


# COUNTY OF YORK

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** April 12, 2022

**TO:** York County Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Neil A. Morgan, County Administrator 

**SUBJECT:** Emergency Preparedness and Management in York County

In response to the emergency preparedness related questions that were asked during the Board of Supervisor's Meeting on April 5, we are offering the following information.

Notably, we have an extremely experienced and well-trained staff (in the Department of Fire and Life Safety/Office of Emergency Management, as well as throughout other County departments and associated agencies). Our staff works diligently to remain prepared to deliver high-quality services to the citizens, businesses, visitors, and employees of York County. We regularly participate in diverse undertakings to sustain and strengthen our knowledge, skills, and abilities in the overall discipline of emergency preparedness. We are committed to maintaining our capabilities through effective planning, training, and exercises – all of which occur year-round (through different venues). Further, accomplishments and lessons learned during real-world incidents (most recently COVID-19), major exercises, and actual or potential severe weather events allow our knowledge, skills, and abilities to remain well honed.

Regarding the areas in which we concentrate, our focus is very broad. We routinely prepare to handle a multitude of everyday emergencies, major emergencies, and disasters (in an environment of dealing with all hazards) - whether naturally occurring or human-caused. Our basic mission areas include prevention, protection, mitigation, response, and recovery. Accordingly, we plan and train for each mission area. Operational readiness extends beyond that of response; we prepare to serve before, during, and after a significant event, emergency, or disaster.

The Department of Fire and Life Safety/Office of Emergency Management is the County agency that coordinates the development of plans and necessary response actions. However, it relies on various County departments, agencies, constitutional offices, non-governmental partners (i.e. Red Cross, etc.), and others that have responsibilities outlined in the County's overall Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) to maintain their capabilities and carry out their roles during a major emergency or disaster. The County's EOP is updated and maintained regularly (an Executive Summary is included with this memorandum). Essentially, the Department of Fire and Life Safety/Office of Emergency Management is similar to the conductor of an orchestra, or the hub of a wheel; it supports and facilitates the work performed by the various responsible agencies during a disaster. In most cases, this is done from the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) – but may also be accomplished virtually. Further, the Office of Emergency Management routinely collaborates within our community, with neighboring jurisdictions, with other jurisdictions across the Hampton Roads region, with private-sector partners, with the

Commonwealth of Virginia, and with the Federal government to determine threats, assess capabilities, exercise emergency plans, seek/address specific needs (either generally or mission-specific), and to ultimately be able to prepare for, respond to and recover from a major emergency or disaster. York County has an excellent working relationship with all of our partners.

An example of our successful relationships is demonstrated on a regular basis, typically every 1 ½ to 2 years (minimally every two years), during VOPEX (Virginia Operations Plan Exercise) - which tests multiple facets of our local Emergency Operations Plan and our hazard-specific Radiological Emergency Response Plan. This exercise, overseen by the Virginia Department of Emergency Management, FEMA, and the Federal Nuclear Regulatory Commission, simulates an emergency or disaster at the Surry Nuclear Power Station. York County is assessed and evaluated according to acceptable standards (local, state, and federal) regarding preparation, planning, and response (not only to the scenario but overall). Our administrative and operational abilities are scrutinized with attention to detail. Historically, we have performed extremely well in all of the exercises, and have been regularly complimented for our effective EOC management and overall response. Our most recent exercises occurred in the summer and fall of 2021. The specific areas evaluated during 2021 included:

- Emergency Planning
- Emergency Operations Center (setup, organization, and operation)
- Communications
- Transportation (bus routing)
- Radiological field monitoring
- Public information and rumor control
- Notification, warning, and route alerting
- Security
- Traffic control and access control
- Evacuation Assembly Center (disaster shelter) operations - which included personal monitoring, vehicle monitoring, personal decontamination, vehicle decontamination, registration, medication dispensing, mass-care, and sheltering
  - Setup, organization, and operations
  - Communications

To accomplish the 2021 VOPEX events, the following organizations were involved in the planning, setup, and/or operations. This list is not all-inclusive – rather, it represents the major partners. We rely on many of these departments/organizations to perform similar roles during other emergencies/disasters.

- Department of Fire and Life Safety
- Department of Social Services
- Department of Community Services
- Department of Information Technology
- Department of Emergency Communications
- County Administration

- County Attorney's Office
- Public Affairs Office
- York-Poquoson Sheriff's Office
- Department of Public Works
- York County School Division
- Peninsula Health District - Virginia Department of Health
- American Red Cross
- Virginia State Police
- Surry Power Station
- Virginia Department of Emergency Management
- Federal Emergency Management Agency
- Collaboration and coordination also occurred with surrounding localities

The VOPEX exercise, while radiologically centered, allows us to test most of the capabilities that must be used during other emergencies and disasters. For example, during the hurricane season, most of the previously mentioned areas (capabilities) are performed (Planning, Emergency Operations Center, Communications, Notification, Warning, Traffic Control, Security, Sheltering, and Mass-Care - to name a few). Generally, many of the same organizations, departments, and partners that participate in VOPEX are our partners in Emergency Management.

Regionally, York County coordinates, collaborates, and participates in initiatives that support emergency preparedness throughout Hampton Roads. Accordingly, our participation effectively increases our capabilities, staffing, and resources - while ensuring that we are benefiting not only our County but the region as a whole. We are members of committees (and in some cases serve in leadership roles) that collectively enable us to better plan, prepare, mitigate, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters. Additionally, a number of our employees are members of specialty response organizations, or teams (for example FEMA VATF-2 Urban Search and Rescue, Federal HHS DMAT - Disaster Medical Assistance Team, and the American Red Cross). With affiliation in such organizations, our employees bring back valuable training and experiences from deployments outside of the County. Examples include hurricane deployments (across the southeast United States), September 11, 2001 (Pentagon), Salt Lake City Olympics, Puerto Rico, Surfside building collapse, Presidential inaugurations, and the Haiti Earthquake - to name a few. There are many more.

COVID-19 was a major worldwide disaster that required significant coordination and collaboration among all levels of government. York County served significant roles (including leadership efforts) where many components of emergency management were implemented and coordinated. Regarding collaboration and coordination during COVID-19, some occurred in a face-to-face environment (initially) and then transitioned to a virtual environment - using technology platforms for many months (approaching two-plus years). The Board is certainly aware of the various awards that were received for these extraordinary efforts of coordination and collaboration.

Our County employees have access to high-quality training - either through their respective departments and offices or through specific training that supports their roles in emergency preparedness and management. Depending on the situation or type of class, training can be coordinated directly through a department (for example, shelter operations within the Department of Social Services) or the Department of Fire and Life Safety/Office of Emergency Management. The majority of staff who have roles in emergency preparedness/disaster-response must also complete various National Incident Management System (NIMS) and/or Incident Command System (ICS) courses. Additionally, staff routinely participates in regional drills and exercises associated with their respective departments, and/or through their affiliation with special teams and organizations.

I hope that you all find this information helpful.

Attachment:

- Executive Summary

Copy to: Fire Chief Stephen P. Kopczynski, Director/Coordinator of Emergency Management

## **Executive Summary**

The York County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) is a multi-discipline, all-hazards plan that establishes a single, comprehensive framework for the management of major emergencies and disasters within York County. The plan is implemented when it becomes necessary to mobilize the resources identified herein in order to save lives, protect property and infrastructure, and preserve the environment. The EOP incorporates the National Incident Management System (NIMS) as York County's standard for incident response and management. It reflects other changes resulting from the publication of the Department of Homeland Security/National Response Framework in January 2008, fourth edition 2019 and Presidential Policy Directive 8 (PP-8) National Preparedness released March 30, 2011.

This plan has been developed in accordance with the Code of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Title 44 Chapter 3.2, requiring each Virginia city, county and town to prepare, and keep current, an EOP to respond to disasters or large-scale emergencies. York County has established the emergency management guidelines contained within this EOP, which established the overall roles and responsibilities for emergency operations, as well as the concept of operations for York County Government and its partner agencies to protect the lives, property, and environment of its citizens, businesses, and visitors. The EOP is regularly reviewed and updated, as necessary, by the York County Department of Fire and Life Safety Office of Emergency Management, and is adopted by the Board of Supervisors, in accordance with the Code of Virginia. This EOP is intended to be used in conjunction with established operational procedures, plans, and protocols.

This plan assigns roles and responsibilities to County departments and agencies, as well as supporting volunteer and/or non-governmental organizations, outlining their responsibilities prior to and during planning, response, and recovery to disasters and major/large-scale emergencies. The York County Emergency Operations Center (EOC) is the primary location for direction, control, coordination and oversight of response and recovery operations during a disaster or large-scale emergency. In addition, other facilities may be used to support operations, as necessary. The EOP is not intended to serve as a stand-alone document, but rather as a guide that establishes the foundation for more detailed planning/process and procedural development by the individual departments, agencies and organizations that have roles/responsibilities and/or are active before, during, and after a significant event/incident, disaster, and/or major/large-scale emergency. The EOP is intended to be used in conjunction with more detailed department and agency plans and operating procedures.

## **Executive Summary**

The successful implementation of the EOP is contingent upon a collaborative approach with a wide range of partner agencies and organizations that provide crucial support to York County during disaster and emergency operations. The plan recognizes the important role that our partner agencies and organizations perform during significant events/incidents, disasters, and/or large-scale emergencies. Separate memoranda of understanding or agreements are typically established with many of these organizations.

The York County EOP has been developed to be consistent with the Department of Homeland Security's (DHS) Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) model document for the development of state and local EOPs and the DHS/FEMA Comprehensive Preparedness Guide – Developing and Maintaining Emergency Operations Plans (CPG 101) Version 2.0, November 2010, and DHS/FEMA Comprehensive Preparedness Guide 201: Threat and Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment and Stakeholder Preparedness Guide (CPG 201), Third Edition, May 2018.

The York County EOP is organized into sections, to include the Basic Plan, which is the primary component and basis for the overall EOP. The Basic Plan includes the Continuity of Operations Plan (COOP) for emergency operations, and assigns duties and responsibilities to agency heads or organizations that either are part of, or will serve in support of, local government in times of disaster and large-scale emergencies. The EOP becomes the organizational and legal basis for emergency operations.

Additional components that support the Basic Plan, identified as annexes, are used to implement the tasks established by the plan. York County's emergency management system is divided into functional and support areas or tasks. Functional and support annexes provide procedural guidelines for each of those areas. During activation of the EOP, the primary department, division, agency, or organization is responsible for coordinating all activities within the scope of the plan and appropriate annexes. The County has also uses certain hazard-specific annexes. Generally, the hazard-specific annexes are separate plans.

COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR  
Neil A. Morgan



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April 15, 2022

Jacinda Russell  
Federal Lands Access Program Manager  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
Federal Highway Administration  
Eastern Federal Lands Division  
22001 Loudoun County Parkway  
Building E2, Suite 200  
Ashburn, VA 20147

Re Federal Lands Access Grant Program Application for Birthplace of America Trail

Dear Ms. Russell:

The Birthplace of America Trail (BoAT) is a multi-use trail that will be the centerpiece of a regional active transportation network and economic driver connecting the Virginia Capital Trail in Richmond, VA to the numerous waterfront communities of Hampton Roads. The trail is designed as a shared-use path with several points of access to Colonial National Historic Park, including Historic Jamestowne, the Yorktown Battlefields, and Cape Henry as well as the Fort Monroe National Monument. The trail will enhance non-motorized transportation and tourism, as well as recreational and health and wellness opportunities for hundreds of thousands of Virginia residents, many of whom come from historically underserved communities. The entire BoAT will be approximately 190 miles when completed.

A portion of the BoAT is located in York County. We have partnered with the City of Newport News to provide technical and financial assistance for portions of the trail as our community will greatly benefit as well.

I urge you to award the full grant amount for this project.

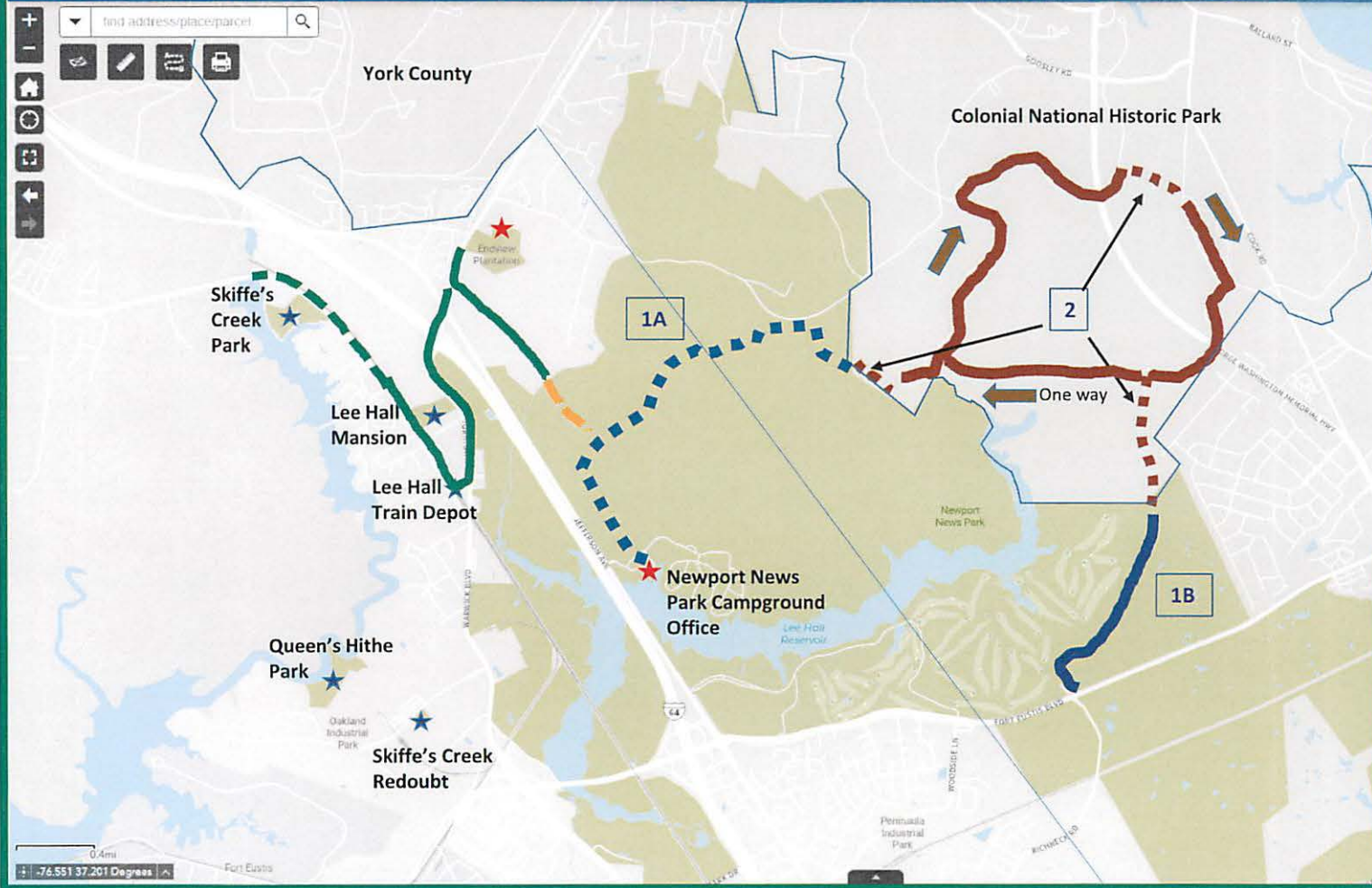
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

  
Neil A. Morgan  
County Administrator

Enclosure





**Birthplace of America Trail**

- TA grant funded (FY '23-24)
- Future TA application
- Bridge crossing / park link (funding (TBD))
- Proposed FLAP grant paved SUP improvements
- Existing CNHP ped/bike trail (unpaved – potential SUP)
- Existing CNHP historic road (ped / bike paved SUP)
- Existing paved maintenance road / SUP
- Potential Trailhead Parking
- Points of Interest

**Cost Estimates:**

- 1A) NN Park office - CNHP: 2.25 mi  
Prelim. est. \$3.5 M
- 1B) NN Park - maintenance road rehabilitation: 1.25 mi  
Prelim. est. \$ 0.5 M
- 2) CNHP - NEPA / TBD – to be coordinated with CNHP



# COUNTY OF YORK

## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** April 15, 2022

**TO:** York County Board of Supervisors

**FROM:** Neil A. Morgan, County Administrator



**SUBJECT:** Selection of New Human Resources Director

I am pleased to report that after a search process, I have selected Ms. Rose McKinney, to be our next Director of Human Resources effective May 9, 2022. Ms. McKinney is a seasoned HR professional with extensive experience in both private and public sectors. The selection panel, of which I was a member, unanimously recommended Ms. McKinney as our first choice; and she has now accepted the position.

In addition to other relevant experience, Rose long served as the City of Portsmouth Assistant Director of Human Resources, a locality with approximately twice as many employees as York County. Rose and her husband are also longtime residents of York County. I will plan to introduce Rose formally to the Board of Supervisors later this spring once she is onboard.