



November 5, 2025

MEMO TO: CSPDC Executive Committee

FROM: Ann W. Cundy, Executive Director

SUBJECT: November 12, 2025, Executive Committee Meeting

The Executive Committee of the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission will hold a meeting on Wednesday, November 12th via Microsoft Teams. RSVP to Kimberly Miller at 540-885-5174 ext. 101, or email kimberly@cspdc.org.

[Click Here to Join the Meeting](#)

Agenda

1. Call to Order
2. Consideration of August 18, 2025, Minutes*
3. Public Comment
4. SERDI Agency Assessment Final Review (EC Memo #25-05)
5. Discussion of Virginia Retirement System Exploration (EC Memo #25-06)
6. Other Business
7. Adjournment

**Action Needed*



Minutes
Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission
112 MacTanly Place, Staunton, VA
Executive Committee Meeting
August 18, 2025, 8:05 p.m.

Attendance

	City of Buena Vista		City of Waynesboro		Staff
✓	Tyson Cooper	✓	Terry Short	✓	Ann Cundy
	County of Augusta		Rockingham County	✓	Kimberly Miller
	Pam Carter	✓	Rachel Salatin		
	City of Lexington		Rockbridge County		
✓	Frank Friedman		Chris Slaydon		
	City of Staunton				
✓	Sharon Angle				

Call To Order

The Executive Committee meeting of August 18, 2025, was called to order at 8:05 p.m. by Chairperson Frank Friedman.

Consideration of Minutes

Chair Friedman presented the minutes from May 6, 2025. The Executive Committee meeting minutes were approved unanimously.

Public Comment

Chair Friedman opened the floor for public comments. There were no public comments.

Officer Elections

The Executive Committee conducted officer elections for the upcoming 3-year term:

Chair: Frank Friedman expressed his interest in continuing to serve as Chair. Mr. Short moved to support the nomination, which was approved without objection.

Vice Chair: Chair Friedman nominated Tyson Cooper to serve as Vice Chair. The nomination was approved without objection.

Treasurer: When asked by Chair Friedman, Terry Short agreed to continue serving as Treasurer. The nomination was approved without objection.

Secretary: After brief discussion, Rachel was nominated and agreed to serve as Secretary. The nomination was approved without objection.

Discussion of Virginia Retirement System Exploration (EC Memo #25-03)

Ms. Cundy provided an update on the VRS exploration process, noting significant developments since the May Executive Committee meeting. She reported that after sharing the agency's employee census and Money Purchase Pension Plan details with VRS staff, VRS revised their recommendations that substantially changed the evaluation of previously discussed options.

VRS Staff Findings

VRS staff, after reviewing CSPDC's unique situation with their FICA replacement plan and significant employer contributions, advised against **Scenario 2** (dissolving the Money Purchase Pension Plan and having employees purchase VRS service with their accumulated funds), calling it a "terrible deal" for employees with any tenure. Due to state code restrictions, employees would only be allowed to purchase a limited amount of service, with excess Money Purchase Pension Plan contributions having to be placed in a low-yield (approximately 4%) savings account that is not actively managed. Additionally, these excess funds would be forfeited if an employee leaves public employment.

Revised Options for Consideration

The discussion focused on **Option 1A**, which involves freezing the current Money Purchase Pension Plan rather than dissolving it. This option would allow current employees to choose whether to remain in the existing plan or join VRS while providing new hires with VRS participation. Existing employees would have one year to make their decision, which would minimize disruption to current staff while addressing recruitment challenges.

Committee Discussion

Mr. Short expressed strong support for Option 1A, stating it would create sustainability for the organization moving forward while addressing recruitment needs for new hires. He noted that this option would provide flexibility for current employees and represent the most practical solution given the organization's unique circumstances. The Committee concurred.

Next Steps

Ms. Cundy agreed to inform VRS staff that the Executive Committee is most interested in Option 1A and to request written documentation of what Option 1A would mean for all current staff. She will continue working toward a decision by the end of 2025 to take advantage of the current staffing situation, noting that the agency hired nine new employees in 2024.

Other Business

Chair Friedman acknowledged Sharon Angle's service, thanking her for her role in check signing and other vital functions, particularly noting the challenges of handling these responsibilities remotely.

Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kimberly Miller, Commission Clerk



November 5, 2025

MEMO TO: CSPDC Executive Committee

FROM: Ann W. Cundy, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Executive Committee Memo #25-05
SERDI Strategic Assessment Final Review

Executive Summary

Following presentation of a draft set of recommendations to the full Commission at the October 20th meeting, SERDI Staff Consultant Jim Youngquist has presented a draft of the final report of the Executive Committee's review and discussion.

With the Executive Committee's final comments and requested revisions, Jim will finalize the report and we will present it to the full Commission at the December 15, 2025 Commission meeting for approval.

Attachment

Draft CSPDC Strategic Assessment



The Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission Strategic Assessment

Conducted by the



August – November 2025

About the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC)

The Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC) 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.

The CSPDC works with its member jurisdictions, communities and agencies to provide high-quality planning, technical assistance, and facilitation of services that address local, regional and state needs in an innovative, timely and cooperative manner. Covering everything from land use planning, transportation, water and waste-water utilities, natural resource management, affordable housing, economic and community development, disaster mitigation and preparedness, agritourism to human services, the CSPDC is an invaluable asset to the quality of life in the Shenandoah Valley.

About The Southeast Regional Directors Institute (SERDI)

*The Southeast Regional Directors Institute (SERDI) is a professional development association for regional council executive directors and when applicable their councils and state associations in the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, **Virginia**, and West Virginia. SERDI also offers associate membership to regional councils outside the twelve-state footprint.*

Executive Summary

Assessment Process

At the request of the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC), the Southeast Regional Directors Institute (SERDI) conducted a strategic assessment of the commission. The purpose of the assessment is to develop implementable strategies that will enable the CSPDC to be the most relevant and effective organization it can be for its owners - the region's localities.

The SERDI Voluntary Strategic Assessment program was created by the SERDI Council of Peers (Board of Directors) in 1993. During that time over 70 assessments have been conducted across the region including nine Virginia commissions: New River Valley, Cumberland Plateau, Southside, Roanoke Valley Alleghany, Northern Shenandoah, Central Shenandoah, George Washington, Crater, and Central Virginia. Roanoke Valley Alleghany has conducted the assessment twice. This is Central Shenandoah's second assessment. The first was conducted in 2015.

The strategic assessment was designed to glean input from the region's leaders that provide a broad range of opinions and perceptions of the CSPDC, what they saw as strengths; what concerned them; what issues, challenges, and opportunities face the region and its localities; what role the council should play in addressing them; and the steps it should take to make the CSPDC the most relevant and best commission possible.

The assessment consisted of the following segments:

1. Online Surveys
 - a. Central Shenandoah PDC Board of Commissioners
 - b. Localities Managers and Administrators in the CSPDC Region
 - c. Planning/Community Economic Development Leaders in the CSPDC Region
 - d. CSPDC Regional Leaders
 - e. CSPDC Staff
2. Focus Group Sessions
 - a. Augusta County
 - b. City of Staunton
 - c. City of Buena Vista
 - d. Rockbridge County/Goshen/Glasgow
 - e. City of Lexington
 - f. Highland County/Monterey
 - g. Bath County
 - h. CSPDC Staff
 - i. City of Waynesboro
 - j. City of Harrisonburg
 - k. CSPDC Department Heads
 - l. Rockingham County
 - m. Towns of Rockingham County
3. Presentation of Draft Recommendations and Discussion with the CSPDC Board of Commissioners.

4. Complete Record Report of the entire assessment including the final agreed upon recommendations. The SERDI staff also conducted three telephone interviews with regional leaders that were unable to participate in the focus group sessions.

Assessment Summary

It is clear that the localities of this region are very positive about the CSPDC. The smaller localities tend to depend more on the CSPDC staff than the larger localities; however, it should be noted that the larger jurisdictions realize the value to their locality as well as the entire region. CSPDC is unique in that while it provides traditional services and assistance, it is one of only a handful of PDCs nationally that host two Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) for Transportation and one of only a half dozen PDCs that operate an urban transit system.

The surveys and discussions revealed strong consensus around CSPDC's value as a regional convener and grant administrator, while highlighting critical challenges in staff retention, capacity management, and service delivery customization. Participants felt that CSPDC should continue its role as a convener, but also take on new initiatives, identify desired skill sets for staff to better serve the localities, and for the current staff to be properly supported to be long-term professionals of the Commission. Accomplishing these objectives will require additional local and state funding beyond federal and state grants. Uncertainties around federal agencies and funding programs have made this need particularly salient to regional commissions everywhere, including CSPDC. The Board of Commissioners will need to discuss increased funding by localities and pooling resources in order to acquire needed skill sets and offer the services that locality stakeholders identified through the Assessment process.

Recommendations

The following DRAFT recommendations have been developed based on the input provided by elected officials and locality staff, as well as other regional partners through this assessment process.

The final recommendations that will go forward for adoption in the Complete Record Report of the Strategic Assessment will be decided upon by you, the members of the CSPDC Board of Commissioners.

Recommendation: Build an enhanced line of communication and understanding with the ownership (region's localities) of the CSPDC.

Situation:

It became apparent during the assessment process that there is not a clear understanding of the Virginia statute establishing the planning district commissions across the Commonwealth and that ownership of the commissions lie with the localities in each commission geographic footprint. Furthermore, it is felt that the only local elected officials that understand to varying degrees the purpose, roles, and possibilities of the commission are those that serve on the PDC Board of Commissioners.

Action Steps:

1. That there be an annual work session held each year in (a.) Rockingham County, its Towns, and the City of Harrisonburg (b.) Highland and Bath Counties and the Town of Monterey (d.) Rockbridge County and its Towns and the Cities of Lexington and Buena Vista, and (e.) Augusta County and its Town and the Cities of Staunton and Waynesboro.
2. That the elected officials of the county Boards of Supervisors, town and city Council Members including Chairs and Mayors and any professional staff deemed appropriate by the elected officials attend the work session.
3. That the work session be held in a location in each county as decided upon by the elected officials.
4. The work session would be facilitated by the CSPDC Executive Director and/or the Commission Chair.

The work session will provide an overview of the CSPDC, its creation, who from their jurisdictions represents them on the Board of Commissioners, an overview of the budget and funding sources, a list of the projects, programs, and initiatives that the CSPDC has undertaken over the years for those jurisdictions.

If possible, the amount of dollars contributed to the CSPDC by the localities and the amount of dollars that were provided in return in various efforts will be provided.

5. Second, the locality officials will be asked to share their thoughts on the challenges and opportunities they see facing their locality and what specifics they would like the Board of Commissioners to address for them in the upcoming fiscal year.
6. The process will allow for an orientation to CSPDC but even more importantly will allow the localities to identify for the Board the most relevant local and regional needs and opportunities.

Responsible Parties:

1. CSPDC Executive Director and Board Chair

Timeframe:

1. Prior to the development of an annual work program each year.

Recommendation: **Ensure that the CSPDC offers a competitive employment package to increase the chances of retention of its staff.**

Situation:

Over the last several years the CSPDC has experienced significant turnover in its staff through retirements and transitions to other organizations. The participants in the assessment process were positive about the current staff with their enthusiasm and commitment to the work of the commission. The participants also however expressed concern over the ability to retain the staff and expressed a hope that CSPDC was offering a competitive employment package to increase the chances of retention.

Action Steps:

1. The CSPDC Executive Director and Human Resources Director need to conduct a comparative salary and non-salary benefits survey of like-PDCs and localities to gauge competitiveness and an up-to-date benefit comparison.

Responsible Parties:

1. CSPDC Executive Director and Human Resources Director
2. CSPDC Board of Commissioners

Timeframe:

1. Prior to the beginning of FY 2026.

Recommendation: Expand CSPDC staff capacity by hiring additional staff and providing specialized training to meet identified locality needs.

Situation:

While the assessment participants were positive about the current staff's enthusiasm and commitment, staff and partners alike noted the need to maximize the benefit of CSPDC to its localities with additional staff capacity and increased expertise in certain disciplines. Participants identified the need for a designated Housing coordinator/expert, a Natural Resources professional that could lead/reinstitute flood mitigation, hazard emergency, resilience planning, and other environmental issues, as well as additional staffing in the Transportation and Community Economic Development areas. The localities expressed a need for more information on available grants. CSPDC is currently rebuilding its Grant Resource Guide and developing a communications process to regularly share this information⁰²¹.

Action Steps:

1. The CSPDC Executive Director needs to identify a staff/policy committee to discuss the suggested staff training needs and sustainability of bringing on new staff.
2. The committee needs to review each area of need and determine the expertise that is needed.
3. The committee needs to develop a funding strategy to pay for training and on-going salaries for these positions beyond traditional federal and state grants.

Responsible Parties:

1. The abovementioned staff/policy committee.
2. The CSPDC Board of Commissioners.

Timeframe:

1. To be determined.

Recommendation: **Develop a regional approach to Economic Development that focuses on transportation, housing, and childcare.**

Situation:

While economic development is traditionally thought of as locating jobs and it being a locality versus locality competition, repeatedly it was stated that a regionwide approach with a focus on transportation, housing, and childcare would make individual localities and the region more competitive for job creation. Transportation access to jobs, housing for workers, and childcare for working parents are deciding factors for companies' decision on whether to locate or expand in a community or region.

Action Steps:

1. The CSPDC needs to update the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) to reflect this three-pronged approach to remaining economically competitive and include strategies to make these aspects of economic development a major focus for the region.
2. Based on the strategies developed through the CEDS, the CSPDC will work with the Board of Commissioners, Shenandoah Valley Partnership, and the member localities to devise implementation strategies as appropriate. This would include continuing to support workforce transportation and transit in the region and growing the agencies' Housing Program while also working with current childcare initiatives to determine how CSPDC can support these efforts.

Responsible Parties:

1. CSPDC Executive Director and other appropriate leaders.
2. CSPDC Board of Directors and member localities

Timeframe:

1. 2027

Recommendation: Explore the creation of a Regional Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data and mapping resource center for the water and sewer data and other identified infrastructure of the region's localities.

Situation:

While a few of the larger localities in the CSPDC region have a significant GIS presence, the great majority of localities do not. The inventory of water and sewer and other infrastructure in some cases only exist on personal knowledge. It is important for localities to know not just the location but the condition of their infrastructure. Because of the labor-intensive task of documentation and especially the cost of GIS software, it has been for many cost prohibitive. This is a challenge that was identified multiple times during the focus groups and is thought to be a task that is regional and a role that CSPDC could lead in.

Action Steps:

1. The CSPDC needs to survey the localities to see if there is genuine interest in supporting the development of a regionwide GIS inventory and mapping effort.
2. It will be the responsibility of the CSPDC to develop a projected cost of the development of such an effort.
3. It will be determined by the Board and localities if there is a commitment to moving forward with the development of the inventory and mapping effort.
4. If it is decided to move forward with the development of such a system for the localities of the region, then it be the responsibility to develop a business plan hopefully with the technical guidance of the GIS professionals that exist in some of the member communities.

Responsible Parties:

1. PDC Executive Director, Board of Commissioners, Localities.

Timeframe:

1. To be determined.

Conclusion

The Agency Assessment reveals a high-performing organization at a critical juncture. CSPDC's core competencies in grant administration and as a regional convener are widely valued, but systemic challenges in staff retention and staff capacity threaten long-term effectiveness.

The path forward requires immediate attention to the need for additional staff and staff training, while building toward a more sustainable operating model that balances regional coordination with meeting specific local needs. Success depends on strong board leadership, genuine staff engagement, and expanded financial commitment from member localities.

By addressing these priorities systematically, CSPDC can strengthen its position in support of its member jurisdictions while creating a sustainable and rewarding environment for its staff.



Appendix



Online Survey Results



CSPDC Board of Commissioners Survey Results

Central Shenandoah PDC Board of Commissioners Online Survey Results

1. Do you represent a municipality, county, or appointed position on the CSPDC Board? Are you member of the Executive Committee?

- Municipality. Not on Executive Committee.
- County.
- County.
- Yes, Yes.
- CSPDC Board.
- Member of the Executive Committee.
- Municipality and also a member of the Executive Committee.
- City of Waynesboro
- County.
- Representative of County. No, not on EC

2. What is good about the CSPDC?

- It provides much needed staff support and professional resources to local governments that do not have the staff capacity to complete the same projects.
- Staff, planning, fiscal accountability.
- Help with projects.
- The willingness to help localities.
- Every single time I have posed a situation or question to the professional staff at the CSPDC, I have been provided with information, recommendations and/or considerations I had not previously contemplated. And while perhaps a specific answer may not have been readily available, direction and sound counsel was willingly and promptly shared.
- This organization is essential to cooperative interaction among the many broad political jurisdictions in the central Shenandoah Valley which comprise the breadbasket of the Commonwealth of Virginia.
- The ability of the staff to augment the member jurisdictions particularly in providing assistance in negotiating State and Federal grant programs.
- Regional Collaboration. Going after and receiving grants. Running the BRITE Transit Service.
- It identifies and quantifies specific needs in the region and has a very responsive staff.
- The CSPDC has been successful in securing grants for localities. The regional planning committee improves communication between localities and allows localities within the PDC to be aware of projects taking place in other localities.
- The CSPDC can be a tremendous help in finding funding sources for projects.

3. What concerns do you have about the CSPDC?

- At this time, none that I can think of.
- Hiring and retaining strong staff members.
- That it's extremely focused on Harrisonburg, Waynesboro, Staunton to the exclusion of small cities, towns, counties.
- Not really any concerns.
- There are very few concerns, though one has the impression that there is frequent staff turnover which could be par for the course.
- Availability of federal and staff compensation.
- Too much focus on quantity of housing rather than type of housing.
- Historically, employee turnover.
- No major concerns, really only that we're not fully utilizing their services.

4. From a commissioner's perspective, what do you see as the major roles that CSPDC plays on behalf of the region's local governments?

- It provides much needed staff support and professional resources to local governments that do not have the staff capacity to complete the same projects.
- Coordinator and facilitator for projects.
- Moving forward.
- Managing grant funds and assisting with grant applications.
- Although varied in specifics, overall, I see the role of the CSPDC as providing support to localities in exploring funding options, infrastructure data and researching/considering possibilities that may not be readily apparent to localities.
- Most local governments are pretty limited on their ability to get everything they would like done and to staff for those actions. The CSPDC fills in those gaps with efficient, competent and timely production on a frequent basis.
- Managing regional programs such as housing assistance, Brite bus system, ARC, and EDA. Assistance in grant application and management. Promoting the region. Providing a forum for member jurisdictions to come together as a region in areas of joint concerns.
- Convener of ideas, funding, and services.
- Identifying needs and market gaps and knowing how and where to apply for state grants.
- Obtain grant funding and assistance to localities in small area transportation studies.
- The CSPDC has helped us move forward on projects that were daunting from a funding standpoint.

5. What is the perceived level of commitment of the CSPDC to the work and interests of local governments and other public organizations in the region, and what form(s) does that commitment take?

- When asked for assistance, there is a strong level of commitment.
- The commitment is high based on their achievements strong.
- Very.
- I have never experienced anything but complete commitment from the CSPDC to be helpful and attentive to the needs of a locality. Evidence of this vested interest can be as simple as consistently prompt and informed responses to email messages and/or telephone calls to very involved content creation and verification for comprehensive plans.
- Perception of commitment to local governments is very high. The CSPDC meets regularly to take the pulse of the region and provides job specific assistance by its personnel and through contact and outreach to other professional assistance entities.
- The PDC is perceived as playing an active role in various programs including housing, economic development, hazard mitigation, and environmental quality.
- it's a two-way street. CSPDC has shown a high level of commitment when local governments equally share a high level of commitment.
- Moderate to High commitment, annual publications of the PDC's completed work.
- They have been very responsive and have provided assistance and expertise for planning and grants that our staff couldn't take on.

6. What is the perceived level of commitment of the local governments in the region to the CSPDC?

- It seems there is little commitment from the local governments to the CSPDC.
- Strong and supportive.
- Very.
- Many seem to sing its praises and are believers in its value.
- My fear is that most localities do not utilize the vast resource offered by the CSPDC as comprehensively as could be beneficial.
- Perceived commitment to the CSPDC is measured by annual required membership fees (often necessarily increased) and usually paid.
- The local governments of the PDC are supportive finding that their "return" on dollars spent is good.
- The northern half seem to have more officials involved.
- Moderate to high.
- We count on them as a valuable partner.

7. Are there program areas, projects, or initiatives that you/your local government feel that CSPDC should not insert itself into, or should not be involved in? What are they? Why?

- At this time, none that I can think of.
- No.
- Knowing the tremendous expertise housed within the professional staff of the CSPDC, I cannot imagine any topic or project area that would not benefit from input from the CSPDC staff.
- Nothing I know of other than national political issues.
- No.
- Local land use decisions.
- Assist with economic development and workforce gaps, do not be involved in housing, even though housing is a workforce development issue to an extent.
- To date, there are no program areas, projects, or initiatives that the CSPDC has been involved with that I have objected to or feel that we should not be involved with.
- None come to mind.

8. What are the key challenges and opportunities facing the region? What role if any, should the CSPDC play in addressing these? What new services should the CSPDC consider starting?

- Housing remains a high priority. Focus on helping localities draft land use regulations (not just plans and studies) that allow localities to implement regulations that create more housing opportunities. Assist localities with public input meetings and sessions to facilitate conversations about housing so that regardless of the public's opinion about housing, they will understand each other.
- Transportation and affordable housing.
- No opinion.
- Sufficient workforce for expanding and new employers.
- Improvement to I-81 seems to be a major challenge, but it appears to be a national DOT responsibility. The CSPDC could entertain modes of supporting that effort.
- Challenges include: increasing population and associated challenges for government including transportation, affordable housing, provision of services, environmental challenges and quality of life.
- Affordable housing – if the region pursues a housing trust fund the CSPDC needs to be equipped to staff such an organization.
- Challenges are balancing growth with preservation of our agriculture community. CSPDC should focus more attention on the ag industry as a whole.
- Challenges include housing, staffing levels, socioeconomic disparity. Opportunities include high quality of life, recreation opportunities, room for growth. The CSPDC can continue supporting the localities it serves.

What are the key challenges and opportunities facing the region? What role if any, should the CSPDC play in addressing these? What new services should the CSPDC consider starting? *Continued.*

- Our region is often overlooked compared to more heavily populated areas, which can leave many projects on the back burner for the state. The CSPDC has been a helpful advocate for us.

9. If you could change one thing about the CSPDC, what would it be?

- Nothing at this time.
- Nothing!!!!
- Meetings at different members counties or cities.
- Not sure.
- Not sure that I have an answer for this question.
- Location seems logical and fair. I don't see any obvious oversight.
- Increase focus on land use planning and zoning as a resource for member jurisdictions.
- Focus on agriculture and less on housing.
- To host an annual CSPDC meeting that can serve as a round table discussion for predetermined regional planning issues, to include planners from the various localities. The purpose of the conference would be to have a better understanding of regional planning issues and their relation to each locality.
- I am worried that we aren't fully utilizing them.

10. If you could design a focus and direction for the CSPDC to be the most relevant and effective PDC for its local governments and the region the future months and years to come, what would CSPDC look like?

- Great question, but no comments at this time.
- That would be tough to predict considering the chaos our country is currently facing with our national government.
- No opinion.
- Not sure.
- Goodness, I do not think I am qualified to answer this question.
- Keep on keeping on fearlessly.
- Continue as a forum for providing a regional focus and a resource for member jurisdictions to take advantage of state and federal programs.
- CSPDC would be a grant writing powerhouse, immediately identifying workforce/education needs and applying for grants that would improve certain sectors or gaps within smaller communities that exist.
- A CSPDC that creates more opportunities for collaboration.
- I'd like them to continue on with strategic planning assistance and continue to advocate for us at a state level.

Localities Manager and Administrators in the CSPDC Region Survey Results

CSPDC Localities Managers and Administrators Online Survey Results

1. Are you a manager/administrator in a city, town, or county in the CSPDC region?

- Yes.
- Yes.
- Yes.
- No.
- Yes.
- Yes.
- No.
- Yes.
- Yes.
- No.

2. Have you served in a similar capacity outside the CSPDC region?

- Yes.
- No.
- No.
- Yes.
- No.
- No.
- No.
- Yes.
- No.
- No.

3. What is your locality's relationship with the CSPDC?

- We have an active relationship with the Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission (CSPDC), particularly in community development, i.e. grant writing services grant administration support, and planning assistance in transportation, hazard mitigation, etc. CSPDC provides assistance and expertise to help fill gaps in areas where our limited staff do not always possess the technical expertise needed in some areas of local government.
- Member.
- We are supporting members of the commission.
- Associate/interloper.
- Great. The ability to work collaboratively with the CSPD on a variety of projects is a huge benefit to small jurisdictions.
- Member locality.
- Member locality.
- Very Good.
- Member locality

4. From your interaction and observation of the CSPDC, what does it do well?

- Grant writing/acquisition/administration, and regional cooperation and facilitation.
- Assistance with grants and projects.
- They handle the MPO and transit operations particularly well. They are also good conveners of localities on regional issues. Grant assistance.
- Communication, collaboration.
- The CSPDC does an excellent job of keeping grant projects on track. They have been instrumental in the application and reporting process for the grants that we have received.
- Information gathering/dissemination, planning in many different arenas especially as the leaders of regional requirements, support of local projects, coordination of interaction between local governments, grant acquisition.
- Grant administration, project management and research.
- Grant/Project Management, regional planning. I have worked with 6 PDCs and CSPDC is the best PDC I have worked with.
- Grant administration, project management and research.

5. What concerns you about the CSPDC?

- A regional approach is effective for broad planning, but smaller localities may benefit from more customized strategies that reflect their unique demographics, infrastructure, and economic conditions. A one-size-fits-all model can sometimes overlook hyper-local needs.
- N/A.
- A fairly new staff that may lack some overall experience.
- I know of any.
- My biggest concern is the staff turnover. The working relationship is good, and it takes a while to build a rapport with new staff members.
- Small number of staff members to serve such a large geographic region.
- Staff turnover, and staff being overwhelmed with the number of projects during turnover times.
- An environmental planner on staff would be helpful to assist with federal grants and NEPA issues and studies.
- Staff turnover, and staff being overwhelmed with the number of projects during turnover times.
- Small number of staff members to serve such a large geographic region.

6. What kind of commitment do local governments, the owners of the CSPDC, have to the CSPDC? What could make it better?

- Member localities have a financial commitment. Along with that an active participant.
- I feel like if there was a better understanding of services that are provided within the region to the local government would help the localities have more buy-in.
- My locality is committed to working with the CSPDC. Continuing to have a good working relationship and showcasing the importance of the CSPDC's work to the elected body of the locality is important.
- Stay engaged.
- The localities need to support the CSPDC by working with them and giving recognition for the assistance that is provided. I would like to see more detailed grant opportunities for small rural jurisdictions.
- To be involved in CSPDC led initiatives.
- Local government is committed to funding the CSPDC and utilizing the resources the CSPDC provides. Better communication.
- To be involved in CSPDC led initiatives.

7. What are the key opportunities, issues, and challenges that your locality is facing that might be best addressed on a regional basis?

- Infrastructure and transportation, aging infrastructure, limited funding, improved pedestrian, bike, buggy traffic flow; Affordable Housing, create housing options, develop new units; Environmental Risks, karst landscape's unique challenges, regional hazard mitigation, i.e. flooding, storms, etc.; Economic Development, attract investment, support local, promote tourism.
- Key opportunities – tourism. Challenges – lack of revenue.
- Housing, Emergency planning.
- I would say regional training for local government work force. That could be fire and rescue personnel to water treatment plant operators. The days of hiring our own and training them up seem to be antiquated.
- We have very small staffs and must rely on regional cooperation to enhance our capabilities. Regional workshops to discuss best practices, real world examples of what has worked and the pitfalls you could face.
- Affordable housing, regional tourism development & coordination for communities that are not "destinations".
- Housing, childcare, grant administration, finding funding resources, and research
- Storm water management and flood mitigation, non-motorized transportation methods.

8. How can the CSPDC maximize its relevancy to the region's localities?

- Addressing regional challenges through targeted planning; enhancing workforce development and economic growth, support local planning capacity, and fostering regional collaboration and innovation.
- Continue to work with localities to assist with grant management.
- Continue to be a resource for regional projects.
- Periodic reports from the CSPDC management to the governing body as a whole. Unless the elected official is good at reporting back PDC can seem amorphous and unknown. A yearly check report on the "State of the PDC" or list of current projects would be good.
- Keep bringing people together to talk about issues and to build meaningful relationships.
- Celebrating success stories, helping localities stay aware of funding/grant opportunities.
- Ensure communication and excellent service.
- With their current resources and staffing, I believe the CSPDC already maximizes its output.

9. How can the CSPDC enhance its relationship with the locality managers and administrators?

- Tailored local support, customized recommendation for locality. Always room for all of us to improve communication channels.
- Continue to meet virtually and in person to foster the relationships needed to work well together.
- I feel that this relationship is already good.
- I think its very good. The lunches and virtual meetings are a great way to stay engaged.
- Having more discussions to learn about the issues facing each jurisdiction and what areas the localities could use assistance with.
- Encourage the chronically absent managers to attend meetings. Perhaps develop agendas or specific topics to talk about for monthly meetings
- Additional communication.
- No suggestions as the CSPDC is already very transparent and highly communicative.

10.If you could change one thing about the CSPDC, what would it be?

- Increase locality-centered customization and responsiveness. This would be most impactful for smaller localities.
- N/A.
- More in person meetings with staff to discuss opportunities for enhancing services to citizens.
- I would change staffing to more, so that more can be accomplished.
- Assist managers who do not have a planning background with training and planning staff resources perhaps a range-rider setup.
- I would change staffing to more, so that more can be accomplished.\
- More staff.

Central Shenandoah Valley Regional Leaders Survey Results

Central Shenandoah Valley Regional Leaders Online Survey Results

1. When you hear the words Central Shenandoah Planning District Commission what comes to mind?

- The assistance that is offered to our small city.
- Collaboration for our localities.
- Regional planning and support to local government in planning.

2. What do you think is the role/purpose of the CSPDC?

- Leverage shared interests in the region and also provide resources when called upon local governments, etc.
- Assistance and regional planning/oversight.
- Regional planning, tracking trends and implications, technical assistance to local governments, linking localities to funding programs at the state level.

3. What do you know about the CSPDC and its services and programs?

- The City of Lexington has received support in writing grants, conducting studies, and updating its Comprehensive Plan.
- Quite a bit as a former commissioner.
- The City of Lexington has received supporting in writing grants, conducting studies, and updating its Comprehensive Plan.

4. What does the CSPDC do well?

- It provides good support when called upon.
- Transportation planning visioning.
- Support local governments in local planning efforts, take a larger than local perspective on different sectors such as housing and transportation, and help identify and seek funding for feasibility studies leading to larger funding opportunities.

5. What concerns you about the CSPDC?

- Politicized influencing.
- None, keep doing your good work.

6. How would you gauge the interest level of local governments in the region towards the CSPDC?

- I think local governments are always pleasantly surprised to hear that the CSPDC is able to help with something since sometimes local governments feel they are on their own.
- Very attentive to the regional issues.
- For the Lexington, Rockbridge and Buena Vista local governments there is a high level of interest and appreciation for the services CSPDC offers.
- I think local governments are always pleasantly surprised to hear that the CSPDC is able to help with something since sometimes local governments feel they are on their own.

7. If you are an elected or appointed official of one of the CSPDC's member governments, but not a member of the CSPDC Board, what could the Board and staff of the CSPDC do to enhance their working relationship with you and your local government?

- Attend a meeting once or twice a year (virtually) and remind us of all you do!
- More direct engagement with elected officials.
- Consider sending out a short newsletter, or if already in place, ensure local officials are on the mailing list.
- Attend a meeting once or twice a year (virtually) and remind us of all you do!

8. Do you see the CSPDC as the facilitator for local governments and other public entities to come together to discuss issues, challenges, and opportunities that face the region? If not, could it or should it be?

- I think the CSPDC does do this and each local government's rep on the CSPDC has the most visibility of what it does.
- It could be better.
- I think the CSPDC does do this and each local government's rep on the CSPDC has the most visibility of what it does.
- Yes, the regional housing study is a good example of a regional issue that has specific local attributes, a local only approach will not account for larger trends.

9. What is/are the primary challenges/opportunities facing the region that you feel that CSPDC should play a major role in addressing?

- Our elected officials in Richmond have neglected the I-81 corridor.
- Future transportation.
- Continue to focus on enabling housing production and regional transportation. Help localities find funding to improve the walkability of their neighborhoods.

10. If you could change one thing about the CSPDC, what would it be?

- I would have stayed on the Commission longer.
- Consider holding periodic educational seminars on planning issues facing the region and localities. Planning Commissions, out of necessity, focus on regulatory issues. Strategic planning and building knowledge in important sectoral issues would help Planning Commissions and City Councils.

**CSPDC
Planning/Community
Economic
Development
Leaders Survey
Results**

CSPDC Planning/Community Economic Development Leaders Online Survey Results

1. What does the CSPDC do well?

- Keeping abreast of multiple projects simultaneously.
- React quickly to needed assistance.
- The CSPDC provides useful support for regional coordination and, specifically, assists smaller jurisdictions that may not have staff capacity to manage projects independently. This support can be an important resource.
- The CSPDC does well at identifying programs and program areas of potential collaboration amongst localities. CSPDC also does well at keeping localities informed of funding opportunities and associated deadlines.
- Application assistance and administration of grants, facilitation of regional initiatives like Rockbridge Outdoors, regional hazard plan, etc.
- Assisting localities with finding and securing state and federal grants for various projects.
- Provide knowledge and resources that we don't have a small municipality.
- Assisting localities with finding and securing state and federal grants for various projects.

2. What concerns you about the CSPDC?

- Workload can be overwhelming for the staff on hand.
- No comment.
- Frequent changes in funding sources can lead to initiation of projects without ensuring long-term implementation or maintenance of the initiated projects. This creates challenges in sustaining momentum, retaining staff, and achieving lasting impact.
- No concerns
- I haven't had as much work with CSPDC in the last 6-12 months so not as tuned in.
- High levels of employment turnover.
- High apparent turnover.
- High level of employment turnover.

3. Share with us your Planning/Community Economic Development organization's relationship with the CSPDC.

- Use CSPDC in a multitude of projects.
- It seems the CSPDC is more connected with economic development and transportation matters with our organization.
- The CSPDC's study and grant assistance is helpful; particularly for smaller community projects that may be difficult for staff to prioritize.
- CSPDC administers our MPO and leads development of regional plans
- Long running relationship, PDC has helped BV with many grant applications and administration, so many different projects.
- We have worked well with the CSPDC in the past on various projects, including traffic studies, emergency management and flood mitigation projects and comprehensive plan preparation.
- The CSPDC has assisted with our Comp Plan updates, housing grants, and transportation grants.
- Long running relationship, PDC has helped BV with many grant applications and administration, so many different projects.
- The CSPDC has assisted with our Comp Plan updates, housing grants, and transportation grants.
- We have worked well with the CSPDC in the past on various projects, including traffic studies, emergency management and flood mitigation projects and comprehensive plan preparation.

4. What kind of commitment do local governments, the owner of the PDC, have to the CSPDC? What could make it better?

- Local government have a great deal of commitment to the PDC. Attending meetings at the local level to communicate more effectively may make it better.
- Not sure how to answer the question.
- Local governments appear supportive of the work of the PDC, as reflected in committed annual dues and consistent requests for assistance.
- Local governments value the PDC as a mechanism for collective planning.
- I think the localities sometimes forget about the PDC. The CSPDC is quietly in the background. But projects that are more front and center might be outside the PDC's legal scope.
- Financial commitments from the localities and working with the CSPDC to ensure the best and most effective services to the localities. Increased communication between the CSPDC and localities.

5. What are the key opportunities, issues, and challenges that your community/organization is facing that might be addressed on a regional basis?

- Employment and housing with decreased students in the school system.
- Housing remains a constant conversation, but transportation is likely the biggest impact on a regional basis.
- Notable regional challenges include workforce housing, balancing economic growth with agricultural preservation, securing funding for transportation projects, and maintaining groundwater availability amid ongoing development. Support in identifying innovative transportation funding strategies (specifically buggy and bicycle accommodations for our Mennonite community?) may be helpful. Additionally, a regional groundwater mapping study—incorporating data such as precipitation, land use, soil types, and available water capacity to estimate aquifer recharge rates—could provide valuable guidance for localities making land use decisions related to water-intensive development. While this would be an extensive undertaking, it is worth considering.
- Regional traffic challenges, affordable housing, water & sewer supply, distribution, collection & treatment.
- CSPDC is already helping with airport study and Chesapeake Bay WIP. Would really like to see a regional land bank and continued involvement in housing.
- Housing, workforce and socio-economic disparities.
- Establishing a regional land bank or regional community land trust because we are too small to stand up for such needed programs on our own.
- Housing, workforce and socioeconomic disparities.

6. How can the CSPDC maximize its relevancy to the region's local governments/your organization?

- As Boards change members in local government, an introduction with a briefing on SCPDC and the roles they play that help local government and staff.
- No comment.
- Consider increasing technical and subject-matter staff in areas such as water, agriculture, and housing. Localities often require specialized expertise rather than general project management support.
- Keep doing what you are doing, stay involved in hazard planning, watershed planning, housing, etc.
- PDC has done a good job on many fronts (transportation, hazard mitigation, transit, etc.) Tough nut to crack, but if the PDC could facilitate water and sewer planning on a more regional basis, the collective citizenry would greatly benefit.
- Continue and expand upon regional publications highlighting the work of the CSPDC.

7. If you could change one thing about the CSPDC, what would it be?

- More staffing to get more done under less pressure.
- No comment.
- Consider reducing the number of in-person meetings in favor of virtual formats. Many MPO meetings could be streamlined or replaced with brief virtual updates or summary reports to improve efficiency.
- Consider reducing the number of in-person meetings in favor of virtual formats. Many MPO meetings could be streamlined or replaced with virtual updates or summary reports to improve efficiency.
- Additional focus on common land use decisions throughout the PDC. One example could be community scale solar, and the similarities and differences of how the localities are handling the nuances.
- Not Sure.



CSPDC Region Focus Group Summaries



Focus Group Session Findings

Augusta County

The focus group for Augusta County took place on **Monday September 15 in the Augusta County Government Center, Verona, VA.**

- One of CSPDC's most valuable roles is that of Convener and Facilitator. Bringing the key applicable persons together to address the subject of the day.
- Topics/projects/efforts mentioned that CSPDC is involved in and have been beneficial to Augusta County...Satisfying Code Requirements, Hazard Mitigation Planning, Transit, Housing, MPO, and obtaining a grant that led to the construction of 2 hangers at the county airport. Flood Insurance, CERT.
- The Board meetings and all other events that are led by the CSPDC are well organized and very informative.
- Turnover in staff has been a concern but seems to be stabilizing. Concern discussed regarding the fact that the staff is not under the VRS program...hurts in recruitment and retention?
- Would like to see some type of regional tourism effort and CSPDC should play a convening role with such an effort.
- Need to consider bringing on a grant writer and grant monitor and communicator.

City of Staunton

The focus group for the City of Staunton took place on **Monday September 15 at City Hall in the City Manager's Meeting room.**

- We are very supportive of the CSPDC, but we probably underutilize them and need to work with them better.
- We need to support regional cooperation through CSPDC, but we end up being siloed but need to overcome that because it will benefit Staunton and all of the localities.
- CSPDC is a great advocate for the region, and they have gone outside the box and done a great job on bringing Transit services to a smaller region...it is a real asset that most smaller communities do not have.
- On the one hand they are probably underutilized by us and the other governments in the region, but on the other they are probably stretched very thin. Staff needs?
- Roles that they play and would hope that they would play would be comprehensive planning update, GIS support for the region where needed, flood plain management assistance, water and sewer supply management, emergency and hazardous management, assistance with MS4 storm water requirements, housing, transportation, land management review, on-call planning.
- Some type of on-boarding schedule for new elected officials to understand what CSPDC is, their capabilities, etc.

Rockbridge County/Town of Goshen/Town of Glasgow

The focus group for the Rockbridge County/Goshen/Glasgow focus group took place on **Tuesday September 16 at the Agricultural Extension meeting room at the Rockbridge County Administration Building in Lexington.**

- The CSPDC staff has been great asset in many ways perhaps most helpful in grant writing, administration of grant recipient paperwork including filing reports, etc.
- Their assistance in Comprehensive Planning for the County, Goshen, and Glasgow have been indispensable. The work was very good, and the work was financially affordable as opposed to us going out and having a consultant do the work for much more.
- Even though the timeframes for completion were not achieved, the housing study was very complex and needed...the need for affordable housing at all levels is a challenge regionwide.
- There is interest in expanding Geographic Information Systems (GIS) services a number of jurisdictions across the region. Software costs a prohibited for many communities so it's hoped the CSPDC can consider options for providing a service to those localities that need it as well as becoming the go-to data base for the region's localities.
- They value all of the natural resource expertise and assistance that has been provided to them over the years including water and sewer expertise, statewide regional water study, etc. that they hope that expertise can continue or obtain it.
- An issue/challenge that they face, and they feel is regional in nature is to address childcare strategies and services for the Workforce...they were not sure that was really a role for CSPDC other than convene the key players in that process together to discuss this challenge and how it possibly could be addressed.
- They thought that developing a shared research data base to track common land use decisions.
- They wondered about the possibility of starting an effort for Agritourism, possibly workforce development.
- If they could change one (two) things...more town representation on the Board...address the perception that the southern part of the region does not get as much communication/attention as the northern part of the region.

City of Harrisonburg

The focus group session for the City of Harrisonburg took place at **City Hall on Friday September 19.**

- The staff is enthusiastic and engaging and they are very responsive.
- We work with them closely in the areas of the economic development, transportation, planning, and housing.
- They make us aware of grant opportunities and assist us in writing grants.
- They have assisted in the past in emergency hazard and flood mitigation; hurricane planning, and a drought mitigation study.
- The transition of the staff has been somewhat concerning but they are sharp and engaged. However, the lack of technical experience knowledge is concerning and somehow needs to be addressed.

- There needs to be more coordination in regional service provisions...planning, and economic development...ex. Economic development need to enhance a regional component that includes childcare, housing, and transportation.
- Harrisonburg is several years ahead on the region in having a implementable plan to address housing challenges and opportunities. Harrisonburg has a full-time housing director, they are the only community offering continuum care and it would be helpful for the region to address and reduce the burden of trying to serve the city and the region when possible.

City of Lexington

The focus group session was held at one of the **City of Lexington's municipal facilities of Tuesday September 16.**

- The participants in the focus group noted that their Mayor Frank Friedman is currently serving and has served as the Chair of CSPDC for a number of years and that CSPDC is very well regard by the city elected and non-elected officials.
- They noted that CSPDC has been very helpful with the city's comprehensive planning efforts especially in the transportation sections of the plan.
- They have been very helpful in conducting windshield surveys for CDBG applications, a walkability study, and in their housing efforts.
- CSPDC has played a big role in I-81 improvements and an airport study.
- They have enabled Lexington to think more regionally with Rockbridge County and Buena Vista.
- It would be really helpful for CSPDC to have a seasoned grant writer and water and sewer expert on staff.
- The on-call engineers' program is very helpful and saves time with procurement.
- It would be very helpful to have assistance in resilience planning, environmental issues, recreation and jail planning.
- CSPDC needs to play more of a coordinating role to support the region's transportations needs in competition with the remainder of the Commonwealth. Need to work with VDOT to provide a plan for the next three years, a plan of attach for funding...smart scale, U.S. 60, crossing jurisdictions.
- Need to improve communication on Housing.

Rockingham County

The Rockingham County Focus Group was held at **the Rockingham County Government Center on Friday September 19.**

- CSPDC has done a very good job assisting us with our comprehensive plan, particularly the transportation section. They have always provided us with very good grant writing assistance. That help us with hazard mitigation – dam failure. They have helped us with our long-range transportation efforts.
- Water/Hydrology is a big issue of concern/interest...the focus on water in the state is in eastern Virginia. There must be a regional role for CSPDC possibly jointly with JMU hydrologists.
- CSPDC needs conduct proactive research Power availability in the future 20-50 years...is our infrastructure of power capable of handling growth of data centers and other demanders of power supply,
- CSPDC needs to be a data source and upgrade GIS offerings...potential data source for the localities in the region with initial emphasis for those that have no or minimal GIS and data availability.
- CSPDC should consider setting up Regional Human Resources sharing...employment recruitment, possible benefits, etc.

City of Waynesboro

The focus group for the CSPDC assessment for the **City of Waynesboro was held on Thursday September 18 at Waynesboro City Hall.**

- CSPDC has helped us with our planning process and regional plans on water and hazard mitigation.
- The CSPDC staff are always open to new opportunities.
- While the “hub” is in Staunton, the Board and staff make us, and every other locality feel very welcome.
- Solutions are not easy on the regional housing effort by CSPDC. It is an easier task for some communities than others. It needed to be addressed and probably on a regional basis through CSPDC was the best way to address housing.
- Communication is very important to CSPDC’s success. There should be a periodic memorandum/bulletin that is sent out to all elected officials and appropriate non-elected locality officials to keep them up to date on the happenings of the PDC.
- It would be very helpful for not only us in Waynesboro but the entire region to establish a website that the PDC would operate to tracking legislation in Richmond that impacts the Central Shenandoah Valley.
- It would be helpful to have a regional traffic engineer that could provide assistance and counsel to the region’s localities.

Bath County

The focus group for **Bath County** was held in Warm Springs at the Bath County Courthouse on **Wednesday September 17.**

- CSPDC is invaluable to the county. They help us applying for grants and when we get them, they help administer and complete all the reporting paperwork that needs to be completed.
- We have a lot of dilapidated housing in the county the Housing plan and efforts have been appreciated. They have helped us with hazard mitigation.
- Water and sewer is provided through the Bath County Service Area which is separate from county government, but we work jointly with them and there are needs.
- CSPDC is helped secure funding with a joint Highland/Bath emergency medical demonstration project, Northern Alleghany Highlands Radio Project. This was important also because Bath and Highland and Pocahontas and Pendleton counties in West Virginia are in a National Quite Zone.
- The CSPDC coordinates online and in-person locality manager meetings which are very valuable and provide information on what is happening in the region and gives an opportunity for the managers to talk and get to know each other.
- We lack GIS and data access, and it would be helpful if CSPDC could provide that for not only us but regionwide.

Highland County/Town of Monterey

The focus group for Highland County and the Town of Monterey was held at the **County Administrators office in the Highland County Courthouse September 17.**

- CSPDC is a great asset in grant writing and random questions that we have, and they are always there to help.
- They provide great administration and operation assistance on grants and programs.
- It would really be beneficial for CSPDC to a better job of getting information out to local governments in the region on what they can do...feel like sometimes we are possibly missing out on what might be available.
- We have water issues in the county and water and sewer issues in Monterey. We have benefitted from the water meter program that is allowing us to convert to electronic water meters.
- We would like to find grant money to buy EV charging stations to help with tourism.
- We have recreational opportunities, but we need help in developing a focus and marketing Highland County as recreation/tourism location.
- While don't know that CSPDC could help we need a medical center...primary care...dentist...emergency center.
- The Monterey mayor stated that he knows CSPDC has helped but he said he had never met staff from the CSPDC.

City of Buena Vista

The CSPDC Strategic Assessment focus group session for the City of Buena Vista was held at **City Hall in the Economic Development Conference Room on September 16.**

- CSPDC has been an invaluable partner on managing paperwork and reporting of our successful grants.
- CSPDC has helped us through CDBG to revitalize our bus facility.
- Really appreciate the zoom meetings with locality managers and the monthly lunch meetings.
- Greatly appreciate the On Call Civil Engineers contract that has save so much time and bureaucratic process and paperwork.
- We have greatly benefitted from the housing study and housing symposium.
- Rockbridge Outdoors...40-50 outward.
- One of the greatest concerns has been the turnover in staff but that seems to have stabilized.
- Another concern or something that could improve is communication from CSPDC to the localities....” Here is what we are doing for you.”
- Would love to see the creation of a Regional Land Bank.
- Need CSPDC leading the way on regional hazard mitigation plan...flood mitigation.
- Chesapeake Bay Whip Program...keep us apprised of grant opportunities
- Really like the Managers’ meetings...Like the idea of moving that meeting around the region.
- Need to identify some models for creating a great GIS program for CSPDC...this could really be great for Infrastructure and Real Estate...GIS software and equipment is so expensive but if the localities could pool their money together it could be the region’s/CSPDC.
- Regional housing trust funds construction rehab rent assistance...pooling \$ for housing.

Rockingham County Administrators

The focus group session of the Rockingham County Administrators was held on **September 18 at the Rockingham County Government Center.**

- The CSPDC is a fabric of support for us to help us navigate federal and state bureaucracy.
- They have been very helpful with water supply and hazard mitigation.
- They are the staff that we don’t have and they provide the “how-to” guidance and direction.
- They help with our comprehensive planning process, and they have helped with data and GIS.
- The biggest concern has been staff turnover and that we don’t have the expertise that we once had so they need to think about expertise that would be best based on mission and policy.
- I wish that there was more town involvement staff with CSPDC staff...managers meet but what about other applicable staff?
- It would be great to have more flexible planning models but that is above CSPDC.
- Try to make all their efforts relevant for all regardless of size.



November 5, 2025

MEMO TO: CSPDC Executive Committee

FROM: Ann W. Cundy, Executive Director

SUBJECT: Executive Committee Memo #25-06
Discussion of Virginia Retirement System (VRS)

Executive Summary

CSDPC staff is pursuing participation in VRS. This memo summarizes our progress since the August 18th Executive Committee meeting.

Joining Process

1. Social Security: CSPDC must join Social Security in order to join VRS. Participation is mandatory. In order to join, we must first dissolve our current retirement plan and demonstrate that we are without a plan for at least one day.
2. Once we have joined Social Security, we can then join VRS. The Code of Virginia states that participation in VRS cannot be mandatory for employees, although Social Security participation is.
3. In order to dissolve the current Empower retirement plan, we will distribute all employee and vested employer balances to employees to invest in an IRA or similar product. Funds can also be used to purchase up to 48 months of service in VRS for employees with eligible prior public service.

VRS Scenario 1

We have directed VRS to undertake an actuarial study of the costs of joining VRS with employees earning service going forward. We would participate in the VRS hybrid plan which has a defined benefit component and a defined contribution component (Hybrid 401(a) Cash Match Plan). In addition, employees may make voluntary contributions to a

Hybrid 457 Deferred Compensation Plan, and the employer must match a specified percentage of any voluntary contributions.

Estimated Costs

The actuarial study will determine the monthly cost to CSPDC to participate based on our current staff. We anticipate that costs will increase for employees and could increase for the PDC if all employees contribute the full amount to the voluntary portion of the defined contribution plan, which includes a richer employer match.

Timeline

VRS has informed us that the process from actuarial study to joining VRS takes approximately 1 year. We have indicated that we do not wish this process to extend beyond that timeframe, so they are conducting the study based on a January 1, 2027, start date.

After we receive the Actuarial Study from VRS, we will have the opportunity to decide if we wish to move forward, and then begin the process of employee financial counseling and working with Empower to dissolve the current plan.