

Virginia Tech Center for Housing Research

2009/10 Annual Report

Mission Statement

The Virginia Tech Center for Housing Research strives to improve the affordability, durability, and quality of housing by creating knowledge through research. The Center serves as a resource to policy makers, communities, and businesses for research, information, and technical assistance on affordable housing.

Since its creation by the Virginia General Assembly in 1989, the Center has built its reputation for quality and productivity through a diversified portfolio of research contributing to affordable housing in Virginia and the nation. To this end, the Center conducts research on:

- Sustainability and Green Building
- Housing Technology
- Housing Needs & Markets
- Home Ownership
- Assisted and Fair Housing

Classification of Center and Key Personnel

College of Architecture and Urban Studies Center

Director: Casey J. Dawkins (Dr. Dawkins recently left Virginia Tech to work for the Smart Growth Center at the University of Maryland. Current Co-directors are C. Theodore Koebel and Marilyn S. Cavell)

Senior Associate: Andrew McCoy

Contact person: Marilyn Cavell cavell@vt.edu

URL: <http://www.vchr.vt.edu>

Significant Accomplishments in 2009-10

Significant accomplishments of center and faculty associated with center for year ending June 30, 2010.

The Center for Housing Research and Dr. Dawkins continued work on a project sponsored by the General Services Administration and run through the D.C. Office of Planning. The project examines housing and transportation issues regarding future location of federal offices. Dr. Dawkins also worked on a project for HUD in conjunction with Newport Partners that focuses on affordable housing and transit-oriented development. In addition, Dr. Dawkins will soon complete work on two projects sponsored through the HUD research Cadre. Dr. Dawkins targeted a number of metropolitan areas around the country and analyzed the spatial distribution of low-income housing tax credit properties. He also analyzed assisted housing properties in several states for patterns of racial discrimination.

Continuing a history of providing on-going research support for state and local housing organizations, Ted Koebel and Marilyn Cavell continued work on a project for Housing Virginia to develop housing affordability metrics at the state, metropolitan, and jurisdiction levels. A variety of housing measures, including a series of housing affordability indices based on median housing cost and median income, are available on the Housing Virginia website (www.housingvirginia.org). The measures are current and are updated quarterly. In addition, Dr. Koebel and Ms. Cavell completed work on aiding Fairfax County, Virginia with data collection and analysis for their Consolidated Plan. Currently, Andrew McCoy and Ted Koebel are working on a project with Fairfax County to examine the pricing structures for their Affordable Dwelling Unit and Workforce Housing programs. In addition, Marilyn Cavell conducted an analysis regarding population and housing trends in Virginia for Community Futures.

The Center began a green building initiative with emphasis on sustainable communities that will guide the Center's strategy for future research. Work continues on examining recent homeowners in Blacksburg both those moving into green homes and traditional homes.

Contracts Received in 2009-10

Grants and contracts received in year ending June 30, 2010.

Exploring the Spatial Distribution of Low Income Housing Tax Credit Properties. US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Affordable Housing and Transit-Oriented Development. Newport Partners and US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Methodology to Establish Indicators of Discrimination in Housing Assistance. US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Fairfax County Five-Year Consolidated Plan, Fairfax County, Virginia.

Fairfax County Comprehensive Review, Revision and Development of Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) Construction Specifications and Pricing Methodology; And Development of Workforce Dwelling Unit (WDU) Construction Specifications and Pricing Methodology, Fairfax County, Virginia.

Virginia Mega-Trend Data Analysis, Community Futures.

Update of Metrics for Virginia Housing Affordability, Housing Virginia.

Goals for 2010-11

- Expand and establish the Center's role as a leader in sustainable communities and green building
- Provide on-going research support for state and local housing organizations
- Expand leadership in the Commonwealth as a provider of housing affordability measures

To set the stage for the Center's increased focus on sustainability and green building, the Center sponsored a Sustainable Communities Roundtable in Washington, DC in September 2010 to help HUD set policy surrounding sustainability. Also, in 2011, the Center will be leading the housing initiative for a HUD regional planning grant awarded to the New River Valley Planning District Commission in fall of 2010.

Dr. Dawkins has left Virginia Tech to work for the Smart Growth Center at the University of Maryland. Ted Koebel assumes the role of Co-director for Research Development and Marilyn Cavell is the Co-director for Operations for the Virginia Tech Center for Housing Research. Andrew McCoy, currently a Senior Associate with the Center and Assistant Professor of Building Construction at Virginia Tech, will take on a greater role with the Center and continue as the Center's primary liaison to the Housing Research Center Consortium.

The Center continues a strong relationship with the Metropolitan Institute, a nationally recognized Virginia Tech Center located in Alexandria, Virginia. However, with the announcement of Dr. Dawkins' resignation, the Center aborted the plan to function as part of that organization. The Virginia Tech Center for Housing Research will remain an independent Center within the College of Architecture and Urban Studies. The Center will continue to fulfill its mission to serve the Commonwealth by conducting state and local housing research projects in addition to seeking and conducting national research efforts in the area of green building and sustainability.