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November 29, 2021

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P.O. Box 2448
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RE: MPPDC Elevated Septic System Pilot Project Annual Report

Greetings,

The Middle Peninsula Planning District Commission (MPPDC) is pleased to submit the following annual report for the contract titled "Elevated Septic System Pilot Project" with the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development dated May 20, 2021. The work is based on Chapter 552 of the 2021 Acts of Assembly of the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The MPPDC elevated septic system pilot will be constructed at a public facility slated for construction by King and Queen County during 2022. The facility will be sited on an upland location outside of any designated Resource Protection Area (RPA) or floodplain. The work will be done in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Health and Department of Environmental Quality to analyze and report on the following components:

- The feasibility of elevating the parts of septic systems vulnerable to rising sea levels.
- The optimal system design, or range of designs, for vertically elevated septic systems capable of withstanding sea level rise and chronic flooding that meets effluent standards.
- Recommendations for legal or regulatory changes, if any, to authorize the use of vertically elevated septic systems;

- Recommendations for amending current septic system permit requirements to allow for the use of vertically elevated septic systems;
- Recommendations for financing the installation of vertically elevated septic systems; and
- Installation and projected average annual maintenance costs for a vertically elevated septic system over 10 years.

Additionally, MPPDC has continued to partner with Virginia Sea Grant and RISE on advancing Coastal Community Resilience Challenges which are offering a total of \$3 million in funding and real-world pilot sites in coastal communities to innovators solving the critical problems urban and rural coastal communities face because of climate change. A focal area for the Resilience Challenge pertains to septic system failures related to sea-level rise, land subsidence, and recurrent flooding. The RISE Challenge is seeking innovative, cost-effective solutions that can withstand the environmental conditions of rural coastal Virginia and produce clean water that passes all public health standards for the over 104,000 onsite sewage systems in Virginia's Middle Peninsula, Northern Neck, and Eastern Shore as estimated by the Virginia Department of Health. In partnership with MPPDC, the RISE challenge is looking to expand the number of potential solutions to the problem of failing septic systems in rural coastal Virginia. By aligning the funding from the General Assembly with GO VA funding under the RISE Resiliency Competition, multiple approaches for the exploration of solutions will be made available. The applicants to the RISE competition will be given an opportunity to also access MPPDC funding provided by the General Assembly.

As the project progresses, MPPDC will provide notice of the expected date of completion of the pilot program and any other pertinent information on an annual basis or with greater frequency if requested.

The MPPDC appreciates the opportunity to pilot and analyze potential solutions which can provide environmental and public health benefits to the citizens of the Middle Peninsula, rural coastal Virginia, and the Commonwealth. Please contact me should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Lewie Lawrence
Executive Director