

New River Valley Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy 2015



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Chapter 1: NEW RIVER VALLEY OVERVIEW

1.1 INTRODUCTION

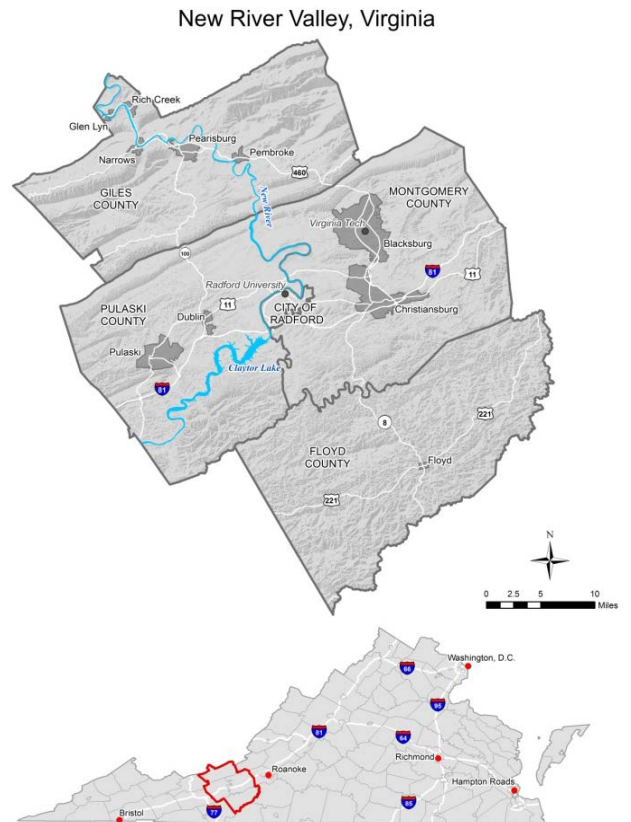
The New River Valley region consists of the counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski, and the City of Radford in southwest Virginia. The counties are home to ten incorporated towns, and a total regional population of 178,350 as of the 2010 census. Two major transportation routes pass through the region, Interstate 81 and US Route 460. Major employers include Virginia Tech, Radford University, Volvo Trucks North America, and Celanese.

The region is growing from a manufacturing and agrarian focused economy into a more balanced, diversified economy. The region has seen gains in sectors such as information technology, healthcare and biomedical, business and financial services, energy, and agricultural businesses. This transition has created the need for training in these growing sectors. Career pathway development is an important part of this transition to a more modernized economy.

The New River Valley Livability Initiative, a regional planning effort undertaken in 2010-13, identified four major themes to focus regional development efforts, reflect the regional characteristics that New River Valley residents value most. These themes are:

1. Enhancing Living and Working Environments
2. Preserving Rural Heritage and Community Character
3. Making the Business Environment Productive and Resilient
4. Building Healthy Communities

Each of these themes has a direct effect on economic development, and these themes are incorporated into the New River Valley's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The region has seen success domestically and internationally in bringing in new businesses. These successes are celebrated, but the need to create homegrown startups needs to improve to strengthen the resiliency of the regional economy. The CEDS serves as a vision on how to



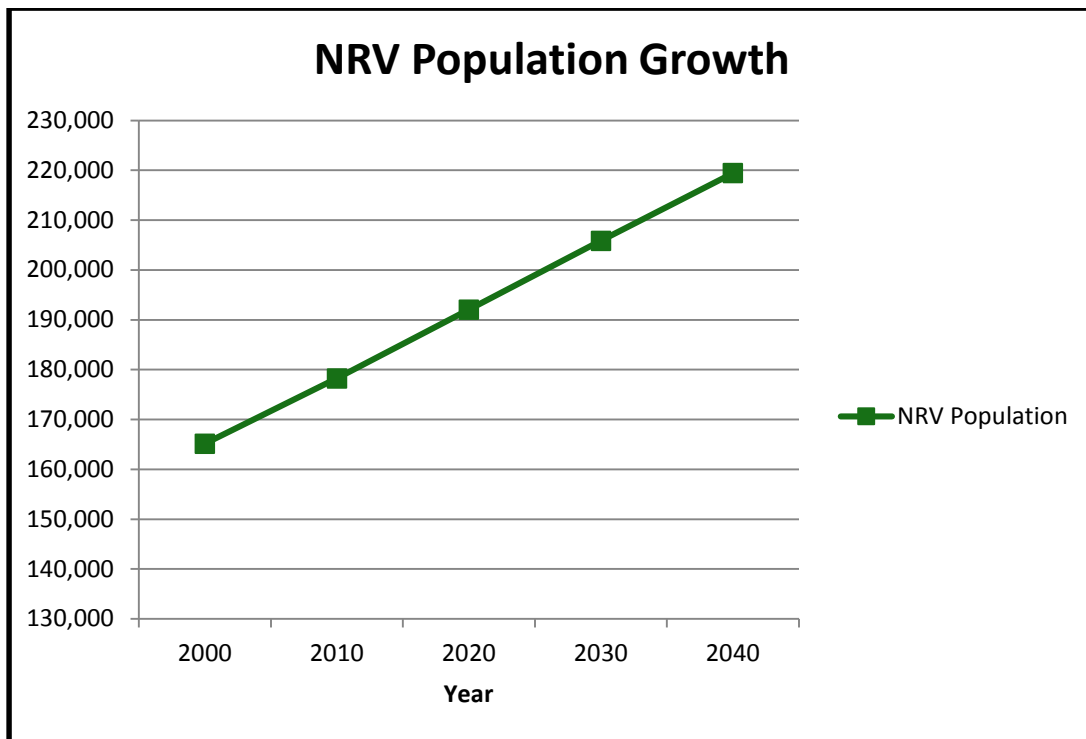
reach the potential for the regional economy, bolstering the success of businesses within the New River Valley while improving the prosperity of its people.

1.2 DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Population

The New River Valley currently has a population of 178,350 and population projections show continued, steady growth to a 2040 population of 219,420, a 23% increase over a 30 year period. The City of Radford and Montgomery County have high percentages of student populations from Radford University and Virginia Tech, with a total student population of the two universities reaching nearly 40,000. This produces nearly 10,000 new graduates within the region each year.

Figure 1: New River Valley Projected Population Growth

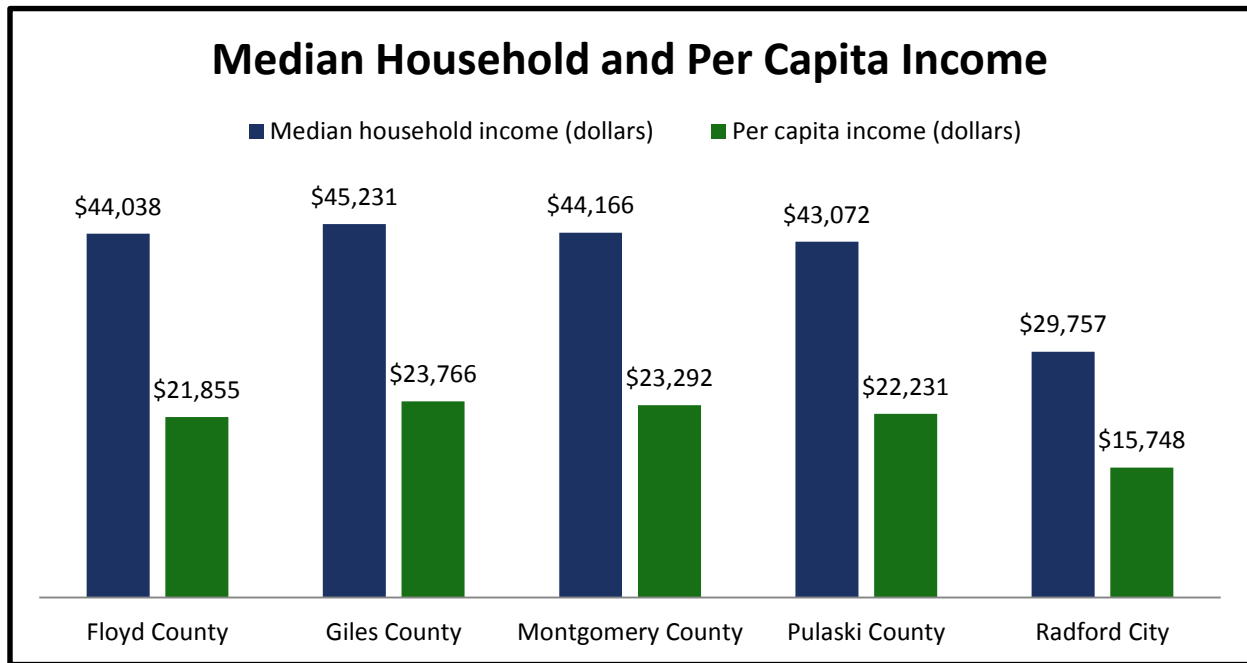


Virginia Employment Commission, U.S. Census Bureau

Income

Income levels within the New River Valley vary by county and city. New River Valley incomes fall short of the Virginia average, but have shown gains in recent years. Following is a chart outlining the median household and per capita incomes of NRV localities.

Figure 2: Median Household and Per Capita Income by Locality

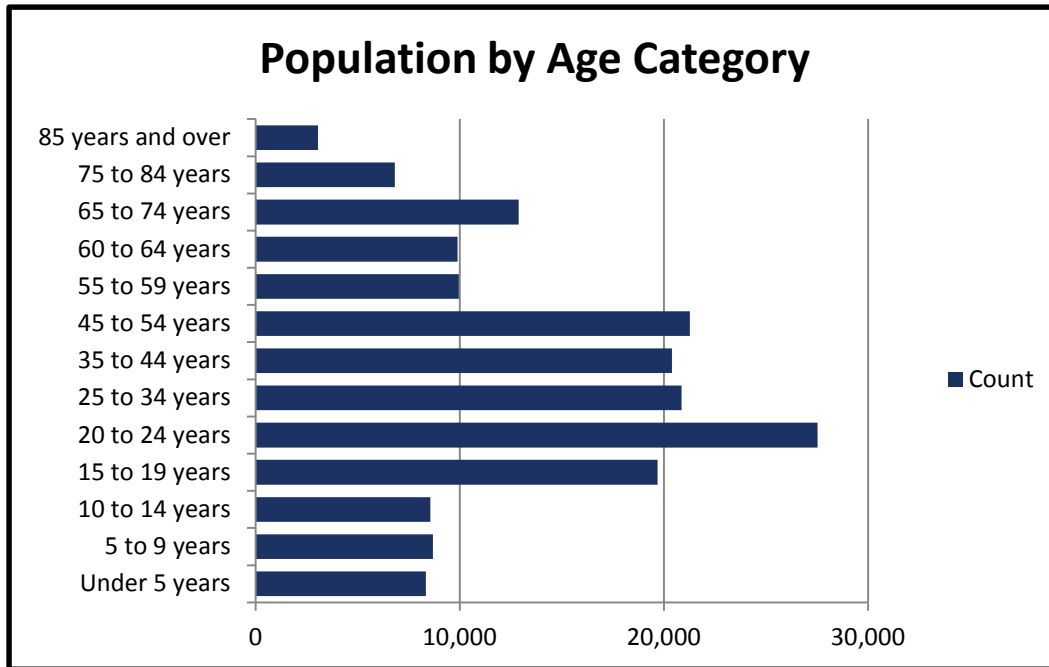


American Community Survey 5-Year Data, 2008-2012

Age

The median age within the New River Valley is 44.2. The two largest categories are 20-24 and 45-54 years old. The 20-24 year old population is heavily influenced by the college student population. The table on the following page shows a breakdown of age groups within the region.

Figure 3: NRV Population by Age



American Community Survey 5-Year Data, 2008-2012

1.3 EMPLOYMENT

The total labor force according to 2012 American Community Survey data is 81,334. Following is a table detailing the employment by sector of these employees.

Table 1: NRV Employment by Sector

INDUSTRY SECTOR	2012 Jobs	2022 Jobs Projected	Difference	2022 NRV Job Growth/Loss
Business & Financial	7,237	9,671	2,434	33.60%
Healthcare	4,663	5,990	1,327	28.50%
Energy	5,297	5,843	546	10.30%
IT Telecomm and Software	4,168	4,598	430	10.30%
Biomedical – R&D	696	840	144	20.60%
Agribusiness	720	692	-28	-3.90%
Arts, Entertainment, Recreation	2,561	3,151	590	23.00%
Electrical Equipment Manufacturing	2,281	2,108	-173	-7.60%
Defense	2,086	2,278	192	9.20%
Advanced Materials	3,977	3,351	-626	-15.70%
Transportation Equipment Mfg.	2,747	1,762	-985	-35.90%

Southern Rural Development Center, NRV Cluster Analysis 2012

*Retail and university/college employment not reflected in chart.

The New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board partnered with the Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development to develop a Skills-Gap Analysis for the region. Both soft skill and technical skill gaps were evaluated. For the region, soft skill needs include: good attendance, critical and analytical thinking, communication, and problem solving. Technical skill needs include: electrical/electronics, engineering, general maintenance, welding, and customer service and sales.

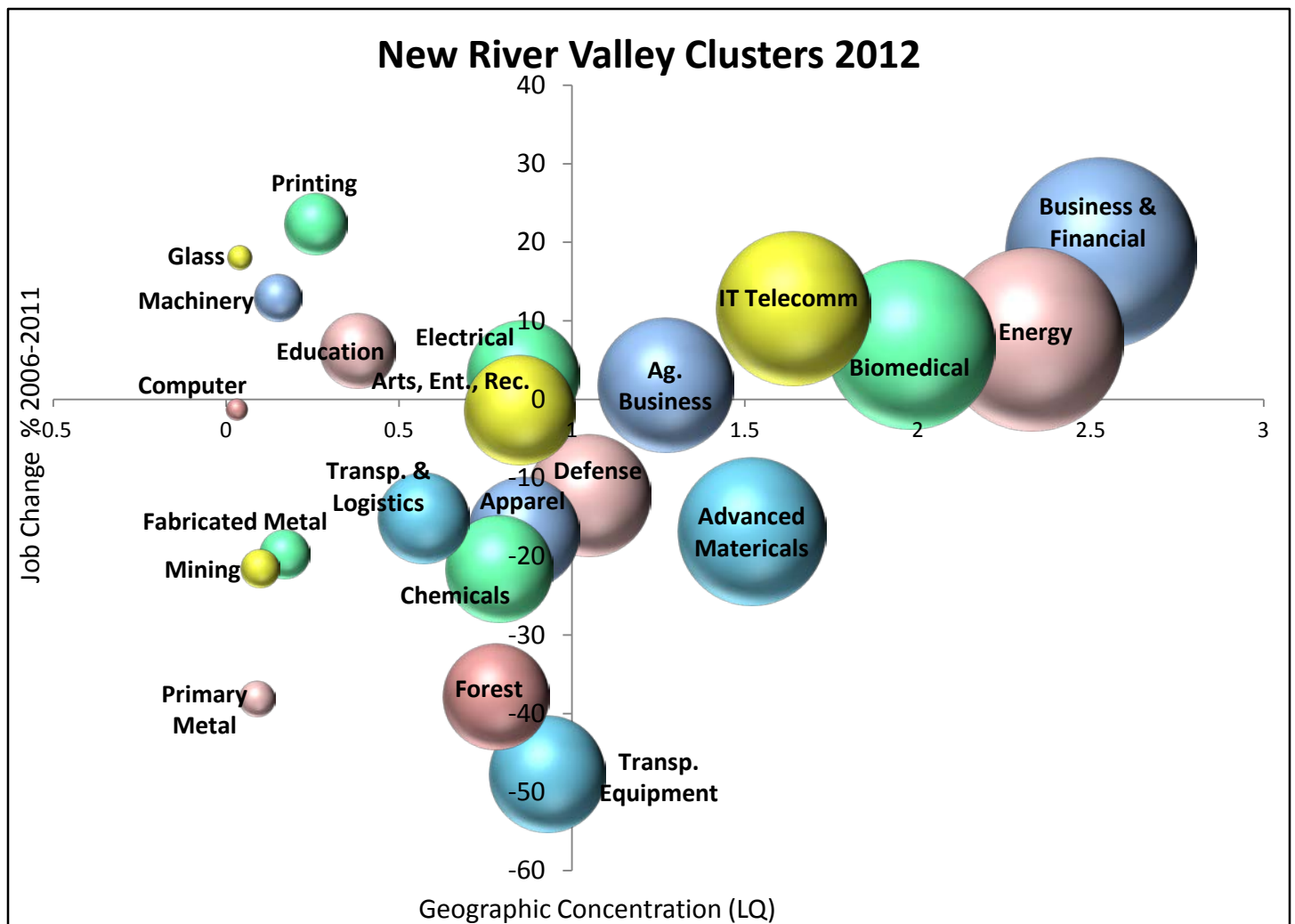
CLUSTER ANALYSIS

The New River Valley Regional Commission worked with the Southern Rural Development Center (SRDC) at Mississippi State University to complete a cluster analysis of the New River Valley. According to the Economic Development Administration, economic clusters are geographic concentrations of interconnected industries and supportive organizations that make regions uniquely competitive for jobs and private investment. To perform the analysis, the SRDC researched employment concentrations within economic sectors throughout the region while measuring the job growth or loss within the specified cluster. As part of this analysis, pre- and post-recession time periods were evaluated to demonstrate the strengths and weaknesses of clusters within the region. Following is a chart that shows economic sectors divided into quadrants. Those in the top right quadrant are considered to be the strongest in the region with strong job growth and a geographic concentration in that sector.

The cluster chart shows five economic sectors that are growing in specialization and employment.

Table 2: NRV Cluster Analysis

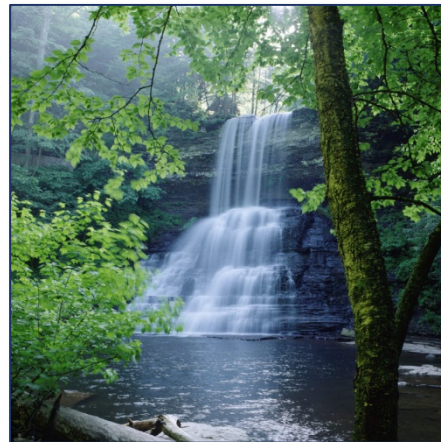
These clusters are: 1) Business and Financial Services; 2) Energy; 3) Biomedical; 4) Information Technology and Telecommunications; and 5) Agribusiness. In cluster theory, the top right quadrant, or 'stars', highlights the standout industries that define the region's economy that also have potential to keep growing in specialization and bring additional employment. The top left quadrant shows 'emerging' clusters that lack geographic concentration, but can grow into the 'star' category due to high job growth. These 'emerging' clusters need strategies focused on developing the workforce and entrepreneurial assistance. The bottom right quadrant shows sectors that still have geographic concentration but are losing that concentration due to job losses. These sectors need special attention if there is to be potential for long-term success in that sector. Finally, the lower left quadrant shows economic sectors that do not have geographic concentration and have lost jobs. Generally speaking, these sectors lack competitiveness unless new industries can be attracted to the region and bolster that sector.



This analysis serves as a guide for future strategy development with regards to workforce training, entrepreneurial development and resource allocation. Further, it provides a base for discussion and development of future strategies.

1.4 ENVIRONMENT AND NATURAL RESOURCES

The natural assets contained within the New River Valley are an important part of the region's character as well as the ability to generate tourism, a growing sector for southwest Virginia. The New River is an important natural feature and generates the name for the region. Mountains are an equally important natural feature for the region.



Cascade Falls, Credit: Virginia Tech

The New River Valley falls within three distinct physiographic provinces: the Blue Ridge

Province (Floyd County), the Valley and Ridge Province (Pulaski County, Montgomery County, most of Giles County, and the City of Radford), and the Appalachian Plateau (in a small part of Giles County). Each province has very different geological characteristics. Giles, Pulaski, and Montgomery Counties are mainly located in the Valley and Ridge Province which is characterized by sedimentary rocks such as limestone, shale, sandstone and dolomites (i.e., karst). Historically, limestone has been mined for agriculture use and sandstone for building purposes. Floyd County is located in the Blue Ridge Province, which is characterized by metamorphic rocks such as gneiss and schist. Metamorphic rocks are harder rocks and have been mined for use in road construction (New River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2011).

All counties in the New River Valley are quite similar with regards to type of land class. The majority of land within the region is considered timberland. It covers 68% of all land within the New River Valley. The only county in the region with a different forestry profile would be Giles where 76% of the total area is considered forest land, a significant amount of which is in the Jefferson National Forest (New River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2011).

The average elevation of the NRV is about 2,500 feet. Elevations range from 1,470 feet above mean sea level at Glen Lyn to 4,348 feet at Bald Knob on Salt Pond Mountain in Giles County. Mountain Lake, also located on Salt Pond Mountain, is one of two natural lakes in Virginia and is reportedly the highest natural lake east of the Rocky Mountains. The New River runs through the Counties of Pulaski, Montgomery, and Giles, and the City of Radford, thus giving the region its name. Little River, Peak Creek, Big Walker Creek, and Dodd's Creek are a few of the tributaries of the New River. A small portion of eastern Montgomery and Floyd Counties are in

the Roanoke River basin, while a small portion of Giles County and the Craig Creek watershed in Montgomery County drain into the James River (New River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan, 2011).

Typical fall foliage peak color is October 10-20 in the Southwestern Mountain Climate Region. Following is a chart from the Virginia Tourism Corporation detailing the climate of the region.

Table 3: Virginia Southwestern Mountain Climate Region

	January Average	July Average	Annual Average
Temperature	24-44 (F)	60-85 (F)	
Precipitation	4.04 inches	4.73 inches	47.33 inches

Virginia Tourism Corporation, Southeast Regional Climate Center

Appalachian Trail

Fifty miles of the Appalachian Trail span Giles County and connects to nearly 2,200 miles of the trail extending from Georgia to Maine.

Blue Ridge Parkway

The Blue Ridge Parkway, spanning 469 miles total, travels through eastern and southern Floyd County. The Blue Ridge Parkway is famous for its scenic drives and brings tourists to the region.



Blue Ridge Parkway, Credit: Lydeana Martin

National Forest

Jefferson National Forest:

The Jefferson National Forest traverses the New River Valley and is home to Pandapas Pond, featuring a trail network for recreation users.

State Parks

Claytor Lake State Park:

The New River Valley is home to Claytor Lake State Park, the only state park in the region. Claytor Lake. Claytor Lake has a full service marina and provides options for fishing, swimming, and camping.



Claytor Lake Dam, Credit: Peter Huber

New River Trail State Park:

The New River Trail stretches 57 miles along an abandoned railroad corridor.

Other Natural Features

- Buffalo Mountain Natural Area Preserve
- Mountain Lake
- War Spur and Wind Rock Trails
- Radford Riverway
- Dora Trail
- Gatewood Park Campground and Reservoir
- Bottom Creek Gorge
- Falls Ridge Preserve
- Huckleberry Trail
- Rock Castle Gorge National Recreation Trail
- Cascades Recreation Area



Huckleberry Trail

1.5 INFRASTRUCTURE

The following information on infrastructure was gathered as part of the New River Valley Livability Initiative and can be found in the 2013 report entitled, *Livability in the New River Valley: From Vision to Action*.

CELL PHONE SERVICE PROVIDERS CURRENTLY AVAILABLE

- nTelos
- Sprint/Centel-Virginia
- U.S. Cellular
- Verizon- Virginia/Verizon South
- AT&T
- Citizens Telephone Cooperative
- Pembroke Telephone Cooperative

Virginia Economic Development Partnership: NRV Community Profile.

- The region now has broadband access along major regional corridors, around universities, and within larger jurisdictions.
- Some rural areas with sparse populations and mountainous topography still have limited access and low-speed/bandwidth which limits opportunities for full engagement in the information economy.

ROADS

- I-81 and US 460 are critical corridors for truck freight movement within the region and throughout the Commonwealth. 40-60% of truck traffic traveling along I-81 neither has an origin or destination in Virginia (9,000 – 13,400 trucks each day).
- Employers and major employment centers are served through road infrastructure mainly through interstate or state route access. Large employers not located along major roads or in more urbanized areas have selected locations based on proximity to natural resources or other valued amenities.

WATER AND SEWER

- New River Valley towns and the City of Radford are served by public water and sewer. Wells and septic systems serve the needs of residents who are not currently on public water and sewer.
- Floyd has limited ground water resources which also limits water intensive economic opportunities.

GAS

- Natural gas is supplied by ATMOS Energy in more populated areas of Radford, Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Dublin, Pulaski, and Fairlawn. Roanoke Gas services eastern Montgomery County. No gas service is provided in Floyd County. Unlike electricity, industrial, institutional and other large users dominate use with about 65% of natural gas consumption in the region. Natural gas prices have declined since 2008 due to a 20% increase in domestic production.
- Columbia Gas of Virginia has provided service to Giles County since the 1960s. Columbia Gas is headquartered in Chesterfield, Virginia and is the third-largest gas utility in the Commonwealth of Virginia. **Columbia Gas of Virginia Company Profile*

CLEAN ENERGY

- Development of clean energy options in the region may play a role in attracting new businesses to the region. For example The Sierra Nevada Brewery was considering Christiansburg as a potential site but settled on Asheville, North Carolina, in part

because North Carolina’s “focus on green technologies played a role in luring the business to invest \$107.5 million into its new brewery there.” *Mountain Express, 2013.

RAIL

- Norfolk Southern’s Heartland and Crescent Corridors intersect just East of Radford. Both corridors are of national significance for freight movement.
- Freight rail serves Pulaski, Giles, and Montgomery Counties as well as the City of Radford. Rail is a major asset to manufacturing and other industries within the region. Floyd County is not currently serviced by rail. Currently, no passenger rail services exist within the New River Valley.

INTERMODAL TRANSPORT

- Intermodal freight transport involves the transportation of freight using multiple modes of transportation (rail, ship and truck) without any handling of the freight itself when changing modes. This method reduces cargo handling, improves security, reduces damage and allows freight to be transported faster and reduces costs and total emissions.
- There is an intermodal transfer facility currently being proposed in Elliston as a part of the Heartland Corridor improvement plan. The completion of the facility would have effects on both the rail and roadway network within the NRV and surrounding regions. Truck freight primarily utilizes I-81, US 460, US 11, US 221, VA 100, VA 8, VA 42 and VA 61. I-81 is one of the primary truck freight corridors on the eastern seaboard.

AIRPORTS

- There are two general aviation facilities located in the New River Valley: the Virginia Tech-Montgomery Executive Airport in Blacksburg and the New River Valley Airport just north of Dublin in Pulaski County. The NRV Airport is currently a registered foreign trade zone and international port of entry. The nearest major commercial passenger airport is Roanoke Regional Airport approximately ten miles east of the region.

1.6 SWOT ANALYSIS

The New River Valley’s CEDS Committee held, and continues to have discussions about the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within the region. Each year, new items are identified for each category. In 2011, the CEDS Committee had an in-depth discussion, and the following show the results of that meeting alongside discussions from the previous three years.

Strengths

- Interstate-81 Transport Accessibility
- Middle mile broadband fiber network
- Water resources
- New River
- Clean air
- High quality of life
- Access to range of healthcare options
- Geographic proximity to large east coast population centers
- Available industrial space/land
- Low taxes
- Virginia Tech
- Radford University
- Access to local foods/agriculture
- Appalachian Trail and Mountains
- Music, arts, and cultural resources
- Engaged community organizations
- Foreign Trade Zone
- Natural resources/beauty
- Recreation opportunities
- Blue Ridge Parkway
- Temperate climate
- Economic diversity
- Low utility costs
- New River Community College
- VT Corporate Research Center
- NRV Economic Development Alliance
- Southwest Virginia tourism – i.e. Crooked Road
- Elected officials

Weaknesses

- Communities still affected by offshoring leading to deteriorating downtowns
- Loss of historic buildings from blight
- Downtown vibrancy
- Lack access to capital for start-ups
- Few entrepreneurial leaders
- Low population, lack critical mass
- Workforce skills not matching available jobs
- Low performing K-12 system
- Brain drain – losing young talent and families
- Lack of diverse energy sources
- Deteriorating housing in some areas
- Lack of racial/ethnic diversity
- Struggle to define regional identity
- Poverty
- Drug issues in some communities
- Marketing assets – tourism

Opportunities

- Public engagement
- K-12 partnerships with businesses
- Entrepreneurship mentoring
- Define competitive advantages
- Job shadowing/Apprenticeships
- Interregional collaboration
- Economic gardening
- Seed and venture funding

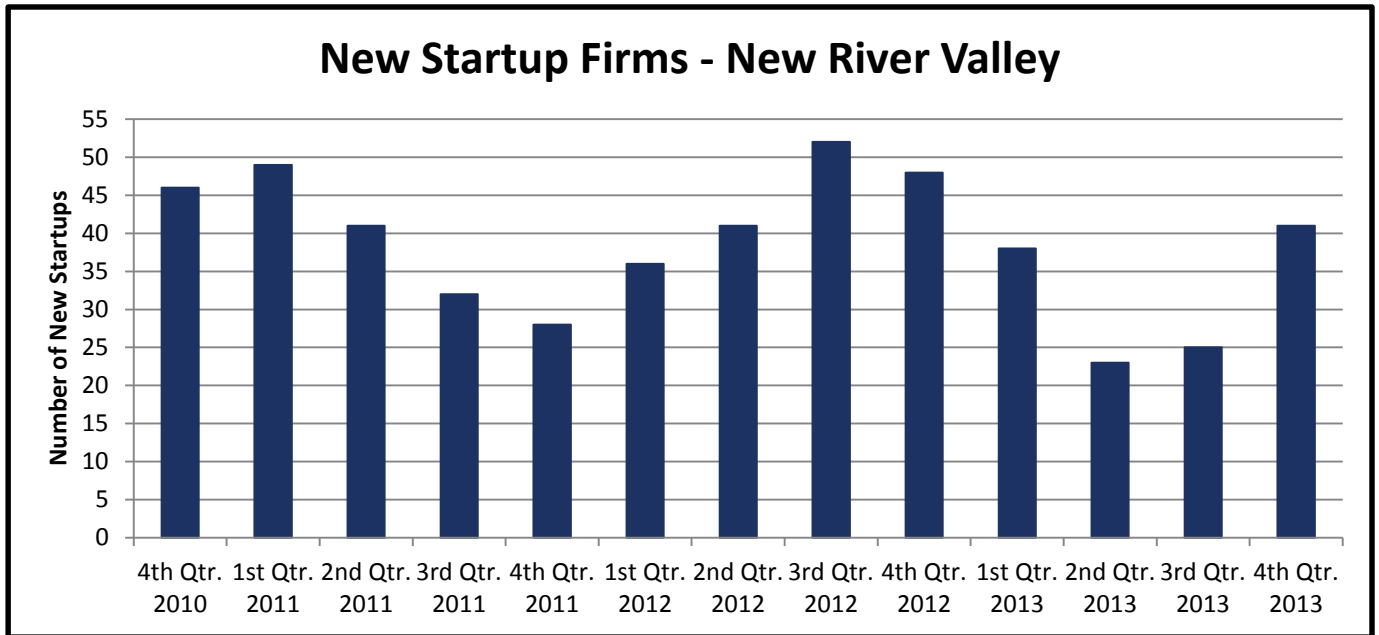
Threats

- Lack of influence at the state level
- Brain drain
- Rural/urban inequity or opportunity
- Current political climate – polarization
- Age of industrial building stock
- Age of residential building stock

1.7 ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND RESOURCES

Entrepreneurial development is important to the overall health of the economy as small business drives job growth. Following is a chart detailing new startups within the New River Valley over the past four years.

Table 4: New Business Startups



New River Valley startup companies have options in each locality for small business services. The urban areas within the Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Radford metro area are more robust, as is expected with a greater population density and two universities. Following is a list of regional, local, state, and interregional services available to small businesses within the New River Valley.

Regional

- Radford Small Business Development Center
- New River Valley Business Center
- VT KnowledgeWorks
- Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology Council
- 460 Angels
- Virginia Cooperative Extension
- Virginia Community Capital

Local

- Economic Development Authority of Floyd County
- Montgomery-Blacksburg-Christiansburg (MBC) Development Corporation Revolving Loan Fund
- TechPad
- Beans and Rice (Radford/Pulaski)

Interregional

State

- Virginia Department of Business Assistance

- Roanoke SCORE

A complete description of each small business service is included in the appendix.

1.8 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The following are public outreach activities during the development of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy alongside the New River Valley Livability Initiative.

- Kickoff Summit: 150 participants at Claytor Lake State Park.
- Working Groups: Economic development working group collaborated with the CEDS Committee to develop goals, objectives, and strategies.
- Community Priority Survey: 660 participants responded to develop regional priorities.
- NRV Tomorrow Survey: 750 participants responded to rank values, projects, and policies within the region.
- BUILT NRV Game: 249 participants discussed concerns, possibilities, and value within individual communities.
- New River Valley Regional Commission Board of Directors: Hosts monthly public meetings where CEDS updates are reviewed. The final 2015 CEDS was presented on June 26, 2014.



BUILT NRV Game

Chapter 2: PRIORITIES, GOALS, AND OBJECTIVES

The New River Valley Regional Commission (serving as Economic Development District) leads the continuous planning process for economic development in Virginia's New River Valley. The NRVRC works closely with localities and several regional groups that take key roles in pursuing economic development projects and funding to advance the quality of life in the New River Valley. Since the last 5-Year Update in 2009, the priorities of the region have changed; therefore, so have the goals and objectives. The seven priority areas have been identified by public outreach, the CEDS Committee, NRVPC Commissioners, and through research on best practices. The priority areas include: 1) Support Small Business and Entrepreneurial Development; 2) Preparation and Continued Support of Qualified Workforce; 3) Available Land, Quality Infrastructure, and Affordable Housing; 4) Attracting New Business to the Region; 5) Regional Marketing/Awareness to Promote the New River Valley; 6) Preserve Natural and Historic Areas; and, 7) Business Friendly Governance and Representation.

Priority 1: Support Small Business and Entrepreneurial Development

Goal: Establish an environment that fosters the growth of existing businesses and supports entrepreneurs from startup stage through maturation.

Objective 1: Optimize existing resources for entrepreneurs and small businesses and promote collaboration between these resources.

Objective 2: Increase the number of jobs created through entrepreneurial start-ups and expansions in the New River Valley.

Business Assistance and Entrepreneurial Support Key Strategies

- 1) Promote cooperation between the Radford Small Business Development Center, VT KnowledgeWorks, New River Community College, etc.
- 2) Create new and support existing financing opportunities for business/industry expansion, including venture capital.
- 3) Encourage the use of locally developed technology and intellectual property in manufacturing and other industries.
- 4) Organize creative financing programs and improve entrepreneurs' access to capital.



Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center

- 5) Increase small business support services through provision of community e-commerce space as well as trainings (social media, computer, etc.).
- 6) Link local industries with technology and research capabilities of Virginia Tech, Radford University, and New River Community College.

Priority 2: Preparation and Continued Support of Qualified Workforce

Goal: Prepare the New River Valley workforce for present and future employment in growing employment sectors.

Objective 1: Train and re-train workers for higher skills and productivity in the modern economy.

Objective 2: Improve the industry/education interface at all levels.

Preparation and Continuation of Qualified Workforce Key Strategies

- 1) Utilize the Community College or the One-stop Centers to assist businesses seeking trained employees or training of employees requiring enhanced skills.
- 2) To establish partnerships between industry/business and all levels of education by implementing an integrated workforce curriculum that provides students with more "real world" learning opportunities
- 3) Expand existing and explore new opportunities for business training and professional development programs.
- 4) Create a Youth Entrepreneurial Center for business and civic development and practice.
- 5) Integrate workforce education and training to meet the needs of the region's strongest economic clusters and where there are skills gaps.

Priority 3: Available Land, Quality Infrastructure, and Affordable Housing

Goal: Maintain existing and deploy additional infrastructure to meet the needs of businesses and residents.

Objective 1: Create an affordable, accessible and interlinked public transportation network that connects population centers with major employment centers.

Objective 2: Strengthen the economic position of downtown commercial districts.



Route 114 Bridge Completed 2014

Objective 3: Improve the region's telecommunication network to attract new firms, assist existing firms, and educate citizens.

Objective 4: Increase the energy efficiency of industrial and commercial buildings.

Quality Infrastructure Key Strategies

- 1) Coordinate and maximize the use of existing public and private transportation resources focused on employment mobility.
- 2) Seek diversification and mixed use redevelopment of downtown commercial districts.
- 3) Deploy last mile fiber optics using wired and wireless technologies throughout the region to serve businesses and residents.
- 4) Create utility standards for service providers to follow and coordinate public digging to minimize costs and disturbances.
- 5) Seek creative and cooperative regional financing strategies for major infrastructure needs.
- 6) Ensure adequate public utilities are in place for businesses and residents.
- 7) Coordinate and adopt creative approaches to encourage the creation of affordable housing for all age groups.
- 8) Use public schools, colleges and universities to expand education, training, and research around clean energy.
- 9) Encourage energy efficiency through education programs that detail cost, return on investment, and feasibility.

Priority 4: Attracting New Business to the Region

Goal: Attract new industries that will complement the region's economy, strengthen inter-industry linkages, and utilize the region's labor force.

Objective 1: Develop and strengthen the role of international trade and commerce in the economy of the New River Valley.

Objective 2: Increase the region's supply of ready and available industrial and other economic development properties.

Attracting New Business Key Strategies

- 1) Seek firms with an international focus to utilize the strategic assets of the New River Valley International Airport, Foreign Trade Zone and Commerce Park.

- 2) Recruit outside firms seeking a trained and skilled labor force, low utility costs, high quality industrial space, and convenient highway access.
- 3) Recruit outside firms that currently have significant supplier relationships with New River Valley companies.
- 4) Develop regional properties tailored to the needs of targeted industry sectors.

Priority 5: Regional Marketing/Awareness to Promote the New River Valley

Goal: Expand the regional identity and brand to increase the marketability of the region for businesses and tourists.

Objective 1: Improve the region's ability to market itself and respond to the needs of new industrial, research, and technological prospects.

Objective 2: Realize the region's tourism development potential and ability to market itself as a culturally and naturally unique tourism destination.

Regional Marketing/Awareness Key Strategies

- 1) Expand multi-regional marketing campaigns involving the New River Valley Economic Development Alliance, and similar organizations throughout Western Virginia.
- 2) Study the feasibility of a Destination Marketing Organization or Convention and Visitors Bureau and develop implementation strategies.
- 3) Participate in, support, and encourage southwestern Virginia initiatives such as 'Round the Mountain, Crooked Road, and Heartwood Center.
- 4) Identify, develop, and package the region's inventory of historical assets and arts and cultural activities, natural features, and events to support external marketing.



Explorenewrivervalley.com Regional Tourism Website

Priority 6: Preserve Natural and Historic Areas

Goal: Preserve the natural and historic assets within the region to protect the character and quality of the regional environment.

Objective 1: Manage the impacts of existing and future land uses in order to preserve the character and quality of the regional environment.

Objective 2: Increase the development and support of local family farms.

Preserve Natural and Historic Areas Key Strategies

- 1) Develop educational, networking and mentoring programs to support and encourage the continuation of family farms; including farmers markets and regional aggregation facilities.
- 2) Implement “Farms to School” programs, which would widen the market for locally grown produce and products.
- 3) Utilize tourism assets as a way to preserve open spaces, historic sites and key natural attractions.
- 4) Improve land use planning and practices to preserve the region's rural character.

Priority 7: Business Friendly Governance and Representation

Goal: Promote a business friendly environment through governments cooperating with businesses at the local level and advocating for them at the state and federal levels.

Objective 1: Bring a voice to the policy table on behalf of the region.

Objective 2: Ensure the safety of the region's citizens.

Governance Key Strategies

- 1) Seek representation on State Commissions and Committees.
- 2) Provide input to State from regional economic development organizations and planning districts.
- 3) Support police, fire, and medical (emergency and non-emergency) operations throughout the region.
- 4) Provide youth programs and support.



Gathering of NRV Local Elected Officials

Chapter 3: ANNUAL PROJECT PACKAGE REPORT

3.1 CEDS Project Evaluation Criteria - Reviewed February-April 2015

As stated in the Organization and Management section of this report, the CEDS Committee and the NRVRC Board members reviewed and updated the project evaluation criteria.

PROJECT TYPE (Points)

Priority Level 1 (8)

- Water and sewer utilities
- Employment Creation/Retention
-Technology and Industrial
- Entrepreneurial/Small Business Assistance
- Regional/Local School & Educational
Facilities & Programs
- Transportation Planning
- Passenger Rail
- Broadband network improvements
- Housing Production
- Technology Career Development Facilities/
Programs
- Tourism (esp. agri-tourism)
- Marketing/Promotion of Assets
- Value-Added Local Food
- Mixed Use Development
- Central Business District Revitalization

Priority Level 2 (6)

- Primary/Arterial Roads & Transportation
Maintenance
- Facilities for Protected Populations
- Neighborhood improvement projects
- Employment Creation/Retention-commercial
- Natural gas and energy infrastructure
- Rehabilitation of Aging Housing Stock
- Green Building Projects
- Protection of Natural/Cultural Resources/Assets
- Regional Coordination of Public
Transportation Connections
- Clean Energy Projects
- Airport Service
- Drainage/Flood Control
- Senior Care Facilities

Priority Level 3 (4)

- Secondary Roads
- Community Centers/Recreation
- Other Economic Development
- Homeownership Programs

Priority Level 4 (2)

- Other Housing
- Other Community Facilities
- Other Community Services Facilities
- Community Development Programs
- Drought Management

“Neighborhood improvement projects” includes sidewalks, solid waste/garbage, debris removal, street lighting, recreation, police/fire protection, and other neighborhood specific needs.

“Other community facilities” include day care facilities, community centers, health clinics, hospitals, and skill-building facilities for youth and the unemployed.

OTHER CRITERIA

While “project type” links the project criteria to the CEDS Goals and Strategies, there are other important factors in ranking individual projects. These factors are represented in the following criteria:

Investment relationship to regional economy and quality job creation: The projects receive addition points for the strength of their relationship to the economy of the Planning District, and the strategies to improve it, as described in the previous sections.

1. Expected job creation- the projects receive additional points if they are expected to result in quality jobs for regional residents, with points assigned as follows:

Points

- 5 Proposed investment directly supports high skill/high wage jobs.
- 3 Proposed investment results in an environment to support high skill/high wage jobs
- 3 Proposed investment supports skills upgrade/career advancement for in-demand jobs
- 2 Proposed investment results in entry-level jobs that are accessible to the long-term unemployed, youth, or others with barriers to employment (e.g., offender re-entry)
- 1 Proposed investment results in jobs with wages at or above the regional average

2. Relation to regional economic clusters: Economic clusters reflect competitiveness of a regional economic sector versus national trends and job growth.

Points

- 8 Project Relates to High Job Growth, High Geographic Concentration Clusters
- 6 Project Relates to High Job Growth, Lower Geographic Concentration Clusters
- 4 Project Relates to Job Loss, High Geographic Concentration Clusters

3. Regional Impact: The impact of a project is in relation to the number of jurisdictions participating or impacted in reference to services and money invested.

Points

- 8 Region-wide or multi-region impact (i.e., affecting neighboring EDDs)
- 4 Four to Five Jurisdictions (Towns or Counties/Cities) Participating or Impacted
- 2 Two to Three Jurisdictions Participating or Impacted
- 1 One Jurisdiction Participating or Impacted

Investment relationship to EDA priorities and requirements: The projects receive additional points to the extent that they align with EDA policies regarding economic distress and national priorities, which may help the project qualify for EDA funding.

1. Per Capita Income: The projects receive additional points if the areas they affect have lower than average per capita income levels (average of all jurisdiction affected).

Points

- 3 If less than or equal to 60% of State per capita income
- 2 If 61 - 74% of State per capita income
- 1 If 75 - 99% of State per capita income

2. Unemployment Rate: The projects receive additional points if the areas they affect have higher than average unemployment rates (average of all jurisdiction affected).

Points

- 3 If 10% or more above State average
- 2 If 5 - 10% above State average
- 1 If 1 – 5% above State average

3. Relative Jurisdictional Stress: A composite index prepared by the Commission on Local Government to compare the relative strengths of the jurisdictions in the State.

Points

- 2 High stress
- 1 Above average stress

4. Directly Correlates to EDA Investment Priorities (as described in EDA request for grant proposals)

- A. Collaborative Regional Innovation
- B. Public/Private Partnerships
- C. National Strategic Priorities 1 point/priority
- D. Global Competitiveness
- E. Environmentally-Sustainable Development
- F. Economically Distressed and Underserved Communities

Project support and feasibility: The project receives additional points if it demonstrates commitment by local partners and identifies financial or other resources that increase the likelihood of project success.

1. Relationship to Private Investments: Capital investments from private sources relate to the significance of the project.

Points

- 5 More than 50% Private Investment
- 3 25-49% Private Investment
- 2 Private Investment below 25%

2. Relationship to Previous Investment

Points

- 2 New Service or Facility; Expansion of Service from an Existing Service
- 1 Replacement of Existing Service or Facility

3. Readiness to Initiate Project

Points

- 5 Jurisdictional Commitment and Final Plans and Specifications-Application Filed
- 4 Jurisdictional Commitment Preliminary Plans and Specifications-Pre-application Filed
- 2 Jurisdictional Commitment, but no Plans and Specifications-Desired Project
- 1 No Jurisdictional Commitment, but Preliminary Plans and Specifications- Pre-application/Application

4. Utility/Infrastructure Availability (Maximum 6 points)

- A. Public Water
- B. Sanitary Sewer and Storm Water Treatment
- C. Electricity 1 point/utility
- D. Telephone/Broadband
- E. Natural Gas
- F. All Season Road
- G. Rail Access

5. Public Private Partnership

Points

- 5 Extensive commitment by multiple public and multiple private partners for project
- 2 Support from at least one public and at least one private stakeholder

Relationship to other regional initiatives and goals- Projects receive additional points if they demonstrate that they achieve the goals and strategies of other regional plans and priorities.

1. Relationship to “Green” Practices

Points

- 5 Project directly creates “green” jobs
- 4 Project implements “green practices” with certification
- 2 Project implements “green practices”
- 1 Project results in recycling or reuse

2. Relationship to Natural Resources

Points

- 5 Project sets aside land for conservation
- 3 Project compliments natural assets
- 2 Project is a detriment to natural resources

3. Relationship to international trade and investment

Points

- 3 Project supports development of international markets for products of regional businesses
- 2 Project supports efforts to attract investment by foreign owned firms to locate in the region

4. Relationship to arts, culture, history, regional heritage

Points

- 3 Project supports the development of arts/culture related business opportunities
- 2 Project supports the preservation/promotion of regional cultural heritage assets

In addition to the above criteria, all of the projects are reviewed for relationships to regional markets in order to maximize the return on taxpayer investment. Proposed projects are proactive trying to anticipate the economic changes in the region and continue to diversify the economy.

4.2 Evaluating Projects

Projects from the 2014 Project package as well as new project ideas are evaluated and ranked using the above criteria. Several criteria are based directly on current economic data, listed in Tables 1, 2 and 3 below.

Table 5: Per Capita Income

Jurisdiction	2009-2013	% of VA	Population
Floyd County	\$21,816	65.14%	15,371
Giles County	\$23,485	70.12%	17,111
Montgomery County	\$23,548	70.31%	94,910
Pulaski County	\$23,987	71.62%	34,768
City of Radford	\$16,181	48.31%	16,705
New River Valley	\$22,790	68.05%	178,865
Virginia	\$33,493	100%	8,100,653

Source: 2008-2012 American Community Survey 5 Year Estimates

Table 6: Unemployment Rate

Jurisdiction	Percent
Floyd County	3.9%
Giles County	5.0%
Montgomery County	4.1%
Pulaski County	4.9%
City of Radford	5.1%
New River Valley	4.4%
Virginia	4.5%

Source: Virginia Workforce Connection, April 2015

Table 7: Fiscal Stress Scores by Locality

Jurisdiction	Fiscal Stress
Floyd County	Below Average
Giles County	Above Average
Montgomery County	Above Average
Pulaski County	Above Average
City of Radford	High

Source: Virginia Commission on Local Governments, January 2012

Chapter 4: PROJECT EVALUATION FOR 2015 – 2016

The 2015-16 Annual Project Package represented the priority projects for the region as of June 2015. The Project Package table on the following pages lists the top ranked projects, and includes both ongoing projects identified in previous year's CEDS, as well as the new projects identified during this year's CEDS process. The table includes the estimated project costs and funding sources listed if they are known, as well as identifies a responsible agency to carry out the project.

The projects are ranked according to desirability on the scale described in Chapter 3, and project status is updated annually. Projects are evaluated based on the following descriptions.

Planning

Planning is the general term used to indicate ongoing development of a project. This may include:

- Holding project meetings
- Studies including feasibility studies
- Engineering and architectural reports
- Completion of required forms, permits, processes
- Any other activity indicating pursuit of the project

Funding

The formal funding request from Federal agencies is often a two step process which begins with a pre-application. If the project is viewed favorably, the sponsoring agency is invited to submit an application. A project is considered "Funded" following award notification when grant agreements are complete.

Completed

A construction project is considered completed when the construction is entirely finished. A program (non-construction) is considered completed when it is implemented.

New River Valley Annual Project Package 2015-16

Area	Description	Fed. \$	State \$	Local \$	Total Funding	Const. Date	Responsible Agency
NRV	<p>Preparation of New Graded Building Site at NRV Commerce Park A site to accommodate a graded building pad of a building footprint of 20 to 75 acres.</p>	\$990,000	\$885,000	\$125,000	\$2,000,000	2015	Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facilities Authority
NRV	<p>Development of Broadband Infrastructure and Internet Availability Explore options for higher bandwidth to the end user. Develop wifi availability in downtown areas (projects in Blacksburg, Pulaski). Assess feasibility of wireless towers to allow internet service to Claytor Lake area of Pulaski County. Tower placement studies and streamlining of the zoning process.</p>				\$8,000,000	2014-2015	Private Enterprises and NRV Localities, NRV Network Wireless Authority
NRV	<p>Create a Consortium of School Districts, Community College, Economic Development and Local Business Partners - Develop a Pilot Program Integrated Workforce Curriculum To develop an integrated workforce curriculum spanning from K-12 to graduate degrees focusing on current/future skills needs of targeted industry sectors (including Career Pathways development).</p>				\$250,000	2014	WIB, Education Providers
NRV	<p>Coordinate NRV entrepreneur and small business development network Convene regional revolving loan fund operators, small business counseling services, and other entrepreneur promotion programs. Develop new collaborative projects. Examples include regional business plan 'pitch competition' funded through Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development</p>			\$50,000	\$500,000	2016	Local economic developers, colleges/universities, business development service providers
NRV	<p>Promote and coordinate the development of a New River Valley passenger rail station Continue to research viability of extending Washington DC Amtrak service to a station in the NRV. Coordinate state and private stakeholders to pursue development of this service by 2020.</p>				\$500,000	2020	NRV Localities, State Agencies, Public/Private Railroad Companies, NRVC

New River Valley Annual Project Package 2015-16

Area	Description	Fed. \$	State \$	Local \$	Total Funding	Const. Date	Responsible Agency
NRV	Implement recommendations of New River Valley agribusiness/agri-tourism strategic planning process Identify and pursue projects based on the findings of the 2014-15 regional plan developed by the NRVRC.	\$25,000		\$25,000	\$50,000	2014	New River Valley Development Corporation
NRV	Creation of a Regional Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) and Marketing of the Arts and other regional assets Raise awareness of New River Valley assets and coordinate regional websites/promotion efforts. Use DMO to create a network of artisans and venues to promote New River Valley assets.		\$25,000	\$25,000	TBD	2014	NRV Localities, Tourism Offices
NRV	Research potential for Center of Excellence related to unmanned systems development and aerospace manufacturing capabilities in the region Develop commercialization of technologies related to automated vehicles, especially the aerial vehicles research of the MAAP at Virginia Tech. Recruit aerospace supplier firms to the region to develop a manufacturing cluster.				\$5,000,000	2015-ongoing	Public universities, economic development organizations, business in target sectors
Giles County	Giles Multi-tenant Business Facility (Giles Co) A facility located in the Wheatland Eco Park.				\$2,000,000	2014	Giles County IDA
Radford	City-owned industrial park land improvements Engineering and planning projects to acquire land in Radford industrial park, and upgrade for use by tenants- including brownfields redevelopment.				\$6,000,000		Radford City government, NRVRC
Floyd County	Rocky Knob Interpretative Center Reg. Collaborative (Floyd Co) A bi-county commission is working on the development of a major tourism destination along the Blue Ridge Parkway. A network of hiking trails and an interpretive center are planned.	\$8,000,000		\$2,000,000	\$10,000,000	2015	Rocky Knob

New River Valley Annual Project Package 2015-16

Area	Description	Fed. \$	State \$	Local \$	Total Funding	Const. Date	Responsible Agency
NRV	NRV Airport Parallel Taxiway To provide taxiway parallel to runway and offer an opportunity to provide air access to the Industrial Park (NRV Commerce Park).	\$5,880,000		\$120,000	\$6,000,000	2014	Airport Commission
NRV	Extension of Rail to Commerce Park Rail siding extension from Norfolk Southern mainline about 3,500 feet to the Commerce Park boundary and 3,500 feet to a potential building site.	\$2,300,000	\$750,000	\$1,210,000	\$4,600,000	2014	Virginia's First, Industrial Facilities Authority
NRV	Small Business Development (Green/Nano/Bio/Aerospace/UAS) Program Develop educational program through the community college and university that support the development and/or recruitment of small businesses/industries in targeted technology fields.	\$500,000		\$500,000	\$1,000,000	2014	Universities, NRCC, School Divisions
NRV	Develop 'data dashboard' of regional economic and community health indicators Compile data from Federal and local sources to track the performance of the regional economy on selected CEDS and Liveability Initiative goals. Develop user-friendly online platform to make the information easily accessible.				\$100,000		NRVRC, state agencies, economic and workforce development organizations
Floyd County	Phase II Floyd Innovation Center	\$1M	\$1M	\$1M	\$3M	2015	Floyd County EDA
Montgomery County	Development of Route 177 Corporate Park	\$15 M	\$4 M	\$1M	\$20M	TBD	Montgomery County EDA
Floyd County	Regional Food Aggregating/Processing Center Value-added processing center for local produce and potentially local milk. The facility would serve as aggregator for larger buyers, as well as provide co-packing facilities and a commercial.	\$1,000,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$2,000,000	2014	Floyd County
Montgomery County	Rt. 114 Widening From Christiansburg Town limits to Radford Army Ammunition Plant	\$50M	\$12.6M		\$63M	2018	VDOT/ Montgomery County

New River Valley Annual Project Package 2015-16

Area	Description	Fed. \$	State \$	Local \$	Total Funding	Const. Date	Responsible Agency
NRV	Increase modern building stock through retrofits and new construction Modernize existing building stock through new construction or through retrofits to meet the needs of 21st century businesses.					2015-16	NRV Economic Development Alliance
Floyd County	Jacksonville Center E-Commerce Project (Floyd Co) Establishment of an e-commerce catalog of crafts and products.				\$50,000	2014	Jacksonville Center, Inc.
NRV	Support Farms to School program in the region. Create education opportunities for students and support a supply of fresh foods from local farmers.				\$20,000	2014-2014	
NRV	Creation of Utility Standards Create utility standards for service providers to follow while coordinating digging between localities and service providers to install conduits or other uses						
NRV	Connectivity of Trails, Regional Trail System Interconnect various local, state and federal trails to create a continuous network in southwest Virginia.	\$400,000		\$400,000	\$800,000	2014	Trail Operators
NRV	Interstate-81 Interchange Improvements Exits 89, 94, 98, 105, and 114.				TBD	2014-2020	VDOT
NRV	Route 100 Widening between Pulaski County and Giles County				TBD	2014-2020	VDOT
Pulaski Town	Town of Pulaski Business Park Expansion The acquisition and site preparation of greenspace for industrial growth.	\$1,000,000		\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	2015	EDA, Town of Pulaski
NRV	Support Public Private Partnerships for Agriculture Infrastructure Needs					2014	
Pulaski County	Shell Building-Industrial Park Construction of a shell building at the New River Valley Commerce Park	\$750,000	\$750,000		\$1,500,000	2014	Pulaski County
Montgomery County	Southgate Parkway Construction of ramps on Route 460 at Southgate Parkway entrance to Virginia Tech.	\$124M	\$31M		\$155M	TBD	VDOT
Rich Creek	Rich Creek Downtown Enhancement Project Ensure the success of downtown Rich Creek.		\$1M	\$250,000	\$1,250,000	2014	Rich Creek Town

New River Valley Annual Project Package 2015-16

Area	Description	Fed. \$	State \$	Local \$	Total Funding	Const. Date	Responsible Agency
Floyd County	Phase II Development of Floyd Regional Commerce Center Grade lots 1 and 2.	\$1,000,000		\$500,000	\$1,500,000	2014	Floyd County, Floyd County EDA
NRV	Create Regional Revolving Loan Fund for Energy Audits and Retrofits Fund for New River Valley businesses and residents.						
NRV	Regional Conference/Civic Center Determine feasibility and appropriate site, engineering and architectural plans for regional conference center.	\$7,000,000		\$8,000,000	\$15,000,000	2016	Virginia's First and Partners
Pulaski Town	Brownfields Redevelopment Redevelopment of existing industry and housing.	\$500,000		\$500,000	\$1,000,000	2014	Pulaski Town and EPA
Pulaski County	Exit 101 Interchange Improvements and Connector Route 11 Provide interstate access to the proposed Veteran's Cemetery and Route 11 with an urban 3 lane typical on 4 lane right of way.	\$2M	\$1M		\$16.5M	2020	Virginia's First/Army
Pulaski County	Complete public safety facility Upgrade and consolidate county emergency response and services			\$1,000,000	\$2,000,000	2016	Pulaski County
NRV	Develop a Slaughterhouse or Regional Meat Processing Plant for Meat Processing and Production Develop facility to support local farmers					2014- 15	Rural Development-
NRV	Support Carpooling Efforts/Initiatives throughout the New River Valley Support the expansion and marketing of Ride Solutions while exploring potential for carpooling app						
NRV	Create a Network of Growers and Producers in the Region Link New River Valley farmers markets to increase profitability.						
NRV	Intermodal Transportation Center Further explore the possibility of developing an intermodal transportation site on under-utilized US Army property near Dublin, Virginia.	\$4,000,000		\$4,000,000	\$8,000,000	2014	VA's First/US Army
NRV	Centralize Marketing of Energy Efficiency Options Create a "one stop shop" where people can evaluate						

New River Valley Annual Project Package 2015-16

Area	Description	Fed. \$	State \$	Local \$	Total Funding	Const. Date	Responsible Agency
	typical “payback” on upgrades, find a qualified energy auditor/retrofitter, navigate various financing options.						
Blacksburg	Huckleberry Trail Extension Assist in the construction of the Huckleberry Trail extension from Prices Fork to Glade Road. Grading, site amenities, and surfacing are needed.			\$100,000	\$100,000	2014	Town of Blacksburg
Floyd County	Floyd County Mechatronics Training Center: To prepare advanced manufacturing and other ‘new economy’ workers. Mechatronics includes mechanics, electronics, and computer and control engineering.				\$500,000	2016	County schools, community college, businesses
NRV	Develop Region-Wide Bike Paths Used as both a tourism asset and an alternative/green method of transportation.	\$5,000,000		\$5,000,000	\$10,000,000	2014	NRVRC, Localities
NRV	Access to Capital Host workshops to educate businesses on capital access opportunities in the region, i.e. 460 Angels						
Narrows	Town of Narrows Capital Improvements Upgrades and additions to pedestrian and recreation assets in town and downtown properties		\$50,000	\$50,000	\$100,000	2015	Town of Narrows, Giles County, NRVRC
NRV	Network of Manufacturing Companies Corporate roundtable headed by NRV Economic Development Alliance.	\$500,000	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$1,000,000	2014	NRVRC
Montgomery County	Falling Branch Corporate Park Expansion (FBCP). The 175 Acre pad ready industrial park located in Christiansburg, VA is filling. The County needs to purchase adjoining property from two owners.	\$2,282,500		\$2,282,500	\$4,565,000	2016-2017	EDA of Montgomery County, VA
NRV	Develop Career Pathways Networks and Tap Into Professional Organizations Encourage workers to pursue “continuing education” or recertification so to build skills in emerging economic sectors.					2014	WIB, Local Businesses
NRV	Implement K-12 Curriculum on Organic Food Production				\$50,000	2014	

Chapter 5: IMPLEMENTATION AND RESILIENCY

Projects with the highest rankings will have the highest impacts on the economic resiliency of the New River Valley. Highlights from the top projects include new business attraction, broadband infrastructure, workforce development, renewable energy options, access to capital for small businesses, and tourism and marketing. As these and other projects come to fruition, sustainable jobs will be created within a growing New River Valley.

The effects of offshoring have been felt strongly within the New River Valley over the past three decades, but new sectors are growing and becoming stronger. The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the New River Valley is intended to serve as a guide for future economic development. Evaluating the effectiveness of the CEDS on the economy can be summed up using key indicators identified in the New River Valley Livability Initiative.

- Employment by sector
- Average wage by sector
- Per capita income
- Unemployment rate
- New business starts
- # and value of small business loans
- Net job growth/growth among new businesses
- Adult literacy rate
- High-school graduates pursuing advanced training
- Graduation rates (high-school, associates, bachelor, and graduate degree)
- Technical school graduates employed in field

The CEDS can communicate the values of a region. As mentioned previously, values within the New River Valley include:

1. Enhancing Living and Working Environments
2. Preserving Rural Heritage and Community Character
3. Making the Business Environment Productive and Resilient
4. Building Healthy Communities

As these values are cultivated with guidance from the CEDS, the regional economy can continue to grow. Recent successes in bringing in new companies, both domestic and international, have helped to continue building prosperity. Work needs to be done to cultivate and grow

businesses using entrepreneurs who already reside within the region. Identifying leaders to carry out the vision is an important part in this process. Moving forward, the New River Valley aims to grow the economic sectors that are already strong, turn emerging sectors into economic engines, and strengthen sectors that have been staples within the region for decades. This will lead to a healthy and resilient economy, built to last and increase the prosperity for everyone that calls the New River Valley home.

Appendix I
Minutes of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee and
Minutes of the New River Valley Planning District Commission

New River Valley Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee Meeting Minutes for December 16, 2014

9:00 AM – New River Valley Business Center, Fairlawn

Committee members present: Anthony Byrd, David Denny, Jonathan Everett, Jim Flowers, Mack Hilton, Marty Holliday, Susan Kidd, Jim Loux, Michael Miller, Rebecca Phillips, Kevin Reeder, Gary Reedy, John White

NRVPDC staff: Kevin Byrd, Patrick O'Brien

Agenda: Presentation on CEDS process and review of 2014 CEDS project list

NOTES FROM DISCUSSION

Discussion topic: Regional economic development achievements during the past year

- **Downtown revitalization in several communities**
 - **Giles:** microbrewery in Narrows to open in 2015, Pembroke has an opportunity to get more downtown visitors from visitors to Cascades taking shuttle
 - **Pulaski** had several investments, including Calfee Park upgrades/Yankees hotel development, \$4 million+ into 'West Main' downtown buildings as shops, apts.
 - **Christiansburg** Downtown org is gaining some success (food truck rodeo, etc.)
 - **Blacksburg** development at Brownstone/Mellow Mushroom, and greater density in North End center and moss arts center area
 - **Radford** University expansion and related redevelopment (Burlington building)
- **Successful year for manufacturing announcements (esp. international) and reuse of vacant industrial properties**
 - Pulaski: Red Sun Farms, Korona Candles, expansion at Volvo and suppliers
 - Floyd: Hollingsworth and Vose expansion, Floyd Innovation Center opening
 - Montgomery: CRC phase 2, Falling Branch, Blacksburg Industrial Park
 - Giles: Luna at Wheatland, Celanese investment in natural gas to stay in Giles
 - Radford foundry idled again, but RU redeveloping vacant Burlington property
- **Growing coordination among regional tourism promotion and marketing efforts**
 - Outdoor recreation/local heritage tourism success (Trail Towns in Giles, New River Trail, Draper Mercantile, golf course/resort developments in Draper)
- **Efforts to increase community involvement in education/training programs**
 - Mobile 'hot-spot' internet access and WIA counseling services- traveling to underserved rural communities in areas outside of towns/cities w/o facilities
 - 'Community in School' program (especially in Floyd and Pulaski co schools) to provide resources to help and encourage students to stay in school
 - Citizens, in collaboration with FCHS, to offer a reduced residential internet home service program to qualifying K-12 school age students
 - Regional success of Smart Beginnings coalition for early childhood education
- **Commercial lending/business financing opportunities improving, but still a challenge**
 - Need for seed funding/business start-up financing- esp. mid-sized loans
 - Need financing vehicles for bigger deals, especially site development (eg, regional-managed block grants from DHCD, etc., for development projects)

Discussion topic: Regional events and trends to consider for this year's CEDS update process

- Continued need for **transportation investments**
 - Route 114 widening between arsenal and Christiansburg
 - Route 100 widening between Pearisburg and Route 42 in Giles Co.
 - Route 11 between Christiansburg and Radford
 - Prices Fork Road widening and extension to Route 11 (long term)
 - 460 bypass 460 Bus North in Blacksburg interchange improvements
 - Passenger rail exploration in NRV/Roanoke/Bristol
 - Coordinated transit offering throughout region and with neighbors
- **Workforce development and training activities**
 - Example of Carroll Co. agriculture program in K-12 as successful model
 - Need for apprenticeship model to regional education/training programs
 - Need for connection to younger students (eg 8th graders) to talk about local careers and business needs for workers technical skills
 - Build on successful NRCC programs, esp. instrumentation and basic computer programming (ie, not all jobs need VT computer science degree-level workers)
 - Substance abuse and mental health remain an issue in the region, need counseling and treatment services to complement education programs
- **Broadband/wireless penetration and internet services-** Need to build on success: NRV Unwired, Citizens Upgrade to schools, PDC broadband services project in Blacksburg
- **Regional/extra-regional developments underway**
 - Mountain Valley gas pipeline through Giles/Montgomery
 - Inter-modal facility at Elliston
- Need for **industrial/office shell buildings-** existing inventory is running out
 - Potential to develop on-line GIS-based tool to create map of available sites
- Need for improved school facilities/equipment, and reuse of old school facilities (eg, Prices Fork elementary as retirement facility)

Email comments from those unable to attend:

Comments from **Jonathan Whitt, RBIN--** ... the following high-level items that align with our findings in the Innovation Blueprint:

- STEM (Talent) Workforce development, with a focus on K-12 'Grow Your Own' programs
- Broadband availability as both an access issue and a capacity issue
- Access to capital for early stage technology companies

These are the items that I would encourage weaving into the CEDS plan from my standpoint. I hope the meeting goes great this morning and I look forward to the continued discussion.

Comments from **Gary Forget, Volvo--** Sorry I wasn't able to attend. My only "excuse" is to remind myself that Volvo has hired 600 new employees this year; we have major capital projects approved for next and these hopefully buy me some sympathy. And based on what I've heard 2015 is going to be a record year for us.

New River Valley Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee

Meeting Minutes for February 11, 2015

10:00 AM – New River Valley Business Center, Fairlawn

Committee members present: Diane Akers, Anthony Byrd, Basil Edwards, Jonathan Everett, Jim Flowers, Mack Hilton, Susan Kidd, Tommy Loflin, Jim Loux, Mike Miller, Rebecca Phillips, Kevin Reeder, Gary Reedy **NRVPDC staff:** Kevin Byrd, Patrick O'Brien

Agenda: The meeting focused on recent **EDA revisions to CEDS document guidelines**, especially the increased emphasis on incorporating 'performance tracking' indicators to serve as measurement tools, and tracking progress toward the desired outcomes of CEDS strategies and goals. Patrick gave a brief overview of some of the data tools that provide possible sources for indicators. These include:

-**2014 TECNA Survey** of technology businesses, with custom analysis of the responses from the Roanoke and Blacksburg region as compared to the US overall. The survey asks technology business leaders a variety of questions about how they perceive business conditions, and identifies their most important issues (eg, workforce skills, favorable public policy, etc.). Jonathan Whitt confirmed that he intends to conduct this survey annually, which would make the survey a good indicator of changing conditions in the region as relates to high-tech businesses and entrepreneurship, two important CEDS strategies. Powerpoint detailing the results of the study is attached to this email.

- The **New River-Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board business and employer survey** is a similar data source to assess the evolving needs of regional businesses for skilled workers, and their perception of workforce development-related issues that most affect their hiring/workforce skills requirements. Marty Holliday confirmed that this survey is also conducted annually or biannually. That survey is available online at the following address: <http://nrmrwib.org/images/uploads/2012%20Business-Employer%20Survey%20Results.pdf>

-The **EMSI Analyst** web-based economic and workforce data tool. The PDC has access to this data source for 2015 through an agreement with the New River-Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board (WIB) and Virginia Tech. The tool can provide an array of data points to track trends in the regional economy, especially through the identification of target industry sectors, and the related workforce skills requirements. The attached word documents provides an example of the types of economic and labor market information that EMSI can help track for the region:

The **NRVPDC Top industry sectors and employers** document contains tables on top industry sectors and occupations in the NRV region, and the top employers in each county (this employer data is a little harder to come by- if you notice any errors, please let me know).

The **EMSI NRVPDC economy overview** document provides selected information on regional economic indicators, as well as documentation of the data sources that EMSI uses to calculate this information. This report is an example of the type of reports EMSI can create for individual counties and industries. Pages 1-8 provides basic demographic and economic information about the NRVPDC region. Pages 9-10 provides an 'industry overview' of heavy truck manufacturing, a

major employer in the region. Pages 11-13 contains an 'occupation overview' for software developers, a small but growing sector that provides an example of some of the other jobs we need to track because they are targets, even though they are not large currently. Pages 14-15 provide EMSI's methodology for data collection/calculations used to create these reports.

Other desired outcome tracking measures/indicators discussed during the meeting include:

- Amount, sources, and recipients of investment capital for business creation/venture development
- Location, speed, price and competition options for broadband/fiber service around the region
- Business creation/destruction, and stability of jobs by sector (some information at www.youreconomy.org).
- Information about entry-level jobs in target sectors, to allow low-skill or long-term unemployed residents to begin careers in the local economy
- Information about international trade or foreign direct investment in the region

CEDS project ranking criteria

The committee reviewed the project ranking criteria that were used for the 2014 CEDS update, and discussed revisions based on new trends in the region, and to make the criteria easier to understand and apply to various projects. The revised criteria appear on the following pages. Major changes include:

Upgrading several criteria to higher priority levels, including passenger rail, downtown revitalization, and drainage/flood control projects

Downgrading several criteria to lower priority levels, including clean energy projects and senior care facilities.

Increasing specificity of several criteria, including 'community facilities' and 'utilities' projects (see next page)

Adding criteria for regional coordination, broadband access/speed improvements, international trade promotion, and arts and culture projects.

Reorganizing and editing the 'other criteria' section to match these criteria more closely to CEDS goals, and clarify the system for awarding points to projects (see pages 4-7 below)

CEEDS Project Evaluation Criteria - Reviewed February 2015

As stated in the Organization and Management section of this report, the PDC Board members reviewed and updated the project evaluation criteria.

PROJECT TYPE (Points) (items changed in red)

Priority Level 1 (8)

- Water and sewer utilities
- Employment Creation/Retention
-Technology and Industrial
- Entrepreneurial/Small Business Assistance
- Regional/Local School & Educational
Facilities & Programs
- Transportation Planning
- Passenger Rail
- Broadband network improvements
- Housing Production
- Technology Career Development Facilities/
Programs
- Tourism (esp. agri-tourism)
- Marketing/Promotion of Assets
- Value-Added Local Food
- Mixed Use Development
- Central Business District Revitalization

Priority Level 2 (6)

- Primary/Arterial Roads & Transportation
Maintenance
- Facilities for Protected Populations
- Neighborhood improvement projects
- Employment Creation/ Retention-
Commercial
- Natural gas and energy infrastructure
- Rehabilitation of Aging Housing Stock
- Green Building Projects
- Protection of Natural/Cultural Resources/Assets
- Regional Coordination of Public
Transportation Connections
- Clean Energy Projects
- Airport Service
- Drainage/Flood Control
- Senior Care Facilities

Priority Level 3 (4)

- Secondary Roads
- Community Centers/Recreation
- Other Economic Development
- Homeownership Programs

Priority Level 4 (2)

- Other Housing
- Other Community Facilities
- Other Community Services Facilities
- Community Development Programs
- Drought Management

OTHER CRITERIA

While “project type” links the project criteria to the CEDS Goals and Strategies, there are other important factors in ranking individual projects. These factors are represented in the following criteria:

Investment relationship to regional economy and quality job creation: The projects receive addition points for the strength of their relationship to the economy of the Planning District, and the strategies to improve it, as described in the previous sections.

1. Expected job creation- the projects receive additional points if they are expected to result in quality jobs for regional residents, with points assigned as follows:

Points

- 5 Proposed investment directly supports high skill/high wage jobs.
- 3 Proposed investment results in an environment to support high skill/high wage jobs
- 3 Proposed investment supports skills upgrade/career advancement for in-demand jobs
- 2 Proposed investment results in entry-level jobs that are accessible to the long-term unemployed, youth, or others with barriers to employment (e.g., offender re-entry)
- 1 Proposed investment results in jobs with wages at or above the regional average

2. Relation to regional economic clusters: Economic clusters reflect competitiveness of a regional economic sector versus national trends and job growth.

Points

- 8 Project Relates to High Job Growth, High Geographic Concentration Clusters
- 6 Project Relates to High Job Growth, Lower Geographic Concentration Clusters
- 4 Project Relates to Job Loss, High Geographic Concentration Clusters

3. Regional Impact: The impact of a project is in relation to the number of jurisdictions participating or impacted in reference to services and money invested.

Points

- 8 Region-wide or multi-region impact (i.e., affecting neighboring EDDs)
- 4 Four to Five Jurisdictions (Towns or Counties/Cities) Participating or Impacted
- 2 Two to Three Jurisdictions Participating or Impacted
- 1 One Jurisdiction Participating or Impacted

Investment relationship to EDA priorities and requirements: The projects receive additional points to the extent that they align with EDA policies regarding economic distress and national priorities, which may help the project qualify for EDA funding.

1. Per Capita Income: The projects receive additional points if the areas they affect have lower than average per capita income levels (average of all jurisdiction affected).

Points

- 3 If less than or equal to 60% of State per capita income
- 2 If 61 - 74% of State per capita income
- 1 If 75 - 99% of State per capita income

2. Unemployment Rate: The projects receive additional points if the areas they affect have higher than average unemployment rates (average of all jurisdiction affected).

Points

- 3 If 10% or more above State average
- 2 If 5 - 10% above State average
- 1 If 1 – 5% above State average

3. Relative Jurisdictional Stress: A composite index prepared by the Commission on Local Government to compare the relative strengths of the jurisdictions in the State.

Points

- 2 High stress
- 1 Above average stress

4. Directly Correlates to EDA Investment Priorities (as described in EDA request for grant proposals)

- A. Collaborative Regional Innovation
- B. Public/Private Partnerships
- C. National Strategic Priorities 1 point/priority
- D. Global Competitiveness
- E. Environmentally-Sustainable Development
- F. Economically Distressed and Underserved Communities

Project support and feasibility: The project receives additional points if it demonstrates commitment by local partners and identifies financial or other resources that increase the likelihood of project success.

1. Relationship to Private Investments: Capital investments from private sources relate to the significance of the project.

Points

- 5 More than 50% Private Investment
- 3 25-49% Private Investment
- 2 Private Investment below 25%

2. Relationship to Previous Investment

Points

- 2 New Service or Facility; Expansion of Service from an Existing Service
- 1 Replacement of Existing Service or Facility

3. Readiness to Initiate Project

Points

- 5 Jurisdictional Commitment and Final Plans and Specifications-Application Filed
- 4 Jurisdictional Commitment Preliminary Plans and Specifications-Pre-application Filed
- 2 Jurisdictional Commitment, but no Plans and Specifications-Desired Project
- 1 No Jurisdictional Commitment, but Preliminary Plans and Specifications- Pre-application/Application

4. Utility/Infrastructure Availability (Maximum 6 points)

- A. Public Water
- B. Sanitary Sewer and Storm Water Treatment
- C. Electricity 1 point/utility
- D. Telephone/Broadband
- E. Natural Gas
- F. All Season Road
- G. Rail Access

5. Public Private Partnership

Points

- 5 Extensive commitment by multiple public and multiple private partners for project
- 2 Support from at least one public and at least one private stakeholder

Relationship to other regional initiatives and goals- Projects receive additional points if they demonstrate that they achieve the goals and strategies of other regional plans and priorities.

1. Relationship to “Green” Practices

Points

- 5 Project directly creates “green” jobs
- 4 Project implements “green practices” with certification
- 2 Project implements “green practices”
- 1 Project results in recycling or reuse

2. Relationship to Natural Resources

Points

- 5 Project sets aside land for conservation
- 3 Project compliments natural assets
- 2 Project is a detriment to natural resources

3. Relationship to international trade and investment

Points

- 3 Project supports development of international markets for products of regional businesses
- 2 Project supports efforts to attract investment by foreign owned firms to locate in the region

4. Relationship to arts, culture, history, regional heritage

Points

- 3 Project supports the development of arts/culture related business opportunities
- 2 Project supports the preservation/promotion of regional cultural heritage assets

NEW RIVER VALLEY PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

Minutes of the Commission Meeting

held on

April 23, 2015

6:00 p.m. – New River Valley Business Center, Fairlawn

I. CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT: Mr. K. Sullivan, Chair, Virginia Tech; Mr. G. East, Town of Pulaski, Vice-Chair; Mr. C. Bopp, Pulaski County; Mr. J. Carpenter, Radford University; Mr. L. Clevinger, Town of Pulaski; Dr. H. Harvey, City of Radford; Mr. T. Garrett, Town of Narrows; Mr. F. Gerald, Floyd County; Mr. M. Harvey, Montgomery County; Mr. W. Kantsios, Town of Rich Creek; Ms. E. Janney, Floyd County; Ms. S. Journell, Town of Pearisburg; Mr. L. Law, Giles County; Ms. H. Lesko, Town of Blacksburg; Ms. C. Newcomb, Town of Blacksburg; Mr. M. Patton, Town of Floyd; Ms. A. Perkins, Montgomery County; Mr. J. Soileau, Virginia Tech; and Mr. M. Sutphin, Town of Blacksburg and Dr. D. Warren, Pulaski County.

ABSENT: Mr. S. Weaver, Treasurer, Town of Christiansburg; Mr. R. McCoy, Giles County; Mr. H. Showalter, Town of Christiansburg and Mr. M. Turk, City of Radford.

Staff Attendees: Kevin Byrd, Elijah Sharp, Patrick O'Brien, Michael Gottfredson and Julie Phillips.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

A. Approval of Minutes for March

Mr. Sullivan called for approval of the consent agenda item if there were no questions or changes.

Motion: Ms. Lesko moved for the approval of the minutes. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried; four abstentions, Mr. Clevinger, Dr. Harvey, Mr. Garrett and Ms. Janney.

- B. Approval of Treasurer’s Report for March
Mr. Sullivan called for approval of the consent agenda item if there were no questions or changes.

Motion: Mr. Bopp moved for the approval of the treasurer’s report. Mr. Garrett seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion: Mr. Sullivan asked the budget report include what percentage the Commission is in the annual budget cycle on future reports.

III. COMMONWEALTH INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

- A. Projects (Signed-off by the staff)

None.

- B. Regular Project Review

None.

- C. Environmental Project Review

- 1. [15-10] FY2015 State Revolving Loan Funds Capitalization Application VA150327-01100400400

Mr. Sullivan called for approval of the environmental review.

Motion: Ms. Newcomb moved for the approval of the environmental review. Dr. Warren seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

IV. PUBLIC ADDRESS

None.

V. REVIEW OF MUTUAL CONCERNS AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Dr. Harvey reported the New River Valley Business Center is the second largest incubator facility in the state based on square footage found in an article in the Virginia Business Magazine. Mr. Harvey explained Pulaski County was featured in an article in the Washington Post Magazine and circulated a copy. Dr. Warren reported the Draper Water Treatment Plant received a Gold Award for water treatment and performance excellence in clarification, filtration and backwash. Mr. Carpenter reported Radford University was recognized by the Princeton Review as one of the 'Greenest Colleges' in the nation for the sixth consecutive year and announced commencement will be held May 8th and 9th. Mr. Sullivan noted Mr. Byrd sent out the Virginia Tech Football Economic Impact Study recently completed by the Virginia Tech Office of Economic Development on behalf of the university Athletic Department. He also shared the economic impact study completed by the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission contracted by the Virginia Tech Foundation for the Hotel Roanoke. Since the renovation was complete in the 1990's the report demonstrated over \$660 million in spending attributed to the hotel within the last 20 years. Ms. Lesko reported there will be a farmer's market event to celebrate the opening of the Pearisburg Farmer's Market Saturday, April 25th.

VI. CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Sullivan reported the Board members appointed for the nominating committee for next year's officers are Mr. Patton, Mr. Bopp, and Mr. Clevinger.

Mr. Sullivan called for approval of the three members to serve as the nominating committee.

Action: Motion carried unanimously; one abstention Mr. Sullivan.

VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Byrd provided a summary report in the Commission agenda packet. He reported the NRV Passenger Rail ridership survey can be accessed at www.surveymonkey.com/s/nrvrailsurvey or from www.nrvpassengerail.org and explained a Facebook page was recently established and can be found by searching NRV Rail 2020 on Facebook. The survey received over 3,000 responses within the first week. The MPO Technical Advisory committee is working on site selection for a train station and is moving toward narrowing the list and providing detailed analysis of three sites. Mr. Carpenter explained the region

is the fastest growing population in Western Virginia with 46,000+ students and 10,000 employees at Virginia tech, Radford University, and New River Community College providing \$1.79 billion in economic impact to the region. Mr. Byrd announced if anyone is interested in participating on any of the passenger rail committees to please contact him. Mr. Byrd reported the NRV Agritourism Strategic Plan will be finalized soon. The plan is a collaboration between Montgomery, Pulaski and Giles Counties. Mr. Byrd announced Tammy Stephenson from the DEQ Water Supply Planning Office will present the State Water Supply Plan and how it will be utilized at the June Commission meeting. Lastly, Mr. Byrd overviewed the branding process presentation from the March Commission meeting and the progress made toward the name change and rebranding of the Commission.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

A. Annual Dinner Update

Mr. Sullivan announced the annual dinner invitations were mailed out and encouraged the Commissioners to talk about it within their communities and invite people who may be interested. He overviewed the program and explained it will be a casual event with the focus on networking and a brief awards presentation. He also shared local artisans will be at the event. Dr. Warren mentioned he attended a food truck rodeo previously and it was interesting to see some of the trucks had longer lines than others. Mr. Byrd explained the food trucks will be open from 6:00pm until 7:30pm so there should not be long lines. Guests can move from truck to truck during the networking portion of the event.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Resolution Implementing Commission Name Change

Mr. Sullivan called for approval of the resolution included in the agenda packet in order to officially change the name of the New River Valley Planning District Commission to the New River Valley Regional Commission.

Motion: Ms. Lesko moved for the approval of the resolution. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

B. House Bill 2 Transportation Prioritization

Mr. Sharp gave an overview presentation of House Bill 2. Mr. Sharp explained House Bill 2 directs the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to develop a statewide process which will increase transparency and accountability in dispersing funds for transportation projects; however, the CTB is not required to fund highest scoring projects. Some exclusions to the criteria include revenue sharing, highway safety and maintenance, transportation alternatives, secondary/urban formulas, and the FTA formula. Mr. Sharp explained the objective measures and provided examples of weighting factors. He also explained the entire MPO and Commission boundary is currently defined as category B, or semi-urban. The Commission's Transportation Technical Advisory Committee made a recommendation for the area outside of the MPO to be moved into category C, or suburban. Mr. Sharp then overviewed the timeline of the bill, noting the policy is scheduled to be effective June 2016.

Discussion: Mr. Sullivan asked what prompted House Bill 2. Mr. Sharp explained the intention of the policy is to increase transparency in how transportation funds are distributed since the CTB who makes decisions on transportation funding is a politically appointed body. Mr. East asked how these changes will affect the NRV. Mr. Sharp explained it is difficult to know how it will affect the region without access to the VDOT databases which inform the ranking criteria. Mr. Garrett asked how they classified the entire region as urban. Mr. Sharp explained it is based on population density of the Commission boundary, not necessarily county-by-county evaluation, and that is why the Commission's Transportation Technical Advisory Committee recommended moving from category B to category C for areas outside the MPO boundary.

C. Review Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Goals, Objectives, Strategies, Ranking Criteria

Mr. O'Brien gave an overview of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). He explained the goals, objectives, strategies, and the project ranking criteria. He also gave an update on CEDS committee meetings and CEDS content additions to this year's document. He gave examples of the projects already on the ground, such as the NRV Commerce Park, VT Corporate Research Center, New River Valley Broadband Network, TEMCI, and the NRVDC Revolving Loan Fund. Mr. O'Brien noted several changes in the ranking criteria will allow projects that secured funding to rank slightly lower and projects gaining momentum, such as passenger rail, to rank higher. Mr. O'Brien provided examples of data to illustrate how the region compares to the state in several key areas.

Discussion: Mr. East asked about a data example from the Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology Council that showed the NRV with a 'business friendly environment' lower than technology councils in other parts of the country. Mr. Byrd explained this data point reflects the Roanoke-Blacksburg Technology Council member's perception of local, state and federal government engagement and support of the tech community. Dr. Harvey explained she was pleased to see the both broadband and international trade criteria included in the CEDS. Mr. O'Brien explained some criteria were added to this year's

document to better address and align goals. Ms. Lesko noted that there should be focus on early childhood education and childcare included in the CEDS document. Dr. Harvey noted global economic development is important and suggested the NRV market to international companies in the future. Mr. Byrd explained several international firms located in the NRV recently which demonstrated the need to focus attention on this market in the CEDS. Mr. Sullivan noted in the past the Northern Virginia region has driven the Virginia economy and explained that has shifted in large part due to government contracting. As a result, the NRV is in a good position to increase economic influence in our region because of the diverse economy.

Mr. Sullivan called the Commission to recognize Mr. Weaver for his many years of service as a member of the executive committee of the Commission from its founding in 1969 to his current role as Treasurer today.

Motion: Mr. Patton moved for the Executive Director to prepare a resolution to be presented at the Annual Dinner, May 13, 2015, honoring Scott Weaver for his service and naming him Treasurer Emeritus.

Ms. Newcomb seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:25 pm.

Kevin Sullivan, Chair

New River Valley Planning District

Commission

NEW RIVER VALLEY REGIONAL COMMISSION

Minutes of the Commission Meeting

held on

May 28, 2015

6:00 p.m. – New River Valley Business Center, Fairlawn

II. CALL TO ORDER

PRESENT: Mr. K. Sullivan, Chair, Virginia Tech; Mr. J. Carpenter, Radford University; Mr. L. Clevinger, Town of Pulaski; Dr. H. Harvey, City of Radford; Mr. T. Garrett, Town of Narrows; Mr. F. Gerald, Floyd County; Mr. M. Harvey, Montgomery County; Mr. W. Kantsios, Town of Rich Creek; Mr. L. Law, Giles County; Ms. C. Newcomb, Town of Blacksburg; Mr. M. Patton, Town of Floyd; Ms. A. Perkins, Montgomery County; Mr. J. Soileau, Virginia Tech; and Mr. H. Showalter, Town of Christiansburg.

ABSENT: Mr. S. Weaver, Treasurer, Town of Christiansburg; Mr. G. East, Town of Pulaski, Vice-Chair; Mr. C. Bopp, Pulaski County; Ms. E. Janney, Floyd County; Ms. S. Journell, Town of Pearisburg; Ms. H. Lesko, Town of Blacksburg; Mr. R. McCoy, Giles County and Mr. M. Sutphin, Town of Blacksburg and Dr. D. Warren, Pulaski County and Mr. M. Turk, City of Radford.

Staff Attendees: Kevin Byrd, Janet McNew, Patrick O'Brien, Christy Straight and Julie Phillips.

II. CONSENT AGENDA

- D. Approval of Minutes for April
Mr. Sullivan called for approval of the consent agenda item if there were no questions or changes.

Motion: Mr. Patton moved for the approval of the minutes. Mr. Kantsios seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously

- E. Approval of Treasurer's Report for April
Mr. Sullivan called for approval of the consent agenda item if there were no questions or changes.

Motion: Ms. Newcomb moved for the approval of the treasurer's report. Mr. Showalter seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously.

Discussion: Mr. Byrd noted the budget report now includes what percentage the Commission is in the annual budget cycle.

III. COMMONWEALTH INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW PROCESS

A. Projects (Signed-off by the staff)

1. Application for the Town of Pulaski for a Predevelopment Planning Grant VA150515-01200400155
2. Pulaski County CDBG Application for Kersey Bottom/Case Knife neighborhood improvements VA150515-01300400155None.

B. Regular Project Review

None.

F. Environmental Project Review

2. Notice of Intent to Prepare Environmental Impact Statement for Mountain Valley Pipeline VA150520-01400400400

Discussion: Mr. Byrd explained the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality is asking the Commission to identify which environmental considerations should be taken into account when preparing the environmental impact report for the Mountain Valley Pipeline. Mr. Byrd noted several items initially identified are the visual impact from primary roadways, stream crossings, impact to the Appalachian Trail and noise abatement from any compression stations. Mr. Byrd explained a compression station may be sited in Montgomery County. Preliminary information indicates the compression equipment is the equivalent of two jet engines, so noise abatement will be an issue. Ms. Newcomb asked for the impact to ground water and karst topography to be added to the list of considerations. Mr. Law noted that Giles County is concerned the line will go through the county without opportunities for connections to deliver natural gas to residents. Mr. Harvey expressed a similar understanding that there will not be drop off/connection points provided in the region. Ms. Newcomb indicated the impact to wildlife should be added to the list. Dr. Harvey noted there was an article in the Roanoke Times that explains many of the considerations the Commission should include in the response and will forward that to Mr. Byrd. Mr. Garrett noted the clear cut, or right of way, through forested areas should be as narrow as possible. Currently, a

gas line running to an industrial facility in Giles County has a 100 foot right of way and it has a substantial visual impact. Mrs. Perkins noted the compression station will emit particles and the impact to air quality needs to be included as well as water quality. She also asked for the study to include an assessment of the impact to homes within 200 foot of the pipeline. Mr. Harvey requested the list include impact to steep topography and whether the impacted area can withstand the project on such steep terrain. He also asked for the impact to Tom's Creek headwaters to be included along with access for residents in areas when construction blocks roads, particularly in emergency situations. Mr. Law asked the Commission to inquire where the pipe is being manufactured and whether it was in the United States. Mr. Carpenter asked Mr. Byrd to review the list of concerns provided by the Commission. Following Mr. Byrd's review of the list, Ms. Newcomb asked the Commission to include how the line will be monitored and the process for detecting potential leaks. Dr. Harvey noted the response should indicate the Commission is submitting considerations for the environmental review and it should not be misconstrued to indicate support for the project. Mr. Sullivan explained that the Commission does not need to vote on this review since DEQ is requesting input on which environmental considerations should be included in the upcoming environmental impact statement.

3. VPDES Permit No. VA0000248 Reissuance: Radford Army Ammunition Plant VA150520-01500400400

Mr. Sullivan called for approval of the environmental review.

Discussion: Dr. Harvey asked how many citations the arsenal was given each year. Mr. Harvey asked if the reissuance is only to allow treated wastewater back into the body of water not any other pollutants. Mr. Byrd explained that the permit is for a variety of treated wastewaters identified in the memo from DEQ.

Motion: Mr. Law moved for the approval of the environmental review. Mr. Carpenter seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried; 9-5 (nay votes- Dr. Harvey, Mr. Harvey, Ms. Newcomb, Mr. Patton, and Ms. Perkins.)

4. Virginia Tech Health Center Improvements VA150520-01600400121

Mr. Sullivan called for approval of the environmental review.

Discussion; Mr. Soileau explained the project will include a 1,700 square foot renovation and a 3,500 square foot addition.

Motion: Mr. Patton moved for the approval of the environmental review. Mr. Showalter seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried; 13-1 (nay vote- Ms. Perkins)

IV. PUBLIC ADDRESS

None.

V. REVIEW OF MUTUAL CONCERNS AND COMMISSIONERS' REPORTS

Ms. Newcomb reported the Summer Solstice Festival will be held in Blacksburg in June. Mr. Law reported Pemtel received a \$1.45 million line of credit to make improvements in the network. Mr. Carpenter reported Radford University held their graduation May 8-9, 2015. He also noted construction of intramural fields at Radford University at the old Burlington factory site is underway and scheduled to be completed this summer. The science facility is scheduled to be completed mid-fall this year and the humanities building is scheduled to be completed mid-2016. Mr. Carpenter also announced Radford University baseball will play in the NCAA regionals and it will air on ESPN3.

VI. CHAIR'S REPORT

Mr. Sullivan reported the New River Valley Mayors & Chairs meeting was held May 26th and had good representation from the region. The group discussed regional tourism and potential economic impacts associated with the frequency of lane closures on Interstate 81.

VII. EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Mr. Byrd provided a summary report in the Commission agenda packet. He reported Senator Warner hosted a Southwest Virginia Craft Beer Summit to discuss this growing industry, its tourism potential and economic impact. Mr. Byrd explained the Commission will host a field visit for a Strengthening Economies Together (SET) grant program to build economic opportunities based on the New River next Wednesday, June 3, at the NRV Business Center and encouraged everyone to attend. He reported the NRV Passenger Rail online survey received 4,100 responses and noted the survey will remain open for the next several weeks while the MPO Technical Advisory Committee reviews the preliminary findings. Mr. Showalter suggested the survey go out in the parent's newsletter email from the universities to reach more potential users. Mr. Carpenter explained the NRV Passenger Rail Legislative Committee will host a reception for Elected Officials at Radford University in August. Mr. Byrd noted the Virginia Department of Housing

and Community Development (DHCD) announced a new round of grant funds for Building Collaborative Communities and Community Business Launch. Mr. Byrd explained the Commission hosted the annual Planning Commissioner Training with the topic of Agriculture, Food Vending/Sales and Farmer's Markets as Event Spaces. He also noted the Commission formally introduced the name change to New River Valley Regional Commission at the annual dinner on May 13th. Lastly, he reported VAPDC will hold their summer conference August 5-7 in Virginia Beach, and explained he would like to have at least two board members attend.

VIII. OLD BUSINESS

Annual Dinner Recap/Debrief

Mr. Sullivan thanked the staff as well as Dr. Harvey and Mr. Patton for their work and coordination on the annual dinner event. He also explained next year he would like to continue with a similar event format. Mr. Byrd thanked the Virginia Tech Foundation for sponsoring the event.

IX. NEW BUSINESS

A. Review Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Projects

Mr. O'Brien gave an overview of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) projects completed, active and new projects. He explained some items included in the agenda packet have been updated to show completed status. He asked the Commissioners if they had any comments or changes to the ranking of the CEDS. Mr. Sullivan asked about the success rate of new initiatives. Mr. O'Brien explained he would like to include an indicator on the redesigned NRVRC website to measure the outcomes of initiatives and projects.

B. Revised FY15 Budget

Mr. Byrd explained a revised budget was included in the agenda. He noted that the revised budget is within 1% of the original budget. He also noted a proposed budget for FY16 will be presented to the Commission next month.

Discussion: Mr. Sullivan asked why a revised budget needs to be approved when an original budget has already been approved by the Board. Mr. Byrd responded that revenues and expenditures change throughout the year as new projects are introduced and a revised budget captures the line item adjustments which provides a more accurate reflection than the original budget approved 12 months

previous. A revised budget, along with monthly treasurers reports, keep the Board informed of the changes that occur during the fiscal year.

Mr. Sullivan called for approval of the revised budget.

Motion: Mr. Harvey moved for the approval of the revised budget. Ms. Newcomb seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried unanimously

G. Commission Officers for FY16 – Slate to be Introduced

Mr. Patton explained the nomination committee met and unfortunately Mr. East will step down as Vice-Chair. He also explained Mr. Weaver no longer feels he should remain Treasurer of the Commission given his inability to attend due to health limitations. Mr. Patton noted Mr. Weaver's resignation came after the nominating committee met, so they do not have a nomination for Treasurer at this time. The slate of officers the nomination committee recommends for FY 16 are; Chair- Mr. Sullivan, Vice-Chair- Mr. Carpenter, and Member-at-Large- Mr. Bopp.

Mr. Sullivan called for approval of the Slate of Officers for FY16 as presented. A vote on the officers will be taken at the June Commission meeting.

Motion: Ms. Perkins moved for the approval. Mr. Showalter seconded the motion.

Action: Motion carried; two abstentions, Mr. Sullivan and Mr. Carpenter.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:35 pm.

Kevin Sullivan, Chair

New River Valley Regional Commission

Appendix II
CEDS Committee Membership,
NRV Livability Initiative Economic Development Working Group,
and
PDC Membership

New River Valley
Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee
CEDS-FY15

Name	Principle Business Location	Career Field
Susan Kidd	Town of Narrows	Local Government Staff
Kamala Bauers	Floyd County	Real Estate Development
Jim Flowers	Virginia Tech	Incubator Manager
Michael Miller	Montgomery County	University Licensing
Peggy White	Pulaski County	Chamber of Commerce
Jim Loux	Pulaski County	Exporting Business
Michael Salomon	Pulaski County	Economic Development
John White	Town of Pulaski	Local Government Staff
Basil Edwards	City of Radford	Local Government Staff
Henry Showalter	Town of Christiansburg	Finance, Virginia Tech
Gary Reedy	Floyd County	Telecommunications
Aric Bopp	New River Valley Economic Development Alliance	Regional Industrial Marketing
Marty Holliday	New River Valley WIB	Workforce Investment Board
Tommy Loflin	Town of Christiansburg	Finance
David Denny	City of Radford	International Business
Kevin Reeder	Pulaski County (Fairlawn)	Finance
Shaun Rai	Town of Christiansburg	Community Development Finance
Gary Forget	Town of Dublin	Manufacturing
Mack Hudson	City of Radford	Retired Dentist
Rick Weaver	Montgomery County	Education
Anthony Byrd	City of Radford	Small Business Development
Diane Akers	Town of Blacksburg	Economic Development
Rebecca Phillips	Pulaski Town (NRV)	Education (Governor's School)
Jonathan Everett	Town of Christiansburg	Finance/Young Professionals

FY 2014-15
New River Valley Planning District Commission Members
Chair – Mr. Kevin Sullivan
Vice-Chair – Mr. Greg East
Treasurer – Mr. Scott Weaver
At-Large – Mr. Joe Carpenter
Past-Chair – Mr. Michael Patton

<u>Floyd County:</u>	Mr. Fred Gerald* 994 Sutphin Rd., NW Willis, VA 24380	Ms. Evelyn Janney 366 Bethlehem Church Rd., NE Floyd, VA 24091	<u>Town of Floyd:</u> Mr. Mike Patton* 123 Wilson Street Floyd, VA 24091
<u>Giles County:</u>	Mr. Richard McCoy* 505 Tyler Avenue Pearisburg, VA 24134	Mr. Leon Law 1809 Cascades Drive Pembroke, VA 24136	<u>Town of Narrows:</u> Mr. Thomas Garrett* 105 Bridge Street Narrows, VA 24124
	<u>Town of Pearisburg:</u> Ms. Susie Journell* 412 N. Dennis St. Pearisburg, VA 24134	<u>Town of Rich Creek:</u> Mr. William Kantsios* 936 Greenbriar Drive Rich Creek, VA 24147	
<u>Montgomery County:</u>	Ms. Annette Perkins* 1407 Valley View Drive Blacksburg, VA 24060	Mr. Michael Harvey 803 Willard Drive Blacksburg, VA 24060	
<u>Pulaski County:</u>	Mr. Doug Warren 4540 Shelburne Road Radford, VA 24141	Mr. Charles Bopp* PO Box 1402 Pulaski, VA 24301	
<u>City of Radford:</u>	Mr. Michael Turk* 1405 Madison St. Radford, VA 24141	Dr. Helen Harvey 701 Berkley St. Radford, VA 24141	
<u>Town of Blacksburg:</u>	Ms. Cecile Newcomb* 151 College Ave #23 Blacksburg VA 24060	Ms. Holly Lesko 1708 Westover Drive Blacksburg, VA 24060	Mr. Michael Sutphin* 611 Progress Street Blacksburg, VA 24060
<u>Town of Christiansburg:</u>	Mr. Scott Weaver 965 Cardinal Drive Christiansburg, VA 24073	Mr. Henry Showalter* 455 Overhill Road Christiansburg, VA 24073	
<u>Town of Pulaski</u>	Mr. Greg East* 517 North Madison Ave. Pulaski, VA 24301	Mr. Larry Clevinger 1128 Well Street Pulaski, VA 24301	
<u>Radford University:</u>	Mr. Joe Carpenter Martin Hall 0323 Radford, VA 24141		
<u>Virginia Tech:</u>	Mr. Jason Soileau VA Tech Blacksburg, VA 24061	Mr. Kevin Sullivan 2103 Chestnut Drive Blacksburg, VA 24060	* = Elected Official

Appendix III

Regional Business Services and Entrepreneurial Services

Radford Small Business Development Center

701 Tyler Avenue #231

Radford University

Radford, VA. 24142

Phone: 540-831-6056

Contact: Anthony Byrd, Director

-Services:

- Business planning assistance
- Loan packaging assistance
- Sources of business financing
- Marketing assistance
- Census, economic and business data
- Financial Analysis
- Small business training workshops
- Business Consulting

Website: www.radford.edu/content/cobe/sbdc-web.html

New River Valley Business Center

6580 Valley Center Drive

Radford, VA 24141

Phone: 540-633-6731

-Services: Small business start-up industrial and office space with shared meeting rooms, a copy room, at a flat rental rate (utilities included).

Website: www.nrvdc.org/nrvbc.html

New River Valley Development Corporation Revolving Loan Fund

6580 Valley Center Drive, Suite 302

Radford, VA 24141

Phone: 540-633-6730

-Services: Low interest micro-loans for small businesses located within the New River Valley.

Website: www.nrvdc.org/dcfinance.html

VT KnowledgeWorks

2200 Kraft Drive, Suite 1000

Blacksburg, VA 24060

540-443-9100

-Services: PLAN program components help market-worthy ventures organize, formulate strategy, and obtain outside investment. LAUNCH components help get the business up and running. GROW offerings emphasize strategic support for ongoing growth, continuing intra-preneurship, and professional development for the corporate leader.

Website: www.vtknowledgeworks.com/

Roanoke Blacksburg Technology Council

2200 Kraft Drive, Suite 1400

Blacksburg, VA 24060

Phone: 540-443-9232

-Services: Networking and peer learning for technology companies, and talent promotion.

Website: www.thetechnologycouncil.com/

460 Angels

-Services: Funding and coaching of early stage hi-tech entrepreneurs.

Website: www.460angels.com/index.html

Virginia Cooperative Extension

101 Hutcheson Hall (0402)

Virginia Tech

Blacksburg, VA 24061

Phone: 540-231-5299

-Services: Overall farm business technical assistance.

Website: www.ext.vt.edu/

Virginia Community Capital

930 Cambria Street, N.E.

Christiansburg, VA 24073

540-260-3126

-Services: CDFI offering small business lending and advisory services.

Website: www.vacommunitycapital.org/

Floyd County Business Services

Economic Development Authority of Floyd County

“5 and 10 Loan Program”

Qualifiers: Located in Floyd County, 9 or fewer employees, create/retain one job

-Services: Low interest loans at 5 and 10 year terms

Website: www.floydcova.org/business/floyd5and10.shtml

Giles County Business Services

Giles Business Incubator

211 Main Street

Narrows, VA 24124

Phone: 540-726-7119

-Services: Flexible space for small business start-ups.

Montgomery County Business Services

Montgomery-Blacksburg-Christiansburg (MBC) Development Corporation Revolving Loan Fund

755 Roanoke Street, Suite 2H
Christiansburg, VA 24073-3184
Phone: (540) 382-5732

-Services: Micro Solutions small business lending and training program for entrepreneurs.

Website: www.yesmontgomeryva.org/content/115/161/171/441.aspx

TechPad

432 North Main Street, Suite 200 (above PK's Restaurant)
Blacksburg, Virginia, 24060

-Services: Technology focused coworking and hacker community.

Website: www.techpad.org/

Pulaski County Business Services

Beans and Rice

246 North Washington
Suite B
Pulaski, VA 24301
Phone: 540-980-4111

-Services

Website: www.beansandrice.org/

City of Radford Business Services

Beans and Rice

1608 West Main Street
Radford, Virginia 24141
Phone: 540-633-6270

-Services: Micro Solutions small business lending and training program for entrepreneurs.

Website: www.beansandrice.org/

State and Inter-regional

Virginia Department of Business Assistance

-Services: Loan guaranties, loan loss insurance, Business One Stop, small business workshops.

Website: vdba.virginia.gov/starting_business.shtml

People, Inc.

1173 West Main St.

Abingdon, VA 24210

276-623-2931

-Services: Business counseling, business training workshops, entrepreneur support network/referrals, and numerous small business loan funds, including Ninth District Development Fund, SBA Micro Loan Fund, and others. Serves communities in southwest Virginia, including New River Valley.

Website: <http://www.peopleinc.net>

Virginia Small Business Financing Authority

1220 Bank Street, 3rd Floor

Richmond, VA 23219

Phone: 804-371-8254

-Services: support bank lending to small businesses by providing cash collateral, subordinate companion loans, guaranties, loan loss reserves.

Website: <http://www.vabankers.org/VSBFA>

Roanoke SCORE

105 Franklin Rd SW, Suite 150

Roanoke VA 24011

Phone: 540-857-2834

-Services: Entrepreneur education, workshops, and events.

Website: roanoke.score.org/