

STRIVING FOR

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Virginia Beach: A Quality Government Organization

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Striving for Excellence

Virginia Beach: A Quality Government Organization

Executive Summary

The mission of the Virginia Beach city government is to enhance the physical, social, economic, and educational quality of the community; and to deliver quality services valued by our citizens. The vision for our community, as established by the City Council, is to build a **Community for a Lifetime**. To achieve this ambitious vision, the City Council established key business areas, goals, and an annual agenda for the organization. It is the responsibility of all members of our organization to fulfill our mission and help make this vision a reality.

This Striving for Excellence report illustrates the nature and value of the organization's efforts to continually improve our processes, meet the challenges of the future, and increase our capacity to deliver quality services. It provides a history of our organizational accomplishments and reflects part of the legacy that will be passed on to future generations of our community.

This 2003 annual report documents new quality and productivity initiatives for local government. Through this report we communicate successful activities to the community and the organization itself so that best practices can be replicated and expanded. In fact, some initiatives have been recognized by state and national organizations. These Award Winning initiatives are highlighted further in this report. Readers interested in knowing more about any initiative can contact the department identified under each initiative title (see reference index for phone numbers). Initiatives, both large and small, are included -- many of which may not be highly visible in the community but are still vital to the success of our organization. The initiatives you read about in this report are not random activities -- rather, they represent an ongoing commitment to providing quality service in the most productive, efficient, and cost-effective way.

The following pages reflect the wide range of quality and productivity initiatives achieved in 2003. The narratives convey the essence of the initiative and demonstrate their alignment with our Organizational Values and Strategies. Whether tangible or intangible, all of these initiatives are significant because they contribute to our Quality Government Organization.

The overall impact of these quality and productivity initiatives completed in 2003 are summarized in The Bottom Line. The combined efforts of departments and teams resulted in a savings of \$845,495.

In addition to financial results, significant improvements were made in the delivery of services in 2003. A total of 237 services were enhanced, 77 services were increased through productivity, 86 processes improved, and 49 technology improvements implemented.

The 2003 Striving for Excellence, Virginia Beach: A Quality Government Organization report is testimony to the commitment of all members of the Virginia Beach City government to achieve excellence in public service and to build, nurture, and sustain the City of Virginia Beach as a **Community for a Lifetime**.

The full report is available on the Internet at http://www.vbgov.com/city_hall/

The Bottom Line

This section reports the quantitative savings identified by departments in association with quality and productivity initiatives completed during the past year. It also denotes the qualitative nature of the initiatives. This data reflects initiatives reported for the 2003 calendar year.

Strategic Issue Team (SIT)

È Cultural and Recreational Opportunities SIT (CRO)	19
È Economic Vitality SIT (EV)	10
È Family and Youth Opportunities SIT (FYO)	24
È Quality Education and Lifelong Learning SIT (QELL)	9
È Quality Organization (QO)	59
È Quality Physical Environment SIT (QPE)	28
È Safe Community SIT (SC)	50

Nature of the Initiatives

È Service Enhancements through Improved Customer Service	160
È Service Enhancements through Increased Productivity	77
È Process Improvement	86
È Technology Improvements Implemented	49

Financial Results

È Savings	\$ 845,495
È Cost Avoided	\$ 3,485,812
È New Revenue Generated	\$ 5,444,980
È New Grants Realized	\$ 5,137,085
È New Funds Raised/Donations	\$ 40,195

Special Initiatives

x Pro-active lobbying for state and federal funding for vital City activities

È Emergency Communications Center	\$ 1,000,000
È Hurricane Beach Protection	\$ 2,294,000
È Law Enforcement Technologies	\$ 410,000
È Lynnhaven River Basin Restoration Survey	\$ 300,000
È Lynnhaven and Rudee Inlets Maintenance	\$ 1,380,000
È Paratransit Project	\$ 200,000

Special Initiatives (continued)

◇ Sniper Trial Expenses Reimbursement	\$ 200,000
◇ Traffic Light Signalization Project	\$ 500,000
◇ Virginia Marine Science Museum	\$ 290,000

x Ongoing Projects

È 31st Street

- ◇ Design team for parking garage selected

È Agriculture Reserve Program (ARP)

- ◇ 16 ARP applications received, purchasing development rights for 363.39 acres, which translates into 28 development units acquired
- ◇ To date, 6,710 acres have been enrolled

È Convention Center Replacement

- ◇ Presented CVB Business Plan to City Council
- ◇ Groundbreaking
- ◇ City Council approved additional funding

È "Dome" Site

- ◇ Old Second Police Precinct site remediation completed

È Golf Course Developments

- ◇ Recommendations to City Council on Red Wing Lake and Stumpy Lake management plans
- ◇ Approval of \$5 million of Capital Improvement Program funding for Red Wing Lake

È Municipal Skate Parks

- ◇ Staff recommended city-wide skate park strategy
- ◇ Grand opening celebration of Mount Trashmore Skate Park

È Norfolk Southern Right-of-Way Acquisition

- ◇ Adopted Memorandum of Understanding with Hampton Roads Transit
- ◇ Negotiated acquisition agreement and identify funding source

È Old Beach District Plan

- ◇ Staff presented plan and work program
- ◇ Distributed RFP
- ◇ Advisory Committee established and appointed

x Ongoing Projects (continued)

È Open Space

- ◇ 1,537 acres acquired to date
- ◇ 349 acres currently under review for purchase

È Police Firing Range

- ◇ Reviewed report and identified site alternatives and service provision options
- ◇ Identified funding sources and sought direction

È Recycle Asphalt Product (RAP)

- ◇ This is an annual asphalt resurfacing contract
- ◇ Public Works Operations by contract milled 692,645 square yards of asphalt at cost savings of \$824,000.

x Team Approaches to Major Economic Development Projects

È Northampton Corridor Study (Burton Station)

- ◇ Finalized study at staff level
- ◇ Private appraisals completed

È Oceana NAS/Relations and Issues

- ◇ Secretary of the Navy issued record of decision for Super Hornet Basing EIS
- ◇ Preparation of BRAC process continues
- ◇ Task Force developed to offer recommendations on the new OPNAV instruction and to consider a Joint Land Use Study

È Performing Arts Theatre at Town Center

- ◇ Performing Arts Theatre Advisory Committee established and appointed
- ◇ Explored cooperative opportunities with Schools for Performing Arts Academy
- ◇ City/School Staff Committee is formed to develop partnership agreement
- ◇ PPEA Guidelines and Evaluation reviewed
- ◇ RFQ solicitation completed

È Princess Anne Commons

- ◇ Management of Sportsplex transferred to Parks & Recreation
- ◇ Closed on 55 acres of Princess Anne Park to Sentara for Health Campus
- ◇ Ball field Relocation Project – Design started for ball fields

x Team Approaches to Major Economic Development Projects (continued)

È Southeastern Parkway and Greenbelt

- ◇ Project included in the 2026 Regional Transportation Plan
- ◇ Worked on traffic and environmental issues
- ◇ Kick-off meeting held with State and Federal Resource Agencies
- ◇ Coordination issues being discussed with Chesapeake
- ◇ Steering committee established to address traffic analysis and mitigation options

È Town Center

- ◇ Phase II infrastructure construction contract awarded and construction underway
- ◇ Phase I grand opening took place and the Hilton Garden Inn opened
- ◇ Towne Bank under construction
- ◇ Block 3 under construction

x Cooperative Regional Projects

È 2026 Regional Transportation Plan

- ◇ Plan has met air quality conformity and was approved by the Federal Government
- ◇ Adopted by the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission

È Jamestown/Virginia Beach 1607-2007 Anniversary Event

- ◇ Steering Committee actively planning for events during 2007

Volunteer Contributions

The Mission of the Volunteer Council is to promote volunteerism with City government agencies to enhance the economic, educational, social, and physical quality of the community and to support municipal services valued by citizens. Our volunteers continue to support City government by strengthening programs and expanding services while enhancing relationships and partnerships with citizens and businesses.

More than 30 City departments and state-related agencies manage active volunteer programs that supplement the work of staff and provide many services not otherwise available. There has been an increase in the number of volunteers who work side-by-side with staff. In FY 02-03, 21,720 volunteers donated close to 1.5 million hours of service.

This service to our community is equivalent to 717 full-time staff, and valued in excess of \$17 million.

This year the Volunteer Program celebrated 25 years of service! The longevity of the program demonstrates its value to success of our City government. Today, there are approximately three and one-half volunteers for every paid staff member. The partnership between city staff and citizen volunteers helps save tax dollars, increase service delivery, and further enhance our quality customer service. Together we create City Council's Vision for a *Community for a Lifetime*.

Award Winning Initiatives

The following initiatives have been recognized by state, national, and professional organizations. These award-winning initiatives are provided in full and noted with this symbol (n) throughout the report.

Agency of the Year

Department of Social Services

On March 28, 2003, at the Higher Education Center, Norfolk State University School of Social Work presented an award to Social Services, naming the department the "2003 Social Services Agency of the Year" for initiating many innovative programs for the community and providing supportive programs for professional social workers.

Award for a Perfect Audit

Department of Social Services

The Food Stamps Program, which serves over 6,000 cases annually (for the period of October 2002 through February 2003) was honored for its results in a state quality control audit. The program received a perfect score – including, a zero error rate and no invalid decisions.

Beach Magazine Online - Awards for Publication Excellence Award of Excellence

Office of the City Manager

Originally launched in the winter of 2002, Beach Magazine Online received a 2003 Awards for Publication Excellence (APEX) Award in the category of "Magazines and Journals - Online and Electronic." APEX is sponsored by the editors of Writing That Works, the newsletter for communicators who write, edit, and manage business publications. The awards, which attracted close to 5,000 entries, are based on excellence in graphic design, editorial content, and the ability to achieve overall communications excellence.

Beach Magazine Recognized with Crystal Award of Excellence from The Communicator Awards

Office of the City Manager

In spring 2003, Beach magazine received The Crystal Award of Excellence from The Communicator Awards. The awards competition for print media, held annually, recognizes outstanding work in the communications field. Industry professionals judge entries and award the Award of Excellence to those "whose work serves as a benchmark for the industry." Beach magazine was one of nearly 4,000 entries received from throughout the U.S. and several foreign countries in the competition. The Crystal Award of Excellence is the highest honor bestowed in the competition, which receives entries from advertising and public relations agencies, corporate communication departments, educational institutions, and other business and industry representatives.

Beach magazine's feature stories also received an Excel Award from the Hampton Roads Black Media Professionals and an honorable mention in The Communicator Awards print media competition.

Best Promotional Effort Award/Electronic Media

Department of Parks and Recreation

The Best Promotional Effort Award/Electronic Media was presented to Parks and Recreation by the Virginia Recreation and Park Society at the Society's annual conference on September 8. The award was presented in recognition of the department's excellence in promotional materials which further the field of Parks and Recreation, and specifically for an electronic media advertising piece that has a distinct electronic component for media distribution. The criteria for judging was based on design, readability, attractiveness, quality, effectiveness, content, creativity, and use of resources. Visitors to the City's Web site can download and view the E-stream on their computer. In addition to the Web site location, a video was broadcast on VBTV. Feedback from the public has been very positive and resulted in registrations for our programs from citizens who had not used the programs before.

Breakin' The Chain

Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse

Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse (MHMRSA) and Plaza Middle School facilitated the Breakin' The Chain program. The program is designed to teach life skills, promote youth anti-violence, and provide adolescents with skills to resist negative influences. The program was a successful collaboration between MHMRSA and Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS). The collaboration also included Virginia Commonwealth University's Center for School-Community Collaboration who provided funding for this

initiative with a \$10,000 grant for the 2002-2003 school year (one year only). The program also received special recognition from VBCPS and was the recipient of a Model Partnership Award.

City Page Online - Communicator Award of Distinction

Office of the City Manager

After only one year of publication, City Page Online, the Internet partner of City Page, was awarded a 2003 Award of Distinction from the 2003 Communicator Awards Print Media competition. The Communicator Awards is an international awards program to recognize excellence in the communication field. The City's entries were chosen from among nearly 4,000 international entries from advertising and public relations agencies, corporate communications departments, educational institutions, government entities, and other businesses and individuals.

City-Wide Homes

Department of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation

This initiative resulted in the creation of 13 new affordable housing units, the rehabilitation of 19 existing units, and the investment of \$1,350,000 of private funding into the improvement of Virginia Beach's housing stock. Housing received an Excellence in Housing award from the Virginia Housing Development Authority for their outstanding work.

International Award for Excellence in Management Practice

Department of Parks and Recreation

The International Award for Excellence in Management Practice was presented to the Department of Parks and Recreation by Learning Resources Network, Inc. at the annual conference on Lifelong Learning on December 5, 2003 in San Antonio, Texas for the "Leadership Transition Process."

Local Vehicle Registration and Decal Transition Public Information Program

Office of the City Manager

For generations most Virginia municipalities have required their citizens to purchase a decal for their vehicle's windshield to prove they have paid their personal property tax. Virginia Beach is the first local government in the state to eliminate the annual ritual of scraping and pasting the dreaded "City sticker," while maintaining the important revenue stream it has provided. This marketing communications campaign educated citizens about

a relatively complex change in their routines while advancing their understanding of, and cooperation with, an unusual but more convenient way of doing business with their local government. For its efforts, the City won a 2003 Savvy Award of Excellence for Marketing Campaigns from the national City-County Communications and Marketing Association.

The Alliance for Youth Named a Best Practice

Department of Social Services

The Alliance for Youth (TAFY), a therapeutic foster care program with Social Services, was highlighted by the state as a Best Practice. The state noted exciting and innovative efforts to keep children and families healthy and safe. TAFY was featured on the Child and Family Services Review Intranet site and received an Alpha Smart computer as an award for agency efforts in excellent and innovative best casework practice. The program saves \$2,000 to \$10,000 on each placement, based upon the needs of each child. It is estimated that the placements for the program's 46 children saved \$230,000 this year.

VBgov.com Receives International Recognition

Department of Communications and Information Technology

Within calendar year 2003, VBgov.com received international recognition from the Web community when the International Web Page Award program presented the site with a Certificate of Creative Achievement.

Within 2003, VBgov.com received several other awards, including an e-Gov 2003 Trailblazer Award from the Government Solutions Center, and honorable mention "Top Pick" in the MuniNet Guide and Review, a Best Technology Services Award of Excellence from the City-County Communications and Marketing Association, and a 2002 Best of the Web Award from the Center for Digital Government

Virginia Beach City Page

Office of the City Manager

City Page won the 2003 APEX Grand Award, the highest award for Meganewspapers and Newspapers from The Awards for Publication Excellence. The 2003 Communicator Awards Print Media competition also recognized City Page for excellence in government newsletters.

Quality and Productivity Initiatives for Cultural and Recreational Opportunities

Adam Thoroughgood House Acquisition

Department of Museums and Cultural Arts

The Adam Thoroughgood House is a National Historic Landmark operated as a historic house museum and located in the Bayside area of Virginia Beach. It had been owned by the City of Norfolk since 1961. The museum operation was administered by the Chrysler Museum of Art until October 1999 when Museums and Cultural Arts (MCA) took over operational responsibilities. Public hours were increased by 350% in November 1999.

The disparity between ownership and operations limited investment and commitment to the operation and building preservation. The director of MCA and the City Manager initiated discussions with Norfolk and the Chrysler Museum for the transfer of the property and collection to Virginia Beach. Through the assistance of the City Attorney's Office, an agreement and deeds were finalized in 2003.

Virginia Beach received the historic Adam Thoroughgood House, 4.229 acres of land and additional buildings and structures from Norfolk. The City also received the collection of more than 150 objects and numerous archaeological artifacts from the Chrysler Museum. The City will provide a donation of \$250,000 to the Chrysler Museum in five equal installments beginning in FY05. The City has committed to renovating and upgrading buildings and services during the next five years.

Annual Membership Increase

Department of Museums and Cultural Arts

During the 2003 fiscal year, the Virginia Marine Science Museum (VMSM) annual membership increased from 5,220 to 6,528, which is a 25% improvement over the last fiscal year. The resulting membership fee revenue increase alone amounted to \$105,460, exclusive of any related ancillary revenues. The majority of the growth was in the family membership category, which increased from 3,276 to 4,478 memberships. The Aquarium Connection, a group of young professionals and community leaders in support of the VMSM Foundation, grew their membership from 27 to 107 during their first year of operations.

Aquarium Connection

Department of Museums and Cultural Arts

The Aquarium Connection (AQC) is a group of young professionals and community leaders interested in promoting the Virginia Marine Science Museum (VMSM) through “fun’d” raising activities. These activities support the VMSM Foundation while striving to increase the general membership of the museum. This group is committed to developing new sources of support and increasing the public awareness of the aquarium’s exhibits, Stranding Program, education programs, and special projects. At this year’s Earth Day event, this group volunteered a total of 120 hours to the success of this regional event. The annual social event, *Commotion in the Ocean*, generated net revenue of more than \$20,000, which will be used to purchase an outreach van for VMSM’s education programs. The 5,000 guests who attended the event enjoyed good food and entertainment, as well as viewed many of the exhibits. Annual membership dues for the group total \$7,500, which covers the cost of administering the exciting family and AQC member activities and events.

Arts and Humanities Commission Web Site

Department of Museums and Cultural Arts

The Arts and Humanities Commission launched its new Web site (VBgov.com/arts) in the winter of 2003. This site brings all of the arts and cultural information in Virginia Beach to one comprehensive location. In addition to giving an overview of the public art sculptures located throughout the City and providing a listing of upcoming events, the site also offers access to online grant application and forms, meeting agendas, and resources available to artists and arts organizations in the region.

Since the debut of the Web site, the Arts and Humanities Commission has saved \$200 in postage and marketing charges due to the fact that meeting and event announcements are available on the Web site. Thirty-five area arts and humanities groups have linked their Web sites to VBgov.com/arts for increased visibility of their groups and events.

Battle of the Bands/Musicians Palooza

Department of Parks and Recreation

In May 2003, the Promoting Leisure Activities for Youth Team initiated the first “Battle of the Bands/Musician’s Palooza.” The music program goals were as follows: to expose young music performers with high aspirations to the realities that are faced in the music industry; to provide young music performers with an opportunity to showcase their interest and talent in music in a venue that would provide them with mass audience participation; and to provide our residents and visitors an opportunity to engage in free entertainment provided by Virginia Beach youth.

Battle of the Bands was incorporated into the 2003 East Coast Surfing Championships and was sponsored by the Pungo Strawberry Festival. The event provided youth with the opportunity to perform on the 5th Street stage and receive a grand prize of \$500. There were a total of 12 bands (44 participants) who auditioned for the program. Out of the 12 bands, seven of them went on to compete for a spot in the event. The top five bands were identified to participate in eight weeks of life skills education and perform at the final concert. There were approximately 450 in attendance at the final concert.

The educational program included: music appreciation and a tour of the Verizon Wireless Amphitheater. The “True Lies” and “Music to Die For” videos covered the various themes of today’s popular music and how to communicate to teens through the media. The participants learned how to negotiate a “good” contract, the myths and stereotypes of the industry, how to market themselves, and how to get their music produced.

Beach Access Wheelchairs

Department of Management Services

This program offered two all terrain wheelchairs for the public’s use in the resort area. Wheelchairs were available for persons with special needs for half-day periods at no cost. This program was coordinated through the former Department of General Services with the Convention and Visitors Bureau and Virginia Beach Lifeguard Services.

Best Promotional Effort Award/Electronic Media (n)

Department of Parks and Recreation

The Best Promotional Effort Award/Electronic Media was presented to Parks and Recreation by the Virginia Recreation and Park Society at the Society’s annual conference on September 8. The award was presented in recognition of the department’s excellence in promotional materials which further the field of Parks and Recreation, and specifically for an electronic media advertising piece that has a distinct electronic component for media distribution. The criteria for judging was based on design, readability, attractiveness, quality, effectiveness, content, creativity, and use of resources. Visitors to the City’s Web site can download and view the E-stream on their computer. In addition to the Web site location, a video was broadcast on VBTv. Feedback from the public has been very positive and resulted in registrations for our programs from citizens who had not used the programs before.

Bowling Lane Conversion and Weight Room Expansion

Department of Parks and Recreation

The bowling lanes of the Great Neck and Princess Anne Recreation Centers were converted into aerobics studios which allowed for the expansion of the weight rooms.

The conversion was based on a citizen survey and attendance figures. These two recreation centers had experienced an increased demand in the weight rooms and a decline in the usage of the bowling lanes. The changes in utilization patterns were reflected in the attendance records for FY 97/98 - FY 99/00. Due to the conversion, the operating budgets at each center will experience a cost avoidance of approximately \$5,000 that would have been used to operate (maintenance, equipment, and supplies) the bowling lanes.

Citizen surveys were conducted to ascertain users interest and support for the conversion. There were 1,247 surveys completed during May 2002. Of the 1,247 surveys completed, 1,050 patrons (84%) supported the proposal to expand the weight room and convert the bowling lanes, 135 patrons (11%) did not support the proposal, and 62 patrons (5%) did not have a preference.

Capital Improvement Program funding was identified in the FY 2001/02 budget. Construction began in September and was completed December 2002 at a total cost of \$156,900.

The expanded weight rooms opened to the general public in January 2003. Weight room participation has increased from 201,000 to 207,000 patrons during the first nine months of operation.

Cardboard Boat Regatta

Department of Parks and Recreation

The Seatack Recreation Center has taken responsibility for creating a healthy community in the Oceanfront and Seatack areas. The Healthy Community Initiative includes building relationships with three elementary schools, two middle schools, four housing projects, four churches, and the Judeo Christian Outreach Center. The goal is to provide hot meals to children throughout the year, give children tutoring and homework help to make their time at school successful, and to provide families with recreational opportunities that they normally would not have.

This healthy community endeavor has brought together community leaders, church deacons, school personnel, the police department, private businesses, and community foundations. A program of this magnitude requires support in many areas such as program development, funding, personnel, business, and industry. Three businesses participated. These companies used the event as a team building experience within their organizations and friendly competition between companies. Additionally, each

participating business contributed \$1,000 for the event, well above and beyond the required \$100 entry fee.

The Seatack Recreation Center has been very fortunate to have monetary support from the Virginia Beach Foundation. The Foundation has provided in excess of \$23,000 for multiple endeavors. In looking at that support and trying to diversify revenue streams, it was decided to develop a new collaborative fundraiser between Parks and Recreation, the Foundation, and private/public entities. The proceeds raised would be used for the Seatack Recreation Center Healthy Community Initiative.

The Cardboard Boat Regatta was developed to inform service clubs, businesses, communities, and schools about areas of need that exist within Virginia Beach and how they can help provide and serve these needs. In its first year, the event successfully covered its cost of operation and laid the foundation for an event that should grow and flourish in the future.

The regatta was brought together by a steering committee that consisted of the Seatack Recreation Center Coordinator; Virginia Beach Foundation Executive Director; Taylor's Do-it Centers President and CEO; Ocean Breeze Water Park Sales Manager; two Landmark Communication Directors of Sales; City-Wide Aquatics Coordinator and the Marketing Unit of Parks and Recreation. Twenty-one teams participated with 300 people attending the event.

This effort reinforced the City's commitment to partner with other organizations to develop healthy, strong communities and provide much needed educational services after school. These services will benefit young people who would otherwise not have the special attention needed to become successful socially, academically, and physically.

Elizabeth River Project Headquarters Exhibits

Department of Museums and Cultural Arts

The Elizabeth River Project (ERP), a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the Elizabeth River environment, needed interactive exhibits and an aquarium for its newly acquired headquarters in Portsmouth, Virginia. Earlier efforts at creating exhibits were unproductive and ERP asked the Virginia Marine Science Museum (VMSM) for help in completing this project. The VMSM exhibit team started with a basic concept sketch provided by ERP and developed an exhibit plan for the visitor lobby and classroom. The team coordinated the fabrication and installation of interactive exhibits and interpretive panels that blended together both in style and theme.

Harbor Seal Splash

Department of Museums and Cultural Arts

The Virginia Marine Science Museum (VMSM) Harbor Seal Splash interactive program is the first of its kind in the world. As part of the museum's mission of conservation through education, this program provides a once in a lifetime opportunity, that introduces participants to residents of our local marine environment. The entire program is taught by one of our professional marine mammal trainers and begins with a brief behind-the-scenes tour of our world-class facility. Guests are then taken directly to the restricted Harbor Seal support building located directly behind the main exhibit. It is at this location that they will catch their first glimpse of museum seals and begin to learn about these and other marine animals found off of our coasts. At this location, participants will observe a private animal training demonstration and learn about world-wide conservation efforts of marine mammals. They will also hear about the VMSM Stranding Team and its efforts to rescue, rehabilitate, and return to the wild stranded marine mammals and sea turtles. Finally, under the watchful eyes of the museum's marine mammal staff, guests will put on chest waders and then be escorted into waist deep water on a specially designed platform to have a face-to-face meeting with some of our seals. This fee-based program not only promotes the educational efforts of the VMSM, but it also generates a new revenue stream. Initial startup support for this program was provided by the museum's Board of Trustees. The Harbor Seal Splash will be offered twice daily from Memorial Day through Labor Day and allows four participants per program to experience this two hour hands-on learning opportunity. The cost to participate will be \$125 per person for the general public and \$110 per person for museum members. The program will also be offered on a limited basis during the month of April over spring break and on weekends through the month of September. This program was offered for the first time this past summer and did not begin until midway through our busy tourist season. With minimal advertisement effort, we had 119 participants go through the program with an overwhelmingly positive response. The program generated \$13,855 in new revenue.

Healthy Community "134 Miles of Fun" Trails Map

Department of Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation partnered with Public Health to produce a comprehensive trails map of the City. This partnership is part of the Health Department's initiative "Healthy Community for a Lifetime," in which they promote healthy behaviors, such as walking and biking as ways to overall better health.

The City has a number of trails, as well as state and federal parks that house extensive trails within them, but had no comprehensive guide promoting them. The "134 Miles of Fun" trails map highlights all existing trails in the City and any associated recreational destination points along them, as well as informational material on safety and the health benefits of bicycling and walking.

Public Health and Parks and Recreation partnered with a local bike shop to share the printing costs. Through sharing of the printing costs, \$4,500 were saved. Sixty thousand copies were printed and distributed. Due to high demand we are in the process of ordering an additional 30,000 copies. The partnership will share the printing cost of the map reorder.

International Award for Excellence in Management Practice (n)

Department of Parks and Recreation

Leadership turnover at any level of an organization can be disruptive. When the new Director of Parks and Recreation accepted the position, she began immediately working with the City's Organization Development Office (ODO) to tailor a process that would "jump start" her executive team quickly and accelerate progress during a period in which productivity would normally decline.

A full-day Leadership Transition workshop, with a two-hour follow-up session six months later, was facilitated by the ODO and included not only members of the Executive Team of Parks and Recreation, but also other departmental leaders. Included in the process was an assessment of the department and an evaluation at the end of the day by all members. A joint vision and setting of priorities and goals established a 30-60-90 day action plan for the team to accomplish.

The process had the following outcomes:

- Limit the drop in productivity during the period that the new Director was getting acclimated.
- Build strong working relationships - share the history of the department with the new Director; share the vision of the new Director with the Executive Team.
- Create a shared set of priorities and build ownership in a 30-60-90 day action plan.
- Create leadership team accountability early in the new Director's tenure.

The International Award for Excellence in Management Practice was presented to Parks and Recreation by Learning Resources Network, Inc. at the annual conference on Lifelong Learning on December 5, 2003 in San Antonio, Texas for the "Leadership Transition Process."

Military Appreciation

Department of Parks and Recreation

To recognize the sacrifices made by our men and women in uniform during the crisis in Iraq, we decided to offer a Golf Discount to all active and retired military. Parks and Recreation had never implemented a discount of this type before in our history of managing golf courses.

The discount began on the July 4 weekend and continued through November 11, 2003. The discount applied at all times, regular play, weekend play, and holiday play. The beginning and ending date were selected for their relationship to freedom and what our military is striving to preserve.

A market research of current rates was conducted of area golf courses, including the military, prior to this decision being made. Announcements were made in military newspapers and public service announcements were distributed to all media outlets announcing this new rate for our municipal golf courses.

We tracked 1,235 additional rounds of golf directly related to the Military Discount which created additional revenue of \$13,426 through September 30, 2003.

Mount Trashmore District Park Mountain Recapping

Department of Parks and Recreation

Ongoing issues associated with the previous landfill closure at Mount Trashmore District Park necessitated the need to design, fund, and recap the existing and previous landfill mound at Mount Trashmore. The project started in 2002 and included the installation of a new and impervious layer over the mountain to eliminate existing seeps, a new landfill gas collection and venting system, and various stormwater management improvements. Additional park aesthetic improvements included sod for the entire mountain, three new sets of stairs with handrails up the mountain, and regrading and seeding of other areas of the park for drainage improvement.

The City seal will also be replaced in the near future as part of the project along with additional asphalt walking trail connections and parking lot improvements. The project was funded through Parks and Recreation Capital Improvement Program funding. The project design and overall construction was administered by Public Works.

Mount Trashmore Skate Park

Department of Parks and Recreation

The new 24,000 square foot Skate Park at Mount Trashmore District Park is the first Municipal Skate Park in the City. Parks and Recreation was assisted in the design and

operational plan for the facility by a Skate Park Planning and Advisory Committee comprised of interested skaters, bikers, citizens, parents, and business owners. Opened in August, the park was an immediate success, experiencing approximately 800 users per day and accommodating skateboarders, in-line skaters, and BMX bikers.

The park was designed and built to replace the aging skate ramps at Mount Trashmore Park that were demolished due to poor condition and to also provide the public a place to go other than sidewalks, streets, and shopping centers. The Skate Park features an extensive street course that flows from an aboveground seven-foot bowl known as Mission Control. The Skate Park components are framed with treated wood and covered completely with composite material and skatelite pro surfacing.

Movie Night— Disney Channel Original Movie Premier

Department of Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation, in conjunction with ABC Cable Networks Group (The Disney Channel), presented a sneak preview of The Cheetah Girls, a New Disney Channel Original Movie, on Friday, July 25, at Red Wing Park. This was a unique opportunity for Parks and Recreation because the Disney Channel does not typically offer premieres of original movies prior to them airing on Disney. Virginia Beach was the only location in the country selected to premier the movie prior to its August 15 debut on the Disney Channel.

The movie was based on the best-selling book series. It tells the story of four multi-talented New York City teens from dissimilar homes, cultures, and economic backgrounds, who are trying to break into the music industry.

Prior to the start of the movie, Radio Disney entertained families with activities and giveaways. More than 82 prizes were given away, including 39 books from the Cheetah Girls book series. Before the movie was introduced, the entire audience sang and gestured to the song "YMCA." More than 1,100 people enjoyed this premier.

Recreation/Social Program Enhancement "Saturday Social"

Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation/Substance Abuse

The results of a fall 2002 survey of participants (consumers) in the Beach House program indicated there was interest in more social and recreational opportunities. The program enhancement project began in November of 2002 by increasing the number of staff working on Saturdays to allow for an additional weekend outing. With additional staff being available on Saturday, a third van provides transportation for 13 additional consumers. Consumer attendance has increased by 30% and their positive responses to satisfaction surveys have increased. Revenue has increased by approximately \$1,800 per

month based on an average of nine additional Medicaid-funded consumers attending four Saturdays per month. No additional staff has been hired and no additional City funding has been necessary. A rotating schedule has been implemented to include staff working occasional Saturdays (approximately one every five weeks). The staff works with consumers during the week to plan activities for the Saturday program and assists in procuring outside resources such as donated tickets to hockey games, plays, concerts, and other cultural events, bowling alleys, and AMC movie theaters. Some donations are recurrent; others are only one time. It is estimated that the value of donations averages between \$200 and \$300 per month, creating an additional positive fiscal impact of approximately \$3,000 per year.

Revenue Sharing Program with Cox Communications

Department of Museums and Cultural Arts

In a new initiative, the Virginia Marine Science Museum (VMSM) and Cox Communications developed a revenue sharing program to help increase museum general admission attendance and the sale of museum family memberships. Due to minimal funding for the Museum's advertising budget, Cox stepped up to the plate to contribute television spots on designated cable channels. This pilot program ran for six months, from April 1 – September 30, 2003. The museum paid for the production of two, 30-second commercials; one focused on general museum admission and one promoted a discount of 15% on a family membership (reducing it from \$80 to \$68) when a person presented their Cox cable bill. The revenue sharing came about when the museum realized a return on the television commercials. For every membership sold under this program, the museum paid Cox 10%, or \$8, of a family membership. The general admission increase was a little more difficult to determine. To figure this increase, a baseline attendance number for each month was developed by analyzing the museum's attendance for those months over the past several years. From that baseline number, minus any other specific coupons or discounts, the museum was able to determine an increase in general museum admission. For every ticket sold above that baseline number, the museum paid Cox \$1. With the exception of September (due to Hurricane Isabel), the museum saw an increase of at least 3% and sometimes as much as 12%, each month in general museum admission. The sales of family memberships over the six-month period totaled 329. Total revenue from the program is estimated at \$182,777.

Transition of Virginia Beach Sportsplex Operation

Department of Parks and Recreation

On January 6, 2003, Parks and Recreation, Parks Operations and Services, assumed the operation, maintenance, and management of the Virginia Beach Sportsplex from the Convention and Visitors Bureau.

This transition was recommended because of Parks and Recreation's athletic operations presence in Princess Anne Commons with the U. S. National Field Hockey Training Center,

Princess Anne District Park, the cross country course, and soon to be constructed Princess Anne Ball Field Complex.

In 1998, this \$11 million dollar facility was the first facility in the United States designed and constructed primarily for Professional Soccer. It is the home for the Virginia Beach Mariners Professional Soccer Team.

Since assuming the operation of the Sportsplex, Parks and Recreation has placed full-time city personnel on-site for the first time in the existence of the facility. In addition to the full-time supervisor, one full-time carpenter and one full-time groundskeeper positions were hired without any additional increase in the Sportsplex operating budget. This has lead to improved customer service, improved communication with facility tenants, and improved maintenance of facility and grounds.

Overall events have been increased as a result of the change in supervision and management. In just five months (April to September) in 2003, the Sportplex hosted 19 sporting events with a total attendance of 34,777. The attendance for this brief operating period was more than the total of the 2001 and 2002 seasons combined. A total of 51 events were scheduled in 2003.

Quality and Productivity Initiatives for Economic Vitality

“Adventure Getaways” Brochure

Convention and Visitors Bureau

The Adventure Getaways brochure was created to showcase Virginia Beach’s abundant natural beauty and diverse array of excursion options. This brochure is the first of its kind and helps support the City’s outdoor recreation providers, offers suppliers opportunities to market their product, and, at the same time, helps educate consumers on sustainable outdoor tourism. The brochure offers a variety of different adventure opportunities for our visitors tailored to their individual interests and budget. It highlights our beaches, state parks, and the National Wildlife Refuge. It also allows local businesses the opportunity to sell their products and services.

The Adventure Getaways brochure will be used to market to various outdoor and specialty groups as well as consumers interested in off-season travel. Smith Travel Data Research shows that nature tourism is the fastest growing segment of the tourism industry and bird watching is the fastest growing recreational activity in the United States. There have been significant increases of 166% in hiking and birding within the U.S. in the last two years. Virginia Beach thrives with natural beauty, wildlife, and many outdoor activities and hopes to attract the type of client who is looking for a bit of adventure. This brochure provides consumers with specific information and creative packages that appeal to visitors of all skill levels and offers options that feature canoeing, birding, dolphin sea kayaking, whale watching, deep sea and fly fishing, surf lessons, sunset paddle tours, ocean discoveries boat trips, scuba diving, tours of Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge, and guided nature walks. It will be distributed in response to advertising, as well as at various convention and leisure trade shows throughout the year. A total of 16 participants advertised in this first-ever Adventure Getaways brochure, nine of which were hotel properties.

The Convention and Visitors Bureau and a local advertising and public relations agency prepared the Adventure Getaways brochure.

Available Commercial Property Database

Department of Economic Development

Economic Development has maintained a comprehensive database of available commercial properties for several years. This database has assisted the City in locating new companies to the area and helping existing businesses grow into larger available

spaces. Over the years, Economic Development has dedicated approximately 10 hours per week of staff time to update the constantly changing data for available properties. The City's regional partner, the Hampton Roads Economic Development Alliance, also maintains a similar database for the entire region.

In an effort to avoid duplication of efforts, Economic Development and the Hampton Roads Economic Development Alliance partnered together to jointly maintain the database for the City. This effort has resulted in City staff spending approximately one hour per week to ensure the accuracy of the Hampton Roads Economic Development Alliance's listings, instead of the estimated 10 hours per week. This new initiative has improved the overall regional database of properties, while simultaneously avoiding redundancy. The cost savings is approximately \$5,600 per year in staff time.

Convention Center Groundbreaking

Convention and Visitors Bureau

On June 26, 2003, the City held groundbreaking ceremonies for the new Convention Center. The event was six months in the planning with a committee comprised of representatives from the private sector, various City departments and agencies. The guest list included state senators, dignitaries, meeting planners, City officials (past and present), and Virginia Beach citizens.

Under a big top tent, guests viewed the interactive model of the new convention center, a videotape of community leaders commenting on the importance of this new facility, and enjoyed a first class reception for more than 400 people. Following the formal program, attendees were invited outside the tent where dignitaries made an "X" in the sand to mark the spot where a top hat and tuxedo clad driver drove an excavator to move the first sand. Fireworks exploded to mark the official groundbreaking of the facility.

A ceremony on this level was made possible through the donation of services and equipment and monetary contributions from the private sector. Approximately 25% of the function was funded through "public" resort revenue funds, \$17,000 was raised in monetary contributions from the business community, and the remainder was supported by in-kind services.

The result was more than \$26,000 in media coverage in meeting and convention publications throughout the country, as well as coverage on every local TV station, The Virginian Pilot, and the major business publications in the region. In addition, meeting planners here for the ceremony were able to "experience" Virginia Beach hospitality and learn more about our new convention center.

Our community kicked off the largest building project in the history of the City in a first class manner through effective partnerships that combined City services with both the business and the community sector.

Disaster Food Stamps Program

Department of Social Services

In the aftermath of Hurricane Isabel, Social Services applied for and received authorization to conduct a one-time, seven-day special Disaster Food Stamps Program to assist citizens who had experienced losses in the storm. The Program was funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture and approved by the Virginia Department of Social Services. The response was overwhelming; the local agency completed and processed Disaster Food Stamps for more than 10,100 families in seven days. The program brought \$4.2 million into the local economy.

Familiarization Tour

Convention and Visitors Bureau

The Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC) is responsible for the overall tourism marketing for the state of Virginia. Virginia's tourism industry has come together to share vision, resources, and professional experience to reach new strides in tourism growth for the Commonwealth. Since the tourism industry plays such a critical role in the economy of the Commonwealth, it is important to keep VTC marketing executives up to date on the tourism product within the state. With this in mind, the Convention and Visitors Bureau hosted 16 marketing staff members from the VTC for a familiarization tour October 16-17, 2003.

VTC attendees participated in an informational and educational tour of our City's properties, attractions, and restaurants. CVB staff brought everyone up to date on our new tourism marketing programs and strategies, as well as showcasing our new convention center and the "Bring it to the Beach" campaign.

Online Business Reference Source

Department of Public Libraries

In response to customer demand, the Public Libraries now subscribes to ReferenceUSA Business and Residential databases from infoUSA. These directory style databases provide information on more than 12 million businesses across the USA and data on more than 125 million U.S. households. ReferenceUSA Business includes company name, location, phone numbers, number of employees, sales volume, officials, business type, and Standard Industrial Classification, Electronic Data Gathering Analysis and Retrieval filings, and more. ReferenceUSA Residential information is compiled from more than

3,900 White Pages telephone directories. Also included is data from the most recent U.S. Census including median household income, home value, owner occupied housing, and more. Proximity searches are available in both databases. These databases are available in all library agencies and remotely from the library Web page (VBgov.com/libraries) under Online Reference Sources. In the first four months of operation, 2,341 searches were done on the ReferenceUSA database.

Southwest Airlines Featured Destination Program

Convention and Visitors Bureau

The Convention and Visitors Bureau, with the support of the City's Advertising Advisory Committee, participated in the Southwest Airlines "Featured Destination" program on two separate occasions during 2003. Each promotion offered an opportunity for six local hotel properties to link to the www.southwest.com "Featured Destination" reservations page.

Virginia Beach was first featured on www.southwest.com on April 29, 30, and May 1, 2003. Southwest Airlines database of more than 3.7 million people were exposed to Virginia Beach via the "Click 'n Save" e-mail. The average increase for hotel bookings into Virginia Beach was 230%. The September 29, October 1-2, 2003 promotion generated exposure to 3.9 million Southwest Airlines database customers. The average increase for hotel bookings was more than 200% and room nights increased an average of more than 237%. An additional promotion with Southwest Airlines as a "Featured Destination" was scheduled for December 9-11, 2003 and highlighted Virginia Beach's Whale Watching Program and again featured six hotels participating in this program.

Sports Events Direct Spending Studies Partnership with Old Dominion University

Convention and Visitors Bureau

The Convention and Visitors Bureau receives an overwhelming number of requests annually for financial support for sports events held in the City. In the year 2000, the department established the Sports Marketing Grant Review Committee. This committee is comprised of private citizens from the community who have an interest and background in sports and business, and they review applications from prospective events three times per year to determine whether or not to fund the program and, if so, the amount of funding given.

After an event, recipients are required to file a post event report detailing the economic benefit of the event. Due to the fact that different events collect data using different methods, the validity of information was sometimes questioned. It was recommended that formal studies be done for these events so valid data could be used in evaluating

the events and determining whether or not to continue funding year to year. Comprehensive economic impact studies usually cost upwards of \$5,000 per event, so initially meeting this request seemed impractical.

After some research, contact was made with the Old Dominion University Sports Marketing Program. An agreement was reached whereby students would conduct the studies, under the supervision of an instructor, and receive credit for their work. Each study costs \$1,000 and is paid for out of the funds that the Sports Marketing Grant Review Committee awards the event. In 2003, nine studies were completed. The program has enabled the committee to make decisions using valid data while giving students "real world" experience in Sports Marketing.

Tour Bus Parking

Convention and Visitors Bureau

The number of tour buses visiting the resort area has continued to increase over the years, however, there were no municipal or private parking lots that were capable of accommodating the buses. In the past, buses were directed to remote parking facilities such as the Pavilion parking lot, or they attempted to park within the Residential Parking Permit Program (RPPP) area, which generated complaints from residents. In May 2003, improvements were made to the 4th Street Municipal Parking Lot that included paving, improved lighting, staff, and striping. The completed improvements provided 11 bus parking spaces, and a parking fee was implemented. The location provided the bus drivers access to the trolley system for easy accessibility to destinations within the resort. Since May 2003, approximately 260 buses have utilized the parking facility and \$4,010 has been generated in revenue. In addition, our department has received positive comments from the tour bus operators and residents regarding the new facility. The resulting improvements created a safer parking location for senior citizens, residents, and visitors utilizing the South Beach area.

Quality and Productivity Initiatives for Family and Youth Opportunities

Adoption Incentive Funding

Department of Social Services

The state has awarded Virginia Beach Special Adoption Incentive Funding from the federal government. The bonus funding is for exemplary performance in significantly increasing the number of children adopted from the foster care system. The bonus funding received was \$15,556. The program finalized 28 adoptions during 2003.

Agency of the Year (n)

Department of Social Services

On March 28, 2003, at the Higher Education Center, Norfolk State University School of Social Work presented an award to Social Services, naming the department the "2003 Social Services Agency of the Year" for initiating many innovative programs for the community and providing supportive programs for professional social workers.

Award for a Perfect Audit (n)

Department of Social Services

The Food Stamps Program (which serves over 6,000 cases annually) for the period of October 2002 through February 2003 was honored for its results in a state quality control audit. The program received a perfect score – including, a zero error rate and no invalid decisions.

Beach Babies Treasure Hunt

Department of Museums and Cultural Arts

The Virginia Marine Science Museum partnered with Social Services to host this event, which promotes educational opportunities to at-risk families who are participating in the City's Beach Babies Program. This was one of four venues for special family programs. These programs provided a chance to introduce families to the many educational opportunities in Virginia Beach. The museum opened its exhibits, had three fun craft stations, set up a special live animal encounter area, and conducted a prize drawing for the approximately 90 guests who attended the event. Social Services provided a

storyteller. The evaluations of the program were extremely positive.

Breakin' The Chain (n)

Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse

Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse (MHMRSA) and Plaza Middle School facilitated the Breakin' The Chain program. The program is designed to teach life skills, promote youth anti-violence, and provide adolescents with skills to resist negative influences. A need for the program was determined by reviewing school discipline data, evidence of gangs in the neighborhood serving Plaza Middle School, and data provided by the Plaza Middle School psychologist. There were many positive outcomes derived from the program. A majority of students experienced an improvement in grades, 11 of the 20 students achieved honor roll status by the end of the year, and 55% of students had fewer absences than the previous year. The program was a successful collaboration between MHMRSA and Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS). The collaboration also included Virginia Commonwealth University's (VCU) Center for School-Community Collaboration who provided funding for the initiative. VCU's Center for School-Community Collaboration was impressed with the outcomes of the program and decided to award the Breakin' the Chain program with a \$10,000 grant for the 2002-2003 school year (one year only). The program also received special recognition from VBCPS and was the recipient of a Model Partnership Award. A total of 22 youths participated in the program. We were fortunate to have one student intern from Old Dominion University who volunteered more than 500 hours of service — a cost avoidance of \$9,115. The participating students were co-leaders, performing such duties as co-facilitation, mentoring, and helping individual students develop problem-solving skills. In addition, a variety of sports organizations, business groups, and theatres donated free tickets to performances and cultural events.

Building Bridges of Understanding

Department of Human Resources

Members of the Human Rights Commission are meeting with various community groups to learn about their human rights related concerns. The information obtained from these meetings will assist the commission in developing future forums and programs.

Caring for Our Children

Department of Social Services

On April 30, 2003, as part of the "April is Child Abuse Prevention Month" campaign, the "Caring for Our Children" program was launched. It is a program of public education and parenting education to prevent child abuse and neglect. It is part of the initiative introduced in the Mayor's 2003 State of the City address, to eliminate child abuse and

neglect in Virginia Beach. A Child Abuse Prevention Summit in February 2004 will be the culmination of a year long series of events.

Consolidation of Kidsfest and Youth Opportunity Day

Departments of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation and Parks and Recreation

Staff combined Kidsfest and Youth Opportunity Day, two related but previously separate activities for youth, into one event called Youthfest. This year 2,500 youth attended the event. The combined event cost \$10,189. There was a savings of \$5,810 in actual costs, not to mention staff time (many of the combined committee, volunteers, and participating agencies would have worked on both projects).

Expansion of the Therapeutic After-School Respite Program

Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse

The Therapeutic After-School Respite Program (TARP) serves children with serious emotional disturbances who are at risk of hospitalization or institutionalization. A maximum of 8-10 consumers were served at any given time due to space and resource limitations. Children were limited to one year of participation due to the resource limitations and the high demand for the services. To expand the program, alternative funding and space had to be identified so that twice as many children could be served.

The Virginia Beach City Public Schools arranged for two classrooms at Princess Anne High School to be made available instead of the one classroom at Bayside High School that had been used in previous years. It was decided that money from a state block grant (Children's' Mental Health Initiative) would be reallocated and used to fund the program. Approximately \$46,000 was shifted which allowed for two part-time staff to be hired to accommodate the second classroom. The program coordinator applied for and was awarded a \$7,500 grant from the Virginia Beach Medical Society Auxiliary. This money has been used to establish a resource library for parents and to provide money for additional outings during the summer. This is an intensive program that helps to provide stability for the consumers and their families by reducing the likelihood of hospitalization. It also offers parents an opportunity to work closely with the staff and support the needs of their child.

Exploring Placement Options

Department of Social Services

The "First Place" Program was created in 2002 to screen foster care children up to 12 years of age for the most appropriate and cost-effective placement - i.e., regular foster care, therapeutic foster care, or residential treatment. In 2003, the Exploring Placement Options Program was launched to explore the most appropriate and cost-effective

placement options for the teen population in foster care. The goal is to help teens achieve independence and avoid a residential treatment center.

First Steps Toward a Healthy Family

Department of Public Health

The Healthy Families Initiative expanded its continuum of services to include the National First Steps Program. First Steps is a national program that helps our new parents and their infants by offering telephone referrals, education, and support to first time parents whose babies are born at Sentara Virginia Beach General Hospital (SVBGH).

In 2003, the Virginia Beach program met National First Steps Standards, hired a First Steps Coordinator, and conducted training sessions for volunteers. SVBGH has been a key partner in developing the new service by providing space and support for the coordinator.

This program is innovative because program growth can be met by trained volunteers under the close monitoring of the coordinator. The program demonstrates the value of trained volunteers to meet critical information and support the needs of the community.

Human Services Plan

Departments of Social Services, Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse, Public Health, Parks and Recreation, Housing and Neighborhood Preservation, and City Public Schools

The Human Services Plan is a document which assesses the human services needs of the City and recommends strategies to improve services to citizens within a time frame of several years. It sets forth service delivery values and principles, a Human Services Mission, collects data on community needs, and prioritizes actions to meet those needs in cost effective ways.

Improving Outpatient Service Delivery

Departments of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse

Adult Outpatient Services at Pembroke 3 serves approximately 900 consumers at any given point in time, providing individual and group counseling and medication management. In February 2003, it was determined that caseloads for clinicians were too high, the time from consumer initial contact to first face-to-face contact (intakes) was too long, and the show rates for new consumers were poor. There needed to be major changes to accommodate consumer needs in a more effective, efficient manner. Over the course of six months, staff reviewed all long-term cases and determinations

were made as to appropriateness to continue individual counseling, refer to a group, or transfer to medication management. It was determined that many consumers would be better served in medication management. A Registered Nurse was hired in place of two therapists generating a cost avoidance of approximately \$55,000. An orientation group, staffed by clerical, clinical, and nursing staff, was developed for all clients as a way to get consumers in quicker and to complete required paperwork. The orientation groups have the added benefit of utilizing clinician time more efficiently. Caseloads have dropped and consumers are seen within a much more acceptable timeframe. These measures have effectively helped to lower the caseloads and improved the show rate for new customers.

Life in the State of Poverty

Department of Agriculture

The Virginia Cooperative Extension in collaboration with Tidewater Sowers of Justice and Social Services sponsored the "Life In the State of Poverty" welfare simulation for 75 participants. As communities and organizations assess welfare issues, human service workers and volunteers can better serve low-income individuals if they have a greater understanding of poverty and the state of confusion, defeat, frustration, exhaustion, and despair. The simulation was a community education program designed to help participants begin to understand what life might be like for a typical low-income family and to identify some of the barriers faced by low-income people on a day-to-day basis. Participants portray various types of low-income families typically living in Virginia. Some were unemployed, elderly, or disabled; others had recently been deserted by the "breadwinner"; and others were recipients of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families, or TANF (formerly AFDC), either with or without additional earned income. The simulation was comprised of four 15-minute "weeks" representing one month in the life of poverty. The families must meet specific goals such as provide for basic necessities and shelter during the month. The simulation was staffed with volunteers who portray community resources; such as grocery, police, food pantry, employment office, Social Services office, pawnshop, landlord, and others who create a local economy for participants.

The Tidewater Sowers of Justice donated \$325 for materials and a facilitator and additional donations of \$75 came from volunteers who provided food for participants giving a total of \$400 in donations for the program.

Multi-Systemic Therapy

Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse

Multi-Systemic Therapy (MST) has been recognized nationally over the last decade as one of the most successful children's mental health programs. It is a systematic intensive intervention that takes place in the child's home with family members present. It has been particularly successful with juvenile offenders. Clinicians are on call 24 hours a day,

seven days a week, and typically provide three hours per week of face-to-face therapy in the home. Specific techniques are utilized and a high premium is placed on adherence to the system. Because of the intensity of the program, the program could only accommodate 15 clients this past year. The program's success has been demonstrated by the decrease in additional criminal charges, decrease in probation violations, decrease in out-of-home placement, and an increase in school attendance.

The program has been providing services for the last three years with original funding from the Virginia Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services. Referrals come entirely from the Juvenile Court. This year, the program was awarded a \$90,000 grant from the Virginia Department of Criminal Justice Services to expand services to young juvenile offenders (children first adjudicated before their 14th birthday). The additional funds will allow for a 33% increase in the number of juvenile offenders treated. After the first 18 months, the grant will decline by 25% each year.

Out-Stationing at Two Hospitals

Departments of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse and Social Services

Workers take applications for Medicaid services such as nursing home care from Social Services and Mental Health on-site at Bayside and Virginia Beach General Hospitals. Administrative costs, which are not reimbursed by Medicaid, are covered by the hospitals. Through this effective partnership, the results provide enhanced services to 1,600 citizens annually at no cost to the City.

Pendleton ABC Program

Department of Social Services

Under the ABC Program, Pendleton Child Services Center has joined a partnership with Farm Fresh Supermarkets to help the schools (and now Pendleton Child Service Center) earn free audiovisual equipment, books, computers, printers, software, and sports equipment. Last year, Farm Fresh donated more than \$173,000 in equipment to Hampton Roads schools. Pendleton hopes to obtain a variety of educational materials.

Positive Parenting for Mothers

Department of Social Services

A new program was initiated this year called "Positive Parenting for Mothers." The program is a structured, 12-week topic – specific group for mothers. The sessions are held weekly at the Kings Grant Presbyterian Church. The group is conducted in conjunction with the "Turning Point" domestic violence support group and child care is provided. Mothers can earn points that may be redeemed for small reward gifts.

Prevention Services for Children and Families

Department of Social Services

This new initiative provides social work services for families at risk of child abuse or neglect following referral and investigation by Child Protective Services. The family is identified as in need of supportive services. Workers develop a voluntary relationship with the family to work collaboratively on issues of parenting, resources, financial management, and intervention services, such as counseling and substance abuse treatment to assist with family stabilization. The result has been enhanced prevention of serious child abuse, neglect, and instability for agency clients. The program served 103 clients from May to October 2003.

Revenue Maximization of Human Services Programs

Department of Social Services

A Revenue Maximization Project was initiated in 2003 which was administered through Social Services, but also involved Mental Health, Mental Retardation, Substance Abuse, the Juvenile Court Services Unit, and the Pendleton Child Services Center. These departments identified children and costs that are eligible for federal title IV-E pre-placement prevention funds. Retroactive claims were submitted to the federal government, via the State Department of Social Services. To date, the City has received \$1,120,004 in revenue. These efforts are expected to generate an additional \$770,000 in federal revenue annually.

Section 8 Resource Utilization

Department of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation

The creation and utilization of a monthly "resource utilization report" that consolidated large amounts of information into one report allowed more effective planning and utilization of Section 8 federal housing funds. By using this report and with effective management decisions, all available funding for affordable housing was utilized. This ensured that no funding was left unused and that the maximum number of households that could be served were served.

School-Based Day Treatment Service Enhancement

Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse

Among the children served by Virginia Beach City Public Schools (VBCPS) are those who have been diagnosed with severe emotional disturbances. Federal special education laws require that no more than ten students be in a classroom at a time. Day treatment services consist of a regular full day of school in a self-contained classroom. The students receive instruction from a team that consists of a special education teacher, a classroom aide, and a clinician from Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse (MHMRSA). In

addition to academic subjects, students are provided group counseling daily and individual counseling one to two times per week. Day treatment clinicians are on hand to defuse crises and interact with other elements of the educational system on behalf of the students. The Comprehensive Services Act (CSA), via the state, provides funding for day treatment program for children with special needs due to severe emotional disturbances.

Due to an increase in the number of students identified as seriously emotionally disturbed, it became necessary to open a new classroom at Salem High School. VBCPS provided funding for a special education teacher and a classroom aide. However, due to lack of available funding from CSA, MHMRSA was unable to fund a clinician position. Day treatment services are reimbursable under the Medicaid program. The staff began to evaluate families receiving day treatment services for eligibility and determined that many families were eligible for Medicaid. The families were assisted in the application process. Upon approval, the cost of their services will be billed to Medicaid instead of CSA. This transfer will provide sufficient revenue in CSA to allow funding for the much needed day treatment clinician at Salem High School.

The Alliance for Youth Named a Best Practice (n)

Department of Social Services

The Alliance for Youth (TAFY), a therapeutic foster care program with Social Services, was highlighted by the state as a best practice. The state noted exciting and innovative efforts to keep children and families healthy and safe. TAFY was featured on the Child and Family Services Review Intranet site and received an Alpha Smart computer as an award for agency efforts in excellent and innovative best casework practice. The program saves \$2,000 to \$10,000 on each placement, based upon the needs of each child. It is estimated that the placements for the program's 46 children saved \$230,000 in 2003.

Vulnerable Populations Study Recommendations

Department of Social Services and the Family and Youth Opportunities Strategic Issue Team

An inter-departmental task force lead by Social Services completed a "Vulnerable Populations Study Report", under the guidance of the Family and Youth Opportunities Strategic Issue Team. The study was in response to an Outcome Strategy assigned to the Family and Youth Opportunities Team. We lead the community in reducing abuse and protecting vulnerable individuals. The report includes numerous recommendations to enhance services to vulnerable populations such as abused and neglected children, the elderly, and disabled. Many recommendations have been implemented and others are encompassed in the Human Services Plan.

Quality and Productivity Initiatives for Quality Education and Lifelong Learning

Aging Infrastructure Video Educates Customers

Department of Public Utilities

Public Utilities and Video Services worked together to prepare an eight-minute video that is used to educate citizens about the ongoing need for maintaining the City's sanitary sewer infrastructure. "Aging Infrastructure: Maintaining Our Investment" discusses the issue of the City's aging sanitary sewer system. It also explains the importance of continuing to upgrade the system through renewal and replacement to assure reliable, quality service to citizens, as well as to meet state and federal laws and regulations. The video has aired on VBTV since the summer of 2003.

In July, the final of three planned annual sanitary sewer rate increases went into effect. Although each rate increase has impacted the average residential bill by approximately only \$1 per month, it is important that Public Utilities' customers realize that the revenue resulting from this rate increase helps to fund the renewal and replacement of aging infrastructure. This video helps relate the rate increase to a tangible problem (aging infrastructure) and also shows customers how the fees they pay are used to correct that problem.

Beach Bear's Community Treasure Hunt

Virginia Beach Ready to Learn Team

The Beach Bear's Treasure Hunt Club was established in the fall of 2002 to introduce families to educational, cultural, and recreational resources in the community. The events are geared toward families with children ages birth through six who participate in supportive community programs with Public Health, Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse, Social Services, and Resource Mothers, a program of Family Services of Tidewater. Many of the families have limited resources and are not able to take full advantage of all that the area has to offer. These special events provide an opportunity for the families to explore and learn about the treasures of our City and region.

During the year, children and their families visited four sites in Virginia Beach. At the first event, children visited a farm where they went on a hayride, petted the animals, and participated in many activities of the Harvest Festival before enjoying a picnic lunch and a story. The Virginia Marine Science Museum was the site for the second event. The museum opened for extended hours for the group to explore the museum and enjoy the

Grossology exhibit. For the third event, families visited the Kempsville Recreation Center and learned about services and programs available at each of our recreation centers. The fourth and final event took place at the newly renovated Great Neck Area Library, which featured a tour of the library and a special teddy bear picnic. Each child received books and a special bear, knitted by wives of the Canadian NATO. Approximately 45 children and their families participated in each event.

One of the goals of the Ready to Learn initiative is to help children be better prepared to enter kindergarten. During each event, staff emphasized activities and services that help children be ready to learn and a storyteller shared stories related to the theme and site.

Conversion from DRA to SIRSI

Department of Public Libraries

In February 2003, the Public Library converted the library system to a new, improved catalog system. This public online catalog system has the capacity to provide many new services and conveniences, such as

- Book Summaries, Reviews – (appropriate ports to be connected by ComIT)
- Book covers
- Searches (combined with a reorganized catalog) make finding library material easy

Online services to citizens are available 24 hours per day, seven days per week. The previous software was often offline and non-functional. We now have the ability to provide statistics to librarians, allowing them to better prepare services for their patrons. The previous system had very limited reporting capabilities and no maintenance utilities. The new system not only allows the system administrator to maintain our databases, it provides utilities so staff can perform maintenance functions to catalog and patron databases without having to submit a request for maintenance, providing a better product for our patrons with more efficient services.

The data conversion went smoothly and the staff were well trained when the libraries were reopened after the conversion.

Electronic Grant Databases

Department of Public Libraries

Non-profit organizations frequently rely on the public library to provide information on available grants. The largest local source of grant information is at the Hampton Public Library, which as a Cooperating Library of the Foundation Center receives many

materials free of charge. Virginia Beach Public Library has twice applied to be a Cooperating Library but was not accepted because we are located within 50 miles of Hampton.

All the public libraries in southside Hampton Roads include some grant materials in their collections, but none have had funds for online grant databases, which provides up-to-date, easily accessible information on available grants and grant making organizations. In fall 2002, the Public Library obtained a regional grant from The Norfolk Foundation of \$9,180 to provide expanded grant information to individuals and organizations in Southside Hampton Roads. This grant provides a one-year subscription to two online grant databases, "Grant Select" and the "Foundation Directory Online" for Virginia Beach and three other Hampton Roads public libraries (Chesapeake, Norfolk, and Portsmouth). In the seven months since the databases have been running, 1,456 searches have been performed.

Raising Lifelong Readers

Department of Public Libraries

The Youth Services Coordinating Committee of the Public Library plans and coordinates training opportunities for child care providers, parents, teachers, and story time providers within the library system, other City agencies, and local book stores. Expected outcomes are improved story sharing experiences that prepare young children for school and instill in them a life-long love of reading.

The committee has developed a multi-year training plan. Topics include brain development in young children, presentation skills for storytellers, child development, children's literature, discipline strategies, and working with special needs children and mixed age groups. Eight workshops were presented during FY 2003. Each two-hour workshop was offered in the afternoon and then repeated in the evening.

Specific programs dealt with age-appropriate preschool literacy activities, lapsits for infants and their parents, integration of music and movement into story times, the effective use of television, and making a story come alive. All sessions were interactive, allowing participants to "practice" skills. An average of 50 people participated in each workshop. Childcare providers earned credits that helped them meet state license requirements for training.

The workshops are funded by the Ready to Learn Team. Story time programs for preschool children at the public libraries and recreation centers help children build the foundation that will prepare them for their initial elementary school experiences. Through stories children learn new words, acquire knowledge about the world, and develop imagination, which helps them to think creatively. Story time programs are, therefore, an integral part of the City's strategy to ensure children are ready to learn when they enter kindergarten.

In April 2003, the Ready to Learn program received an award from the Virginia Public Library Directors Association for Outstanding Cooperative Programs.

“Ready, Set, Grow”

Department of Agriculture

The Virginia Beach Master Gardener volunteers, sponsored by Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE), conducted the "Ready, Set, Grow"(RSG) horticultural education program in 71 classrooms of 16 Virginia Beach elementary schools during the 2002 - 2003 school year. The RSG program was developed by VCE to teach first and second graders the importance of gardening and environmental awareness by addressing the educational initiatives now mandated by the Virginia Standards of Learning. In addition to donating their time, the Master Gardeners and VCE also donated all materials necessary to support the program.

Twenty-six Master Gardeners taught the RSG initiative to 1,391 youths in the City Public School system in response to the strategic issue area of Quality Education and Lifelong Learning – “planning and coordination of community services to prepare children to meet the challenges of the future.” Follow up evaluations were received from all 71 teachers. Evaluations indicated that 85% of teachers rated the program at the highest level of learning for students and 96% of teachers rated it above average. When asked if they would be interested in having their students participate in the RSG program next year, 100% of the teachers responded positively.

Reality Store

Department of Agriculture

Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) in partnership with Southeastern Tidewater Opportunity Program (STOP), Housing and Neighborhood Preservation, and the Chesapeake Redevelopment and Housing Authority presented the Reality Store to students who were enrolled in the STOP youth employment program. STOP decided to offer the simulation to their students, because the Reality Store was designed to help youth become aware of their need for basic skills such as financial planning, budget management, goal setting, decision-making, and career planning. The Reality was a real-life simulation which gave youth the opportunity to explore careers and make lifestyle choices similar to those faced by adults on a daily basis. The Reality Store was also designed to motivate students to stay in school, stay away from drugs, and avoid teenage pregnancy. Students were given money equivalent to the average monthly salary for occupations that required post-secondary education, to high school diploma to dropping out of high school. The students’ task was to spend their salary on the necessities and luxuries they envision as part of the adults lifestyle. The first dose of reality the students experienced was when they paid taxes on the money from their

occupation. Volunteer staffers from the state and federal tax offices, housing industry, utilities, grocery stores, department stores, financial institutions, auto dealerships, medical profession, child-care centers, travel and entertainment industry, etc. were present to help the students determine how much of their income must be spent in each category to provide for their daily lifestyle.

The STOP Organization contributed \$1,500 for transportation, food, and to secure the facility. Housing and Neighborhood Preservation provided door prizes, incentives for participations, and the VCE provided the materials used for the simulation.

SEAnior Science Sessions

Department of Museums and Cultural Arts

In February 2003, the Virginia Marine Science Museum (VMSM) was awarded a \$15,000 grant from the Wallerstein Foundation for Geriatric Life Improvements to provide educational opportunities for senior citizens. This money funded a new educational program titled SEAnior Science Sessions. The program ran for five consecutive Tuesdays from 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m. Sessions were offered in the spring (April – May) and fall (October – November) in 2003. Each week, presentations and activities revolved around a relevant topic or issue related to the subject of the Chesapeake Bay. Speakers included VMSM staff from various departments, researchers from the Virginia Institute of Marine Science, and experts -- on topics ranging from Virginia shipwrecks to butterflies from other local museums and organizations. Activities included VMSM Dolphin Watching boat trips, nature walks, seafood preparation, and a demonstration of the effect pollutants have on the Chesapeake Bay. The initial participant limit was 50, but due to popular demand, that number was raised to 60 participants each session, and there is still a waiting list. The weekly sessions, which include lunch provided by the museum's café, provide educational opportunities as well as the chance to socialize with peers. The feedback on the program has been overwhelming. After the spring session, 12 participants expressed interest in volunteering at VMSM. Most said they were amazed at the diversity of life and the overall environmental importance of the Chesapeake Bay and that they have developed a new appreciation for things that they had previously taken for granted.

"Wolfin' Down Books @ Your Library"

Department of Public Libraries

The Summer Reading Program "Wolfin' Down Books @ Your Library" took off at a fast pace in our eight libraries and bookmobile. By the end of the reading program, almost 8,000 children were registered. They did indeed "wolf down" a lot of books. To receive a certificate of completion, each child had to read 15 books or read for at least 15 minutes every day. Those children who completed the program also received a gift book provided by the Friends of the Virginia Beach Public Library, a Busch Gardens pass, and a coupon for a Chick-fil-A kid's meal.

Participants attended special programs at each library where they learned about the life and habits of wolves, presented by a biologist who has spent years doing research on these animals. They heard stories by singing storytellers, learned magic tricks, made crafts each week, and heard about animals that live in our neighborhoods or in the forests and waterways of Virginia. Teens learned how to decorate cakes, play drums from other countries, create a scrapbook, brush up on their manners, and solve a murder at the Teen Mystery Night. There was something for everyone. In total, 6,184 children and parents attended these programs.

Library staff members joined with Parks and Recreation to work with their KidzQuest Program. They visited recreation centers and schools once per week, taking our Summer Reading Program to children who might not otherwise have had an opportunity to participate. Staff members read stories to the children, worked on a craft with them, and encouraged them to continue reading at home.

Quality and Productivity Initiatives for Quality Organization

Accounts Payable Cost-Avoided Process Improvement

Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse

Each month Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse (MHMRSA) receives approximately 250 invoices from medical service providers such as Rehab Associates and Physio Therapist Inc. In the past, these invoices were processed and paid separately.

This initiative involves merging the separate processing of hundreds of invoices sent by the same vendors into a singular process and, therefore, saving the City processing time. The staff in the Accounts Payable Unit created summary invoices for each vendor that allows consolidation of the individual invoices into one, along with a single check. As a result, staff merged processing an average of 266 monthly invoices into three. The result has been a drastic reduction in the amount of time to process payments. The reduction has been experienced not only by our department but also by other City departments such as Finance. The average cost for processing an invoice is based on a national average of \$25 for time and labor. We are now processing 263 fewer invoices per month for a calculated cost reduction/resource redirection associated with invoice processing of \$6,575 per month or \$78,900 annually.

The vendors are excited about the change because it allows them to better manage their payments. The initiative improves services and enhances productivity. It also enables staff to devote more time to other tasks such as pre-audit activities. Exported and applied city-wide, this process improvement has significant potential for increasing efficiency and effectiveness outside MHMRSA.

Barcode on Voter Cards

Office of the General Registrar

The General Registrar's office developed a barcode system to be used on all new voter cards sent out to citizens. The barcode will be used to scan voters' records on Election Day. The scanning process should shorten lines on election day and find citizens' information more quickly and accurately.

Barcode Scanner Upgrade

Department of Public Libraries

In 2002, staff recommended that we no longer use our current standard of barcode scanners and go with a new make and model, which has cut in half the cost of replacement scanners. The new barcode scanners are more efficient, cost less, and are easier to maintain. This allowed us to replace twice as many old scanners for the same cost. The older models cost approximately \$500 each, while the newer models cost approximately \$250 each, allowing us to buy 50 replacement scanners instead of 25.

The \$10,000 savings comes from a longer warranty (three years vs. one year) for maintenance and a lower purchase cost. The new scanner also has fewer parts — the old units required three parts to function and the new one only requires one. This translates into easier troubleshooting for our technicians.

Beach Magazine Online - Awards for Publication Excellence Award of Excellence (n)

Office of the City Manager

Originally launched in the winter of 2002, Beach magazine Online was awarded a 2003 Awards for Publication Excellence (APEX) Award in the category of "Magazines and Journals - Online and Electronic." APEX is sponsored by the editors of Writing That Works, the newsletter for communicators who write, edit, and manage business publications. The awards, which attracted close to 5,000 entries, are based on excellence in graphic design, editorial content, and the ability to achieve overall communications excellence.

Beach Online (VBgov.com/Beach) was designed to complement Beach magazine by offering online visitors the opportunity to read articles, in their entirety, and view selected photographs from the printed magazine. This online version offers users unique features that are not possible in a paper version such as access to the magazine's archives, an editorial calendar, advertising schedule, and links to appropriate external information.

Beach Online is available through the News and Events section of VBgov.com, a section which consistently is among the top five most visited areas of the City's Web site with more than 40,000 views per month. This visibility on the City's Internet site positions Beach Online as a consistently positive and informative piece of communication material. One of the key elements of Beach Online's value is its availability – the current issue can be viewed dating from the parent publication's mail date until the next issue is published, and then it is added to the archives. This feature allows anyone – residents, vacationers, businesses, friends, and relatives – to read about the many programs and amenities this community has to offer, long after paper versions have been discarded.

Beach Magazine Recognized with Crystal Award of Excellence from The Communicator Awards (n)

Office of the City Manager

Beach magazine, a 32-page, full-color direct-mailed magazine, was launched in 2000 to build understanding and support among citizens for City Council's vision and goals, explore why Virginia Beach is such a great place to live, work, learn, and raise a family and allow our citizens a voice to tell this story.

In spring 2003, Beach magazine received The Crystal Award of Excellence from The Communicator Awards. The awards competition for print media, held annually, recognizes outstanding work in the communications field. Industry professionals judge entries and award the Award of Excellence to those "whose work serves as a benchmark for the industry." Beach magazine was one of nearly 4,000 entries received from throughout the U.S. and several foreign countries in the competition. The Crystal Award of Excellence is the highest honor bestowed in the competition, which receives entries from advertising and public relations agencies, corporate communication departments, educational institutions, and other business and industry representatives.

Beach magazine's feature stories also received an Excel Award from the Hampton Roads Black Media Professionals and an honorable mention in The Communicator Awards print media competition.

Beach consistently receives high ratings from residents. Most recently, in the 2003 Citizen Communication Survey, more than 70% of our residents read Beach and, of those, nearly 91% are satisfied with the quality of the publication.

Centralization of a Department's Administrative Talent

Department of Communications and Information Technology

In November 2002, Communications and Information Technology (ComIT) officially opened its ComIT Business Center. The Business Center initiative centralized the department's administrative staff into one location to maximize use of those members' talents and skills. The Business Center's goal is to make certain that the administrative support needs of each ComIT division are being met and to prepare for the department's future administrative support needs. In addition, creation of the Business Center allows the administrative staff to handle support functions, freeing ComIT's technical staff in other divisions to focus on their primary responsibilities. All members of ComIT are the Business Center's customers. The Business Center provides services to other City agencies and the public when supporting the administrative needs of other ComIT divisions.

To form the Business Center, representatives from each ComIT division came together to assess the department's administrative support needs, to determine which administrative support functions would need to remain within the individual divisions, and to determine which administrative functions could be grouped under the Business Center umbrella. The Business Center is divided into various support teams. Each support team is cross-trained to ensure quality service is provided on a daily basis. The Business Center staff has also begun cross-training between teams to open the lines of communication and build bridges where responsibilities are intertwined. Cross-training also ensures a smooth transition from the beginning to the end of business processes that require input from members on more than one team, ultimately enhancing the Business Center's productivity and increasing efficiency. Working as a group also enables Business Center members the opportunity to fully develop skills and serve customers in a focused manner on the specialized support teams, such as the department's internal Human Resources and Payroll, Accounts Payable, Accounts Receivable, and other teams. Finally, centralizing the administrative support functions allows for the separation of duties according to members' areas of expertise and interests, maximizing resources and increasing job satisfaction.

Initially, funding for the Business Center was gathered from each of the budgets of the department's divisions. Now, the Business Center is funded from the department's overall budget.

City Page Online - Communicator Award of Distinction (n)

Office of the City Manager

After only one year of publication, City Page Online, the Internet partner of City Page, was awarded a 2003 Award of Distinction from the 2003 Communicator Awards Print Media competition. The Communicator Awards is an international awards program to recognize excellence in the communication field. The City's entries were chosen from among nearly 4,000 international entries from advertising and public relations agencies, corporate communications departments, educational institutions, government entities, and other businesses and individuals.

Each issue of City Page Online (VBgov.com/CityPage) reflects the print version in its entirety. The full text of each story is available to online visitors, along with appropriate links to outside resources. An added service of City Page Online is the appearance of "Online Extras." These additional stories, for which there may not have been space in the print version, are offered to readers as an incentive to visit City Page Online. For City departments, the "Online Extras" provide an additional vehicle for increased visibility for their announcements, events, and accomplishments. Because the online version of City Page is not restricted to the dimensions of a single newspaper page, the quantity of information the City can provide through the Web site is not restricted by space or cost.

Community Budget Meeting

Department of Management Services

During their 2002 retreat, City Council indicated a desire for more citizen involvement in the Resource Management Plan process, and for that involvement to be early enough in the process to allow the citizen input to be given adequate consideration during the development of the Operating Budget and Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Management Services identified and evaluated several alternative ways to get citizen involvement, and in September 2003 recommended to City Council that a Community Budget Meeting be held to provide citizens the opportunity to come together to discuss issues they feel should be addressed in the upcoming Operating Budget and CIP. Initially, citizens were invited who had responded to the 2003 city-wide Citizen Survey indicating their interest in participating on a focus group to help identify issues. Subsequently, an open invitation was placed in the Virginia Beach Beacon inviting all citizens to participate, on a first-come first-served basis.

Management Services coordinated the meeting, which was held in the evening on October 16, 2003, at Corporate Landing Middle School and was attended by approximately 50 citizens. Several key issue areas were identified by citizens in the meeting, and those key areas are being used by City departments as they develop their Operating Budget and CIP submissions. In conjunction with the Community Budget Meeting, on October 28, 2003, the City held an early public hearing to allow those citizens who could not participate in the Community Budget Meeting to also provide input to City Council regarding the FY 2004-05 Operating Budget and CIP. Both the Community Budget Meeting and the early public hearing were considered successful in that they provided City Council with meaningful input from the citizens.

Digital Archive Available via VBgov.com

Department of Communications and Information Technology

In May 2003, e-docs, an efficient and secure online gateway to the City Clerk's digital document archives, was launched via the City's Web site, VBgov.com. By establishing an online system, the City Clerk's office has increased staff efficiency by decreasing staff time previously required to assist customers with the manual process.

Using the system, citizens and businesses are able to search and view documents online – some dating back to 1953 – that are already available to the public but had required a visit to the Clerk's office, such as City Council agendas, Wetlands Board meeting minutes, and deeds. Through e-docs, users are able to view a document in its original format or as a text file. Available documents are organized into category folders or users can locate specific documents by performing a keyword search. A glossary and users manual are provided to assist visitors in using the system. The documents available, via e-docs, have been scanned into the City's computer system using LaserFiche document imaging technology.

Prior to this system, access to the information was limited to review of hard copy content that required a trip to the City Clerk's office. This often proved cumbersome to users who needed frequent access to the content. By providing it online, the City eliminated the need to visit the City Clerk's office to review the content in person, improving customer service. It also requires less staff member time by providing the information in an always-accessible customer friendly format.

The initiative provides easy access via the City's Web site, providing direct access at the convenience of the customer. The system continues to be a very popular feature of the Web site and has received praise from citizens, businesses, and the media for its ease of use and comprehensiveness. Between May 2003 and September 2003, e-docs had 10,289 user sessions. This system will also serve as the model for additional, similar systems within the City that will provide direct and easy access to internal documents via the Web site.

Initial funding for the implementation of this service was provided through the City's e-Gov reserve budget. Citizens were involved in the beta testing of this application before its full release. Feedback from citizens regarding content, interface, and usability were integrated into the final release.

Display Commemorates 40 Years of Growth and Service Excellence

Department of Public Utilities

Public Utilities helped commemorate the City's 40th anniversary with a photographic exhibit displayed in the second floor corridor of Building 2 at the Municipal Center. City members and visitors to Public Utilities are able to view photos and read articles and narratives capturing some of the significant historical events that have shaped the department over the last 40 years. The Lake Gaston Water Supply Project, one of the most significant projects in the City's history, is chronicled in the exhibit. Other highlights in the exhibit include tributes to past members and recent public interest events, such as a water tank tour that drew more than 500 visitors in one afternoon.

The initiative involved the work of 10 department members who used archived materials and the institutional knowledge of long-time members to create the display. In addition to providing a noteworthy contribution to the City's 40th anniversary celebration, the display enhanced customer service by spotlighting Public Utilities in a positive manner. The project also provided a connection for the many "veteran" members of Public Utilities and its newer members. Untold numbers of individuals -- department members, other City members, customers, contractors, vendors, and other individuals who visit Public Utilities to conduct business -- have paused to enjoy the display and share a conversation about a piece of Public Utilities history.

Eight New Precincts and Boundary Line Changes

Office of the General Registrar

Eight new precincts were developed throughout the City to decrease the number of voters at the current precincts and therefore make the other precincts more manageable and result in less people in line on election day. The eight precincts were approved by the City Council at a public hearing. There were also numerous boundary line changes made to decrease the size of current precincts. Several precincts had their polling locations moved to larger locations with better parking, improved handicap accessibility, and more space inside.

Electronic Filing Process – Journal Vouchers, Ordinances, and Redefinition of Funds

Department of Management Services

The goal of this initiative was to reduce the number of hard copy files for each journal voucher and to save staff time in filing and mailing processes. This process is estimated to save approximately \$1,006 annually.

Electronic Lookup Device

Office of the General Registrar

In February 2003, the General Registrar's Office began initiating and developing the Electronic Lookup device. A pilot device was developed to use in the November 4, 2003 election and worked successfully. This device assisted election officials with locating the correct voting precinct for our lost voters without the necessity of calling the Voter Registrar's office. In addition, the device provides a receipt to the voter with the correct polling location and its address. The precincts that had the equipment provided improved customer service to the voter. The device assists in meeting the mandate of the Help America Vote Act by having the capability of locating the voter's correct polling location and eliminating the need to use provisional voting. The equipment is fast and very user friendly. The voters were receptive of this equipment and were able to key in their own voter identification numbers.

Electronic Pollbook

Office of the General Registrar

In February 2003, the General Registrar's Office began initiating and developing the Electronic Pollbook. Two different pilot projects were developed to use the Electronic Pollbook in the November 4, 2003 election and was very successful. Eventually, this project could go statewide and save the state \$12 million dollars. Election officials can use the electronic pollbooks to verify if someone has already voted at another precinct,

thereby, increasing the security of the election. The poll book is faster and very user friendly, diminishing lines and allowing anyone to use any line instead of an alphabetical process. Equipment can help a voter become more self-sufficient, thus decreasing the amount of election officials necessary to work at the voting precinct. Once an electronic pollbook is available at all 86 voting precincts, it can produce a reduction of one election official for each precinct for a total savings of \$7,740 per election. In addition, there could be a savings of \$37,878 in salaries for additional part-time staff needed for elections each year.

eMapping GIS Web Site

Department of Communication and Information Technology

Since March 2003, the eMapping feature at the City's Web portal, VBgov.com, has provided citizens and City members' mapping information via the Internet and the internal Intranet. The level of demand of map viewing across the City in map rooms indicated a need for improved, flexible mapping services. Being able to now access maps from any computer that has Internet or City Intranet access has eased accessibility to mapping information for members and visitors immensely. Now citizens and members can view tax maps, information on geographical proximity to government offices, programs, and possible hazards such as Air Installations Compatible Use Aones (AICUZ) and flood zones. Members can use eMapping to locate the City sites in the field using the online maps and City's assets, such as pipes, shut-off valves, pump stations, traffic control devices, and monitoring stations.

The eMapping feature has also proved useful during emergencies. For example, while Hurricane Isabel was approaching in September 2003, citizens were able to use eMapping to locate their homes in relationship to Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) hurricane surge zones. Through eMapping, citizens were able to determine if they were in a low-lying area that may flood during a hurricane and plan accordingly for evacuation to shelters. Within the month of September 2003, 11,000 different users accessed the VBgov.com Web site.

The eMapping service was funded through the City's annual budget. The VBgov.com Web site was reviewed and approved by the Mayor's e-Government Commission.

Emergency Communications Develops Alternative Scheduling Process

Department of Communications and Information Technology

In early 2002, members of Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) Emergency Communications division (VB911) requested work schedule alternatives to the division's traditional schedules. ComIT management determined that alternative scheduling would help reduce staff attrition, meet the division's staffing needs, and

enhance morale within the highly stressful call center environment. Under the alternative work schedules, approximately 86 Emergency Communications Officers are assigned rotating shifts based on seniority.

Results from the alternative work schedules have been positive. The division's staffing needs are met more often, members have requested less leave time, and member morale has improved – ultimately improving customer service for those calling VB911.

All members of VB911 are eligible to participate in the alternative work schedule program. No additional funding was necessary to support the initiative. The alternative work schedules were implemented in January 2003.

Enhanced Blue Pages Listings

Department of Communication and Information Technology

In early 2003, Communications and Information Technology's Public Information Office (PIO) developed an electronic process for the review, revision, and compilation of City contact information for the Government "Blue Page" listings in the Verizon telephone directory. This new process curtails human data entry error, speeds up the submission process, and allows for additional City design management when developing the listings. This process also allows the City to submit additional City contact information as part of the listing, including the City's Web site address and BEACHline listings, the City's Integrated Voice Response system that allows users to call in to hear pre-recorded messages on citizen service topics.

The process for maintaining accurate blue page listings was cumbersome in the past. Additionally, the blue pages were often difficult for users to navigate when seeking City information. To increase accuracy and usability of the process and the listings, the PIO revised the procedures and format of the listings. The initiative provides enhanced blue page listings that include direct access information to the City's main phone number, our Web site, and lists all of the topics for BEACHline.

By providing easy listing access, citizens can now find the information they need more efficiently and can also access answers to most questions after hours using BEACHline or the City's Web site. The customers for this initiative are the citizens, visitors, and businesses of Virginia Beach, and potentially any recipient of the Verizon White Pages. Since the summer 2003 release of the revised listings, calls to PIO and BEACHline have dramatically increased and are attributable to the enhanced listing. The increase in percentage of calls to the 427-4111 line for September 2003 was 57%, not including calls resulting from Hurricane Isabel, and 49% for October 2003. The increase in calls to BEACHline for September 2003 was 71%, with only approximately a 2% increase expected for October 2003.

Other than work hours, no additional funding was required to develop and support this initiative. The initiative was completed in April 2003. Using feedback provided by other City agencies, the initiative will continue to evolve with each annual issue of the listings.

Enhanced Fire Records Management System Deployed

Department of Communications and Information Technology

Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) Applications Support division worked with the Fire Department to replace its incident reporting system with an improved, user-friendly, multi-faceted system called "Red Alert." This new system will provide management, application and database administrator expertise. Updating the system will benefit all citizens, fire fighters, and fire staff while meeting a necessary compliance governed by the National Fire Incident Reporting System and Virginia Fire Incident Reporting system. The new system also meets all City standards. Funding for the Fire Department is made through grants that require compliance of these mandated upgrades. This improved system not only guarantees the necessary funding of the Fire Department but also provides other needed improvements.

Reports will now provide a direct link from the City's VB911 report system. The VB911-report information can be used as a legal document and is often used in court cases. Additionally, all statistical information is reported accurately and within compliance requirements. Network environments, servers, test environments, and update rollouts were all updated and installed during the transition. Street verifications were also addressed. Alert fire incident reporting system was implemented January 6, 2003 and the VB911 link is currently being installed. This new system will allow the flexibility for the department to remain current for any future trends by the capability to upgrade and enhance the software.

Equipment Storage Efficiency Initiative

Convention and Visitors Bureau

Although the standard operating procedure for the storage of the convention center event furnishings and equipment had been in place for 20 years, the procedure and plan were not an efficient use of storage space or of staff time. The old procedure kept all the equipment of certain types together in common storage areas. A great deal of equipment was also stored on the exhibit floor (behind the telescopic seating platforms), which created a loss of space for nearly all Pavilion clients. This equipment would be moved out for select shows through the year. Although this system worked, it created inefficiencies such as extra work at certain times of the year, while at other times left some equipment completely inaccessible during events.

The new initiative is simple. Staff determined the nominal need for types of equipment and created storage layouts for major storerooms. Regularly used equipment was placed

in the Exhibit Hall storage. Equipment used less frequently was placed in the Theater storage rooms. This allows the telescopic seating platforms to be pushed back as far as possible, all year long, creating approximately 3,000 square feet of usable exhibit space that was not previously available. For example: Out of our 4,500 chairs, the majority of our events need 1,500 or fewer. Instead of storing all the chairs together, we have 1500 near the primary event area and bring additional chairs over only when needed, usually only two to three times per year.

This initiative has no execution cost. Although there are no direct monetary savings, staff time is being used more efficiently due to the improved access to frequently used equipment. Staff time is not used to "get equipment out of the way;" instead, equipment is only moved when it is needed. There are several other benefits:

- Customer appreciation of the additional space
- More efficient use of limited storage space
- Equipment is always accessible (easier logistics planning)
- Frequently used equipment is more readily available
- Additional billable space on the Exhibit Floor

Because event contracts are issued up to six months in advance of the event, recurring revenue from this additional billable space will begin in January 2004. These new, non-tax dollars will generate an estimated \$11,780 in revenue annually.

Expanded Public Information Customer Service Hours

Department of Communications and Information Technology

To enhance citizen services and increase citizen satisfaction, Communications and Information Technology's Public Information Office (PIO) extended its telephone hours in June 2003. The new hours are 7 a.m. to 8 p.m., Monday through Friday. PIO extended telephone hours to provide additional convenience and enhanced customer service to citizens.

Citizen calls for service often come in to PIO before or after normal working hours within the City. PIO believed that callers would receive better service, more efficiently by extending telephone service hours to provide a "live voice" to address citizen concerns. Expanding the call center hours provides the ability for callers to contact PIO within a 13-hour time span that allows more flexibility and a quicker resolution to their concerns. Callers to PIO include citizens and businesses of Virginia Beach, as well as visitors to the City.

Between June 2003 and September 2003, PIO handled more than 2,000 after-hours calls for service. The expanded hours consistently account for five percent of the total weekly call volume experienced by the office. The initiative was made public in June 2003 for a one-year trial period to determine effectiveness.

By expanding hours and moving to a split shift without hiring additional staff, the initiative simultaneously increased efficiency and customer service. Other than work hours, no additional funding was required to develop and support this initiative.

Extended Support Center Hours

Department of Communications and Information Technology

Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) Support Center extended its service hours from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday, to provide enhanced customer service to City members. The Support Center provides technical support to the City's approximately 3,500 computer users via 427-HELP (4357). When users call the Support Center, the technician logs the user's service request and dispatches ComIT's technical support staff to provide technical assistance to the computer user. Often, the technicians provide solutions to callers over the phone, eliminating the need to dispatch a technician. The Support Center's extended service hours also supports the City's productivity by providing computer users with assistance at the time of the day they need it most. The Support Center's new business hours became effective June 2003.

HIPAA Compliance Program

Department of Audit Services

Audit Services coordinated the City's efforts for compliance with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA). This legislation impacts certain City departments that generate, use, or rely on individually identifiable health information that is protected under this law. Departments may be impacted directly and/or indirectly in the areas of management, operations, communications (both internal and external), and information management and security.

Given the complexity of such an undertaking and the limited timeframe in which to comply, we chose a project structure that included a management level steering committee to guide the implementation of HIPAA regulations; a full-time project manager to coordinate the city-wide assessment and implementation of HIPAA regulations, and use of consulting services to provide the necessary expertise. Steering committee members worked directly with the project manager to ensure the objectives were met in a timely and efficient manner. The project manager worked with departmental representatives and consultants to assess the impact of HIPAA on the City and to implement changes necessary to ensure our compliance.

As a result, the City was able to achieve its objectives towards compliance, including completion of an assessment of the potential impact of the regulations on the City and its variety of businesses; development of procedures to ensure compliance; development of a Notice of Privacy Practices with an initial distribution to nearly 4,000 people who receive health care services from the City; development and deployment of a comprehensive online training initiative to educate nearly 1,300 workforce members; execution of Business Associate Agreements with other entities; and development of a number of forms and processes to support meeting the requirements of the law. Additionally, we set up an internal resource site on BEACHnet offering workforce members access to information, procedures, and forms related to compliance with HIPAA.

Our decision to leverage existing resources and appoint a current workforce member familiar with City operations as project manager resulted in a savings of approximately \$93,816 in project management costs, as well as allowed for development of internal expertise to ensure the City's continued compliance.

HIPAA Workforce Training

Departments of Audit Services and Communications and Information Technology

Under the federal Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), all workforce members who may use, disclose, or otherwise come into contact with Protected Health Information (PHI) are required to be trained on the organization's policies and procedures regarding protection of PHI. This equated to approximately 1,300 existing members and an estimated 220 new members each year. In addition, HIPAA requires that organizations maintain records of the training completed by its workforce members.

To accomplish this massive training effort, the Audit Services/HIPAA Compliance Program teamed with the Public Information Office (PIO) in Communication and Information Technology (ComIT) to develop an online training solution. The HIPAA Compliance Program wrote the training content in a PowerPoint presentation and developed the specifications for a database to track pertinent information on those who had completed the training module. PIO set up access to the training module on BEACHnet and built a database and input screen to house information on those who had completed the training. PIO staff also created an online report available to the HIPAA Compliance Program for inquiry into the database.

Estimates from outside sources indicated that the least expensive reputable HIPAA training product available for purchase would cost approximately \$40 per person. Based on this estimate, costs for the City's initial training would have reached \$51,480, with ongoing costs of approximately \$8,840 per year for training of an estimated 220 incoming workforce members due to normal turnover.

Because of the tight timeframe for completion of the initial training, the development of a solution that workforce members could access quickly and easily was critical. Utilizing an approach of bringing the training to the member instead of the member to the training created great economies by eliminating travel time and mileage expenses for trainees. In addition, the training module remains available online so that workforce members can return to it for review at any time. It is estimated that one half hour per workforce member was preserved as productive time instead of travel time to or from a training site. This time equates to just more than 643 hours. At an average fully fringed rate of \$20 per hour, another \$12,870 was saved by the elimination of travel requirements. The benefits of this approach continue as new staff members utilize this online training method to satisfy the HIPAA training requirements from any City work location with access to BEACHnet.

The actual costs of the implementation included approximately 60 hours of staff time in the HIPAA Compliance Program, approximately 40 hours of ComIT staff time, and four hours of other staff time for content review. The estimated staff costs were \$4,216. Since existing technology infrastructure, database, and technology architecture were used to support this initiative, no additional costs were incurred.

Implementation of City-Wide Telephone Standards

Department of Communications and Information Technology and Professional Support Development Team

In May 2003, Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) Public Information Office worked in conjunction with the City's Professional Support Development Team (PSDT) to release a set of Telephone Standards and Guidelines for use throughout the organization. The City Manager determined that the City needed to have a policy in place to assure quality customer delivery via the telephone, whether to the public or other members. The nine Telephone Standards and Guidelines provide an enterprise-wide set of standards to help ensure quality service delivery via the telephone, addressing all aspects of customer service and communication via the telephone. All City members are to adhere to the guidelines when answering an office telephone. In addition to the guidelines, the group also developed informational reference cards, brochures, and guideline booklets that also contain "best practices" information on implementing the standards within each department's business functions.

The standards and materials have been assigned to the Public Information Office (PIO) for continued revision and growth. PIO has distributed 400 manuals, 2,218 brochures, and 3,182 reference cards to City agencies since the standards were released. PIO has also provided introductory presentations and department-specific presentations to inform members regarding the standards. The presentations continue to be well received within the organization.

ComIT provided funding for the initial printing of the reference materials. No additional monetary funding was required.

Improved Identification and Directional Signs

Convention and Visitors Bureau

In spring 2003, City Council approved the expenditure of funds to design and install new directional and exterior identification signs at the Visitor Center site located at 2100 Parks Avenue. The Center, built in 1989, needed better exterior identification so guests entering the City from I-264 could more clearly and easily see and locate the building. The Center operates daily year round and assists approximately 100,000 guests annually with information on lodging, restaurants, events, attractions, and recreational opportunities. Installation of the signs was completed in early August 2003. During the next few weeks, visitation to the Center increased by more than 8% compared to the same period in 2002. The clear, inviting and visible signs welcome the guests as they enter the resort and guide them to a source of complete and accurate information about Virginia Beach and the surrounding area. These efforts are designed to offer quality service to our visitors and encourage them to vacation longer in our community.

Information Security and Privacy Office

Department of Communications and Information Technology

When reviewing the City's information systems, Communications and Information Technology (ComIT) realized the City was neither funded nor staffed adequately to address the growing number of information security and privacy issues being faced daily. Some of those issues include meeting the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) requirements, managing network security, preventing malicious computer code infections from entering the City's networks, and more. Therefore, to address these issues proactively, as well as meet the City's existing information security and privacy management needs, ComIT established the Information Security and Privacy Office (InfoSec) in November 2002.

Having InfoSec provides many advantages to the City. For example, having an Information Security Officer and Privacy Officer on staff means the City is meeting the minimum requirements for several federally mandated security and privacy standards. Also, having InfoSec means a reduction in viruses on the City's systems leading to greater network and server availability, added confidence in the integrity of the City's systems, increased productivity, and perhaps an improved bond rating resulting from more favorable audits. In addition, the City now has two officers trained and focused on industry trends related to security and privacy who are dedicated to evaluating proposed new and existing systems, establishing security and privacy standards, and developing

policies and procedures meant to maintain these standards. InfoSec has already reviewed the current state of the City's systems and is presently developing security policies. Finally, citizen information is better protected now that the City has InfoSec.

The ComIT operating budget funded the development of InfoSec.

Jury Management System

Office of the Circuit Court Judges and Department of Communication and Information Technology

The new Jury Management System has been converted from a DOS based jury management software program to a Windows environment system with enhanced operating applications to improve jury processing. The current DOS program was outdated technology and labor intensive as to functionality. The new Jury Management System will be able to utilize the services of ComIT for support. The processing of required functions is improved, more user-friendly and efficient. The system was launched on December 1, 2003.

Just-In-Time Inventory

Department of Communications and Information Technology

Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) City/Schools Printing and Mail Services division found that they were running out of space for storing materials. To solve this problem, they established a quarterly paper bids and contracts process with the City's paper vendors. This arrangement provides "just-in-time" inventory of common paper items, reduced the amount of inventory stored, and freed space on the production floor.

The new process allows the division to receive materials overnight, creating a long-term solution for the lack of storage space. As bids are made, the vendor holds that inventory until the materials are needed. Eliminating the inventory of common paper items freed and improved the workspace while enhancing productivity because members of the division are no longer required to constantly inventory items on hand. The new process also provided needed space for overflow printed pieces the division houses for customers until pick up.

The "just-in-time" method has provided effectiveness demonstrated by improved inventory control, directly resulting in a significant 25% cost reduction. This demonstration of effectiveness will be a continual benefit for years to come.

Land Records Management System

Department of Communications and Information Technology

Since 1998, Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) Application Support division has worked closely with the Clerk of the Circuit Court's Office to enter the information highway. Citizens are now able to access numerous public documents via the Internet. The new electric land records management system will allow citizens to search for real estate records, deeds, judgments, uniform commercial code (UCC) filings, wills, business names, and marriage licenses by accessing www.vblandrecords.com. Prior to this, records could only be accessed at the Clerk of the Circuit Court's Office. This efficient initiative, which was funded by the Commonwealth of Virginia's Technology Trust Fund, will improve services for citizens, various City departments, as well as staff of the Clerk of the Circuit Court's Office. This project was completed June 16, 2003.

Local Vehicle Registration and Decal Transition Public Information Program (n)

Office of the City Manager

For generations most Virginia municipalities have required their citizens to purchase a decal for their vehicle's windshield to prove they have paid their personal property tax. Virginia Beach is the first local government in the state to eliminate the annual ritual of scraping and pasting the dreaded "City sticker," while maintaining the important revenue stream it has provided. This marketing communications campaign educated citizens about a relatively complex change in their routines while advancing their understanding of, and cooperation with, an unusual but more convenient way of doing business with their local government. For its efforts, the City won a 2003 Savvy Award of Excellence for Marketing Campaigns from the national City-County Communications and Marketing Association.

Mapping Intranet Application

Department of Communications and Information Technology

The Departments of Communication and Information Technology (ComIT) and Public Utilities (PU) collaborated to provide a custom Public Utilities Intranet mapping site. The site utilizes PU information with overlays on common GIS map layers to enable staff to review Public Utilities' assets, service crew dispatch information, and analyze service areas and water quality. More than 100 utility workers who repair or design services can now access this essential information. Specifically engineers, technicians, and operational workers need to review maps prior to working on sites. To maintain the system, PU users meet to discuss the overall appearance and effectiveness of the system. The PU group makes suggestions to the GIS technical support team, who updates the maps to meet the needs of users.

The new system has increased productivity and improved customer service. Services are improved to the citizens because PU members are more efficient at repairing and

designing services. In addition, because of the new system, PU members spend less time researching information enabling staff more time to spend on completing customers' service calls. Both field workers and staff have been using this system since December 2002.

Multi-Rater Feedback for Command Staff

Department of Police

The Police Department, in collaboration with Human Resources, has conducted multi-rater feedback for the Command Staff. Each participant receives feedback from two superiors, three peers, and five subordinates. The multi-rater feedback instrument used is the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI). The instrument is based on the best selling book The Leadership Challenge, 3rd Edition. The instrument measures the frequency with which the leader utilizes the five practices of exemplary leadership: modeling the way, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, enabling others to act, and encouraging the heart. Each rated person participates in a feedback seminar in which he or she is taught how to interpret the results of his or her LPI feedback report. The rated person is then led through a process of personal reflection and the initial stages of developing a self-development plan. Each rated person is also provided with copies of The Leadership Challenge, 3rd Edition, and Credibility, and a planner to assist in tracking their self-development plan. This method is also incorporated in the West Point Leadership development programs.

Member Survey on Quality of Work Life

Department of Human Resources

After thorough, extensive research and various Member input, Member Communications worked with a research firm to conduct a Member Survey to determine a foundation of what type of quality of work life we are providing to our Members. Our goal is to conduct this Member Survey every two years. The research firm provided us with their analysis and results. We then took these results and helped to further analyze departmental scores by providing personalized presentations to more than 700 Members comprised of Management Leadership, Department Directors, Department Leadership, Member Conversations, and to various departments. In addition to the analysis, Member Communications and the Organization Development Office worked together with several departments to gain additional feedback concerning statements that received low scores. We held focus groups and asked Members: "If you were in charge, what changes would you make to create improvements?" This feedback was then shared with the participating Department Directors to assist them in creating their Departmental Action Plan.

Multi-Function Device Deployment

Department of Public Libraries

In 2003, Automated Services, in cooperation with ComIT, was able to replace 80% of network and standalone printers with Multi-Function Devices (MFDs). This involved setting up new data and fax lines, ordering the right MFD for each location based on volume of printing and functional needs, and coordinating delivery to several libraries throughout the City. Automated Services also orchestrated ComIT and Xerox technicians to install, set-up, and test for production use of each MFD installed in the libraries.

By completing so many MFD deliveries and set-ups, Automated Services was able to retire (from the Library's inventory) 15 printers and six fax machines. This has produced a \$15,840 savings for maintenance and repairs.

Neither Rain Nor Sleet...

Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse

Many of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, Substance Abuse Programs are located miles away from the administrative offices at Pembroke 6 and the Municipal Center. The programs have been on a courier route for some years, which has been a great benefit to our mail delivery. Programs often would run out of stamps or have to wait for postage to be added to the postage machines. As our programs have grown over the years, the cost of postage has substantially increased.

Staff collaborated on solving this dilemma by suggesting that we send our mail through the City's mailroom and avoid purchasing stamps altogether. In addition, not only was the City's rate lower (.352 per stamp as opposed to .37), the City's system would allow local mail to be delivered the next day as it is driven to the Norfolk Distribution Post Office each evening. Another benefit for us was that the cost of each piece of mail was now more accurately determined.

The plan was implemented in September 2003. We had 2,316 pieces of mail delivered in the first month with an anticipated annual total of approximately 75,000 pieces. We expect to save approximately \$1,500 annually on postage.

Organizational Climate Survey

Department of Police

The Police Department has conducted an organizational climate survey. The department surveyed 457 members using the Campbell Organizational Survey™ (COS). This instrument measures member perceptions in 16 areas that affect individual and organizational performance. Reports were generated which reflect the perceptions of all members of the department and comparison of perceptions based on organizational

assignment, rank, and the demographic areas of race, gender, age, and tenure. These reports will be utilized to establish baselines to chart performance improvements in all 16 areas. Teams will be assigned to assess the reports and develop and implement improvement plans to address the areas of interest. The COS™ will be readministered in 12 to 18 months.

Partnership and Cooperation with the State Board of Elections

Office of the General Registrar

There was cooperation with the State Board of Directors in developing and providing the data necessary for use in the Electronic Pollbook and Electronic Lookup device pilot project. The assistance and cooperation helped with the success of the pilot projects. Together, we were able to have the data current before the election with all absentee balloting and new voter registrations.

Postage Rate Reduction Through Outsourcing the Metering of Daily Mail

Office of the City Treasurer

In January 2003, the City Treasurer's mailroom, in an effort to reduce costs, turned over the metering of our daily mail to the City's Bulk Mail Service Provider (BMSP). The rate we were previously paying in house was .37 per piece. The BMSP is able to meter our mail at .278 per piece, a cost savings of .092 per piece. They are able to accomplish this with a discount given by the United States Postal Service for the amount of bulk mail processed on a daily basis. The savings associated with this initiative averages more than \$21,000 per year. The costs avoided in FY03 due to this initiative equal approximately \$1,285, which include the annual rental of a postage meter and a rate protection pac. In 2002, we processed on the average 900 mail pieces per day in-house, excluding our large biannual mailings for Personal Property and Real Estate, which are outsourced to the BMSP. These pieces include customer receipts, delinquent notifications, requests for information, and other miscellaneous notifications. Having the daily mail outsourced has saved approximately one hour of time per day in the metering of our mail, which has allowed for a small increase in productivity. This time is now spent in the processing of incoming mail, which allows for customers to have their receipts/requests processed a little faster.

Prism Deployment

Department of Communications and Information Technology

Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) Systems Support division recognized the need for a centralized/automated software application deployment system. The number of ComIT members required to visit each of the City's computers to

install applications in a network environment as large as the City's was exhaustive as well as non-productive. When ComIT assumed responsibility for all software licensing city-wide, including installations, the desire for an automated network-wide application deployment tool changed from a luxury to a necessity. Once the decision was made to migrate from Novell to Active Directory, analysis began to find similar functionality for the new platform. "Prism Deploy" was the product selected for centralized/automated software application deployment within the City.

In June 2003, ComIT began implementing Prism Deploy. Prism enables ComIT to "push out" or deliver software installs, operating system patches, emergency repairs, and other changes from a centralized location within ComIT to members' computers in less than an hour, as opposed to visiting each individual computer. Therefore, Prism enables ComIT to service the City's computers more quickly and standardize procedures, resulting in improved customer service for members. For example, installs that would have taken several weeks can be reduced to a few hours. In addition, having Prism in place enables ComIT members to focus attention on other pressing projects.

The ComIT operating budget funded the implementation of Prism. Installation of Prism was completed in June 2003, and the application was upgraded and re-engineered in October 2003.

Recurring Journal Vouchers

Department of Finance

In Finance, there are many journal entries that need to be made to various funds each month or periodically through the fiscal year. Although the dollar values of these journals change, the debits/credits often are from the same account code structure. This process helps reduce the manual entry of these journals each month. While reviewing a process for improvement, it was noted that the 'recurring journal' functionality may be beneficial to others. After discussions with staff, a two-hour refresher training was designed and planned. Staff were introduced to this feature and provided with support in designing their recurring voucher templates. More than 10 new templates were designed for multi-line journals, saving extensive account code keying each month. This effort also minimizes typographical errors.

There were 11 Finance members who received training and began developing new recurring journal templates. More than 11 templates were developed, containing more than 80 lines of accounts. Most of these templates will be used monthly to more efficiently generate journals.

Reinstating In-house Custodial Services in Lieu of Contracting

Department of Public Works

The cleaning of the City's facilities is accomplished through a combination of City members and Contract Custodial Services. Currently, City members service all buildings at the Municipal Center and all other City facilities are serviced by cleaning contractors. While this system has worked well in the past, the level of service at nine City facilities has declined to an unacceptable level while the hourly cost for contractual services has escalated. The City can save money and improve service by cleaning these additional buildings using City staff instead of cleaning contractors. The buildings targeted are Automotive Services, Animal Control, Helicopter Shop, Mosquito Control, Pendleton Child Services, Police K-9, Police Training Gym, Pungo Police Sub-Station, and the Special Operations and SWAT Trailer. A five-year cost analysis was conducted to compare the cost for private contractors with costs for City staff to provide the same services. The analysis projects that the City will save approximately \$130,000 over five years by adding staff to provide the services in-house.

Resource Management Plan CD-ROM Enhancement

Department of Communications and Information Technology

The Resource Management Plan (RMP) CD-ROM Enhancement Project was a collaborative activity involving Communications and Information Technology (ComIT) and Management Services in an effort to enhance the City Budget CD-ROM. ComIT managed the project. The project's developmental phase was begun in December 2002. The project was completed and the new CD was distributed in June 2003.

Prior to developing the RMP CD-ROM Enhancement Project with ComIT, Management Services had implemented an HTML CD version of the FY02/03 Resource Management Plan (City Budget). After review of the original version, ComIT determined that Video Services had the skills, tools, and resources necessary to assist Management Services with enhancing the CD product. Management Services agreed with Video Services' final recommendations and teamed with the ComIT division to develop the improved product. The project had the following goals:

- To enhance the existing CD-ROM version of the RMP.
- To create a user-friendly product that is expandable and grows to meet the information needs of the City as it relates to the budget and the budget creation process.
- To implement the proposed enhancements for the FY04 RMP release.

The result of the project was the creation of a CD that used technology to improve customer service and increase productivity for those attempting to review the resource management plan. The CD includes an explanation of the RMP, a glossary of terms used in the document, and self-guided tutorials on how to use the CD and review the budget document. The CD is distributed internally and externally to customers who need or request the City's RMP on CD instead of the printed document.

Video Services provided Management Services with 1,000 copies of the enhanced CD for distribution to customers. The CD-ROM project design and creation was funded through the Video Services division budget. The CD was mass-produced by an outside contractor.

Route Distribution Consolidation

Department of Communications and Information Technology

In 2003, Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) City/Schools Printing and Mail Services Division began researching and reviewing the routes of mail trucks and printing trucks. The division found that current processes reflected a duplication of vehicles routes. It was apparent that the trucks were shadowing each other on a daily basis.

This discovery prompted City/Schools Printing and Mail Services to implement a strategic plan to optimize these routes by eliminating duplication. The trucks now run separate routes providing the flexibility to add on stops without straining the drivers. This improvement has increased productivity, as well as improved the response to customers needs. Equally important, a reduction in City garage charges will provide a verifiable cost savings.

Sealable Checks

Department of Finance

The Finance Department issues and mails more than 78,000 City vendor checks and more than 18,000 school vendor checks each year through the financial system ViBES. This initiative was implemented to reduce the amount of time required to prepare these checks for mailing to our vendors. The sealable check process eliminated the requirement to stuff each check into an envelope prior to mailing and was a joint effort between Communications and Information Technology and Finance.

As a result of implementing the sealable check process, approximately 80% of the checks processed through ViBES do not require additional handling to prepare them for mailing. This reduction in handling has increased customer service and productivity within the Accounts Payable office and has resulted in a cost avoidance of more than \$5,000 annually.

Shrink/Swell Soils - Nawney

Department of Planning

The Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (USBC) requires all localities to have a policy for shrink/swell soils. Virginia Beach is fortunate to have Nawney as the only shrink/swell soil type found within the City. The Permits and Inspections staff worked with the City's GIS staff to identify the shrink/swell soils on the City's maps and display the information on the City's Web site, along with Air Installations Compatible Use Zones noise zones and floodplains.

Since the shrink/swell soils information will be available on the City's Web site, the consultant/ developer/ builder/owner will be able to use the same information as the City staff to determine the possible presence of shrink/swell soils. The consultant/developer/ builder/owner may choose to challenge the map by providing a soils report, prepared by a qualified professional, to Permits and Inspections when applying for a building permit or have an engineered foundation designed by a qualified professional for the structures located on the lots with shrink/swell soils.

The Development Service Center development plan review staff will identify the possible presence of shrink/swell soils during the residential subdivision and residential site plan reviews. This early identification of shrink/swell soils will save the developer/builder time by avoiding a delay during construction.

Telecommunications Expands Intranet Information

Department of Communications and Information Technology

The service offerings of Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) Telecommunications division (Telecom) are becoming increasingly diverse and complex to meet customer needs. Additionally, Telecom's staff of only eight members is responsible for more than 7,000 phone lines (landline and wireless). In an effort to establish efficient methods for distributing information regarding Telecom's products and services and to empower City members seeking Telecom-related information, most of Telecom's interdepartmental request forms, help guides, and online phone tutorials are now available via the City's Intranet. Telecom management determined that it would support members' productivity to provide its information services via the Intranet, available 24 hours a day, seven days per week, supplementing the help desk available by phone during traditional business hours. Also, because Telecom's Intranet site provides up-to-date, standardized forms – most of which can be submitted via the Intranet system – members' productivity will not be delayed as they wait to submit service requests during normal business hours.

Telecom did not need additional funding, training, or software to support the development of the division's Intranet offerings. All Web development and technical/ telecom-related documentation was created through collaboration among ComIT

members. This initiative will be an ongoing effort, continuing to expand to reflect Telecom service offerings and City members' needs.

The Beach Scene at a Glance Newsletter

Convention and Visitors Bureau

One of the competitive methods identified in the Convention and Visitors Bureau business plan is the necessity to create and manage a positive customer experience. The department operates two year round and two seasonal visitor service centers to foster positive customer service, assisting more than 100,000 customers each year. The staff receives information and brochures on a variety of local events, special attractions, and numerous activities that would specifically be of interest to the guests. The visitor service centers provide guests with accurate and complete information on accommodations, attractions, events, recreational opportunities, and historic sites. However, the volume of events and available brochures can, at times, be overwhelming to guests who request information quickly. To meet this need, the visitor services staff--in conjunction with the event sponsors and attraction managers--identified a way to consolidate some of this information into an easy to read format. A newsletter was created to distribute at the City's visitor center locations. A goal of this project was to provide the guests with accurate and specific information that could give them reason to extend their stay or perhaps assist them in planning a future trip to Virginia Beach. The first edition of the newsletter was published in June 2003. It is published monthly in the summer and bi-monthly during the other seasons of the year. The newsletter has been well received by customers and the tourism industry. Depending upon the season, 500 – 800 newsletters are distributed at each printing. The newsletter has helped us move forward as we pursue our goal of service delivery that exceeds our customer's expectations.

The e-Ticket Services Expand at VBgov.com

Department of Communications and Information Technology

Working closely with the Clerk of the General District Court, Communications and Information Technology released an expanded online ticket payment system in May 2003. The expansion allows for online payment of moving violations and other police citations through the City's Web portal, VBgov.com. The system provides a direct link to the payment collection system maintained through the Supreme Court of Virginia's Case Management System. Any citizen or visitor who receives a traffic violation or police citation is eligible to use the system. Virginia Beach was the first municipality to undertake the process and was the test case for statewide implementation. Since e-Tickets was implemented, 19 other localities in Virginia have begun participation in this process.

The e-Tickets initiative was pursued and implemented because the volume of tickets issued and eligible for prepayment by citizens necessitated exploring alternative payment

options. Citizens needed a method of payment that would be quick, convenient, and not dependent upon interaction with Court personnel to complete, enhancing customer service to citizens. All transactions that are paid online result in a reduction in the number of phone, mail, or in-person transactions that need to be handled by General District court personnel. By providing an online payment alternative, the existing Court staff can focus their efforts on processing non-online payments in a more timely fashion.

The e-Ticket system continues to be a very popular feature of the Web site and has received praise from citizens, businesses, and the media for its ease of use and comprehensiveness. From May 1, 2003, when the initiative started, through November 1, 2003, 1,214 transactions have been completed online generating revenue of \$133,971.

The customer agency for this initiative was the General District Court, Traffic division. In regards to the involvement of the City, this initiative was completed using existing operational staff so no additional funds were required.

The Virginia Supreme Court, who maintains the Case and Financial Management System, partnered with the Virginia Information Providers Network to handle the processing of online credit card payments.

Uniform and Supply Point of Sale Inventory System

Department of Police

The department installed its uniform and supply/point of sale inventory system to upgrade the tracking of uniforms, equipment, and supplies issued to personnel and units. It also provides a point-of-sale system for the Cop Shop. This system will also provide much better documentation of equipment inventories.

Upgrade of Phone System

Department of Health

The Department of Health upgraded a phone switch and voice mail system to allow for increased call volume and enhanced call-processing capabilities. The upgrade resulted in the ability for staff to handle higher caller volume and more options to internally route calls in the best possible manner.

VBgov.com Receives International Recognition (n)

Department of Communications and Information Technology

Within calendar year 2003, VBgov.com received international recognition from the Web community when the International Web Page Award program presented the site with a

Certificate of Creative Achievement. To receive this recognition, VBgov.com competed with Web designs produced by Web development firms, ad agencies, major magazines, and others from across the globe. The International Web Page Awards draws entries from Australia, Argentina, Austria, Belgium, Canada, China, Denmark, Egypt, Ecuador, England, Finland, France, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the Netherlands, and the United States. The International Web Page Awards bring recognition to graphic artists, Web site designers, advertising agencies, corporations, companies, and individuals who wish to spotlight their creativity in interactive design. Judges for the competition are recruited solely from the entries received. Judges review entries utilizing a 26-question critique based on the attributes of the Web site. VBgov.com was the only local government Web site to be recognized in the competition.

Within 2003, VBgov.com received several other awards, including an e-Gov 2003 Trailblazer Award from the Government Solutions Center, and honorable mention "Top Pick" in the MuniNet Guide and Review, a Best Technology Services Award of Excellence from the City-County Communications and Marketing Association, and a 2002 Best of the Web Award from the Center for Digital Government.

The VBgov.com Web portal averages more than 12,000 users per day and nearly half a million visitors each month. Users of VBgov.com include Virginia Beach citizens, businesses, and potential visitors to the City. The effectiveness of VBgov.com is measured through online surveys completed by visitors to the site, e-mails sent to the City's Web team, and the results of Web award programs.

VBTV Talent Search

Department of Communications and Information Technology

Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) Video Services division (VBTV) has conducted bi-annual talent searches since the early 1990s. The talent pool was established to locate volunteer talent to host or narrate VBTV programs. The last audition was in 2000. As of 2003, the talent pool had dwindled to its lowest level in five years. Talent auditions were held in May 2003, selections were made in June, and the first person selected to appear on a VBTV program because of the search was in July 2003.

The 2003 talent search was a great success. More than 50 people participated in the audition process. As a result, Video Services has the most talented pool of individuals from which to draw in the division's history. The new pool includes everyone from television news producers, to burgeoning actors, students, retirees, and housewives. Members of the talent pool are from Virginia Beach and the surrounding cities of Chesapeake, Norfolk, and Newport News. The faces and voices for VBTV programming truly reflect the diverse population of Virginia's largest City.

Video Services uses the talent pool as the need arises. Since Video Services produces more than 180 productions per year that require "talent," it would be cost prohibitive to use professional (paid) talent for these productions. In addition, the talent pool provides a diverse group of aspiring actors, news anchors, and/or reporters to support and deliver vital information about the organization's programs and activities to the residents, visitors, and businesses of Virginia Beach. Also, the talent audition process reduces the need to search for narrators and hosts on a project-by-project basis. Some members of the talent pool work on regular series, while others handle the individual topic programs that occur based on the needs of City and School initiatives.

Last year alone, VBTV saw the contribution of 248 volunteer hours valued at \$5,000. In addition, by using the audition process, forming a talent pool and drawing on that resource as projects are requested, VBTV staff save an average of 7.5 hours per production creating a service enhancement for the division's customers through increased productivity within VBTV. No additional funding was required to implement and manage the talent pool.

ViBES Training Addresses Advanced User Needs

Department of Finance

A new training program was added this year to the Virginia Beach Enterprise System (ViBES) financial accounting system courses. The Advanced Users Training course was designed to address extending features and functionality of day-to-day users. This training focused on expanding the knowledge base of daily users so they can maximize their use of the system.

The evaluations from the course support the need and appreciation for this course. The advanced training allows users to better utilize data, be able to identify how to access information (reports, queries, both, other), be able to establish short-cuts, easy ways of using the system, reduce problem calls, and improve user effectiveness. The users served by this training often respond to requests from citizens, Council, and management. This training will help access data for response faster and more efficiently.

Video Services Relocation Spurs Quality, Productivity, and Technical Enhancements

Department of Communications and Information Technology

Communications and Information Technology (ComIT) Video Services Division moved staff, equipment, and operations to the Advanced Technology Center (ATC) in January 2003. In addition, the division implemented advanced video equipment. With the relocation and migration to a digital tape format, Video Services is now positioned to be a viable communications outlet for the City and Schools for years to come.

Video Services' VBTV studio and production facilities were previously located in a building unable to sufficiently meet the division's unique needs. The ATC's design grouped "like"

activities and provided an infrastructure and cabling plant for Video Services that allowed appropriate sharing of files and video resources, as well as the space and infrastructure needed to support a television facility.

Making the move to the ATC has enhanced VBTV's productivity. In concert with the relocation, Video Services migrated to a digital video acquisition and playback system that produces high-quality video. The equipment and infrastructure improvements avoided potential equipment failure by replacing outdated and hard to maintain equipment. The upgrades also allow high-quality video transfers and resource sharing among all production facilities. Also, the new studio is nearly 30% larger than the previous location enabling Video Services to maintain three active studio sets and saving a minimum of 10 staff-hours per program that would have been needed to adjust the studio equipment. In addition, Video Services can now tape multiple studio shows on the same day, further increasing productivity. Finally, the studio's new generator, power back-up system will enable VBTV to be dependable in situations of inclement weather and/or natural or man-made disasters. During the move, Video Services experienced less than an hour of down or "off air" time.

Funding for the move and the new equipment was provided by a combination of the Capital Improvement Fund, building furniture and equipment budgets, and the Video Services Cox Communications grant fund.

Virginia Beach City Page (n)

Office of the City Manager

The City works to enhance communications with its citizens and believed City Page could be a public relations tactic that would help accomplish that goal. According to research, citizens wanted more information shared earlier, more often, and free of any form of bias. City Page was developed as part of a plan to improve two-way communication between government and the people we serve. A Communications Plan Rollout targeting the support of key internal audiences was also developed. After working with key internal audiences, a news release was distributed along with developed Frequently Asked Questions to answer potential questions from the media and citizens. We developed a survey and respondents said City Page contained useful information with 88% of respondents wanting to see City Page continued. The president of the Council of Civic Organizations supported City Page as a way to keep the public informed. Overall, the reaction to the initiative has been very positive from City Council and Virginia Beach citizens and other municipalities. City Page is printed twice monthly in The Virginian-Pilot including current, topical, unfiltered information that enhances communications with citizens, reaching its goal. City Page won the 2003 APEX Grand Award, the highest award for Meganewspapers and Newspapers from The Awards for Publication Excellence. The 2003 Communicator Awards Print Media competition also recognized City Page for excellence in government newsletters.

Virginia Commonwealth University Masters Degree in Gerontology Program

Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse

Thirty-four staff members (in Social Services and Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse) have formed an educational cohort group to complete a Masters Degree in Gerontology from Virginia Commonwealth University. The 34 staff who completed the Masters Program in Gerontology will enhance the two agency's services to our City's fast growing elderly population. An enhanced knowledge base will enable staff social workers to develop new initiatives in Gerontology.

Volunteer Recognition Program

Department of Museums and Cultural Arts

When the volunteer program began at Virginia Marine Science Museum (VMSM) in 1986, recognition was formal and occurred on a yearly basis. All volunteers, regardless of age, were invited to an annual evening recognition reception that included an address from each section supervisor, distribution of pins and certificates, and remarks from the museum's Executive Director. In addition to this event, a Fish Fry was held every fall and included family, friends, and museum staff. While the Fish Fry was a popular, well-attended event, the evening reception was not. Without the volunteers attending the event, it was difficult to recognize them. To address the changing needs of this audience, and assure that one of the museum's most vital resources was recognized and maintained, the staff changed the recognition process to be more personal and sincere. Now, throughout the year, smaller more intimate events are held. The VMSM Stranding Team held its annual meeting with refreshments in January. The Docent, Museum stores, clerical, and exhibits volunteers were recognized with a luncheon, and youth volunteers had a cookout beach party.

Web Pages for BEACHnet and VBgov.com

Office of the City Clerk

The City Clerk's office has developed Web pages for the City's Intranet Site (BEACHnet.com) and Internet Sites (VBgov.com). The City Council agenda is posted immediately on the Web site. This has not only eliminated mailing of the brief (summary) agenda, but also the printing of approximately 36 agendas. This has resulted annually in labor and material savings of approximately \$47,000. Also, the Office of the City Clerk is now responsible for the immediate placement of all presentations made to City Council on the City's Web page. The City Council and Wetlands Board Minutes, Data Sheets, and member listing of all Boards and Commissions with their names, addresses, and phone numbers appear on this site.

Finally, the pursuit has become a reality that citizens, as well as the City Council and administrative departments, may access all the City Clerk's historical records electronically. Available documents are organized into category folders and users can also perform a keyword search.

Webvision Implementation

Department of Health

The Department of Health implemented Webvision, a new Patient Care software system, to consolidate all local districts' data. The goal is to provide one central access point for patient information, including immunization records. Our district had to complete extensive preparations including data cleanup, user training, and hardware re-configuration to prepare for this new system. We will also be able to use this system to generate reports on the population that we serve.

Workforce Planning and Development

Departments of Communications and Information Technology and Human Resources

Workforce planning and development is a process which will fundamentally change the manner in which the City manages the organization's human resources. A systematic approach to workforce planning can facilitate more efficient and accurate alignment of the workforce to meet organizational goals, commitments, and priorities. The results can be a more effective utilization of members' knowledge, skills and abilities, increased opportunities for high potential workers, enhanced career counseling, staff development, identification of current and future training needs, and the strengthening of a diverse and multicultural workforce.

The City is faced with new challenges and opportunities due to changes in technology, increasing changes in the work required to satisfy changing customer needs and expectations, and changes in its workforce due to aging and attrition. To ensure the organization is prepared to meet these challenges, it is becoming increasingly important that the City plan for future workforce needs. City leaders recognized that Workforce Planning and Development is a strategy that supports the continuous effort to maintain an effective, professional workforce.

To meet this challenge the City has developed WorkPad. This integrated Workforce Planning and Development application allows Virginia Beach to analyze workforce needs in an efficient, timely manner to facilitate more efficient and accurate alignments of the workforce to meet organizational goals, commitments, and priorities. Human Resources (HR) manages the initiative with technical support from Communications and Information Technology (ComIT). WorkPad is an Intranet application that will be available to all City members for career planning and development. Through the system, job descriptions will

be online instead of in various word processing documents housed only in HR. In addition, members' Training records will be centralized on the system.

The success of the initiative will be measured through the development of Department workforce plans. Phase I of the initiative was rolled out to pilot departments in August 2003.

Quality and Productivity Initiatives for Quality Physical Environment

Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area Site Plans

Department of Planning

In an effort to streamline processes, the Development Services Center (DSC) developed a new site plan review process, review and preparation checklist, and notes for single family sites in the Resource Protection Area of the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Area (CBPA). This effort included staff members from the DSC, current Planning, Zoning, Civil Inspections, Permits and Inspections, and Management Support Services. This information is available on the DSC Web site at http://www.VBgov.com/dept/planning/dsc/review_process.asp.

The new CBPA review process and checklist provide concise guidance, information, and plan requirements for review staff, consultants, builders, and homeowners. The process coordinates the review and approval by multiple Planning Department divisions, thereby saving our customers considerable time when obtaining building permits. This process is being used as a model for developing similar processes, guidelines, and checklists for all single family and duplex site plans reviewed by the DSC.

City to Administer Five Virginia Department of Transportation Roadway Projects

Department of Public Works

In response to programming resolutions adopted by the City, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) programmed five major roadway projects and selected consultant engineering firms for each of the projects. Subsequent state budget shortfalls in transportation funding caused VDOT to cancel the contracts for engineering services and instead endeavor to perform the engineering design functions "in-house," thereby taxing existing available resources. The City has requested, and VDOT has approved, the administration by the City of the design, site acquisition, and construction of the projects. This initiative will allow the City to directly and more effectively coordinate, manage, and provide resolution of project issues in a timely manner.

The five projects will provide relief for the motoring public from severe traffic congestion at the Princess Anne/Kempsville/Witchduck Roads intersection and along the heavily traveled corridor of Witchduck Road from Bonney Road to Virginia Beach Boulevard (Witchduck Road Phases I & II). Improvements to Indian River Road from Lynnhaven Parkway to Elbow Road will help alleviate increasing traffic currently served by a two-

lane rural road. Improvements to Elbow Road will provide a key linkage between Princess Anne and Indian River Roads and will complete a cross-City east-west corridor.

The City's share of the project costs, approximately \$4 million, is appropriated for activities currently programmed for the projects. The Princess Anne/Kempsville/Witchduck Roads intersection project is fully funded, while the remaining four projects are funded for design and partial acquisition. The City is executing design contracts with selected consultant engineering firms and will be aggressively pursuing design of these projects.

City-Wide Homes (n)

Department of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation

For the first time, using City-controlled federal funds, private investor equity through the Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program was utilized to acquire and rehabilitate vacant housing units in the City, as well as creating quality affordable housing units. This was accomplished by providing funds to the Virginia Beach Community Development Corporation (VBCDC).

This initiative resulted in the creation of 13 new affordable housing units, the rehabilitation of 19 existing units, and the investment of \$1,350,000 of private funding into the improvement of Virginia Beach's housing stock. Housing received an Excellence in Housing award from the Virginia Housing Development Authority for their outstanding work.

City-Wide PBX System Expansion

Department of Communications and Information Technology

In 2003, Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) Telecommunications division (Telecom) expanded the City's PBX (Private Branch Exchange) system.

The PBX project provided additional call routing capability for the City's phone systems, which now allows telephone calls to be routed to the proper recipient more efficiently. In addition, the new PBX system provides twice as many possible phone lines while using the same amount of physical storage space. This allows the City's telephone needs to expand without additional space, thus, allowing the City to avoid the cost of expanding its storage areas. With renovation costs and additional space at a premium, this is a cost avoidance of more than \$250,000.

The new equipment is currently in use and functioning properly. All City members, the citizens at large, the business community, and visitors are served by this initiative because of the efficient, enhanced customer service the system enables. Additionally, this positions the City to provide expanded and enhanced services as additional users

and needs arise. Often times the technology is behind the need, however, with this initiative, we are positioned for the future.

Funding for this initiative was provided by the ComIT retained earnings fund with no impact on the general fund or other initiatives.

Cost Participation Agreements

Department of Public Utilities

Cost Participation Agreements allow Public Utilities to participate in planning and constructing utilities in new developing areas. This allows the department to partially fund water and sanitary sewer facilities beyond what is currently needed for the new development. This participation results in a fully coordinated and integrated utility system provided at the lowest cost to the customers. By partnering with developers, certain utilities construction and planning are coordinated with the developer at the time of new construction allowing for the future completion and expansion of the system to be done in a more efficient and less costly manner.

Two cost participation projects were completed this year: Nimmo Parkway East Waterline Extension and Red Mill Utility Extension for Parcels G-1, G-2, and G-3. These projects combined provided a cost savings of \$145,609 and cost avoidance of \$235,412.

The Nimmo Parkway East project installed 364 feet of 12-inch ductile iron water line planned for a future CIP water line extension project, simultaneously with the developer's construction.

The Red Mill Utility Extensions project allowed the City to participate in the lowering of an existing sanitary sewer casing pipe with increased slope. This will ensure that future connections to the public sanitary sewer system can be made to this section pipe and maintain minimum cleansing velocities.

Geographical Information System - Information Management System Interface

Department of Public Utilities

Public Utilities maintains its asset inventory by recording survey and record drawing data into its Geographical Information System (GIS) in the Engineering division. The Operations division uses an Information Management System (IMS) to process work orders against Public Utilities' inventory of assets. The Operations division relies upon Engineering to provide a current and complete inventory of infrastructure assets, but unfortunately, the GIS and IMS are two separate databases. This has been addressed in the past by way of a manual transfer (i.e., a "migration") of inventory record data from the Engineering database to the Operations database. This migration required significant

time and cost to manually transfer records from the GIS in Engineering to the IMS in Operations, so it was not cost effective enough to be done frequently. Transferring updated inventory records from GIS to IMS would require several days of consultant time to make the transfer, to perform quality control, and to clean up bad records. This cost was estimated to be \$2,500 per update.

This project evaluated current software options that would ease this process, minimize the cost, and allow updates to occur more frequently (i.e., a monthly or weekly basis). Total cost for the software solution equaled \$18,360 for the first year and \$3,000 annually for software maintenance. After evaluating costs over a five-year period and assuming that updates would be performed monthly, the five-year savings amounted to \$116,640 (60 months x \$2,500/month vs. \$18,360 + \$3,000/year x five years), or \$23,328/year.

The greatest benefit to Operations is having a complete and current inventory of infrastructure assets to track maintenance history. This improves the ability to manage assets and to recognize when and where major repairs and replacements are necessary. The Operations division is now able to complete a backlog of work orders to be recorded in the IMS. With few exceptions, all new work orders can be entered into the IMS today, linked to 400,000 line-item assets compared with approximately 211,000 assets prior to this project. The Engineering division completed this project with support from its GIS consultant and the Operations division.

Geographical Information System Map Maintenance

Department of Public Utilities

Public Utilities began managing its mapping and infrastructure data records for water and sanitary sewer in the Geographical Information System (GIS) in 1997. Map maintenance work orders were accumulating faster than staff could process them with the new GIS. Through use of contract services, a backlog of more than 900 work orders were processed through November 2003, eliminating the backlog.

Completion of the backlog resulted in a more current and complete inventory, valuation, and mapping of assets. Map maintenance is being completed within 90 days from the day survey data is collected. Internal customers (meter readers, maintenance crews, Miss Utilities, and firefighters) and external customers (developers and citizens) benefit from having more current and complete water and sanitary sewer maps and data. Cost savings will exist in the form of efficiencies gained by having more complete and current data available to maintenance crews, but it is difficult to quantify these costs from existing records. Costs can be avoided by ensuring excavation work by others does not damage our facilities, facilitated by Miss Utility being able to mark the location of all existing underground utilities before work begins. Current map of hydrants also enhance fire protection services in ways that cannot be measured in dollars. The project was completed by the Engineering division and its GIS consultant.

Grand Opening

Department of Public Libraries

On October 5, 2003, the Princess Anne Area Library was opened to the public. This branch is the first in the line of newly designed libraries that offer new, more convenient, friendly service to the public. At this location, the Information Specialists are stationed on the service floor of the library where they can greet and assist customers with their information and reading needs without need for the customer to stand in line for service. A drive-up window makes pick-up and drop off of materials convenient, particularly for customers with mobility problems and parents who might not want to have to get out of the car with young children. Customers are also able to pickup their reserves on the floor of the library and, in February, self check-out stations will allow them to check out their reserves and other materials without standing in line at the Help Desk. The branch also includes special area for teens, storytimes, and has a computer lab with word processing software and Internet access so youth and adults can work on homework and other projects in a separate area of the library.

The Grand Opening event on October 5 proved that the neighborhood surrounding the Princess Anne Library had certainly been waiting for this library to open. In the three hours that the event was happening, the library had more than 2,400 people walk through the doors to see the branch and check out materials. Customers also enjoyed the community street fair the library provided in the parking lot of the building. Many community organizations, businesses, and City departments participated in the event, making it a big success.

Grit Dewatering & Transfer Facility

Department of Public Utilities

Public Utilities provides sanitary sewer service to approximately 128,000 customers. There are more than 1,400 miles of gravity sanitary sewer pipes that convey the sewerage from the customers to the regional sewer treatment plants operated by the Hampton Roads Sanitation District.

A normal sanitary sewer maintenance function is to clean the debris from the sewer pipes on a periodic basis. This minimizes the potential for sewer blockages in the pipes, which can cause a sewer to overflow into the streets or back up into homes. Pending Environmental Protection Agency regulations also will require an increased level of sewer cleaning.

Public Utilities staff reviewed the regulations and identified a need to improve the process of dewatering the debris removed from the sewer system prior to disposal in the landfill. Staff identified several alternatives and determined a Sewer Residuals Handling Facility, located near the Utility Operations building on Dam Neck Road, was the most

cost effective alternative. This facility became operational in March 2003. The facility enables the department to process more material than prior practices and at a lower cost. The material is dewatered then disposed of at the City landfill.

Prior to construction and operation of the grit dewatering and transfer facility, the grit and liquid mixture contained in the vactor trucks were dumped into a holding pit and mixed with sand to achieve a solids to liquid ratio such that this mix could be hauled to the landfill for disposal. The City's A/E consultant that designed the grit dewatering and transfer facility estimated that 720 tons of grit mixture will be produced from cleaning the sanitary sewer collection system annually. Based upon the anticipated sanitary sewer cleaning schedule, a substantial quantity of sand for a proper mix and a greater number of mixing pits would have been required. The grit dewatering facility will allow for the sludge mixture in the vactor trucks to be dumped on the drying beds and thicken over time to a consistency to meet landfill disposal requirements; thus eliminating the need for sand to mix with the vactor contents. At \$15 per cubic yard of sand, a total annual savings of approximately \$28,000 is anticipated.

Hansen Training Sessions – Basic Concepts

Departments of Public Utilities and Public Works Hansen Implementation Team

Public Works and Public Utilities have used the Hansen Work Order Management System since 1995 and 1999, respectively. Between the two departments, there are 242 users who use Hansen almost daily to perform their job duties. Although each department has different requirements for modules, it was apparent that users were not using Hansen in accordance with the business processes defined by each department. Hansen is the main tool used to record all customer inquiries received by telephone, e-mail, written, and/or through the Internet. These customer inquiries must be accurately recorded and tracked for purposes of budget projections, scheduling preventive maintenance, and taking a proactive approach to responding to customer complaints.

Due to the widespread use of Hansen, it was apparent that all members required training in its correct use. The Hansen Implementation Team developed a training manual on basic concepts and utilized it during training sessions with staff from both departments. Each participant received their own manual, which enabled them to comply with the business practices defined in Public Works and Public Utilities. This basic concepts training ensures that all users have the knowledge necessary to effectively and efficiently use the Hansen V7 software. Learning to correctly use the lookup/query function in the Hansen software means a faster response to both internal and external customer inquiries.

By training all 242 users in the Basic Concepts of the Hansen V7 software, fewer customer service inquiries have become "lost in the system," which in turn has resulted in quicker resolution of complaints. Users can find the information they need in the

Hansen software more quickly and respond to customer inquiries and questions more effectively.

Implementation of Enhanced Voicemail System – Call Pilot

Department of Communications and Information Technology

Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) Telecommunications division (Telecom) completed implementation of the first phase of the City's new enhanced voicemail system, known as Call Pilot, in September 2003. This initiative was a result of the Telecom request for proposals (RFP) for new equipment and upgrades to the City's phone system, which was awarded August 5, 2002. Telecom performed the RFP process to prepare the phone systems for the City's anticipated growth.

The City's voicemail system was replaced because the previous system was at full capacity; used aging, potentially expensive technology; and did not integrate well with other telephone systems, limiting the City's customer service abilities. Also, during the upgrades to the City's voicemail system, Social Services' system was migrated and consolidated into the Municipal Center Call Pilot enterprise voicemail system, enhancing the capabilities of that agency's voicemail.

Implementing the new voicemail system will enhance the City's customer service abilities and productivity. The new voicemail system will provide reliable, flexible communications options to callers through the City's 1,700 Municipal Center and 356 Social Services voicemail boxes. The new voicemail system is also easily expandable to meet the City's future needs and can accommodate up to 6,500 voicemail boxes for the City's approximately 6,000 members.

Funding for this initiative was provided by the ComIT retained earnings fund with no impact on the general fund or other initiatives.

Implementation of In-bound Caller Identification

Department of Communications and Information Technology

Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) Telecommunications division (Telecom) completed implementation of the City's in-bound caller identification (ID) system in March 2003. Caller ID functionality is required on the City's phone system to position the Municipal Center for future Computer Telephony Integration (CTI) applications being planned to enhance the overall functionality of the City's phone system. In-bound Caller ID allows members to view the name and phone number of callers, enabling members to provide improved customer service to callers. At the time the Caller ID system was implemented, 581 City phone sets that have display capability were able to view the In-bound Caller ID information. City members, citizens, and the

business community will be provided with service that is more efficient, and when other CTI-enabled systems are deployed, there will be additional enhancements to customer service.

By converting to Caller ID services, Telecom converted the type of service from the vendor to a more efficient digital format with a much lower cost. The original cost of this service was approximately \$117,600 per year multiplied by five years or \$588,000. Our new service will be \$54,720 per year multiplied by five years or \$273,600 for a savings of \$62,880 per year. Overall, the 10-year contract savings will be approximately \$628,800.

Funding for this initiative was provided by the ComIT retained earnings fund with no impact on the general fund or other initiatives.

John H. Prescott Federal Stranding Grant Program: Improving Response

Department of Museums and Cultural Arts

The goal of this project is to enhance the ability of the Virginia Marine Science Museum Stranding Program to evaluate marine mammal strandings in Virginia by improving carcass retrieval, necropsy, sampling, storage and disposal techniques of dead specimens, and upgrading data collection and management systems. Project funds were used to upgrade carcass collection; handling and disposal capabilities; construct and outfit a dedicated necropsy area; provide cold storage for carcasses and samples; improve evaluation of carcasses for overall health, causes of death and life histories; upgrade computer systems, hardware, and software to enhance data management capabilities; and develop training programs for stranding network cooperators. Project funds also support a full-time stranding response coordinator.

John H. Prescott Federal Stranding Grant Program: Improving Triage

Department of Museums and Cultural Arts

This project improved the Virginia Marine Science Museum Stranding Program's ability to respond to and provide medical care, holding facilities, and transport for live marine mammal strandings in Virginia and adjacent areas in the mid-Atlantic region. Project funds were used to upgrade the seal rehabilitation area; purchase medical diagnostic equipment and supplies; cover the costs of transport for live stranded animals and support staff; provide advanced training for staff; and employ a full-time veterinary technician.

Landscaping Guide

Department of Planning

A work group, with representatives from Planning, Public Works, Police, and Parks and Recreation, as well as professional citizens, completed the new Landscaping Guide. The Guide was placed on the City's Web site and made available for purchase on CD. The Landscaping Guide combined the Parking Lot and Foundation Landscaping Specifications and Standards, Landscape Screening and Buffering Specifications and Standards, and the Tree Planting, Preservation and Replacement booklets into one inclusive resource.

Little Island District Park--Two New Restroom Facilities

Department of Parks and Recreation

Parks and Recreation, in coordination with Public Works, has successfully built two new restroom facilities in Little Island District Park. The construction began in September 2002. Due to the age and the failing infrastructure, the department chose to demolish the existing restroom. In addition to replacing this structure at the north end of the park, a second restroom was built at the southern end. By adding the second facility, visitors are encouraged to use the southern section of the beach and avoid crowding at the northern end. The new facilities have modern equipment including sensor touchless sinks and toilets. Outside the facility, showers, foot-washes, and changing booths are present. Facility #1 has 1,433 square feet and facility #2 has 1,201 square feet. Each facility is handicap accessible. These two facilities accommodate 500 to 1,000+ visitors per day during the peak season.

Ocean Beach Water Sampling

Department of Public Health

Beach water monitoring was increased from twice a month to weekly. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) grant funds in the amount of \$2,732 were used to cover Police salaries and \$1,775 to cover fuel cost of Police boats. An intern was hired to assist Environmental Health Specialist in the sampling at \$1,333.80. Equipment cost associated with the sampling program was \$6,183. EPA grant funds expended for the Beach Water sampling program came to a total of \$12,024. Public Utilities and Police were vital partners in this effort.

Oil Recycling Day

Department of Agriculture

The Virginia Dare Soil and Water Conservation District is a member of the Albemarle-Pamlico National Estuary Program Committee (APNEP). The APNEP committee is a joint project between Virginia and North Carolina to enhance water quality within the river

basins shared by both states. The committee, which is comprised of many agency representatives, has focused its efforts on promoting projects through grant funding or in-kind services to enhance water quality by addressing current and potential issues or concerns.

Oil recycling was one of the first potential projects identified by the group to assist a large number of agricultural producers in the area. Used motor oil, diesel fuel, transmission and hydraulic fluids generated on the farm need to be recycled in an environmentally friendly and cost effective way. Currently, producers must pay a fee for the used products to be collected and recycled. APNEP members began contacting recycling companies to see if they would be willing to collect a large amount of material in exchange for a reduced fee or free of charge. The recycling company agreed to collect the used material from the producers free of charge. The used oil and fluids will be cleaned and the finished product is sold to other vendors for further utilization.

Depending on the locality in APNEP, the Soil and Water Conservation District or the local Cooperative Extension office served as the coordinator of the recycling event for each area. The Virginia Dare District coordinated the event for agricultural producers within the district's boundaries of Chesapeake and Virginia Beach. A survey was distributed to determine current levels of oil stored on the farm and how much material is generated within a year. The surveys were placed in the district's newsletter and posted in the offices of the District, the Farm Service Agency, and Cooperative Extension offices in both cities. The Extension Agents also included information about the program in their newsletters to producers.

More than 25 producers returned surveys. The recycling company required the producers to have a minimum of 100 gallons on-site to receive a free collection. Many producers had less than 100 gallons and would need to either transport their material to another farm or wait for another pick-up when they stockpiled the minimum amount. The District coordinated the event by compiling the results of the survey, contacting producers to participate, and scheduling those that would receive collection for the first pick-up. A minimum of 2,000 gallons was needed for the recycling company to send a truck for collection. Producers that were unable to have their oil collected for the first pick-up day will have priority for the next event.

The first Oil Recycling Day was held on July 16, 2003. Seventeen producers participated and recycled 2,512 gallons of burned motor oil, diesel fuel, and hydraulic fluids. Since the recycling company waived the collection fee, the producers saved at least \$180 each based on annual contract fees, which equated to a \$3,060 savings.

Producers that participated in the event were pleased to have their used materials collected free of charge. Many producers have shared their experience with neighbors to encourage them to participate as well. This project will be ongoing to provide a needed service to producers in our area. The district staff is currently coordinating another Oil Recycling Day to be held during the winter.

This program was very successful in many aspects. Not only did it provide financial assistance to the producers by waiving the collection fee, it also recycled and converted the materials into usable products benefiting the environment and reducing any water quality concerns within the watershed. The district provided a much needed customer service by coordinating the event and serving as a liaison between the producer and the recycling company. The event in turn provided technology and process improvements by utilizing the recycling industry to produce a renewable resource from used materials. The process to have the oil and materials collected from the farm by the recycling company has become easier with the district's coordination.

New and Upgraded Phone Systems at Remote City Sites

Department of Communications and Information Technology

Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) Telecommunications division (Telecom) began installing new equipment and upgrading phone systems at remote sites. To position the City for enterprise dialing, enterprise voicemail, and provide a common, city-wide telephony standard, City remote sites must be converted to a platform that supports connectivity to the Municipal Center. Once the standards are deployed city-wide, Telecom's support, equipment replacement process, billing, and maintenance efforts will be more manageable, providing improved customer service for City members. In addition, implementation of new systems and upgrades to remote sites will enable all sites to have caller identification, standard voicemail, and access to common Municipal Center telephone services, enabling members to provide enhanced customer service to callers and improving productivity. Telecom also estimates that the capabilities of the new system will enable overall savings in the area of reduced monthly recurring costs for the City's Telecom infrastructure. It is estimated that the monthly recurring cost savings for remote sites is approximately \$10,580 or \$126,960 annually. A total savings over a 10-year contract term would be approximately \$1,269,600.

In 2003, the following remote sites new phone systems were successfully installed and implemented: Landscape Services, Advanced Technology Center, Princess Anne Library, Sandbridge Fire Station, and General Booth Fire Station. In addition, the following remote systems were successfully upgraded: Great Neck Library and Princess Anne Fire Station. The initial phases of this project began February 7, 2003.

Pavilion Orchestra Shell Replacement

Convention and Visitors Bureau

The purpose of this initiative was to economically replace the Pavilion Theater's orchestra Shell. The existing shell was part of the original equipment of the Pavilion -- it was 23 years old. The original shell was designed for use in the theater and the exhibit hall, with a cantilever design. Through age, transport, and repeated use, the overhead part of the cantilever could no longer be set up correctly. The manufacturer would no longer support

the product and recommended replacement. The safety of staff and theater users was of great concern every time the shell was used.

Orchestra shells of this type are usually custom designed pieces that can cost between \$100,000 and \$500,000. Because the theater is scheduled for only two more years of use, purchase of a new shell was deemed cost-prohibitive. However, an orchestra shell is a necessary and expected piece of equipment for a theater such as ours. No longer providing a shell was not an acceptable alternative.

The Pavilion Operations Production department was tasked with creating a solution that would provide similar acoustic and aesthetic results as the old shell. Staff went to work designing a series of flyable overhead pieces. These lightweight and inexpensive units are designed to hang from the scenery battens above the orchestra at an angle, deflecting sound outward to the audience. They also include a new amenity that the old shell did not have. The panels are made of translucent plexiglass and are positioned so that colored light can be shown through them, offering customers a range of aesthetic choices for their concerts. This design is also analogous to the LED lights that will be in the ceiling of the new convention center ballroom. As such, the units were designed to be an amenity for meeting planners making staging choices in the new facility.

The process of design and assembling the shell was done entirely by City staff. The cost for the materials was \$3,645 and approximately \$1,000 in part-time labor to initially assemble the materials. For less than \$5,000, the Pavilion Production department provided a safe, effective, and aesthetically pleasing alternative for our customers. The new overhead panels have been well received by users. Our return on the investment will be realized in approximately 14 rentals of the equipment.

Phase 1B of Mandatory Water Connection Program

Department of Public Utilities

The City's Mandatory Connection Ordinance requires customers of the public water and sanitary sewer systems to connect when services become available. Enforcement of mandatory water connections was suspended in 1992 upon the adoption of the City's Water Emergency Ordinance.

When the Lake Gaston Water Supply Project became operational in 1998, the Mandatory Water Connection Ordinance was reinstated. Through the coordinated efforts of the Public Utilities and Planning departments, a program was developed to identify water customers who had public water available, but had not connected because of the Water Emergency Ordinance. Phase 1A of the program identified 248 properties in which developers had paid connection fees.

Phase 1B consisted of approximately 600 properties where connections were made available through the City's Capital Improvement Program. This group represented a

greater challenge than Phase 1A, since there were more than twice the number of properties, and property owners were responsible for paying their own connection fees (unlike Phase 1A, where the developers had already paid the fees, and property owners simply needed to connect to the water system).

Notifications were mailed to the property owners informing them of the reinstatement of the Mandatory Connection Ordinance and requesting payment of connection fees. Once the fees are paid, a meter is set at the property, and Public Utilities begins to bill the property owner for a water service availability fee. The program allows Public Utilities to track properties for compliance with the ordinance, as well as enforce the City Code when properties do not connect within one year of notification.

Because of this initiative, the City will realize approximately one half million dollars in water connection fees, as well as an anticipated revenue of more than \$150,000 annually for water service availability and water supply charges.

In addition, customers of the City's public water system enjoy many benefits, including a safe water supply in full compliance with all federal and state drinking water standards; improved water pressure; increased fire protection; 24-hour emergency response; and reliable, uninterrupted service, even during severe electrical outages -- as clearly demonstrated in the aftermath of Hurricane Isabel, during which time many residents were without electricity for as long as two weeks.

Renovation and Improved Workflow

Department of Public Libraries

The Great Neck Area Library received a year-long renovation that brought new services to the community – a computer lab with word processing workstations, book drops open 24/7, a new phone system, a community meeting room, and a separate childrens room. Established work patterns had to change to accommodate the changed environment and new service options. Material processing is now done behind the scenes and staff at the public service desk are able to focus on helping customers with their information requests. Customers also now have new, long-awaited services as well as an attractive, welcoming library building in which to conduct their business.

Resort Neighborhoods Cleanliness Initiative

Departments of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation and Public Works

As a result of citizen concerns regarding the occurrence of bulky items left at the curb and litter/junk in resort area neighborhoods, the two departments met to identify potential improvements that would address these issues. Based on these meetings, several process improvements were implemented. These included closer coordination between all departments, including regular meetings of area supervisors; and flexibility in

interpretation of waste management regulations. With these improvements in place, the problems were reduced, although there is still an ongoing challenge in these neighborhoods based on high transient use and high traffic.

Sanitary Sewer Overflow Reporting Procedure

Department of Public Utilities

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) requires all localities to report event information if a sanitary sewer overflow (SSO) occurs in their sewer collection system. These reports were a cumbersome, paper-based process and each city in the region used different criteria to define and report SSO events to DEQ. As a result, the DEQ database was not appropriate for comparing the system performance of each locality, or making important decisions based on the data in the system.

Public Utilities, in conjunction with the neighboring localities and the Hampton Roads Planning District Commission, identified a number of issues to improve this process. Standardized criteria for the information needed for the DEQ report was defined. An electronic form and submission process were developed which eliminated the cumbersome paperwork procedures. Employee training ensured that the reporting procedures were consistent and in compliance with DEQ regulations. The improved reporting criteria and process were accepted by DEQ.

Sewer Cleaner Truck Acquisition Process

Department of Public Utilities

Public Utilities Operations division is responsible for the operation and maintenance of the sanitary sewer collection system in Virginia Beach. Each year, Operations personnel use six sewer vacuum cleaner trucks to clean approximately 30 miles of gravity sewer pipe within the City, clear 450 mainline stoppages, and assist repair crews with their work duties. These vehicles cost approximately \$250,000 to purchase. Maintenance costs over the eight-year life of the vehicle are approximately to 50% of the purchase price.

The maintenance requirements and the downtime associated with these vehicles increases dramatically over the lifespan of the vehicle. For example, maintenance costs average approximately \$9,000 per year in years one to four and approximately \$20,000 per year in years five to eight. Additionally, during the increased downtime in years five to eight, Operations personnel are unable to use the vehicles to perform the duties for which they were acquired.

The traditional process for funding these vehicles was for the City to accept the lowest responsible bid, fund the maintenance costs for the eight-year life, and salvage the vehicle

after an average of approximately eight years. However, a team consisting of members from Public Utilities, the City Garage, and Purchasing investigated and discovered a less expensive and better way to procure these vehicles. By using the RFP process instead of the traditional bid process, the team was able to incorporate a guaranteed, not-to-exceed maintenance cost for the vehicles into the purchase contract and a guaranteed repurchase price after four years.

Because the resale value of the vehicle after four years is higher than after eight years, and because the maintenance cost in the first four years is lower than the last four years, the RFP process demonstrated that the lowest annual cost of owning and operating these vehicles (i.e., purchase price, plus maintenance, less resale) would be to keep them for four years, instead of eight. The annual savings is expected to be \$11,000 per year per vehicle (\$33,000 per year per vehicle for the four-year RFP vs. \$44,000 per year per vehicle for the traditional low bid purchase, kept eight years).

Additional benefits are realized from the four-year turnaround on these vehicles. The much lower maintenance requirements during the four-year vehicle cycle-time equates to lower vehicle downtime, and conversely, higher vehicle availability time. Public Utilities will not only realize the cost savings from the RFP process but will have the use of the vehicles a greater percentage of time. This results in faster, more reliable service for our customers.

Trash Bash 2003

Department of Museums and Cultural Arts

In keeping with its mission of conservation, the Virginia Marine Science Museum hosted the 3rd Annual Trash Bash event to increase awareness of the danger of pollution to our local marine environment. The event ran the entire month of August. To truly make this event a success there were 38 external partners (i.e. Chesapeake Bay Foundation, Elizabeth River Project, Hampton Roads Sanitation District, Ocean Conservancy, U.S. Coast Guard, Virginia Department of Environmental Quality, Virginia Beach Clean Community Commission, and Virginia Marine Resources Commission to name a few) who participated by providing displays, staff, activities, or written materials. There were numerous hands-on activities which included fun things such as the Trash Toss and the Chesapeake Bay Challenge. The Virginia Institute of Marine Science sent four researchers who spoke on the effects of marine debris on the environment. A local preschool created Trash Collage posters, and Maddie, an 18-month-old chocolate lab, made appearances every Monday as the "Scoop the Poop" pup to educate visitors about this important "scoop." More than 97,000 museum guests had the opportunity to see this visitor enhancement and learn simple things they can do to improve our marine environment.

Virginia Beach Community Development Corporation Study and Task Force

Department of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation

Virginia Beach Community Development Corporation (VBCDC) is a non-profit organization whose board of directors is appointed by City Council. Housing and Neighborhood Preservation (HNP) provides significant annual funding for its operations and projects. After 16 years of VBCDC's existence, it was necessary to measure its results against similar organizations to determine if VBCDC's operations were cost effective and were comparable to other non-profits. A study by a national consultant was jointly funded by the City and VBCDC. This study found that VBCDC's results were well within comparable organizations. In addition, the consultant made certain recommendations for improvement and/or changes. A task force of VBCDC staff and Board members and HNP developed a set of recommendations to address these, and they were adopted by VBCDC's board and are in the process of being implemented or are planned for implementation.

Wild Horse Fence

Department of Agriculture

The Sandbridge community, False Cape State Park, and Back Bay Wildlife Refuge were experiencing a problem with the wild horses migrating into the City from Currituck County, North Carolina. The wild horses eat and trample the vegetation and dunes in Sandbridge, the park, and refuge. Also, in the past, several horses have been killed by automobiles.

These horses are believed to be descendants of Spanish Mustangs that survived shipwrecks or were abandoned on the barrier islands more than 400 years ago. Today the herd is estimated to number approximately 60.

In 1998, a short-term solution was developed to protect the horses and environment. When the horses were spotted in Sandbridge, volunteers from the Corolla Wildlife Fund were notified and the horses were corralled and safely returned to their sanctuary in North Carolina. However, the horses often would return to Virginia sometimes within hours of their release.

In an effort to develop a permanent solution, a number of agencies and other interested parties including the City, Currituck County, Corolla Wild Horse Fund, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, and the Sandbridge Civic League collaborated to establish an enclosure fence (a fence designed to exclude the horses) to prevent the horses from entering the City. In January 2003, a fence was constructed just inside the Virginia side of the state line. The fence is approximately one and one-half miles long and runs from the Atlantic Ocean to Back Bay. More than 40

volunteers assisted in the construction of the fence. Currituck County provided \$15,000 for the fence and will be responsible for its maintenance. Since completion, indications are that the fence has been very successful in preventing the horses from entering Virginia Beach.

Quality and Productivity Initiatives for Safe Community

911 Training Academy

Department of Communications and Information Technology

Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) Emergency Communications division (VB911) began the 911 training academy for new Emergency Communications Officers in late 2002. Research indicated that new Emergency Communications Officers preferred to begin training in a non-stressful environment and establish some foundation prior to the previous method of "on-the-job, live call training." In addition, it had been customary for the Emergency Communications division to recruit for vacancies on a continual basis and provide training on an as needed basis, which caused gaps and inconsistencies in the division's training methodology. In 2003, Human Resources/Occupational Health and the City Attorney's Office worked in conjunction with Emergency Communications to improve the lesson plans, develop a standardized training program with training simulators, and to provide dedicated, full-time instructors within the VB911 Communications Center to improve the training established by the VB911 academy.

Since the inception of the academy, retention of new members in Emergency Communications has increased significantly. In 2001, retention was only 30% at the end of each fiscal year. Upon the conception of the program, retention grew to 40%. With continuing improvements being added, retention has grown to an impressive 74% as of the end of FY02. Increased retention rates will benefit ComIT, the City, and 911 callers greatly by providing a sufficient number of Communications Officers to cover shifts in the VB911 communications center to answer 911 emergency calls, as well as reducing the stress placed on staff.

Acting Fire Instructors

Department of Fire

The Fire Training bureau provides a variety of fire-related programs to members of the Fire Department, employees of other state and local agencies, and members of the general public. Beginning in August 2003, Fire began a new session of the Tidewater Regional Fire Academy, a basic-training program for new firefighters lasting approximately four months. In the past, existing training programs were negatively affected as Fire Instructors had to divide their energies between courses. Additionally, to provide for a safe instructor/student ratio in practical fire training evolutions, which

included working with live fires set in a specially-constructed training building, off-duty personnel were paid overtime compensation to assist the Fire Training bureau.

The Fire Department developed the Acting Fire Instructor initiative to minimize the negative impact on other member development programs which would have been caused had existing resources been tasked with this additional burden. Fire temporarily assigned three Master Firefighters to the bureau of Fire Training as Acting Fire Instructors. This initiative had no financial impact on the department as monies were covered by existing operational accounts. This allowed Fire to: eliminate any negative impact on other training programs; expand the knowledge, skills and abilities of those personnel assigned to the Acting Fire Instructor positions; eliminate the need for overtime compensation to ensure safe instructor/student ratios were maintained; and provided new members with additional positive role-models by expanding the Fire Training staff. This initiative permitted Fire to avoid additional costs of between \$10,000, the estimated cost for overtime to meet operational needs, and \$135,000, the estimated cost for adding three Master Firefighters to the Fire Training bureau.

After-hours Lifeguard Program

Department of Emergency Medical Services

In response to an alarming trend in drownings or near drownings between the time the oceanfront lifeguards went off duty at 6 p.m. and dusk, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) instituted an after-hours lifeguard program. EMS guards relieved contracted lifeguards at 6 p.m. and remained on the stands until sunset. At least 10 guards were assigned to stands every evening and at least three others patrolled the beach in ATVs or other vehicles. Recognizing that prevention is the key, those on patrols provided tips on beach safety to citizens and tourists. (During holiday weekends such as Memorial Day, July 4, and Labor Day, more than 30 stands were staffed and additional patrol units were deployed.) The EMS volunteer Marine Response Team also was available to assist if necessary. The contractual service and EMS service utilized the same standards of training and equipment. In fact, joint use of stands and close coordination between supervisory personnel assured seamless protection of beachgoers from morning until dark. No other East Coast beach community has lifeguard coverage on stands as late in the day as Virginia Beach did in 2003. This resulted in no drownings during after-hours coverage.

Airplane Enterprise Prisoner Transportation Program

Department of Police

The Airplane Enterprise Prisoner Transportation Program is utilized whenever the Commonwealth requests a prisoner or witness to be transported to the City of Virginia Beach as the result of a transportation order, writ, interstate agreement, or order for extradition. Once a request is made, the officer/pilot in charge of the program

determines the most cost effective means by which this transportation can be accomplished. In most cases, a Beechcraft King Air leased by the City is used, however, commercial air carriers and City vehicles are occasionally called into service. Once a means of transportation has been established, a travel itinerary is set. A minimum of two officers are assigned the transport. At the conclusion of the transport, the costs are assessed and the Commonwealth is issued a bill. All costs are reimbursed by the Commonwealth. The program has significantly reduced the time police personnel spend transporting prisoners/witnesses. This has resulted in reduced staffing costs to the Police Department. Additionally, by transporting prisoners in a more efficient and timely manner, trial dates are shorter and more easily scheduled with reduced prisoner housing costs. The program in this fiscal year is operating on a budget of approximately one-half the previous year's budget. Recent assessments of the program have indicated an overall increase in productivity of nearly 50% over past years.

Asset Forfeiture/Business Fraud

Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney

Over the years, the value of assets seized involving drug cases and fraudulent business activities has increased tremendously. This office has dedicated one attorney to specialize in the prosecution of these types of cases. During FY 2002-2003, this program provided over \$125,000 to our Police Department for law enforcement activities, a savings to the City, and enhanced services to the community. Specifically, we received a \$51,000 settlement in a business fraud case allowing the Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney to offset a corresponding loss in state funding (State Compensation Board). This allowed our office to retain an attorney whose position would have been eliminated during the state budget cuts of FY 2002-2003. Any loss of staff reduces the ability to effectively prosecute the criminal element in Virginia Beach. Seizure of asset forfeitures during this current budget year has already produced approximately \$1 million. The Police Department will receive over \$700,000 as their share.

Automated External Defibrillators Deployment

Department of Emergency Medical Services

Building on the successful deployment of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) in the City's community recreation centers and the Pavilion, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) expanded the program to other facilities including the City Manager's Office, Virginia Marine Science Museum, and all Comprehensive Mental Health/Mental Retardation/Substance Abuse offices. Emergency Response System teams have now been trained in all these facilities.

A new initiative involving AEDs was the deployment of these life-saving machines on police vehicles. In the spring, two police vehicles in each precinct were selected, for a

total of eight. Expansion of the AEDs into additional police vehicles will be an ongoing process throughout the year. In addition, the EMS Continuous Quality Improvement Coordinator has trained police supervisors and 90% of the officers in the Fourth Precinct in anticipation of placing more AEDs in police vehicles. This initiative is a partnership between the Departments of EMS and Police, as well as with the American Heart Association that financed the purchase of some of the AEDs.

Automated Mug Shots and Photo Lineups

Department of Police

The Police Department implemented a police mugs hot module to automate police lineups and link photos of arrested persons with their criminal histories. This initiative will reduce the need for officers and witnesses to travel solely to Police Headquarters for these functions.

Bimonthly Training for Fatal Accident Crash Team and Crisis Negotiation Team

Department of Police

The Fatal Accident Crash Team and Crisis Negotiation Team have started conducting training every other month, comprised of classroom and practical training. The training is geared to enhance the teams' knowledge of their specialty area. It allows the teams to handle fatal crashes and crisis situations without having to rely on outside agencies to assist them. The training has been conducted four times for each team which consists of 10 officers per session.

Code Enforcement Partnership

Department of Police

This trial partnership involved members of the Fourth Precinct evening shift working with code enforcement inspectors to improve the service of code enforcement related court paperwork. For a three month-period (February to April 2003), encompassing a total of 16 working days, officers and code inspectors made 130 attempts to serve code enforcement paperwork. This effort resulted in the service of 45 code enforcement related summons/warrants, service on six criminal misdemeanor warrants, service of 18 felony warrants, and service on two protective orders. This effort was accomplished in conjunction with the officers' normal work duties.

Community Emergency Response Team Program

Department of Fire

The Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) Program is a partnership between the departments of Fire, Police, Emergency Medical Services, Volunteer Council, the Federal Emergency Management Agency, Virginia Beach City Corps Council, and the community.

After a large-scale disaster, local government resources will be stretched to their limit. The CERT Program provides citizens with all-risks, all-hazards training that prepares them to assist their neighbors and the community after a catastrophe strikes. It is a positive and realistic approach to disaster preparedness and response. CERT Program training includes such things as extinguishing small fires, providing basic first aid, search and rescue operations, and disaster preparedness.

The program is largely funded by federal grants: the Fire Department received a \$35,000 grant for the establishment of a CERT Program and a \$5,000 grant to assist in forming the Virginia Beach City Corps Council. The development and implementation of the CERT Program increases the alignment between City disaster preparedness plans and those of the Department of Homeland Security, ensuring that we remain eligible for homeland security grants in the future.

Computers Crime Unit

Department of Police

The newly formed Computer Crimes Unit (CCU) has excelled in its mission to interrupt, identify, and prosecute dangerous criminals who utilize computers to prey upon members of our community. In less than one year of operation, the members of CCU have arrested and successfully prosecuted more than 10 individuals in both state and federal courts who were involved in child endangerment activity in Virginia Beach. A current study indicates that each one of these predators who were detected and arrested by CCU may individually be responsible for over 30 additional undetected sexual contact crimes. Members of CCU also hosted four computer crimes training sessions for over 130 local, state, and federal law enforcement officers from across the U. S., and presented educational programs to community groups in Virginia Beach on the dangers that lurk on the Internet. The CCU has facilitated the development and operation of a state-of-the-art computer lab at the Law Enforcement Training Academy which will be utilized for local, state, and federal law enforcement training.

Construction of the Juvenile Detention Center with State Funding

Department of Social Services

Construction of the 90-bed Juvenile Detention Center began in December 2002. The Center is located between the Post Office and Building Maintenance at the Municipal Center. Completion is expected by June 2004, with opening in August 2004. The 80-staff center will hold juveniles awaiting trial/court hearing and disposition, and some sentenced youths. The City will be reimbursed \$1,728,708 from the state for FY05. An additional \$2.5 million will be saved by not funding placements at the Tidewater Juvenile Detention Center. The Administrator, hired in September, is currently involved in the hiring and planning for the center.

Defense Reutilization Marketing Office Acquisitions

Department of Police

In 2003, Police/Special Investigations obtained a great deal of valuable assets free of charge through the Defense Reutilization Marketing Office (DRMO) program. Many of these assets have been distributed for use to other divisions of the Police Department. Some notable items include: 34 Gen-3 night vision monoculars valued at \$76,000 (25 went to Special Operations); 150 new riot control batons transferred to police supply, saving the Police Department \$8,550; 90 holographic red dot weapon sights that were transferred to the SWAT team; numerous camcorders; and a 1995 Chevrolet Lumina that was put into service. Other miscellaneous equipment acquired included digital cameras, exercise equipment, computer, and other audio/video equipment. Through the DRMO program, Special Investigations has acquired over \$100,000 of equipment free of charge.

Digital Cameras Purchased for Each Member of the Fatal Accident Crash Team

Department of Police

Digital cameras with extra memory cards were purchased for each member of the Fatal Accident Crash Team. These cameras will be maintained by the individual officer and used to photograph serious and fatality crashes. Although Forensic Services responds to most accidents for photographic evidence, sometimes evidence can be destroyed or moved due to rescue and lifesaving efforts. The ability to take photographs before this happens can preserve evidence and prove very valuable in a crash investigation. The cameras have also allowed the officers investigating the crashes to clear the cases sooner. This allows for the officers to be available to answer more calls for service to assist citizens and also reduce the inconvenience to the general public when a roadway

is closed. Seven of these cameras were purchased with a grant of \$3,800, and the other two were purchased from "driving under the influence (DUI)" cost recovery funds.

Emergency Communications Participates in Leadership Training

Department of Communication and Information Technology

In January 2002, 10 VB911 supervisors and 75 members from Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) Emergency Communications division completed a year long nationally acclaimed Crestcom Leadership Training program. The training program is one of the only year-long leadership training programs in the City. The training was completed in an effort to enhance the knowledge and skills of the supervisors, to ensure that all supervisors received the same messages in training, to address a need for consistency across the division, and to enable greater collaboration among the division's members. Leadership subjects included customer service, managing change, the visionary leader, establishing goals, motivating members, and other contemporary issues. The VB911 supervisors, along with their peers within Hampton Roads, discussed and learned new leadership techniques and developed member action plans within the course that were immediately implemented within the VB911 Emergency Communications division.

The 10 supervisors successfully graduated in February 2003. Training for the other Emergency Communications members is ongoing. But, because of the training, members of the division have already noticed more consistency in dealing with issues across the division, improved interpersonal communications among staff, and consistent customer service among members and toward callers.

Evaluation of Therapeutic Communities in Virginia Beach Correctional Center

Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse

Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse, along with the Correctional Center, has been fortunate to receive funding for the substance abuse therapeutic community treatment program since 1995. Many changes in funding have occurred over the years. Most recently, in FY03, funding was cut by the state. However, the Virginia Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Services (VADMHMRSAS) secured federal dollars for the continuation of three of the six programs across the state. A site review was conducted in July 2002. Preliminary results were compiled and reported to the General Assembly in September 2002. The Virginia Beach program was chosen because it represents a "pure" replication of the jail-based therapeutic community model. The General Assembly agreed to fully fund the program at (\$192,363), but in exchange, requested that outcome data be sent quarterly to VADMHMRSAS. It is expected that when the study is complete, two key

elements will stand out. First, a remarkable high percentage of clients who enter the jail-based program successfully complete the program. During the first quarter of FY03/04, 75% of the clients who entered the program completed the program. Second, a remarkably high percentage of clients who are eligible for "aftercare" (once per week counseling group clients attend for up to 12 months after their discharge from the jail) follow through with placement in the group. Ninety-one percent of clients followed through with aftercare during the first quarter of FY03/04. This is consistent with the preliminary result from FY03 and reflective of the program's pre-screening and orientation process, as well as the staff's promotion of follow-up counseling upon discharge from the jail.

Fire Permitting Fee Assessment

Department of Fire

The Fire Prevention Code of the Commonwealth of Virginia allows for the collection of fees-for-service for the issuance of code-related permits as a means of allowing local governments to recoup administrative costs. Historically, the Fire Department did not collect these fees and absorbed the expenditures within their operational budget. Beginning January 1, 2003, the Fire Marshal's Office began to assess fees-for-service. They collected approximately \$139,000 for permitting activities from January to September 2003. It is estimated that the program may generate revenues in excess of \$180,000 per year from this initiative. Revenues generated through the Fire Permitting Fee Assessment initiative has allowed the Fire Marshal's Office to fund two additional FTE positions for their office (one full time and two part-time staff), allowing them to increase the productivity of their office. Consequently, this initiative should enhance the fire safety of the City without any additional property tax monies being spent.

Focus Groups Created by the Fatal Accident Crash Team and Selective Enforcement Team

Department of Police

In response to the number of fatal crashes in our City, the members of the Police Department's Fatal Accident Crash Team and Selective Enforcement Team were divided into three research groups: engineering, enforcement, and education. Each group worked to devise innovative ways to reduce fatal crashes and also driving under the influence. The members provided muster training to all of the officers in the precincts. They worked with Traffic Engineering to improve intersections that had a high crash rate. Additionally, they worked with the media to improve coverage regarding intoxicated drivers. This year, the Selective Enforcement Team was featured in an article in [The Virginian-Pilot](#).

Gumshoe Award

Department of Police

The Detective Bureau implemented the "Gumshoe Award." This is a weekly award that serves to recognize detectives doing outstanding investigative work. A unique plaque is placed on the desk of the receiving detective by the supervisors in the Detective Bureau while they inform staff of the circumstances of events that resulted in the award's presentation for the week. This program has been successful in giving recognition for 15 detectives that provided desired outcomes valued by the community.

Hampton Roads Military and Civilian Task Force on Family Violence

Department of Police

The Detective Bureau Domestic Violence Unit hosted a meeting of the Hampton Roads Military and Civilian Task Force on Family Violence. The meeting networked 75 professionals, practitioners, and victim advocates of family violence. The participants were representatives from civilian and military agencies, and City, state, and federal government within the Hampton Roads region. The task force serves to help identify opportunities and best practices associated with service to victims of family violence. They identified barriers/environmental restraints in an effort to eliminate or reduce their impact to help improve customer service.

Hurricane Isabel Response

Department of Public Health

Quality assurance visits were conducted on over 1,200 food service facilities that suffered a loss of electric power as a result of Isabel. The purpose was to ensure that the public was not subjected to food borne disease. Loss of electric power and refrigeration pose a considerable risk of food borne disease including campylobacter enteritis, diarrhea caused by escherichia coli (E.coli), and salmonellosis. Lack of hot water may lead to food service workers avoiding hand washing, a major function in preventing diseases. Loss of structural integrity can lead to contamination of food products and equipment. As a result of this effort, restaurants were allowed to resume operations and no food borne illnesses were reported due to Isabel.

Identity Theft and Fraud Awareness/Prevention Program

Department of Police

The Detective Bureau Economic Crime Unit provided identity theft and fraud awareness/prevention training to directors and members of museum retail sales gift shops. This

training, held at the Virginia Marine Science Museum, and coordinated through the Virginia Office of the Attorney General, provided training in the areas of identity theft and fraud. The purpose of the training was to help the staff of museum gift shops recognize fraudulent activity, such as fraudulent credit cards and checks, and to make them aware of the increasing problem of identity theft. This program has been successful in providing training to 45 members of museum retail sales gift shops.

Investigating Housing Fraud

Department of Police

In April 2003, the Fourth Precinct Cop Unit expanded the Section 8 investigation program to include investigating housing fraud involving privately managed properties. Due to the greater amount of calls for service and incidents, the Twin Canal Village apartments were chosen for the pilot program. This required a joint partnership with the Housing and Urban Development (HUD) investigators and the property management of Twin Canal Village. The program was developed to assist the HUD investigators to ensure that persons receiving government assistance through HUD are not committing fraud as described in the Code of Virginia for housing fraud. The program also focuses on investigating residents who were engaged in other activities that were in clear violation to the rules and guidelines that are set forth by HUD and to improve the quality of life for the apartment residents by removing negative influences out of the complex. Two officers from the Fourth Precinct Community Policing Unit were selected to participate in this program. The officers were able to develop information based on concerns by citizens, police officers, and the property manager. The eviction of violators removes the negative element from the community and allows persons who have been on a waiting list for government housing eligible to receive assistance.

Investigative Training Program for Detectives and Uniform Officers

Department of Police

The Detective Bureau implemented a "Two Day Investigative" school for newly assigned detectives, detectives on the eligibility list, and for uniform personnel. The program was successful in providing 45 attendees specialized training in investigations.

Leadership Speaker Series

Department of Police

The Police Department received a grant in April 2003 sponsored by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services titled "Creating a Culture of Integrity." This initiative offers grants to major city police organizations throughout the nation who are

willing to create pilot programs and share with other law enforcement agencies. Priding ourselves on our longstanding reputation for integrity, a proposal was developed and submitted that would allow the department to continue and strengthen our ongoing efforts to keep values, ethics, and integrity as important elements in all of our activities. As a result, the department was awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Justice in the amount of \$118,000 to implement the proposal. The proposal consisted of two components. The first component, representing approximately \$62,500, will be dedicated to the development of a leadership speaker's series (the second component, and the other half of the grant, will be implemented next year). Experts in a variety of leadership and management related fields would provide training to members of the department. Leadership and Developing a Belief System was the topic in April. Other speakers are scheduled to talk about Leadership Development Foundations, Leadership Skills and Application, and Challenging the Organizational Culture. In addition, the series will be made available to members of other law enforcement agencies. The first session attracted 75 participants.

Management Program

Department of Emergency Medical Services

In response to requests from members of the City's volunteer rescue squads, Emergency Medical Services created a management training program to develop future leaders in the system. This program offers skills development for any member of the system who is or aspires to be an officer.

The program is composed of six levels: recruit, Attendant-In-Charge (AIC), junior operational officer, senior operational officer, administrative officer, and field commander. The recruit and AIC programs are included in the orientation for new recruits and in the First Responder and Emergency Medical Technician courses.

The first of the nine junior officer development modules was presented in January 2003 to more than 30 people. Since that time, 26 courses have been offered; 568 volunteers have attended at least one of the sessions, resulting in 1,719 hours of classroom time.

This program is designed to be flexible and rescue squad members can take any module at any level in any order. Certificates are presented when a level is completed.

Missing Person Awareness Training

Department of Police

The supervisor of the Detective Bureau Missing Person Unit provided missing person awareness training to third graders at Seatack Elementary School. The training was developed to help alleviate children's fears of abduction and provide tips on how not to become a victim of an abduction. This training was in response to concerns these

children had over a highly publicized case involving a missing child from Indiana, reported to have been abducted 18 years ago and thought to be alive and living in Virginia Beach. There were 60 children from the school who benefited from this training.

Modified Enforcement for Residential Parking

Department of Police

During 2002, the Second Precinct officers encountered numerous problems in enforcing residential parking restrictions. Statistics indicated that for each vehicle towed in the enforcement of the restrictions, each officer would spend approximately 20 minutes with each vehicle. Due to the amount of time required, citizens living in the residential areas were being inconvenienced through unlawful parking by others.

In 2003, officers of the Second Precinct met with the three area tow companies as well as members of Emergency Communications. The purpose of the meeting was to develop an alternative to the current tow process. By group process, the result was that the officer's time spent towing vehicles was reduced from 20 minutes to approximately five minutes. There were 3,471 tows in 2003 that equated to a savings of approximately 868 hours of staff time.

Motorcycle Theft Investigation/Prevention Training

Department of Police

On June 1, 2003, the Detective Bureau Auto Theft Unit developed a program to provide specialized training to uniform personnel. They conducted meetings to develop operational planning while combining efforts with Crime Analysis detectives to investigate an increase in sport motorcycle thefts. This program was successful in providing specialized motorcycle theft investigative training to four supervisors and 60 uniform officers. The numbers of motorcycle thefts were reportedly reduced during this program period, and a number of suspects responsible for these crimes were identified.

New Vehicles for Traffic and DUI Enforcement

Department of Police

The department purchased two 2003 Dodge Intrepids to add to the Special Operations inventory of covert police vehicles. The two vehicles are unmarked and are two different colors. The vehicles have no police markings and no spotlights. These two vehicles are a valuable addition to the existing fleet of covert vehicles and will be very useful in proactive traffic and DUI enforcement. This can be very important in helping to reduce the costs associated with serious and fatality crashes as a result of driving under the influence and other traffic offenses. These vehicles have been on the street since

January 2003. The officers operating these vehicles have arrested more than 75 intoxicated drivers and issued more than 1,000 traffic summonses in these vehicles.

Online Homeland Security Information

Department of Communications and Information Technology

The Homeland Security information available via the City's Web portal, VBgov.com, was developed in early 2003 to respond to citizen concerns over communication and security under national terrorism threats. Communications and Information Technology's Public Information Office (PIO) worked closely with the Media and Communications Group to develop a threat level notification system and informational resource on VBgov.com and BEACHline, the City's Integrated Voice Response (IVR) system that allows users to call in to listen to pre-recorded messages on citizen service topics.

The customers for the Homeland Security information initiative are the citizens and businesses of, and visitors to, Virginia Beach. The Homeland Security threat level notification is posted on the VBgov.com homepage and provides a link to internal and external resources that provide timely preparedness and emergency information to citizens and visitors in a proactive manner. Additionally, to obtain the current threat-condition information, citizens can call BEACHline.

Although no qualitative analysis has been conducted, informal results and feedback from citizens and businesses have been extremely positive. Other Hampton Roads cities have used our process and system as a model for their informational campaigns.

This area of the Web site continues to see steady traffic throughout the year; between February 2003 and September 2003, the Homeland Security Web site has had 109,516 visitors.

Other than work hours, no additional funding was required to develop and support this initiative. Information provided via the site was partially generated in response to normal citizen inquiries.

Operation Ground Hog

Department of Police

The Detective Bureau Warrant/Fugitive Unit launched a program called "Operation Groundhog" on January 17, 2003. Wanted suspects that were identified that had the most serious outstanding warrants on file were specifically selected for apprehension. Due to the violence associated with the wanted suspects identified in this operation, Special Operations personnel assisted in providing services for several of the wanted suspects. This program was successful in locating 42 suspects and resolving 101 warrants that were on file.

Operation Holiday

Department of Police

The Detective Bureau Warrant/Fugitive Unit worked in partnership with Special Operations SWAT officers in an effort to relieve the City of criminals still at large that were wanted for crimes such as rape, robbery, firearms charges, child exploitation, and an assortment of other felonies and misdemeanors. Four SWAT officers and two Warrant/Fugitive Detectives worked the operation a total of three days per week for eight weeks. The operation was a tremendous success resulting in 30 suspects being arrested, 82 warrants served, nine people located out of city, four located out of state, and one found to be deceased.

Parenting Training Intervention at St. Bride's Correctional Center

Department of Social Services

The Father's in Training (FIT) Program has been reaching out to fathers at the St. Bride's Correctional Center. This is a new prevention strategy for the FIT Program, and it reaches a new client population that is in much need of services. The program provides training and counseling to assist prison residents in returning to their lives as proud, responsible parents, and grandparents. The first year has been quite successful, and the warden has requested that FIT sponsor new programs twice per year at the facility.

Port Security Initiative

Department of Police

In November of last year, members of the Police Department's Marine Patrol Unit attended a regional meeting of local law enforcement officers that was hosted by the U.S. Coast Guard. Representatives from the U.S. Attorney's Office, FBI, U.S. Customs, Chesapeake, Norfolk, and Yorktown Police Departments, and others attended. The Coast Guard proposed the formation of a Port Security Task Force (PSTF) whose goal would be to develop and coordinate a holistic port level strategy to secure the Port of Hampton Roads from terrorist threats or attacks. The task force would also coordinate efforts to detect, prepare for, prevent, protect against, respond to, and recover from terrorist attacks within the Port of Hampton Roads. The Captain of the Port of the U.S. Coast Guard chairs the task force.

During 2003, Virginia Beach became an active member of the PSTF and has participated in many planning meetings, joint training exercises, and joint operations in the Port of Hampton Roads. These operations include the escort of vessels that could be possible terrorist targets, such as cruise ships and propane ships. We also participated in the inauguration ceremony of the USS Ronald Reagan.

To improve response capabilities of the agencies involved in the PSTF, the U.S. Coast Guard provided information on federal grants that could be used to obtain funds to

upgrade equipment. The Police Department has been trying to obtain funds for several years to upgrade its current dive equipment and marine equipment. The unit was also very interested in upgrading its fleet of boats to vessels that could respond safely in all types of sea conditions. Our current fleet had difficulty responding once sea conditions became greater than three to four feet with winds 25-30 mph.

The citizens of Virginia Beach would benefit from these upgrades by having a safer boating environment through law enforcement and boater education. The unit would gain tools and additional training that would both enhance its current mission and provide the Hampton Roads region a valuable tool in the event of a regional emergency in the Port of Hampton Roads. It would include a rapid and formidable response to terrorist threats.

In February of this year, a grant was submitted to the Transportation Security Administration. The grant requested funds for upgrading marine vessels and equipment. Most, if not all, of these upgrades had been previously requested but denied due to budgetary constraints. The grant requested \$1.2 million and we were awarded \$506,599, which City Council approved August 5, 2003. These funds will be used to upgrade our current dive and marine unit equipment and to purchase three new vessels to replace older boats in our current fleet. These vessels were all overdue for replacements (hulls are scheduled for replacement after 10 years of service). The new vessels to be purchased will be proven law enforcement boats equipped with state of the art technology.

Promotion of Smoke Free Dining in Virginia Beach

Department of Public Health

In an effort to promote smoke free environments and overall healthier living, the Public Health Department published a smoke free restaurant guide for our City's residents and visitors. "Your Guide to Smoke Free Dining in Virginia Beach" lists restaurants that do not allow smoking in any part of their establishment. This publication has been placed in City libraries, recreational centers, YMCAs, Farmers Market, the Visitor's Center, and oceanfront informational kiosks. The brochure is constantly updated as new restaurants open or as restaurants choose to become smoke free.

With second-hand smoke being responsible for over 50,000 deaths annually, the Health Department believes that emphasizing the importance of smoke free environments is a critical public health message.

Radio and Telephone Recording/Logging System Replacement

Department of Communications and Information Technology

Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) Emergency Communications division (VB911) found that replacing the current VB911 recording/logging system was a necessary preventative measure. The City's VB911 recording/ logging system was suffering

from increasing system failures due to the age. Also, parts for the 11-year-old system were becoming difficult to locate. The City began the request for proposal process to purchase a new system on July 21, 2003, and a contract was awarded to Dictaphone on September 23, 2003.

The new recording/logging system will provide multiple benefits to the City. The new system will allow multi-authorized workstations to play back recordings when reviews are needed. Installation of the new system will also include adding the security of a firewall, which will protect information transmissions from unauthorized interceptions and will protect callers' privacy. In addition, the new system will enable VB911 to efficiently provide the numerous audio copies of telephone calls and radio transmissions requested to meet the requirements of the Federal Freedom of Information Act and other authorized requests. Several groups and agencies that utilize the information maintained by the equipment are expected to benefit from the capabilities of the new technology, including VB911, Departments of Police, Fire, Emergency Medical Services, and Risk Management, the Offices of the City and Commonwealth's Attorney, external law enforcement agencies, the court system/attorneys, and others.

Recruitment Strategy Phase I

Department of Emergency Medical Services

As the oversight agency for the largest volunteer rescue squad system in the nation, Emergency Medical Services (EMS) sought to increase membership by creating a recruitment officer position last year. In 2003 the department implemented the first of several recruitment campaigns that are planned for the next few years.

Phase I began in the first quarter of 2003 with presentations to college Emergency Medical Technician classes, public service announcements on VBTV, and the creation and distribution of a general information flyer. This was distributed at all City libraries, recreation centers, and golf courses. Other key elements included a series of advertisements in the Beacon and military newspapers, and the creation of two brochures – one providing general information on the rescue squad system and its volunteer opportunities, the second illustrating the purpose and membership criteria for the department's volunteer specialty teams. The final element of Phase I was a \$30,000 advertising campaign that utilized print ads in the Beacon and Port Folio magazines; billboards in Virginia Beach, Norfolk, and Chesapeake; Internet ads via HamptonRoads.com and Pilotonline.com; and television ads on LNC 5. While viewership on LNC, readership for the various publications, and the number of hits on the Web sites reached into the millions, it is safe to say the various elements of the campaign directly reached several thousand. The department had more than 250 inquiries directly linked to the campaign and has experienced a 40% increase in the number of recruits.

The ads were financed in part through a grant from EMS, as well as through a contribution from the Virginia Beach Volunteer Rescue Squad Foundation Inc.

Robbery Investigators' Electronic Mail Network

Department of Police

The Detective Bureau Robbery Unit has established an electronic mail network administered by the Robbery Supervisor that includes 18 federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies. There are 68 investigators that specialize in robbery investigations that communicate important information related to the investigation of robberies. The network allows vital information to be sent simultaneously to the entire region with a single electronic mail transaction. Photographs of suspected robbers can be attached to the transaction and utilized within minutes in jurisdictions throughout the region. The network mailing list also provides area investigators with points of contact in every area agency. The network was established utilizing existing equipment and technology. New procedures were established to incorporate network notifications of area investigators in major robbery investigations, which included bank robberies, serial robberies, and commercial robberies.

Shelter in a Storm

Department of Social Services

During Hurricane Isabel in September, Social Services administered 10 emergency shelters which served 2,331 citizens. An enhanced team system in the emergency shelters and at the Emergency Operations Center enabled more efficient and equitable staffing of shelters and a more flexible means of shifting resources among the shelters. The results are improved service to citizens and improved staff morale.

Smallpox Vaccinations for Emergency Providers

Department of Emergency Medical Services

Smallpox was eradicated in the United States in the late 1940s. Because of events that have taken place in the last two years, this highly contagious and potentially deadly disease is a source of concern by many who feel this disease may be used as a biological weapon.

A federal preparedness program was initiated to address the administration of the vaccine. The plan identified three pre-event stages. Stage I addressed the vaccination of public health personnel; Stage II - vaccination of public safety and first responder personnel; and Stage III outlined plans for the general public.

To prepare our pre-hospital emergency care providers who, in most cases, would be the first on the scene in the event of a possible smallpox event, it was imperative prior to their being offered the vaccination to provide in-depth information about the disease, the vaccine, possible reactions, and contra-indications. This program was implemented in June and conducted over the course of the summer. Over 200 Emergency Medical Services

(EMS) members attended the program and close to 100 expressed interest in volunteering for the vaccine. Five clinics, in conjunction with the Health Department, were established and vaccination of EMS personnel began.

Spay and Neuter Program with the Virginia Beach SPCA

Department of Police

In October 2003, the Bureau of Animal Control and the Virginia Beach SPCA began a partnership where all adopted dogs and cats are sterilized prior to going to their new homes. In the past, adopters only had to sign a contract agreeing to have their animal sterilized, within a certain time. However, almost one-third adopted in 2002 were not sterilized and these unsterilized animals have the potential to add to the pet overpopulation problem in the City. Now, all dogs and cats will be sterilized before going home with new owners. In time, we should begin seeing a reduction in stray and unwanted dogs and cats.

State Regulation Changes

Department of Emergency Medical Services

For the first time in more than a decade, the Virginia Department of Health and Office of Emergency Medical Services (EMS) issued sweeping changes to regulations involving Emergency Medical Services agencies. There were significant changes to personnel standards, equipment requirements, and administrative processes. EMS took a proactive approach by working toward implementing the new standards -- months in advance. This minimized the workforce and equipment costs needed to achieve full compliance. All departments involved in the Virginia Beach Emergency Response System, including the 10 volunteer rescue squads, the Fire Department and EMS, passed inspection with high marks.

Stop Larcenies from Autos Team

Department of Police

In the past, the Police Department would file Larceny from Auto reports in cases when there were no clues to the suspect's identity. Officers in the Third Precinct are investigating these cases by cross referencing suspects engaged in similar criminal activities and questioning them in conjunction with checking local pawn records from our City, Norfolk, and Portsmouth. If the program expands, partnerships with other Hampton Roads cities will develop. The initiative served 14 citizens in a two-week period resulting in three arrests.

Survival Spanish for Law Enforcement

Department of Police

Being an organization of continual learning and realizing the diverse composition of our residential, tourist, and transient populations, we are providing formal training in Spanish speaking skills. Professional Development and Training staff partnered with a citizen to develop and provide two Survival Spanish for Law Enforcement classes. Each class, which meets once per week for three hours, provides police officers with the ability to effectively communicate with citizens who only speak Spanish. Currently, 32 officers are attending the classes, and we anticipate continuing the classes in the upcoming year. We will assess the success of this initiative to explore providing this and similar training to our entire public safety community.

Training Partnerships

Department of Police

Professional Development and Training has successfully partnered with a variety of other agencies that provide free training. This cooperative effort has resulted in additional specialized training for our members at no cost to the Police Department and has increased our effectiveness to provide homeland security and service to the public. During this period, the partnership has included the U. S. Coast Guard, Virginia Crime Prevention Institute, Virginia Community Policing Association, and the Department of Criminal Justice Services.

Upgrade of the City's 800 MHz Radio System

Department of Communications and Information Technology

In January 2003, Communications and Information Technology's (ComIT) Emergency Communications division began upgrading the City's 800 MHz radio system. The departments of Police, Fire, Emergency Medical Services (EMS), Public Utilities, Public Works, and Parks and Recreation use the radios to communicate while working in the field or outside of their offices. Emergency Communications manages the maintenance of radio equipment for the City. When reviewing the radio system equipment, Emergency Communications found that the City's radio vendor could no longer support the equipment because the radios and supporting equipment had become outdated and parts were no longer available. ComIT determined that the only solution would be to replace the aged equipment with new equipment, providing improved customer service to the department's customer agencies. In addition, upgrading the equipment would enhance productivity because the new equipment would be more reliable and offer additional technology solutions.

To manage the radio replacement process, members of ComIT and the departments of Purchasing, Fire, Public Utilities, Police, and EMS formed a radio request for proposals (RFP) team in March 2002. The contract and radio scenario selected by the team in July 2002

resulted in an anticipated cost of \$6.8 million to replace the 1,700 radios. Additionally, the team formed a strong personal and professional relationship during the RFP process. These strong partnerships continue today and have resulted in gainsharing and win-win outcomes at many levels within the City. The team was able to negotiate for better radios that position the City to implement a better system today and position the users to take advantage of innovation in the future.

Urban Search and Rescue Light Task Force

Department of Fire

The Fire Department has hosted a Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) Team for over a decade. The team deployed to the Oklahoma City bombing and to the aftermath of the September 11, 2001 attacks at the Pentagon and the World Trade Center. They also deployed to the Olympics in Atlanta and Salt Lake City to stand-by in case of a disaster. This partnership between the federal, state, and local governments has been very successful in providing a readily available national response asset that, consequently, has garnered the City a great deal of positive publicity and aided in the acquisition of various grants to support preparations and training.

As of July 3, 2003, the Fire Department has a USAR-Light Task Force. This new configuration of existing resources makes the unit more mobile and more flexible in terms of mission capability. It makes the unit more compatible for specific types of large-scale disasters such as weather-related catastrophic events (i.e., hurricanes). This initiative requires no additional financial resources. It represents a process improvement that allows for an enhancement in customer service while increasing our ties with the Department of Homeland Security.

Youth Town Hall Meeting

Youth Opportunities Office

To implement one of the strategies in the Youth Plan "to provide youth with... opportunities, which ... promote their development into responsible citizens.....," the Youth Opportunities Team worked collaboratively to launch and host two Youth Town Hall meetings. These forums provided youth with opportunities to ask questions and address issues with panels comprised of selected City, School and military leaders.

A Steering Committee comprised of representatives from schools, churches, youth serving organizations, and youth volunteers planned and implemented the event. Over 300 students from 14 public and private high schools attended the forums. Participants were provided opportunities to ask questions on issues such as homeland security, school safety, curfew, etc. The interaction between youth and adult officials was beneficial in promoting understanding and awareness and alleviating safety concerns. Informational

materials were distributed from a number of youth serving organizations and universities. Sponsors provided food and door prizes. Entertainment was provided by a local youth band "Ill Spent Conversion" and local step teams "Kempsville's Flava Unit" and "The Salem Steppers."

Reference

For your reference, listed below are the Department Contacts and their phone numbers. The area code for Virginia Beach is 757.

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Department of Economic Development	Cynthia Whitbred-Spanoulis 437-6459
Department of Emergency Medical Services	Ed Brazle 427-4850
Department of Finance	Shelley Bishop 427-8225
Department of Fire	Travis Halstead 437-4837
Department of Housing and Neighborhood Preservation	Melissa Bradley 426-5735
Department of Human Resources	Nancy Hughes 427-8855
Department of Management Services	Gloria Washington 563-1834
Department of Museums and Cultural Arts	Lynn Clements 437-4949
Department of Parks and Recreation	Sue Hazlett 563-1105
Department of Planning	Jolida Saunders 427-4936
Department of Police	Susan Morris 427-9163
Department of Public Health	Jennifer Whitley 518-2782
Department of Public Libraries	Karen Russell 427-8709
Department of Public Utilities	Talmage Piland 427-8652
Department of Public Works	Cheryl Kraemer 427-8762
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Office of the Circuit Court Judges	Mike Davy 427-8357

Office of the City Clerk	Beverly Hooks 427-4308
Office of the City Manager	Angela Gainer 427-4242
Office of the City Treasurer	Lynn Gaskill 427-8255
Office of the Real Estate Assessor	Larry Thurston 427-8729
Office of the Commonwealth's Attorney	Vicki Rogers 427-8723
Virginia Beach Ready to Learn Team	Karen Russell 427-8709
Volunteer Council	Mary Russo 427-4722

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