

Virginia Tech Center for Housing Research

2010/11 Annual Report

Mission Statement

The Virginia Tech Center for Housing Research strives to improve the sustainability, 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 creating sustainable and affordable communities.

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
- Housing Affordability

Classification of Center and Key Personnel

College of Architecture and Urban Studies Center

Director: Co-directors are C. Theodore Koebel and Marilyn S. Cavell; Andrew McCoy will take over as Center Director in July 2012.

Associate Director of Technology Research: Andrew McCoy

Contact person: Marilyn Cavell cavell@vt.edu

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

Significant Accomplishments in 2010-11

Significant accomplishments of center and faculty associated with center for year ending June 30, 2011.

The Center changed directors in January 2011. Dr. Casey Dawkins left Virginia Tech and joined the faculty of the University of Maryland as an associate with the Smart Growth Center. Upon departure of Dr. Dawkins, Ted Koebel assumed the role of Co-Director for Research Development and Marilyn Cavell assumed the role of Co-Director of Operations. In addition, Dr. Andrew McCoy was appointed as Associate Director of Technology Research.

Prior to leaving, Casey Dawkins completed two U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development pass through research projects. He completed research on exploring the spatial distribution of low income housing tax credit properties on sample areas could lead to a project on a national scale and designed a methodology to establish indicators of discrimination in Housing Assistance.

In spring of 2011, the Center became a partner with the New River Valley Planning District Commission to lead the housing component of the Livability Initiative. Funded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Community Development, the three-year regional planning project integrates housing, land use, economic and workforce development, energy, and transportation in pursuit of reducing barriers to

achieve affordable, sustainable communities. In addition, the Center continued work in the area of green building through conducting a survey of recent homeowners in Blacksburg, Virginia. This post-occupancy survey will help to determine homeowner awareness of green building and sustainability and the impact on their housing choices.

The Center continued to provide on-going research support for state and local housing organizations. Led by Dr. Andrew McCoy, the Center for Housing Research carried out work on a pricing schedule for Fairfax County's Affordable Housing and Workforce Housing programs. In addition, Center faculty and affiliates worked on a management function review of Prince George's County, Maryland's Department of Housing and Community Development. Marilyn Cavell and Ted Koebel continued work on the housing affordability metrics project now referred to as the Housing Sourcebook and available online at www.housingvirginia.org. A variety of housing affordability measures, including a series of housing affordability indices based on median housing cost and median income, are available at the state, metropolitan and jurisdiction levels. A new module was added to the Sourcebook that determines the ability of workers in particular occupations to afford housing in their area.

The Center for Housing Research was a sponsor for the 2010 Governor's Housing Conference in Richmond, Virginia that provided a forum for showcasing research projects and disseminating information to the Virginia housing community.

Contracts Received in 2010-11

Grants and contracts received in year ending June 30, 2011.

Prince George's Review of Management Functions and Operations, Department of Housing and Community Development; County Council, Prince George's County, Maryland; Ted Koebel; December 2010.

Metrics for Housing Affordability (Update of Housing Affordability Metrics, 2011 modification); Housing Virginia; Marilyn Cavell and Ted Koebel; March 2011.

Developing a Plan for Sustainable, Affordable Housing for the New River Valley; New River Valley Planning District Commission (U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development); Ted Koebel and Marilyn Cavell; June 2011.

Goals for 2011-12

Dr. McCoy, who is currently serving on the Executive Committee of the Housing Research Center Consortium, will take over as Center Director in July 2012. Under his leadership the Center will continue its efforts to be a leader in the sustainable and housing technology arena. The Center was awarded a grant from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development after the period covered in this report. As the principal investigator for the two-year project (Impact of Market Behavior on the Adoption and Diffusion of Innovative Green Building Technologies in Residential Firms), Dr. McCoy will work closely with HUD to develop strategies in support of innovation in housing. Through Dr. McCoy's leadership, the Center has goals to:

- Expand the Center's role as a research leader in sustainable communities, green building, and housing technology
- Continue leadership in the Commonwealth as a provider of housing affordability measures and of research in support of state and local housing organizations