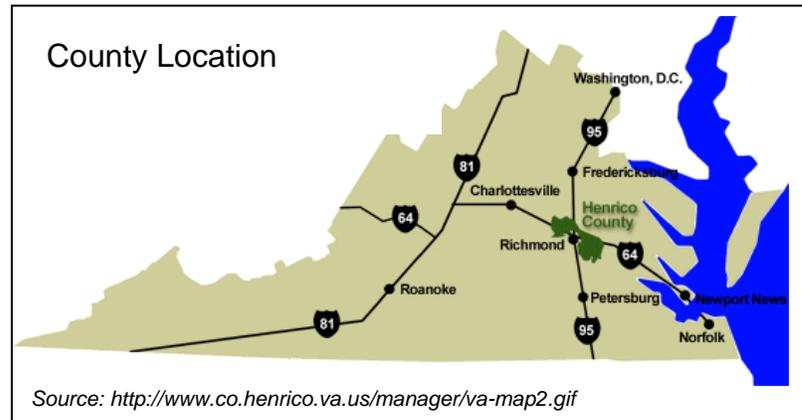


## ***CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE COUNTY***

Henrico County is approximately two-hundred forty-four (244) square miles in area and is located in the central portion of the Commonwealth of Virginia. The county is bordered to the south/southeast by the James River and the City of Richmond, which separates Henrico from Chesterfield County. New Kent and Charles City Counties lie to the east. Tuckahoe Creek, to the west, defines Henrico's boundary with Goochland County, and the Chickahominy River to the north forms the boundary with Hanover County.



The county has excellent regional connections; it is accessible from Interstate-64, Interstate-95, Interstate-295, Route 895, and the James River. It is the home of the Richmond Regional International Airport, the primary airport for the Richmond Metropolitan Area. It also has a station along the Amtrak line.

Henrico County is one of the oldest communities in the country. In 1611, Sir Thomas Dale left Jamestown and established a settlement along the Powhatan River, now called the James River. The settlement of Henricus, or the Town of Henrico, was located on the north side of the river on what is now Farrar's Island. Henricus was considered the second successful English settlement in America and had the first hospital and university chartered in the English colonies. The town was abandoned in 1622 after a series of attacks by Native Americans.

In 1634, Virginia was divided into eight (8) shires, or counties, one being Henrico. The first boundaries of the county incorporated an area that became ten (10) counties, as well as the Cities of Richmond, Charlottesville, and Colonial Heights. The county was named for Henry, Prince of Wales, the eldest son of King James I of England.

The county played a role in both the Revolutionary and Civil Wars. Many important Civil War battles were fought on Henrico soil, including the battles of Seven Pines, Savage's Station, Glendale, Malvern Hill, Yellow Tavern, New Market Heights and others in defense of Richmond.

Although coal mining was a source of employment in the western portions of the county during the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, historically, the economy of the county was based in agriculture, and the development patterns of the county reflected this agricultural focus. Until the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, the county was characterized by family holdings of between one-hundred (100) to five-hundred (500) acres of agricultural land, with Richmond serving as the primary market center.

In the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Henrico County grew from an area of rural agriculture to a thriving suburban community generally capturing more growth than the City of Richmond. Similar to the growth trends of the nation, the county experienced its most significant growth in the period following World War II, and has continued to experience steady growth to the present day. With the growth the county experienced in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Henrico became the first county in Virginia to adopt the County Manager form of government in 1934.

Through the 1990's and into the new millennium, Henrico County has maintained its character as a desirable place to live and work. It has experienced steady and positive growth in population and business while still maintaining urban, suburban, and rural qualities. These diverse characteristics, along with the county's location, quality public services, and other amenities have contributed to Henrico's success over time. Many national and international companies have headquarters and facilities located in and around Henrico County, drawing new people every year. With a constant influx of new people and businesses, the county has a history of being proactive in planning for the growth and development these assets can generate.

In 1958, the Julian Tarrant Plan was adopted as the first plan for the county. This plan was used until 1983 when the 2000 Plan was adopted. In 1995, the county completed a fifteen-year, long-range Land Use Plan which has served the community well. Because the planning horizon for that plan is drawing near and development trends in the county have evolved, Henrico has embarked on the development of a plan update that will incorporate land use, public services, transportation, infrastructure, open space, and recreation planning into a coordinated and comprehensive plan that will guide the county into the future.