



The Maritime Administration would like to welcome Barbara Nelson to the team as the Community Planner for the Marine Highway and StrongPorts Programs at the Maritime Administration's (MARAD) Office of Intermodal System Development. Before joining MARAD in June 2014, Barbara was a Principal Planner with the Richmond Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for eight years. The MPO is the federally designated forum for advancing transportation visions, programs and projects within the region. While at the MPO, Barbara was responsible for managing several programs including: intermodal/freight, passenger rail, financial programming through the Transportation Improvement Program, bicycle and pedestrian program and public outreach.

Barbara was one of the team members for the development of the James River "64-Express" project, working closely with the Maritime Administration, the Virginia Port Authority and the James River Barge Line to develop and expand port-related opportunities in the Richmond region. The James River/I-64 corridor was designated by the U.S. Department of Transportation as an America's Marine Highway Connector in 2010, and the project was a recipient of grant funding by the Maritime Administration. In 2009, the National Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations recognized the project by awarding the MPO with the 2009 National Award for Innovative Practice in Metropolitan Planning.

Prior to her work with the MPO, Barbara's previous work experience includes work in the private sector as a developer and marketing specialist of geographic information system services at Mapcom Systems, Inc., as the Director of Planning at the Town of Ashland, and as the Executive Director of the Virginia Trails Association, a statewide, private non-profit greenway and trails advocacy group in Virginia.

Barbara enjoys reading and touring wineries with her friends. She is also an avid gardener at her home in Ashland and in her volunteer work with historic Garden Week in Virginia. Barbara received her Bachelor's Degree in Geography at Mary Washington College, a Master's Degree of Urban and Regional Planning from Virginia Commonwealth University, and received her planning certification by the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP).