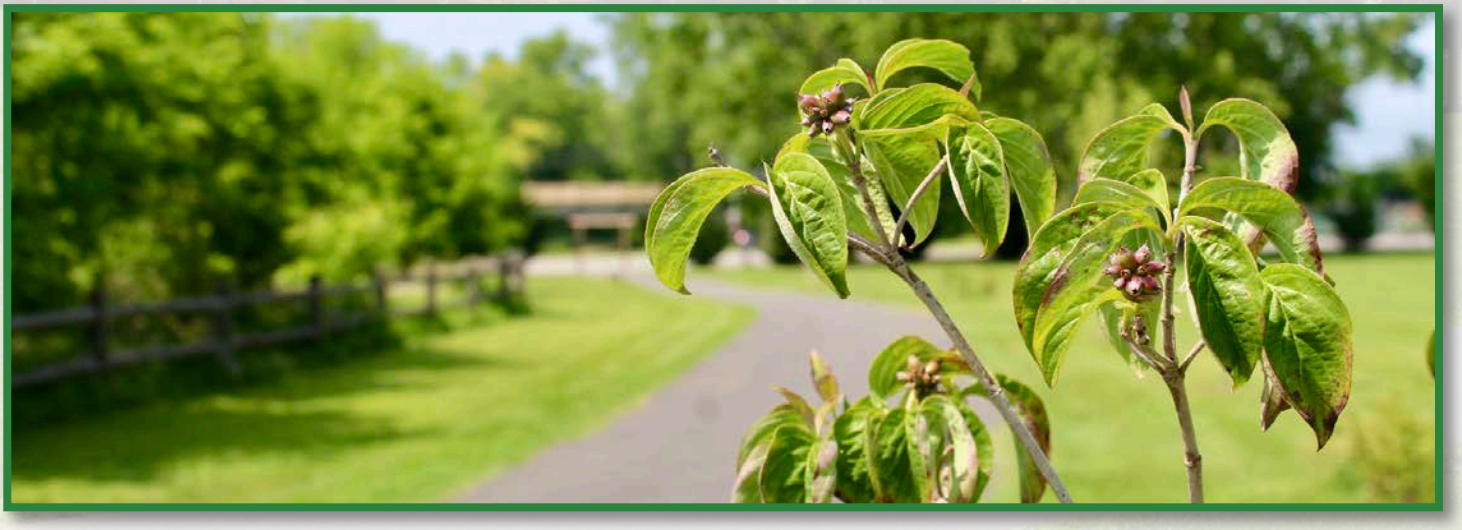
The CSPDC Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP) program provides coordination, planning, and technical support for localities on stormwater improvement projects that improve water quality to meet Virginia's pollution reduction goals for the Chesapeake Bay watershed through support from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ).

Through the WIP program, the CSPDC was awarded a $300,000 grant to fund the City of Waynesboro South River Preserve Tree Planting project, which is planting native trees and meadow grasses to replace impervious areas and five acres of managed turf along 700 feet of Rockfish Run draining into the South River. The project was complete in spring 2025.

The WIP program also funds the CSPDC's Watershed Wellness Grant Program, which provides 100% no-match funding for the planning, design, and implementation of nature-based stormwater projects that address water quality and flooding issues.



*New native meadow grasses and tree plantings at the **South River Preserve in Waynesboro** were supported by the CSPDC's WIP Program.*



*New trees planted in **Elkton Landing in Elkton** were supported by the CSPDC's WIP Program.*

RESILIENCY: ENVIRONMENTAL PROGRAMS

In 2024, the CSPDC's WIP grant program awarded over $15,000 in funding for stormwater projects to localities and non-profits that included tree planting, streambank stabilization, and the removal of invasive species. In 2025, the WIP grant program will award nearly $100,000 in funding for stormwater planning and implementation projects across the region.

CSPDC staff are also organizing an educational workshop on how regional stormwater professionals working in localities can better understand new DEQ stormwater requirements for discharge to karst areas outlined in the updated DEQ Stormwater Management Handbook. The workshop will address the unique stormwater issues throughout the karst-dominated Central Shenandoah region, and feature presentations from state agencies, stormwater professionals, and a James Madison University geology professor.



New trees in Whitelow Park in Bridgewater were supported by the CSPDC's WIP Program.

Bath & Highland Improve Emergency Communications with $2M DHS Grant

Bath and Highland Counties are making significant strides in modernizing their emergency communications systems, thanks to a $2 million grant awarded by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). The DHS ***Rural Emergency Medical Communications Demonstration Project*** **(REMCDP)** grant program supports efforts to examine rural emergency medical communications barriers and identify solutions to enhance existing infrastructure.

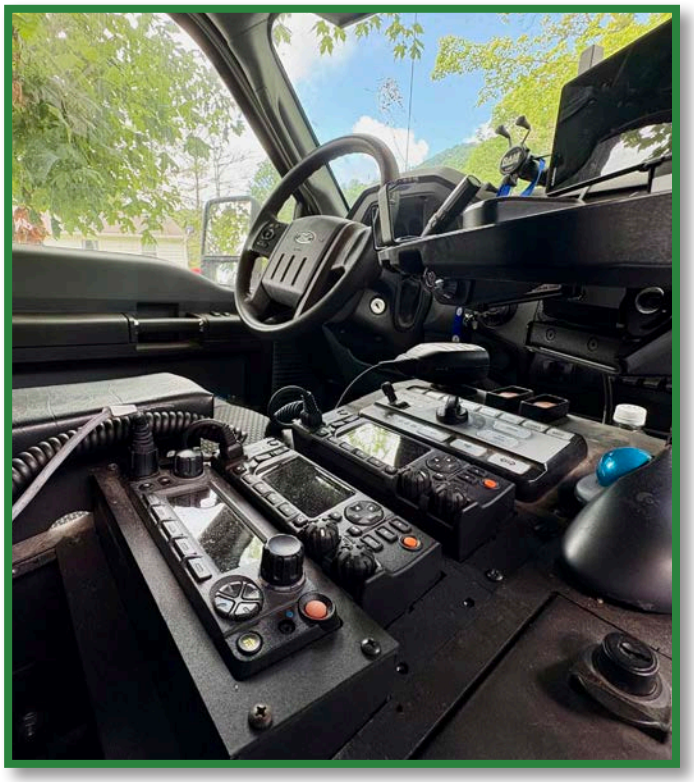
In 2023, the CSPDC identified the competitive funding opportunity and assisted the counties with applying. The project was one of two selected across the nation.

Over the past year, the counties have used the funds to purchase radio equipment that will not only improve emergency communication operability and interoperability, but also comply with National Radio Quiet Zone (NRQZ) restrictions. Due to their proximity to the National Radio Astronomy Observatory and the NSA's Sugar Grove Listening Station, Bath and Highland Counties operate under strict communication restrictions designed to protect sensitive research and intelligence operations. These limitations have historically hindered local, regional, and state-level emergency response coordination.

With the support of the REMCDP grant, the counties have begun deploying upgraded radio systems that improve interoperability among first responders, hospitals, and public safety agencies without disrupting operations within the NRQZ. This critical investment represents the first phase of a long-term, cross-state strategy to strengthen emergency response capacity throughout the region.

The CSPDC continues to convene emergency management coordinators in Bath, Highland, Pendleton, and Pocahontas counties to seek out additional funding opportunities for studies, equipment installation, and staff training.





New communications equipment supported by REMCDP grant.

RESILIENCY: DISASTER PLANNING

CSPDC Updates Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan

The CSPDC is updating the ***Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan,*** an essential tool for reducing the vulnerability of community infrastructure and assets to natural disasters and man-made threats.

Federal law requires local governments to maintain a FEMA-approved and locally adopted Hazard Mitigation Plan to remain eligible for state and federal disaster funding following a federally declared natural disaster. These events may include extreme flooding, wildfires, droughts, severe winter weather, or other natural or man-made threats to critical infrastructure.

The Plan must be fully updated every five years and plays a crucial role in protecting lives, property, and infrastructure throughout the region. It identifies local hazards and vulnerabilities and outlines strategies to mitigate potential impacts.

The CSPDC received funding through FEMA's Hazard Mitigation Grant Program (HMGP) to complete the current update. Since July 2024, CSPDC has convened four steering committee meetings, bringing together a diverse group of local leaders and experts, including emergency coordinators, town managers, floodplain administrators, school officials, healthcare professionals, and representatives from regional agencies.

Throughout the past year, the CSPDC has worked to ensure the plan reflects local needs and insights by gathering public input through surveys and engaging with Local Emergency Planning Committees. A public comment period on the draft plan is coming soon, offering residents a final opportunity to help shape a safer, more resilient future for the region.



Flooding of the Maury River near Goshen.

Lewis Street Transit Hub: From Vision to Award-Winning Reality

The Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission's ***Lewis Street Transit Hub*** project exemplifies successful community-centered infrastructure development. The Hub is a vital part of BRITE Bus operations—managed by the CSPDC—serving as a central transfer point for four bus routes. Located in Historic Downtown Staunton, it also offers free parking for visitors to the downtown area.

Project Development and Funding:

CSPDC purchased the lot in 2021 to ensure transit access at this strategic location, but the lot was in a state of significant disrepair. In March 2022, the CSPDC utilized a 5339 Bus and Bus Facilities Grant from the Federal Transit Administration to rehabilitate the deteriorating transit hub.

The CSPDC matched this federal grant with funds from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation allowing the transformative work to be done with very little cost to local partners.

Project Completion and Celebration:

The CSPDC began the project in April 2024 and completed construction on time and under budget. CSPDC held a ribbon cutting ceremony in August 2024 to celebrate the improved Lewis Street Hub. The completed project includes new pavement, updated passenger amenities, safety lighting, and a dedicated bus lane and parking area.

National Recognition:

The project's success drew national attention when the renovated hub earned a Civic Improvement Commendation from the Garden Club of America. The Augusta Garden Club nominated the project, praising the creation of a functional green space with native plantings that serves both transit users and the broader community.

The new Hub provides a safe and dignified space for transit users to wait for the bus and serves as an award-winning example of how transit infrastructure can be designed to enhance rather than detract from the local environment.



*The CSPDC's **Lewis Street Transit Hub** is located in Historic Downtown Staunton.*

Building Regional Connections Through UVA Partnership

The CSPDC's partnership with the University of Virginia (UVA) continues to demonstrate how strategic collaboration can create meaningful change across regions. This partnership, centered on the **Afton Express** commuter service, has evolved into a model for effective transportation that benefit both employees and the broader region.

The collaboration strengthened in 2024 with the implementation of UVA's Wahoo Commute program, which provides fare-free rides for all University affiliates on the Afton Express. This partnership demonstrates how CSPDC's transit solutions can support major institutional goals while serving regional transportation needs.

The **Afton Express achieved record ridership levels in 2024,** with 19,146 passenger trips representing a 16% increase from the previous year. Beyond transportation access, the service has expanded employment opportunities for Shenandoah Valley residents by providing access to UVA positions for some while offering others a more sustainable and cost-effective commute. Riders experience substantial economic benefits, saving an average of $7,879 per year on transportation costs, and report improved quality of life through reduced stress and enhanced work-life balance.

The partnership extends beyond transportation services to support broader regional sustainability initiatives. CSPDC's leadership in developing the Afton Express has enabled UVA to advance its commitment to carbon neutrality by 2030, while simultaneously providing essential connectivity between the Shenandoah Valley and Charlottesville/Albemarle employment centers. The service significantly reduces traffic congestion and alleviates parking demand on UVA's Grounds, while also generating meaningful environmental benefits through reduced single-occupancy vehicle trips throughout the region.



Mobile Data Collection Upgrade for BRITE Bus System

BRITE Bus was given a technology upgrade through implementing a new ***Mobile Data Collection System (MDCS)*** for the bus system, with technical assistance from Kimley-Horn. Previously, data collection was all manual, but the upgrades now allow for easy electronic bus tracking and data entry and access to support operations and planning.

Identified in the 2017 BRITE Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Plan, the new technology consists of hardware and software, provided through Passio Technologies, that tracks bus location, assists bus operators with counting and classifying passengers, and collecting other operations data. Additionally, the technology provides easy communication with dispatchers and indicators for on-time performance. Bus operators complete data entry tasks through a simple interface on ruggedized mobile data terminals while stopped, and dispatch and operations staff can monitor the fleet from the transit facility in real-time.

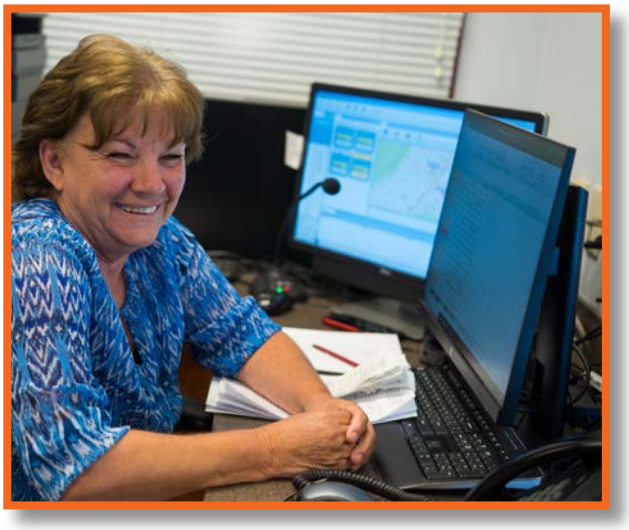
This technological upgrade also enables transit staff to have on-demand access to reports on ridership by stop and route. Previously, the granular stop usage data was only obtained once per year for a two-week counting period through manual tracking, which was a heavy burden to operations staff.

Access to this level of data has enabled efficient decision-making for stops and service. When new developments along Middlebrook Road in Staunton necessitated a change for the Staunton West/North Loops, transit staff was able to make informed decisions with the availability of Passio data. These changes help BRITE to better serve riders. For Afton Express, availability of actual passenger trips by UVA-affiliated riders enhances the implementation of UVA's Wahoo Commute program for accurate tracking of UVA riders.

Data availability will be convenient for transit staff and BRITE partners. It will facilitate operations and serves as the starting point for additional technology improvements such as a "where's my bus" app in the future.







MDCS upgrades for the BRITE Bus are improving service.

Strengthening Mobility & Access: Commuter Assistance Strategic Plan

The Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission has released a new ***Commuter Assistance Program Strategic Plan*** for FY2026–2030 for the Rideshare program. This updated plan builds on years of successful programming and addresses evolving transportation needs throughout the Central Shenandoah Valley.

The RideShare Program supports the region's commuters by connecting them to alternative transportation options such as carpooling, vanpooling, biking, walking, and transit services. The plan sets a clear path forward to address the unique commuting challenges in the region, including long rural commutes and varying levels of transit service, while leveraging the region's strengths in collaboration and innovation.

The new Commuter Assistance Program Strategic Plan was developed in partnership with the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission and Launch! Consulting, incorporating data-driven insights and community feedback. It replaces the previous 2017 Transportation Demand Management Plan to ensure that efforts remain relevant and responsive to today's commuters.

Key priorities in the updated plan include raising awareness of the program and trip planning tools like the ConnectingVA app, building relationships with local employers and transit providers, and expanding outreach to highlight the benefits of alternative transportation choices. Over the next five years, the CSPDC will continue to support the implementation of this plan to strengthen mobility and access with transportation solutions that enhance the quality of life for all who live and work in the region.



The CSPDC's new Commuter Assistance Program Strategic Plan.

Go Virginia Supports the Region's Economy

GO Virginia is a business-led, Commonwealth-supported economic development initiative that encourages Virginia's diverse regions to collaborate on economic and workforce development activities. The CSPDC is within GO Virginia Region 8 which stretches from Lexington to Winchester. CSPDC staff provides support to the Region 8 Council and assists with GO Virginia project development, applications, and project administration.

Since 2017, the GO Virginia Region 8 Council has completed 10 projects, investing $2,997,346.99 towards cluster scale up of industries, workforce development, and site development and infrastructure projects. Of the 10 projects, 9 included CSPDC localities. 4% of the Go Virginia funding invested in cluster scale-up projects, 27% or $821,000 funded site development and infrastructure projects, while 69% or $2,069230.81 was awarded to workforce development projects.

2025 Region 8's Economic Growth & Diversification Plan

CSPDC staff are assisting with the update to ***Region 8's Economic Growth and Diversification Plan.*** The 2025 update includes an overview of all industries located in Region 8, a comprehensive analysis for how each targeted cluster identified by the Region 8 Council is currently performing, and an examination of the type of resources and skill development in place to attract diverse industries to the region. Focus groups and one-on-one interviews with targeted industries were compiled to inform the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) analysis that will advise the development of goals and strategies for the plan. The plan will be considered by the GO Virginia State Board at their meeting in December 2025.

Go2Work

The Shenandoah Valley Center for Advanced Learning (SVCAL) ***Grow Our Own Go2Work Program*** aims to provide a solution to the workforce skills gap and talent pipeline issues in manufacturing and transporting industries, including aviation, by preparing and increasing the number of individuals in the manufacturing and transportation industries. To achieve this goal the program set out to expand the existing curriculum and update technology. SVCAL was awarded GO Virginia funds for program equipment for the Go2Work program to add new career and technical programs for industrial maintenance and aviation technology and to upgrade equipment to modern standards and technologies for training.





Powered by GO Virginia, the Go2Work Program helps students gain workforce skills in industrial maintenance and technology. (credit: SVCAL)

Go Virginia Expands Industrial Capacity

SHD Aviation Technology Park

Through GO Virginia funding, the **Shenandoah Valley Airport (SHD)** constructed 4,080 linear feet of water line and 980 linear feet of sanitary sewer line to elevate their 58-acre aviation technology park site to Tier 4 on Virginia Business Ready Sites scale. Relocating utilities to the site's perimeter creates an opportunity to construct additional hangars to meet the distinctive needs of aviation-related businesses. The utility relocation project directly follows the construction of two new hangars in the aviation technology park completed in 2023.

TAF's Virginia Innovation Accelerator

Since 2022, CSPDC has worked with The Advancement Foundation (TAF) to renovate and adapt a cigarette paper printing factory in the City of Buena Vista to become the ***Virginia Innovation Accelerator* (VIA).** Through a Go Virginia Grant, TAF established the VIA for business acceleration programs to provide support to new businesses. The business hub will be a space for agricultural value-added product development, small scale manufacturing, and outdoor recreation & tourism incubation.



Virginia Innovation Accelerator (VIA) in Buena Vista supported by CSPDC and The Advancement Foundation with GO Virginia funding.

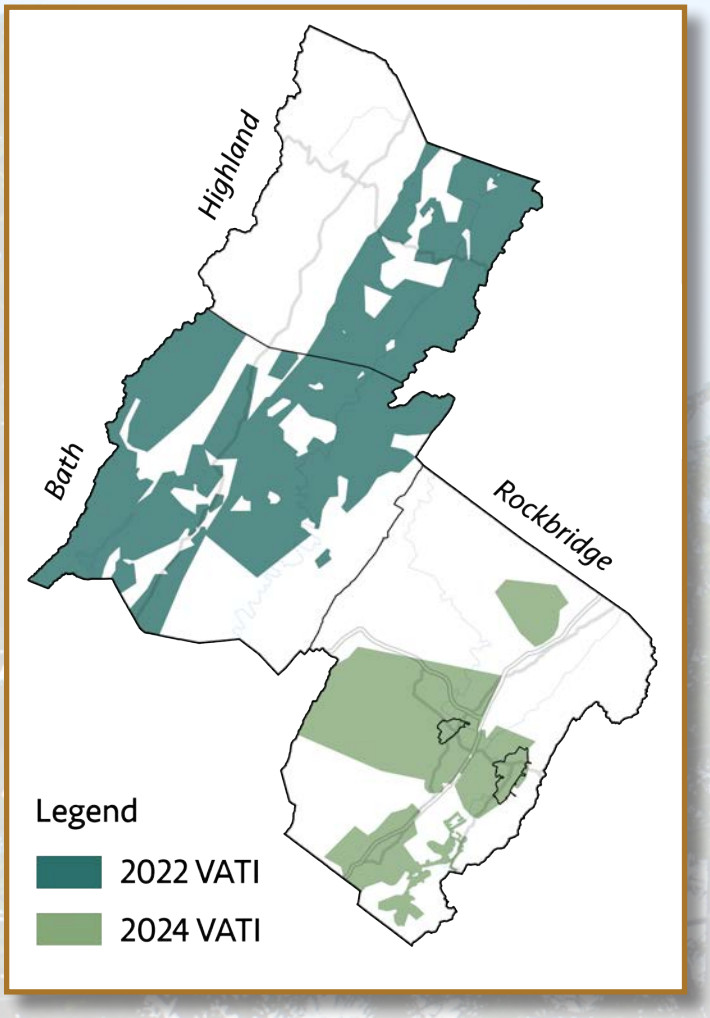
Connecting Central Shenandoah

The CSPDC is committed to supporting our localities in achieving universal high-speed internet access across all jurisdictions. In 2022, the CSPDC, representing the Bath-Highland Network Authority, secured $7 million in **Virginia Telecommunication Initiative (VATI)** funding through the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). This funding will bring broadband to 2,156 locations in Bath and 314 in Highland Counties.

In FY2025, MGW Telephone Co., the project's internet service provider partner, connected 123 additional locations, bringing the total number of locations served since the start of the grant to 1,111.

In the same fiscal year, Rockbridge County received two separate VATI awards in collaboration with BARC Electric Cooperative and Brightspeed. The partnership between Rockbridge County and BARC Connects includes three projects that will deliver high-speed internet to 293 premises in remote areas with difficult terrain in the central and western parts of the county.

The total estimated project cost is $2,988,568, with VATI contributing $1,197,320 (40%) and BARC and Rockbridge County providing $1,791,248 (60%) in matching funds.



Project areas for broadband expansion supported by VATI.

Locality Comprehensive Plan Updates

Virginia Code requires all municipalities to maintain current comprehensive plans and update them every five years, making this planning process both a legal obligation and a practical tool for managing growth pressures, protecting community character, and securing grant funding opportunities that often require demonstration of comprehensive planning efforts. Projects identified in Comprehensive Plans as meeting a community need are well-positioned to receive grant funding.

In FY25, staff worked with Bath County and the Towns of Broadway and Grottoes to update their Plans, and with Rockbridge County to update the Transportation Chapter of their Plan. For each of the updates, staff facilitated community surveys and public engagement sessions, collected data for demographics, and drafted goals and objectives to guide decision making for future land use decisions.

CSPDC Secures $2.25M for Goshen Revitalization

The Town of Goshen received a transformational **$1.25 million *CDBG Community Improvement Grant*** to construct a 2,633 square-foot multi-purpose community service facility. This project addresses critical service gaps in a community where residents currently travel over 25 miles for basic healthcare and live in a USDA-identified food desert.

The facility will house an array of essential services under one roof: a comprehensive health clinic offering medical, dental, mental health, and substance abuse services; a food pantry; senior services; fitness and health education programs; and flexible community space for events, legal counseling, GED classes, and specialized support services.

The CSPDC was also instrumental in securing a **$1 million *Industrial Revitalization Fund*** grant to renovate the former Stillwater Worsted Mills textile plant into a museum, a preservation workshop, and a forest-to-finish wood manufacturing factory focused on the construction of log cabin tiny homes next door to the Community Center. By supporting major community and economic development projects in downtown Goshen, the CSPDC is advancing the Town's efforts to spur job creation and community revitalization.



The future Goshen Community Center will be built next to the historic town office building.

LOOKING AHEAD



Executive Director's Message

As we close another successful year for the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission, I am incredibly proud of all that we have accomplished for the communities we serve.

The activities outlined in this report reflect the exceptional caliber of our team. Our planners and administrative staff approach each challenge with technical expertise and genuine care for the people their work will impact. When colleagues ask me how my first full year as Executive Director has gone, my response has always been, "Great! I have the most amazing team. They are smart, hardworking, and fantastic to work with, every day." Their professionalism and dedication are the foundation of everything we achieve.

In FY 2025, we brought $4.7 million worth of housing, transportation, economic revitalization, and stormwater projects to the region. We transported over 200,000 people on safe, reliable public transit. On some days, that work was big, splashy, and newsworthy. Was cutting a ribbon with giant gold scissors on the new Lewis Street Hub a highlight? Absolutely. But the real value of our work is in the daily, professional service that we provide to our jurisdictions.

The year ahead brings tremendous opportunities to build on our momentum. With federal, state and local funding, we will improve community resiliency against flooding, build new affordable housing units, expand transit service, and support community development planning and project implementation in every corner of our region. We will complete plans to define how our localities respond to emergencies and natural hazards, and partner with economic development organizations to bring new jobs and industries to the region.

What energizes me most about leading this organization are the people I work with every day — our staff, elected officials, public servants, private sector and academic partners. It's an honor to participate in the process of building and supporting the communities that make up this incredible place where we live and work. I am thankful every day to call the Shenandoah Valley home.

I am also more convinced than ever that when local officials choose to work together rather than compete, when our staff stays curious about new approaches to old challenges, when communities embrace change while honoring their history—that's when the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission fulfills its highest purpose.

Thank you for your continued trust in our work. We look forward to serving you in the year to come.

Ann Cundy
Executive Director





CSPDC ORGANIZATIONAL CHART

Celebrating 55 Years
CSPDC
Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission



Ann Cundy

Executive Director

Responsible for the overall administration and direction of the Commission which serves a regional area of five counties, five cities, and 11 towns.



Jeremy Crute

Director of Planning

Responsible for all planning projects and coordination of services in the areas of community development, economic development, housing, emergency management, and environmental.



Kimberly Miller

Office Manager

Responsible for Human Resources administration, and oversees building and office management functions.



Donnie Kern

Finance Director

Responsible for the development of the budget, accounting, financial management and reporting systems for the organization.



Paula Melester

Director of Transportation

Responsible for regional transportation programs, including metropolitan and rural planning, public transit, transportation demand management, bike and pedestrian planning, and the interface of land use and transportation.



Philippe Bone

Regional Planner

Provides planning services for local governments in the areas of community and economic development, housing, and recreation.



Elizabeth Goodloe

Regional Planner

Provides planning services for local governments in the areas of community and economic development.



Rachel Kinzer

Regional Planner

Provides planning services for local governments in the areas of environmental and emergency management.



Carrie Sensabaugh

Administrative Assistant

Provides routine and non-routine administrative support to the organization, ensuring operations of the Commission are carried out in an efficient and timely manner.



Richard Sagui

Accountant

Assists the Finance Director in all areas of the Commission's accounting system, and is responsible for Accounts Payable and Receivables.



Zach Beard

Transportation Manager

Responsible for all Transportation programs SAWMPO, HRMPO, Rural Transportation programs and Environmental programs.



Garreth Bartholomew

Transportation Planner

Provides transportation planning services; supports the Staunton-Augusta-Waynesboro and Harrisonburg-Rockingham MPOs.



Devon Thompson

Transit Manager

Responsible for management and oversight of the region's public transit system (BRITE) and coordinating public transportation planning.



Danielle Gannon

Transit Planner

Responsible for the public relations as well as support and coordination of the Transit and Rideshare Programs.





image credit: Rockingham County Tourism



YEAR IN REVIEW
FY 2025