



# FY 2012-2013 Annual Report

# CHAIR'S MESSAGE



Greetings! Thank you for taking your time to browse our annual report. We hope you will sense both our pride and pleasure as we share the accomplishments of the past year in our New River Valley, a place where we live, work and most importantly, the place we call home.

It has been my privilege to lead our Planning District Commission for the past year. One project I personally want to highlight is our completion of the South East Regional Directors Institute (SERDI) voluntary regional council assessment. We as a Commission wanted to know how others in the New River Valley viewed us and the job we are doing and probably most importantly, the job our fellow citizens expect of us.

During the months of July and August, 2012, surveys were mailed to more than 100 elected officials, community leaders and others asking what we as a Planning District were doing well, concerns regarding their PDC and basically their hopes and dreams for our valley. On the heels of the surveys, a staff member from SERDI was

on the scene here interviewing some of these same folks in addition to others. Focus groups were held with leaders in each major area we serve - Montgomery County, Pulaski County, Giles County, Floyd County and the City of Radford - in addition with the educational leaders in our valley, primarily the school superintendents, and also the PDC staff itself.

A complete report of the assessment followed, and trust me, the PDC Board digested it thoroughly. And we are still digesting it and moving forward toward implementation of many of its recommendations. Two messages from the assessment rang out loud and clear to us. **The Planning District Commission belongs to the people of the New River Valley** through the elected officials of the localities comprising our district. **And it is valued by our fellow citizens** for the work the PDC staff delivers to our New River Valley.

The assessment energized our Board. Your Commissioners, a majority of whom are elected officials but also a large number of your fellow citizens, serve at the appointment of the elected bodies throughout the New River Valley, have become more engaged and more committed to their service representing you and your communities.

**We all** want to make this place we call home, our New River Valley, an even better place. This annual report reflects our efforts toward that goal!

Michael S. Patton, Chair

## FY 2012-2013 COMMISSIONERS

### FLOYD COUNTY

Mr. Fred Gerald  
Ms. Evelyn Janney

### GILES COUNTY

Mr. Leon Law  
Mr. Richard McCoy

### MONTGOMERY COUNTY

Ms. Annette Perkins  
Mr. Ray Chambers

### PULASKI COUNTY

Dr. Doug Warren  
Mr. Charles Bopp

### CITY OF RADFORD

Dr. Helen Harvey  
Mr. Tim Cox  
Mr. Bob Nicholson

### TOWN OF BLACKSBURG

Ms. Cecile Newcomb  
Ms. Holly Lesko

### TOWN OF CHRISTIANBURG

Mr. Scott Weaver, Treasurer  
Mr. Henry Showalter

### TOWN OF FLOYD

Mr. Michael Patton, Chair

### TOWN OF NARROWS

Mr. Thomas Garrett

### TOWN OF PEARISBURG

Mr. Charles Via

### TOWN OF PULASKI

Mr. Larry Clevinger  
Mr. Greg East

### TOWN OF RICH CREEK

Mr. Gary Eaton

### RADFORD UNIVERSITY

Mr. Joe Carpenter

### VIRGINIA TECH

Mr. Kevin Sullivan, Vice Chair  
Mr. Jason Soileau

# REGIONAL COOPERATION

## NEW RIVER VALLEY LIVABILITY INITIATIVE

By the fall of 2012, the seven topic-area working groups of the Livability Initiative concluded their respective work. Representatives from each of the working groups came together for the first of two Integrated Working Group Meetings to explore the intersections between the important issues each had delved into over the past year. A second round of public input, the Community Priorities Survey, provided priority goals. The Community Priorities Survey asked respondents to indicate how much priority they would place on each of the goals developed by the working groups while also having an opportunity to write in goals of their own.



The Integrated Working Group came together again to evaluate the projects and policies list that participants felt would be most effective toward achieving citizens' highest priority goals for the region. These projects and policies were brought back to the public for a final round of feedback through the NRV Tomorrow Survey. The NRV Tomorrow Survey's projects and policies options were selected from a list of draft strategies developed by the working groups, particularly those strategies that related to the highest priority goal themes from the previous survey effort.

As the Livability Initiative nears completion, the Livability Initiative Final Report is being developed. This final report will identify ways to increase regional self-reliance and prosperity, save tax dollars, increase support for local businesses, support and revitalize existing communities, offer more choices in housing and transportation, improve community health and protect the region's rural character, natural environment and scenic beauty. This report will also provide important information about the region, priority goals that have been identified by citizens, and a menu of action items that communities can select from to best address their most pressing challenges, while at the same time helping to accomplish regional goals. For further information on the Livability Initiative visit [www.nrvlivability.org](http://www.nrvlivability.org).

## NRV WIRELESS AUTHORITY

The New River Valley Network Wireless Authority (Giles County, Pulaski County and City of Radford) along with Citizens Telephone Cooperative finished laying the fiber for the middle mile fiber network in the region. This is an \$11.5 million dollar project, funded by National Telecommunications and Information Administration, with 186 miles of fiber extending from Wytheville to Botetourt County. The middle mile fiber will bring significant upgrades to internet capabilities to anchor institutions throughout the region, including hospitals, schools, and government facilities. Once tested and fully deployed, Citizens Cooperative will broker the open access fiber to private providers in the region. As this project comes to a close, the Wireless Authority is exploring options to deploy last mile fiber to businesses and residences through traditional infrastructure as well as wireless transmission.

## NEW RIVER VALLEY HOME CONSORTIUM

The HOME Consortium broke ground on the first affordable supportive housing community in the New River Valley, named Summit Place, and located in the Town of Rich Creek. This service is desperately needed and in line with the overwhelming data on the region's aging population. The 23-room facility will serve residents 62 years and older and provide services such as meals, medication management, and social activities.



The HOME Consortium is also providing funding for eight rental apartments for persons 55 and older on Grissom Lane in Blacksburg, to be completed in the spring of 2014.

## VIRGINIA'S FIRST AND NEW RIVER VALLEY COMMERCE PARK



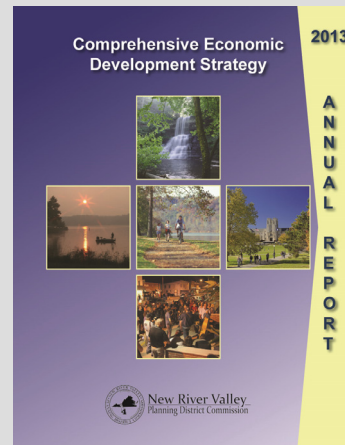
Virginia's First and the New River Valley Commerce Park Participation Committee welcomed Red Sun Farms into the New River Valley Commerce Park this past fiscal year. This first prospect to locate at the Commerce Park will be making a \$30 million investment on 45 acres and creating 205 jobs in the next five years.

Following the strategic plan completed last year, marketing investments were made in prospect mailings and the development of a website ([www.nrvcommercepark.com](http://www.nrvcommercepark.com)), making information about the property available to companies and site consultants during their "first-cut" evaluations, before the first contact with local economic developers happens.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & HUMAN SERVICES

## COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY ANNUAL UPDATE

An annual update of the New River Valley Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) was completed with the help of the CEDS Committee consisting of representatives from local businesses and local governments. The biggest changes for this year's update are the changes to the Goals and Objectives section to reflect priorities discovered through a community survey distributed through the Livability Initiative, and an additional section on the strength of various economic sectors within the region. A CEDS Consumer Version was also created alongside the annual report. CEDS reports can be found online: [www.nrvpdc.org/cedsinformation.html](http://www.nrvpdc.org/cedsinformation.html).



## FLOYD INNOVATION CENTER

Commission staff is working with the project management team and providing grant administration for the Floyd Innovation Center. The center will host multiple tenants engaged in industries such as high-performance and biotechnology manufacturing and is expected to be operational by mid-year 2014. Grant funding by the Tobacco Commission, the Appalachian Regional Commission, and the US Economic Development Administration bring the total investment in the project to \$2.3 million. These grants will fund design and construction of a 13,000-square-foot-plus building that will provide tenant spaces suitable for clean room production and energy-efficient features for sustainable operation in the Floyd Regional Commerce Center.

## NEW RIVER VALLEY/MOUNT ROGERS WORKFORCE INVESTMENT BOARD

This past year the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board (WIB) contracted with the Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development to conduct a Workforce Skills Gap Analysis for target industries in the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Area and to develop a stakeholder implementation plan to improve Regional Workforce services. The Skills Gap Analysis is scheduled to be completed by September 30, 2013.

The WIB also partnered to hold a Job fair where over 60 employers participated and over 350 job seekers were served. Grant Initiatives of the WIB include: HITE (Health Information Technology Education) and the Valley's on the job training (OJT) Program. The WIB served 700 adult/dislocated workers with a placement rate of 82% and 305 youth with a placement rate of 79%. For further information on the WIB visit [www.nrmrwib.org](http://www.nrmrwib.org).

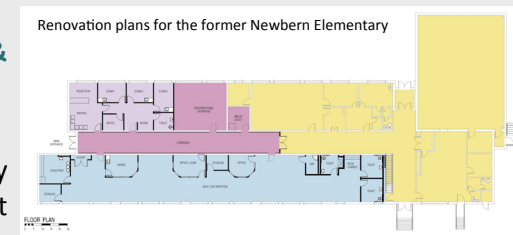


## NRV DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION REVOLVING LOAN FUND

Barrel Cave Wines, located in the NRV Business Center, received a \$20,000 loan through the New River Valley Development Corporation's Revolving Loan Fund. This loan will provide start-up funding for Barrel Cave's online retail sales of high quality wines from around the world. Additional loans are available for small businesses within the region, typically ranging from \$10,000 to \$25,000.

## PULASKI COUNTY ADULT DAY SERVICES & FALL PREVENTION CLINIC

Pulaski County recently applied for grant funding through the Department of Housing and Community Development in order to renovate the former Newbern Elementary School, near the Town of Dublin, and create an Adult Day Services & Fall Prevention Clinic. The facility will provide a holistic approach to caring for disabled adults and their caregivers with the addition of providing evidence-based fall prevention assessment and interventions targeted to each person's individual risk factors. In late June, the County was notified it had been awarded this funding, totaling \$700,000.



## TRANSPORTATION EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURING COMPETITIVENESS INITIATIVE

Throughout the three-year grant cycle of the Western Virginia Transportation Equipment Manufacturing Competitiveness Initiative (TEMCI), staff provided technical assistance through Virginia Tech to 11 companies from Botetourt County to Bristol. Project evaluation of total jobs created and total investment will coincide with the closing of the grant in the fall of 2013.

# PLANNING/TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

## REGIONAL PLANNING FORUM

The Commission supports communication and training between local government planning departments by coordinating a Regional Planning Forum for local planning staff. The Planning Forum provides at least one training session annually



which is open to all local government Planning Commission members in the region. The Commission hosted the sixth such training session on May 15, 2013, which was attended by more than 50 local planning commissioners and staff. Using information emerging from the New River Valley Livability Initiative, the event focused on “Addressing Trends and Challenges in the New River Valley.” The session also featured interactive discussion among groups of attendees concerning preferred goals, projects, and policies.

## HAZARD MITIGATION

With the NRV Hazard Mitigation Plan approved last fiscal year, localities continue to be eligible for Federal Emergency Management Agency funding through the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. Two proposed projects submitted during this fiscal year for funding are intended to minimize property damage and threat to human life from flooding events.

## ADDITIONAL TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED FY12-13

- Town of Narrows Planning Commission and staff in developing draft zoning ordinance modifications.
- Town of Pearisburg Planning Commission and staff in developing a draft update of the Town’s Comprehensive Plan.
- Pulaski County Planning Commission and staff in developing draft zoning ordinance modifications.

## GILES COUNTY BOAT ACCESS FACILITIES

The Commission worked with the Town of Pearisburg and Giles County to develop Public Boating Access Facilities grant applications, coordinated environmental review, and performed contract administration. Based on a 2002 angler survey, the 37 miles of the New River in Giles County is the most heavily fished section of the river in Virginia. In 2007, anglers spent \$793,521 in direct expenses and \$291,921 in consumer surplus between McCoy and Ripplemead. In Giles County alone, the total recreational value (including fishing) between March and November of 2007 was \$8,512,991. Creating more access to the river will provide additional resources for Giles County and Virginia to meet the growing demand and capture additional revenue to support continued recreational development and maintain existing resources.

## BASKERVILLE NEIGHBORHOOD REHABILITATION PROJECT

Twelve homes have been rehabbed or are under construction in the Baskerville Neighborhood Rehab Project, which is funded by the Department of Housing and Community Development, the New River Valley HOME Consortium, and other local investment. Infrastructure upgrades will begin in mid-July of 2013, with final project completion slated for early 2015.



BEFORE & AFTER of a substantial reconstruction in the Baskerville Neighborhood

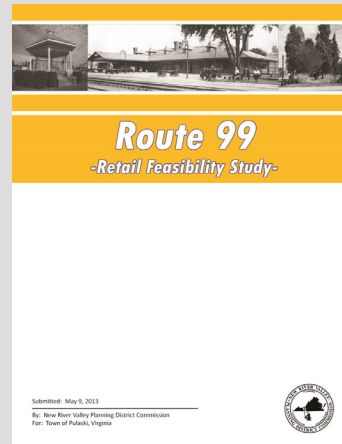
## DRAPER CORRIDOR STRATEGIC PLANNING EFFORT

In 2011, Pulaski County received a grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission to develop a strategic plan for the Draper Corridor. The project study area predominantly consisted of the section of Greenbrier Road between I-81 and the New River Trail. The project involved efforts to assess capital needs, create a plan, and assist entrepreneurs and small business owners in developing their operations and establishing links to activities along the corridor. The Commission assisted Pulaski County by leading group activities, developing a SWOT analysis, and creating conceptual plans.

# TRANSPORTATION

## PULASKI ROUTE 99 RETAIL STUDY

The Planning District Commission worked with the Town of Pulaski and Pulaski County to develop a Retail Feasibility Study for the Route 99 corridor. Public water and sewer is currently available within existing town limits and can support redevelopment opportunities; however, developers have inquired about opportunities outside of town limits, particularly within the vicinity of I-81's Exit 94 interchange. To determine potential opportunities along Route 99, the Planning District Commission worked closely with key town staff to collect data and develop potential scenarios for new development and redevelopment. Multiple resources were used to evaluate existing conditions, such as: location of existing retail, undeveloped parcels, transportation system, existing market share of the Route 99 corridor, and the proximity of other businesses. Commission staff is connecting the town with appropriate resources to assist with project implementation.



## GILES AND MONTGOMERY COUNTY'S SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SRTS) PROJECTS

The Commission worked with Giles County, Montgomery County, the Town of Pearisburg and the Town of Christiansburg to develop School Travel Plans and Infrastructure Grants. In each of the projects committees were established consisting of parents, school principals, teachers, local government administrators, planning department staff, police and EMS representatives. Each SRTS team developed a vision and action plan to improve unsafe or insufficient bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, existing travel behaviors, and school activities. The action plans detailed specific issues, potential strategies to improve each issue, responsible parties, estimated costs, and sources of funding for implementation. Once the School Travel Plans were approved, the Commission completed infrastructure grants for eligible activities – tallying over \$2M in potential revenue for infrastructure improvements.



## VDOT'S ROUTE 8 AND ROUTE 460 STUDIES

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), in conjunction with Montgomery County and the Town of Christiansburg, identified the need to develop corridor studies along Route 11/460 and Route 8. A project team assisted VDOT to determine the following: existing conditions analysis, future conditions analysis, proposed improvements, and a plan of action for each corridor. The Commission participated on both project teams.

## DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION'S (DRPT) MULTIMODAL SYSTEM DESIGN GUIDELINES

The Commonwealth of Virginia is working to improve the multimodal aspects of the state's transportation system for citizens, businesses, and visitors. Multimodal transportation improvements include providing new sidewalks or bike lanes, installing bus shelters at transit stops, striping crosswalks, and many other ways of transforming streets to improve travel using a variety of modes. The planning process was led by the DRPT, who engaged a steering team that included a cross-section of local, state, and modal agency professionals involved in transportation planning and design across Virginia. The Commission participated on the steering committee throughout the 2-year planning process.

## RIDE SOLUTIONS

The RIDE Solutions program continues to support and recruit Workplace Partners in the NRV. This goal is being met by directly contacting businesses, participating in business expos and other events to build visibility, and by developing partnerships with other organizations in the region. Community outreach through the NRV Job Fair and Expo and partnering with local organizations for the fourth annual Blacksburg Fix Fest are also building recognition of the RIDE Solutions brand and interest in sustainable transportation.



# FINANCE AND PERSONNEL

## DIRECTOR'S MESSAGE

As a regional organization closing out the 44<sup>th</sup> year of service to its members, it is exciting to reflect on a year of regional successes and projects that provide vision for communities and the region. As FY13 commenced, the Commission Board of Directors actively engaged in a voluntary self-assessment which solidified the purpose of the Commission and set direction for years to come. As a result, the Commission is working diligently to ensure the agency is providing opportunities for communities to collaborate while delivering technical assistance when requested by our members. The region celebrated a significant milestone in the spring with the announcement of the first company to locate at the Commerce Park, a regional industrial park owned by eleven local governments. The announcement is not only a success measured by job creation, but also demonstrates the commitment of local governments across the region to pool resources in order to deliver the necessary infrastructure to attract such a company. The region experienced another major accomplishment with the installation of 186 miles of open access middle mile fiber for telecommunications. Both of these successes started over ten years ago in planning meetings with a wide array of people at the table. Sometimes regional goals take a long time to complete, in large part due to financial investments that must be made and the time it takes to gather resources. These visionary discussions take place across communities each year, whether through a comprehensive planning process like the one recently completed in Pearisburg, or through economic development planning in Pulaski with the Rt. 99 Retail Feasibility Study. Visioning is also happening through the NRV Livability Initiative and the public provided excellent insight through the NRV Tomorrow Interactive Survey this year which secured feedback on community priorities. It is through planning and collaboration which the region has a tremendous amount of potential for a prosperous future. As we move into FY14 the Commission is committed to continuing the important work of visioning so all of the communities across the region can find success.

Kevin R. Byrd, AICP, Executive Director

## FINANCE REPORT

Year Ended June 30, 2013

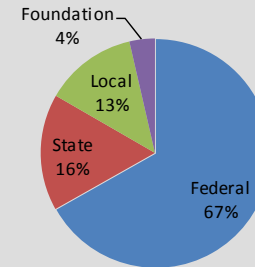
### Revenues

Grants and Appropriations	
Federal	1,480,632.01
State	365,756.70
Local	289,603.62
Foundation	79,750.00
Total	2,215,742.33

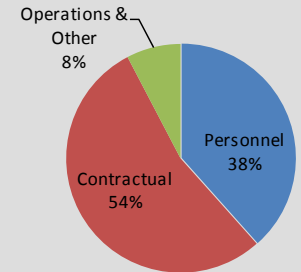
### Expenditures

Personnel	801,960.66
Contractual	1,125,977.93
Operations & Other	160,346.76
Total	2,088,285.35
Funds Carried Forward	127,456.98

## Grants and Appropriations



## Expenditures



## PDC STAFF VOLUNTEERED

over 70 hours this past year to various NRV organizations including Habitat for Humanity, Free Clinic of the NRV, Mountain Lake Conservancy, Blacksburg Farmer's Market, NRV Trout Unlimited, VT yToss, Virginia's Hunger Action Month.



## NRV PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION STAFF

Left to Right:

(back row) Kevin Byrd, AICP, Executive Director; Jennifer Wilsie, Regional Planner II; Christy Straight, Regional Planner II; Julie Phillips, Office Manager; Janet McNew, Director of Finance and Personnel; Jan Gilbertson, Communications Manager; Phil Gilbertson, Senior Cartographer

(front row) Elijah Sharp, Regional Planner II, Patrick Burton, AICP, Senior Planner; Ken Hall, Part-time Regional Planner; Brad Mecham, Regional Planner

Not Pictured: Kim Thurlow, Project Coordinator; Carol Davis, Community Outreach Facilitator



# New River Valley Planning District Commission

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