

HAMPTON VA

NEWS RELEASE

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Hampton gets \$15,000 grant to map, prioritize natural assets in downtown, Kecoughtan areas

Dec. 7, 2015 - Hampton recently received a \$15,000 grant to map and prioritize trees, vegetation, wildlife habitat and other natural assets in the downtown and Kecoughtan areas.

The money from the Green Infrastructure Center will be used to identify assets that could help the city meet some of the goals that were set this summer during “Dutch Dialogues Virginia; Life at Sea Level.”

The Dutch Dialogues was a regional gathering focused on sea level rise and flooding that plagues both the Peninsula and the south side of Hampton Roads Harbor. Among the goals that came out of the Dialogues was mitigating flood risks, improving water quality, and providing broad value to the city and its residents.

In their grant application, city officials said “smart management of natural resources can bring financial savings from reduced grey infrastructure and stormwater management expenditures, attract employers and workers, increase land values, boost tourism, and improve the health and quality of life of Hampton residents.”

Hampton was one of 11 counties, cities or towns across Virginia that in November received grants ranging from \$5,000 to \$15,000. The money “will help localities map and rank what they have and create a plan for protecting or restoring their natural resources,” said Karen Firehock, director of the Green Infrastructure Center in Charlottesville. “These localities can reap many benefits... such as revitalizing a downtown business district, protecting water supplies, identifying new recreational opportunities or informing zoning decisions,” Firehock added.

The Green Infrastructure Center is a non-profit that helps communities develop strategies for protecting and conserving ecological and cultural assets. The money for the grants came from the U.S. Forest Service.

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