



**P-O-R-T-S-M-O-U-T-H**  
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## 2002 First Half Highlights

- New and expanding businesses tracked by Economic Development have generated over **\$7.5 million in capital investment** and created over **130 jobs** to date. New businesses include: **Jani-King International's regional office**, and **Randolph-Bundy**, a distributor of millwork, window & door products. Expansions include: **Atlantic Cable and Trench**, a cable contractor; **Center for Pain Management and Orthopaedic Surgery Center**, health care providers in Midtown. The **John Kool Lincoln-Mercury Dealership** on High Street also announced plans to expand its operation.
- The **Middle Street Garage**, a 500 space, 4-story parking deck located in Olde Towne Portsmouth opened in January. The garage provides additional parking for downtown businesses and attractions.
- In May, Portsmouth Economic Development and the Portsmouth Partnership hosted the **2002 Business Appreciation celebration at Roger Brown's Restaurant and Sports Bar**. The event was a success with over 300 business owners and guests in attendance and it provided a great networking opportunity as well as information on state and local resources.
- Real Estate Assessment information from the City Assessor's records is now available online at no charge. Avoid a trip to City Hall by visiting [www.portsmouth.va.us/assessor/data](http://www.portsmouth.va.us/assessor/data). Search by street address or map and parcel number to get assessment data, site acreage, building square footage, zoning, etc. Property owner information is not available online.



# InSite into Portsmouth Economic Development

SUMMER 2002

## Midtown is on the move!

Midtown Portsmouth is on the move. Plans, proposals, and purchases are underway to improve this area of the city.

By Labor Day, work should be completed on the widening and realignment of Bart Street. This new roadway is a result of the city's Vision 2005 Plan for Midtown. When completed, it will improve traffic flow and enhance the visibility of the site of the former MidCity Shopping Center.

In August Blackwood Development Company, one of the developers of the Victory Crossing Shopping Center, announced a redevelopment project on the site of the former MidCity Shopping Center. Blackwood Development is working on several conceptual site plans for this 20-acre site which would encompass demolition of the existing structures and construction of a brand new shopping center. Although marketing for the project has just begun, company officials report that tenant interest in the proposed development is strong. For information on leasing space in the new center call 804-320-0422.

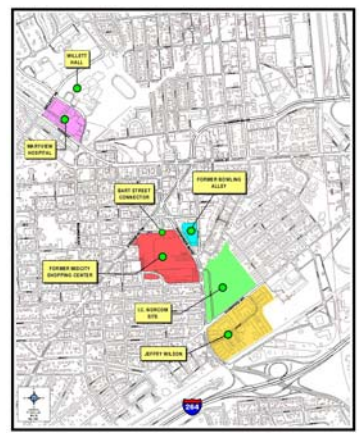
In June the City Council and the Portsmouth Redevelopment and Housing Authority (PRHA) adopted a Redevelopment Plan for Midtown. The plan documents the decline and blight in certain sections of Midtown and puts the appropriate policy in place should PRHAs involvement in property acquisition be necessary to further facilitate the improvements in Midtown.

In May the City of Portsmouth issued a Request for Proposals offering developers the opportunity to present plans for the former 24-acre I.C. Norcom School site. The RFP process should result in the redevelopment of this parcel in a manner which corresponds to the overall recommendations outlined in the Midtown Economic Enhancement Strategy prepared for the city by HyettPalma in 2001.

In February the Greater Portsmouth Development Corporation (GPDC), a public-private partnership, has recently purchased the former Bowling Alley at 1101 Frederick Boulevard and plans to have it demolished.

GPDC's acquisition of the highly visible 2.6-acre parcel puts it in the hands of an owner willing to facilitate its redevelopment. In 1998 GPDC purchased the former Woolworth's building in Downtown and was instrumental in facilitating its successful renovation into Roger Brown's Restaurant and Sports Bar. GPDC also acquired the former Governor Dinwiddie Hotel in 1999. The hotel is currently undergoing extensive renovations by a local developer to become a Hawthorn Hotel & Suites.

And PRHA plans to submit a Hope VI Grant application to the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) on behalf of Jeffrey Wilson Homes. If awarded to Portsmouth, this grant would provide several million dollars for the redevelopment of this 26-acre property at the foot of the I-264 and Frederick Boulevard interchange. PRHA has already begun the process to prepare its submission which includes a variety of public meetings; however, HUD has not indicated when it will begin accepting applications for the program.



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## Victory Crossing... Retail, golf course, and business park



Retail has scored a victory at Victory Crossing, Portsmouth's new power center on the former Tower Mall site. Shoppers are checking out what Victory Crossing Shopping Center has to offer. Anchors include Lowe's Home Improvement Center, which opened in early April with a board cutting ceremony and A.J. Wright, which will open in the fall.

Outparcels including Dollar Tree, Bank of America and Wendy's are open. Pizza Hut, Ruby Tuesday and Exxon will open soon. Announcements for other inline shops are pending.

The ripple affect from this retail success is spreading across Victory Boulevard where Victory Plaza, a new 9,100 square foot strip center, is nearing completion. Radio Shack is open for business and leases are pending to fill the remaining space available. New Millennium Fitness is adjacent to Victory Plaza in a free-standing former retail space, and a free-standing Auto Zone is also under construction.



Bide-A-Wee Golf Course scored a hole-in-one recently when *Golf Digest* named it "Most Improved Course in the Nation." The most read golf magazine in the world also increased the course rating from 1-1/2 to 4 stars. With design assistance from Curtis Strange, the 18-hole championship course underwent an \$8 million renovation in 1998 and features practice putting greens, a driving range and chipping area, a restaurant, cocktail lounge and meeting rooms.

Just a chip shot away from Bide-A-Wee, a new 125-acre business park is under development. Victory Crossing Business Park is one of Portsmouth's largest developable tracts of land and the second planned office and industrial park in the city. The park will host a range of office and industrial facilities including Class A and B office, flex space, warehouse, institutional and campus style settings including the proposed Portsmouth Campus of Tidewater Community College, a state-of-the-art center of higher education for the 21st Century. In addition, the park has the distinct advantage of being located in an Empowerment Zone, Enterprise Zone and HUBZone and is readily accessible to I-264, I-64, I-664 and State Highway 58.



## Economic development names new deputy



Tara F. Saunders has been appointed Deputy Director of Economic Development for the City of Portsmouth.

A lifelong Hampton Roads resident, Saunders served more than 12 years in the City of Chesapeake's Economic Development Department, where she was primarily responsible for identifying and recruiting new businesses for the city. Most recently she served as Assistant Director of Economic Development for the City of Suffolk.

Deputy City Manager Douglas L. Smith said her main role for Portsmouth will be development and implementation of a regional, national and international strategically focused outreach effort. "We are looking for Tara to use her many years of solid local government economic development experience to bring a renewed focus to Portsmouth's outreach program," Smith said.

Saunders received her Master of Business Administration (MBA) in 1992 from Old Dominion University. She also earned her Bachelor of Science in Business Administration in 1985 from Old Dominion University. She is a member of numerous economic development and business organizations, including Corenet Global/IDRC, International Economic Development Council (IEDC), Southern Economic Development Council (SEDC) and Virginia Economic Developers Association (VEDA), International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC), Hampton Roads Association for Commercial Real Estate (HRACRE), Public Relations Society of America (PRSA) and serves on the Old Dominion University Alumni Board.

## Shirley is small business award winner

Congratulations to Shirley Construction Corp. The 47-year-old commercial contractor located in Portsmouth, was named Hampton Roads Small Business of the Year in May 2002. Longevity, marketplace flexibility, employee relations and triumph over serious challenges set Shirley Construction apart from small business nominees in other cities. CEO Merilyn Spears has been running the company with her son since the death of her husband several years ago.

Shirley has completed or is currently working on several school projects in Hampton Roads and northeastern North Carolina. Last year, Shirley completed its largest project ever - a \$12 million sports and wellness center at Christopher Newport University in Newport News.



Shirley Construction Corp., 3535 Elmhurst Lane, Portsmouth

The Small Business of the Year Award is sponsored by the Hampton Roads Chamber of Commerce and Small Business Development Center of Hampton Roads. Nominees from various cities were rated according to performance, innovations, quality and leadership.