

New River Valley
Planning District Commission



FY 2001-2002
Annual Report

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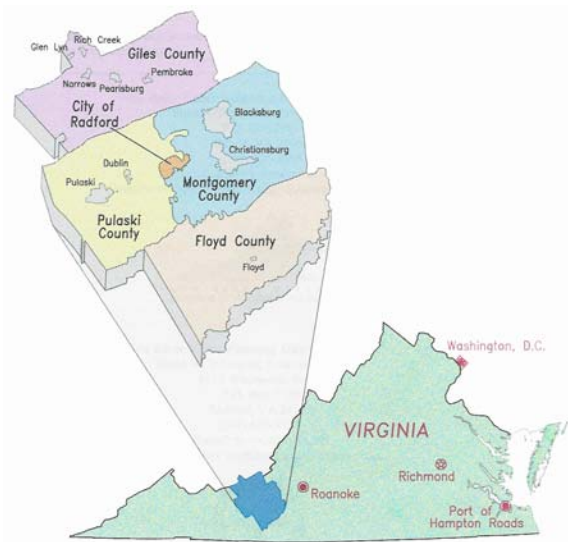
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Virginia’s New River Valley





Executive Director's Report



Dear Commissioners and Regional Citizens,

Fiscal Year 2002 was a year of transition and reorganization. Changes occurred at the Federal, State, and Local levels.

The Commission serves as the lead organization for the preparation of the strategic development plan for the region. In 1995 *Vision 2020* was adopted as the Commission's Strategic Plan and has subsequently been adopted by several other organizations as the base plan. The Commission began the planning for an update of *Vision 2020* during Fiscal Year 2002. A celebration of accomplishments since the initial *Vision 2020* was planned. The revised plan will identify changes that have occurred which affect the region and outline the strategic direction for the next five years.

At the National level, the Appalachian Regional Commission was reauthorized by Congress for a five year period. Along with the reauthorization came many changes in the authority of the Commission. Most importantly, the revised legislation provides for a telecommunications program and the formation of a new interagency coordinating council on Appalachia to be led by the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Rural Development within the Department of Agriculture was also reauthorized. The legislation provides among other things funding of the backlog of water and sewer projects, a new program for Rural Strategic Investments, Broad Band Services in Rural America, and Rural Firefighter and Emergency Personnel grants. The new programs will require the

development of regulations and take some time to see implementation. The backlog funding has been utilized to finance many projects which have been under consideration to serve the region.

The U.S. Census Bureau designated Blacksburg, Christiansburg, and a portion of Montgomery County as an "urbanized area". This designation brings several changes for the Blacksburg-Christiansburg area. First, the Census designation triggers an additional designation of the area as a "Metropolitan Planning Organization" (MPO) by the Federal Highway Administration. MPO's are tasked with overall transportation planning for "urbanized areas". The three localities will appoint representatives and provide for staffing to assist the MPO with its planning responsibilities. Blacksburg Transit will become an urban transit system and will no longer be funded through rural transit funding programs. The area will also be required to participate in DEQ's municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) stormwater permitting program.

The General Assembly authorized the formation of a Bi-state Commission with North Carolina for the Roanoke River Watershed. The Commission is to be made up of mostly General Assembly members. To assist the Bi-state Commission with its work, the Roanoke River Basin Advisory Committee was also formed. Each of the Planning District Commissions in the basin were asked to nominate persons to be members of the Committee. Evelyn Janney of Floyd County was selected to represent eastern Montgomery and Floyd Counties.

These changes and the impacts of the downsizing economy promise to make the next several years very interesting and challenging. The Commission has undertaken the revision of *Vision 2020*, the regional strategic plan, to address changes. We will need to work together in new and expanded ways to attain the future we envision.

Sincerely,

David W. Rundgren
Executive Director

Regional Cooperation

Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facility Authority

The *Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facility Authority* continues to hold regular meetings with primary activities being focused on the development of Phase 1 of the New River Valley Commerce Park. In addition, the Authority appointed a study committee to consider the establishment of a workforce development program. The primary goal of the study committee was to evaluate the potential for such a program with an emphasis being placed on providing high tech job opportunities in the information technology industry to local graduates of New River Community College, Radford University, Virginia Tech, and the New River Valley Magnet School for Information Systems Technology.

In January 2002, the New River Valley Planning District Commission (NRVPDC) staff assisted in the preparation of a \$1.1 million EDA application on behalf of *Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facility Authority* and the Town of Pulaski for the acquisition and renovation of a 19,900 square foot building located in the Town of Pulaski. This facility, referred to as the Pulaski Technology Center, will provide a means by which to employ and develop the much needed technology workforce within the *Virginia's First* region.

New River Valley Magnet School for Information Systems Technology

The Magnet School is a partnership between New River Community College and Bland, Carroll, Wythe, Giles, Floyd, Pulaski, and Montgomery Counties and the City of Radford. Through articulated agreements with New River Community College (NRCC) and participating

school divisions, college credits may be earned by high school juniors and seniors. These credits may count for high school graduation requirements and college credit at New River Community College as well. In addition, certain classes are offered for dual enrollment credits. Students may have to pay tuition for those classes they opt to take for dual enrollment credit depending upon arrangements made with NRCC and their particular high school. Students may also become certified in certain computer related fields by completing the necessary course requirements upon graduation from high school and passing the certification tests. Students have the option of continuing their education and training in their field(s) of interest or entering the work force with certification in their chosen field.

All Magnet School technology classes have approximately 200 students enrolled per semester. Interest and support for the School has also increased among business and technology groups. Well trained workers help attract high-tech industries to the Valley, thus encouraging recent graduates to stay in the area and boost the economy.

The Magnet school curriculum is organized into five program areas: Networking, Computer Applications, Electronic / Computer Repair, Programming, and Computer Graphics. This includes a Regional Cisco Networking Academy on the campus of NRCC.

In January 2002, the *Virginia's First Regional Industrial Authority* endorsed the Magnet School project. The Authority supports the program because the school has the potential to produce the skilled work force that is needed to help attract a high-tech industry to the Authority's Commerce Park.

Virginia's New River Valley Regional Competitiveness Partnership

Virginia's New River Valley Regional Competitiveness Partnership was formed at the request of the local governments. It is composed of representatives of the NRVPDC

and the New River Valley Economic Development Alliance. The Partnership reports on the status of regional projects and encourages other regional projects through the investment of funds provided to the Partnership by the General Assembly, approximately \$300,000 last year. These funds were used to support the development and operations of the New River Valley Airport as a User Fee Airport and Foreign Trade Zone. Funds were also utilized to provide operational support to the New River Valley Competitiveness Center and to further the New River Access project development. In the area of workforce development, Regional Competitiveness Partnership monies provided ongoing support to the continuation of the Technology Magnet School and the Montgomery County Accelerator project.

Vision 2020

Vision 2020 continues to serve the NRVPCD and its jurisdictions as a foundation for regional cooperation, particularly for projects that draw heavily on grassroots involvement. In June 2002, the NRVPCD began planning for a celebration of *Vision 2020* and the community's accomplishments. As the following projects show, *Vision 2020* gives the New River Valley a framework for broad-based community development activities and helps to reach the region's goal of a healthy, sustainable community by 2020.

Kellogg Managing Information with Rural America (MIRA)

The Kellogg Foundation funding began the MIRA program in March 1998 and the final phase of mini-grants was completed in August 1999. The ten citizen-run community improvement projects that were implemented in the region with funding from the Kellogg MIRA grant continues. The goal of these projects was to enhance information technology access for the grassroots community, and to encourage formal and informal networks of people and organizations across the region. Over 150 citizens from across the region were involved in the development of these projects. Each team was required to build in sustainability for their efforts following the grant period. All programs

are still viable in the various communities of the New River Valley.

A digital storytelling workshop held in June 2002 engaged 16 youth from across the New River Valley region. These youth met at Virginia Tech and learned both elements of storytelling and technical skills necessary in creating a digital story.

In Floyd County, oral histories are being collected. An entire digital story devoted to one of the subjects, "Ma Hall" has already been created by a MIRA participant.

American Heritage Rivers

The New River was designated an American Heritage River by President Clinton in July of 1998. By late July 1999, with staff support from the NRVPCD, a tri-state (North Carolina, Virginia and West Virginia) New River Workplan was complete and unveiled at Congressman Rick Boucher's New River Conference.

In the Fall of 2001, the Bush Administration indicated that it intends to honor the previous administration's commitment to maintain the American Heritage Rivers Initiative through July 2003.

The New River Valley has representatives on the New River Community Partners Board of Directors which is charged with providing assistance and support to New River communities as they implement their projects.

In the NRV region, work continues on developing a series of access points on the New River. The newly-incorporated New River Land Trust (NRLT) is working with landowners along the New River to educate and inform them about easement opportunities. Through efforts of NRVPCD-affiliated staff, the NRLT facilitated the donation of an island to the Department of Conservation and Recreation in Grayson County.

Grassroots Leadership Development Initiative

As reported in last year's annual report, the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation awarded a

two-year grant to the Community Foundation of the New River Valley (CFNRV) for a grassroots leadership development program (EAGLES: Energized Active Grassroots Leadership Engaged Systematically) that was developed in collaboration with NRVPCD staff. The first year of EAGLES was completed in 2000 with the participation of 13 grassroots leaders, ranging from emerging leaders to well-established leaders, including Executive Directors, ministers, Department of Social Services employees, Virginia Tech extension agents, and Head Start parents. NRVPCD and CFNRV staff developed the eight all-day Saturday sessions with a community development expert from Learning Partners in Tennessee. The participants themselves identified their leadership needs and the trainings focused on personal development as a pathway to community development.

The EAGLES program is being evaluated, and the Mary Reynolds Babcock Foundation has invited the Community Foundation in partnership with the NRVPCD to submit a white paper for further grassroots development work.

Youth Civic Engagement

In year two of the Youth Civic Engagement program, Montgomery County Schools participated in a Community Foundation developed program sponsored by the Coalition of Community Foundations for Youth. Students from middle and high schools in the County participated in diversity training and each student-lead team from all ten of the County middle and high schools developed applications to promote positive ideas around diversity. The teams were awarded up to \$1,000 for the implementation of their projects. Each team was responsible for the development of the project, a budget, and evaluating the impact of the effort on their school's views of diversity. The students first identified issues in their schools and worked to come up with an intervention that would increase tolerance and acceptance of diverse people and view points. This grant will continue for one additional year with the hopes that Montgomery County will incorporate it permanently into the school programs.

These projects, with staff support from the Commission, have strengthened the grassroots community in the New River Valley. There is a growing cross-jurisdictional network of citizens who are interested in sustainable development issues and who are learning the skills needed to make a difference in their communities.

Economic Development

New River Valley Foreign Trade Zone

In the arena of international trade, the New River Valley Airport near Dublin holds two important distinctions: Customs Port of Entry status (designated by the U.S. Customs Service) and Foreign Trade Zone status (designated by the U.S. Department of Commerce). These designations are referred to as Customs Port of Entry No. 1481 and Foreign Trade Zone No. 238. A U.S. Customs officer is stationed at the Port No. 1481 office located at the Airport.

During FY 2001-2002, the New River Valley Port of Entry logged approximately 2,000 Customs entries and marked its second full year of service to the region. Port No. 1481 is a full service Port of Entry for industrial, business, and personal cargo being transferred into or out of the United States and is available for public use.

The chief benefits to business users of the Foreign Trade Zone and Port of Entry are related to convenience and savings of import fees. From an economic development perspective, Foreign Trade Zone benefits will be a useful marketing tool in attracting new businesses to the New River Valley. Development of the Foreign Trade Zone will facilitate expansion of the New River Valley's already significant level of international trade while helping to diversify the economy and create jobs.

New River Valley Competitiveness Center

The fiscal year ending June 30, 2002 was an exciting year for the New River Valley Competitiveness Center. During the year six new incubator tenants were welcomed to the Center, one tenant graduated, and one new tenant joined the regional offices. It remained at capacity during the year and the tenants added twenty-two new jobs that helped to achieve the primary mission of job creation. Furthermore, on September 28, 2001, the Center began construction on a 23,000 square foot expansion.

On June 1, 2002, Joe Marchese graduated from the Center after successfully completing three years of tenancy. During his time in the Center, Joe achieved several levels of licensure as a Certified Financial Planner. Although he was the sole employee when his business began, he has added five additional employees and had planned for two more by August 2002. The Center looks forward to Joe continuing his growth and success in the future.

Two businesses, however, left the Center without completing their goals. Bowswitch USA, Inc. ceased operation when their supplier of valves in Germany was hit with a patent infringement suit and could not supply their product. Expert Automation, Inc. closed their business after nearly three years after they were unable to complete contracts that constrained their cash flow.

The departure of tenants, however, is good news for those entrepreneurs looking for a good fit to start their business. **New River Think Tank** joined the Center with one employee and a plan to design, install, and maintain computer networks including wireless configurations. **Business Systems Technology, Inc.** is a new business that provides management services to small companies especially start-ups. They evaluate the business and assist in systems

designed to address identified needs such as management systems, human resources, and marketing. **Woodworks Restoration and Remodeling, Inc.** specializes in historic residential and commercial structures. Their specialty is quality craftsmanship with the ability to find replacements for antique fixtures and woodwork. **University Woodworks, Inc.** designed and marketed a hutch for college dorm room desks. They signed a four-month lease to manufacture their product at the Center for the



New River Valley Competitiveness Center

2002 college year. **DeVic Industries, LLC** is producing a commercial product based in a compound developed for the space industry. The product is a coating that has significant heat reflective capabilities and has applications in many industries where high heat is used such as in blast furnaces. The product can also be utilized during construction as a fire retardant. **Lurleen Collins Accounting Services** provides accounting and bookkeeping service to individuals and small businesses. She specializes in assisting start-up businesses in establishing financial reporting systems and in generating reports needed to measure success of their business.

Western Virginia Emergency Medical Services Council joined the Center as a regional tenant filling the only regional space available. The Council provides support for local emergency medical organizations and oversees the training programs offered to emergency medical personnel.

One of the existing tenants reached a milestone during the year. **Luxine, Inc.** achieved Underwriters Laboratory and Federal Communications Commission approval of their induction technology cooking system. They are transitioning from research and development to production and have signed contracts with two manufacturers of cooking appliances to use their product. As a result of their success they have increased the space they occupy from 1,200 square feet to 2,150 square feet and are looking at one of the new 4,000 square foot bays to provide space needed to meet expected demand.

Wayne Carpenter presented entrepreneurial workshops during the year to various groups. The participants in the workshops ranged from intermediate school students from Dalton Intermediate School to students in Beginning Your Own Business class from Virginia Tech. Presentations were also made to public school teachers participating in an economic development workshop at Radford University. In addition, Wayne has served as an advisor to Radford University's Business Technology Park planning committee for the development and use of their 100,000 square foot facility.

In May, the Center joined the New River Valley Development Corporation in applying for a grant to begin a business development program for selected tenants. The program, Intensive Business and Enterprise Development Program, is designed to bring small, owner operated businesses to their maximum potential in a short time frame by providing hands on assistance in management development, accounting practices, marketing skills, and office management systems. The application is for \$20,000 through the Appalachian Regional Commission's Entrepreneurship Initiative grants program.

After twelve months of design, engineering, and competitive bidding, construction on Phase 2 of the Center began. The 23,000 square foot addition features two 4,000 square foot bays designed for manufacturing. The bays are expected to be occupied by production companies. In addition to the spaces available for lease to tenants, there is a large meeting room that can be used by tenants or rented on a

daily basis by other groups. The space can be divided into four meeting rooms or opened for groups of over 100. The meeting area includes a servery for setting up meals or refreshments.

Architectural Alternatives, Inc. of Blacksburg is the architect and Acorn Construction, Ltd. of Troutville is the general contractor for the project. Construction should be complete before December 31, 2002. There are three office suites in the expansion that have three private offices, a workroom, and reception area each. The total area of each suite is 1,150 square feet. Fourteen individual offices make up the remainder of the tenant space in the addition. These offices range in size from 200 to 300 square feet. The Center looks forward to making more incubator space available and bringing diverse businesses to the local economy.

Giles Business Incubator

The Giles Business Incubator has been functioning under the Giles County Industrial Development Authority for the past two years and is beginning to make a real difference in small business development in Giles County.

Chris McKlarney, Giles County Economic Development Director, is serving as Director to the Business Incubator since former Director Terri Martin resigned to resume her teaching career in July 2002.

The following are some exciting things that have been happening at the Incubator:

Precision Machine and Design, owned and operated by Roger Fleeman of Narrows, opened his business in September 2001. He has 12 years experience in custom machining jigs, fixtures, molds and parts to suit customer needs. He has state of the art CNC machining equipment.

Mountain Sporting Goods, owned and operated by Donald Waldron also from Narrows, opened his store in July 2001. This is a retail store which specializes in outdoor sports. He

also has collectibles, rare and limited edition firearms, and various gifts for any sportsman.

Giles County Partnership for Excellence has now expanded and occupies four suites. They provide a variety of services to the residents in Giles County. Representatives from Social Services, Virginia Employment Commission, and Veteran's Benefits continue to visit the Incubator on a regular basis to meet with clients.

Wild Country Studios, owned and operated by Alisa Horniman, from Pembroke, opened her business in August 2002. Mrs. Horniman specializes in designing websites, brochures, letterhead, and other various graphic specializations.

Ceramicx USA opened in August 2002. Owned by Paul Andrews and Bill Willis of Blacksburg, this business is the sole distributor of ceramic infrared heating devices for the United States.

The Incubator has recently teamed up with New River Community College in offering adult education classes and hopes to partner with Bluefield College in offering a bachelor of arts program in organizational management in the spring.

Jacksonville Center

The Jacksonville Center, a previously modified barn, located in Floyd, received additional grant funds to renovate the facility into a cultural business incubator. NRVPCD staff prepared the feasibility study as well as the grant applications. Granting agencies include Rural Development and the Appalachian Regional Commission. These are in addition to the Virginia Department of Business Assistance funds announced the previous year. The total renovation funds are now \$581,000. NRVPCD staff is administering the project. To-date, the architect has been selected and preliminary design is proceeding.

Project architect, Architectural Alternatives of Blacksburg, Virginia, completed the final plans



Jacksonville Center

and specifications and the project went out to bid May 19, 2002. Harris Contractors of Radford, Virginia was named apparent low bidder at the bid opening held on June 18.

Floyd Regional Commerce Center

To provide for identification of construction activities specific to federal, state, local and private funding sources, the Floyd Regional Commerce Center project was separated into five divisions by the project engineers, Anderson and Associates.

Construction under **Division I** began in October of 2001 and was completed in December 2001 by Sowers Construction of Mt. Airy, North Carolina. This provided for the construction of a temporary access road and initial site clearing and grading on Lot #3 to enable the construction of the Dreaming Creek facility to proceed.

Division II covered the erection of a shell building by H.S. Williams Co., Inc. of Marion, VA to be occupied by Dreaming Creek, a local timber frame manufacturing operation.

Divisions III, IV & V includes the construction of approximately 2,500 feet of industrial access roadway, 7,000 feet of water line and 2,800 feet of sewer line and site preparation of up to six building pads. Construction under these divisions began in February 2002 and is

expected to be complete in December 2002. Sowers Construction is the prime contractor.

Creating new jobs is a high priority for Floyd County leadership. The County has concentrated much of its energy and limited resources to developing a facility controlled by the County and structured to attract and assist companies that will create jobs and bring investment to Floyd County.



New River Valley Commerce Park

Narrows Downtown Revitalization

This revitalization effort has entered its next phase. The portion funded by the Department of Housing and Community Development was completed in Spring of 2002. The next phase includes projects that will be funded by the Virginia Department of Transportation's Transportation Enhancement Act of the Twenty-First Century (TEA-21) funds. This project includes establishing a farmer's market, extending the streetscape features throughout the entire Central Business District, reinforcing the Duck Pond to prevent further stormwater erosion, and other enhancement activities. This project is expected to be completed by Spring / Summer of 2003.

New River Valley Commerce Park

During FY 2002, *Virginia's* First Regional Industrial Facility Authority continued with the development of the New River Valley Commerce Park. In March 2002, *Virginia's* First Regional Industrial Facility Authority achieved coordination of funding consisting of a \$2,083,500 Rural Development low interest loan, a \$2,000,000 First National Bank loan with a federal guarantee, a \$1,375,000 Virginia Regional Industrial Facility grant, and a \$450,000 Virginia Department of Transportation grant. These funds provided for the implementation of Phase 1 of the New River Valley Commerce Park consisting of the acquisition of 326 acres, the construction of a 40

acre pad and a mile of industrial access road into the facility.

Construction of the Commerce Park began immediately following loan closing in mid-April 2002, with Haymes Brothers, Inc., of Chatham, Virginia being chosen as the general contractor. Construction continued during FY 2002 and substantial completion of this project is expected by Fall of 2002.

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

NRVPDC staff updated the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), the strategic plan for the Economic Development Administration. Embodied in the update was a revision to Vision 2020 which outlines goals and strategies for economic development, education and training, health and human development, natural and cultural environment, and physical infrastructure in the New River Valley.

The CEDS document also includes an Annual Project Package Report which lists and ranks projects in the region according to specific criteria and priority levels. The criteria this year included: regional significance, relationship to locally adopted comprehensive plans, per capita income and unemployment in the locality, relationship to private investment and previous investment, and readiness to initiate projects. Level 1 priority projects included water and sewer improvements, employment creation /

retention, microenterprise assistance, tourism, roads, local schools and educational facilities, and technology career facilities.

Human Services

Welfare Reform Phase II Implementation

The five Departments of Social Service agencies in the New River Valley, known collectively as the Partners-for-Self-Sufficiency (PSS), began working together in 1997 during welfare reform implementation. Since then, they have continued to collaborate on regional projects that helped make the New River Valley social service delivery system stronger. In 2001, the collaborative received hard-to-serve grant funding from the Virginia Department of Social Services in the amount of \$471,000 to implement expanded programming for welfare clients experiencing multiple barriers to employment. Based on the success of the first grant, the collaborative received continuation funding in the amount of \$226,000 to keep this effective program operating until May 2003. The main objective of the working group is to blend resources and increase economies of scale by developing region-wide programs for the smaller and larger localities.

The hard-to-serve grant project included the following components:

Component #1:

"Systematic Evaluation of VIEW Clients' Barriers to Employment: Strategies that Assist with Resource Development and Clients' Ability to Meet Self-Sufficiency Goals"

Component #1 of this grant funded a contract with Media-Tel, Inc. to transform the social services' comprehensive in-house screening

instrument into a secure, web-based database. This database holds information from the internal screening and additional diagnostic assessments obtained from other sources. Access to aggregate data is available to DSS staff, agency managers, and other organizations serving the hard-to-serve population to evaluate: the effectiveness of existing resources, the need for the development of additional community based resources, and outcomes of the process of moving individuals toward self-sufficiency. After the database was beta-tested in Pulaski County, it was implemented in the other four agencies.

Component #2:

"A Regional Approach to Conducting Extensive Assessments of the Hard-to-Serve Population & Bridges-to-Practice Program"

In addition to implementing a more comprehensive in-house screening instrument, PSS also recognizes the necessity to conduct more extensive assessments of a portion of their hard-to-serve clients who may have "hidden barriers" to employment such as medical, mental illness and substance abuse problems, learning disabilities, etc. The Partners for Self-Sufficiency have been working with several service providers to develop a process that allows VIEW Workers to "red-flag" serious barriers to employment that require further assessment and individualized consultation. This grant has funded a partnership between PSS and other service providers to provide an extensive assessment circuit program that allows VIEW Workers the flexibility to utilize the services of a variety of specialized psychologists and counselors for general medical, learning disabilities, mental health, substance abuse and vocational assessments.

Component #3:

"New River Valley's Job Readiness/Job Retention and Workplace Essential Skills System"

PSS has contracted with New River Community College to implement a job readiness and job retention circuit program. In addition to having two-week classes held monthly at the two locations in Christiansburg and Dublin, NRCC staff has also conducted specialized training sessions to meet the needs of individual jurisdictions. This program fully incorporates the Workplace Essential Skills System, and uses internet modules, workbooks and videos to assist with group discussions and activities.

In addition to the hard-to-serve grant discussed above, PSS has also participated in a regional grant proposal to create an apprenticeship program, called Steps-to-Independence.

The Steps to Independence Program reflects an important need collectively identified by representatives of the Voluntary



Welfare to Work Program

Welfare to Work Program (VAC), New Enterprises Fund (the region's micro-enterprise program), all five social services agencies, New River Community College, Virginia Tech's Race and Social Policy Research Center, and several major nonprofit organizations. In their internal evaluation of the job readiness and job retention system, they identified some areas needing improvement. On average, each month the region graduates 25-30 people from the job readiness classes, and a majority of those graduates find stable employment. The main challenge is the ability to assist individuals in securing living-wage employment. As an immediate step, the region is building stronger relationships with local employers and aggressively seeking their input in identifying living-wage positions. In doing so, they are expanding employers' perceptions of welfare workers. The Steps to Independence Program directly addresses this perception by ensuring that TANF clients are adequately

prepared to successfully compete in the labor market.

VAC is requesting \$700,000 from the Department of Health and Human Services' JOLI program to fund a three-year innovative, demonstration program entitled "Steps to Independence Program". This program is designed to assist TANF clients who have completed the job readiness program and have gained on-the-job skills directly related to their interests and abilities. Through paid six-month apprenticeships with nonprofit agencies in our region, with weekly training programs in micro-enterprise, participants of the Steps to Independence Program will acquire new knowledge and skills, a solid referral and reference to build their resume, and additional services to help them either start their own small business, become self-employed or obtain a full-time position with benefits.

Transitional Housing

The Planning District Commission contracted with the City of Radford for administration of a \$700,000 Community Development Block Grant awarded to the City by the Department of Housing and Community Development. Radford City applied for the funds on behalf of the Women's Resource Center of the New River Valley. This Community Improvement Grant provided funds for the construction of a transitional housing facility to be owned and operated by the Women's Resource Center.

Transitional housing provides victims of domestic violence with a safe environment for longer periods of stay than is feasible in an emergency shelter. Residents of the Women's Resource Center emergency shelter who desire a more supportive living environment with a goal

of self-sufficiency, will be eligible to move into an apartment for a stay of three months up to two years. The transitional housing program provides more than just a place to live. Women's Resource Center staff is on-site providing supportive services to families throughout their stay at the facility. Included in the scope of services: counseling, parenting classes, life skills training, educational assistance, financial management, and programs designed specifically for children serviced by this facility.

Designed by Architectural Alternatives of Blacksburg, Virginia, and built by Independence Construction of Princeton, West Virginia, the facility is a cluster of eight apartment units of various sizes plus a common community area, playroom, laundry and office space for Women's Resource Center staff.

In a dedication ceremony held July 31, 2001, the new facility was officially christened *Cornerstone*. The apartments were fully furnished and ready for occupancy thanks to help from companies donating furniture through the Neighborhood Assistance Act, a program offering tax credits to companies who donate their products to private, non-profit organizations and to local churches that "adopted" individual apartments providing necessary items such as linens, towels, utensils and cookware.

The first family moved into *Cornerstone* in August 2001.

New River Valley Disability Services Board (NRVDSB)

The NRVPC contracted with the NRVDSB for staff support services. NRVPC staff assisted the DSB in performing a number of different tasks, including assisting with the overall operations of two satellite offices of the Blue Ridge Independent Living Center, assisting the state with the overhaul of the needs assessment survey procedures and instruments, and developing the next needs assessment, due to the state by January 2003. The DSB Staff Support position also serves as a liaison between the

NRVDSB and the Virginia Disability Services Commission and Virginia Disability Council.

Planning/ Technical Assistance

Town of Narrows Zoning Ordinance

The Town of Narrows Planning Commission began updating its Zoning Ordinance in conjunction with the 2001 Comprehensive Plan. The NRVPC staff assisted the town in re-wording much of the confusing and irrelevant information that was found in the "old" ordinance. The revised ordinance was adopted in June 2002.

Town of Narrows Comprehensive Plan

The Town of Narrows began updating its Comprehensive Plan in August 2000. In October of 2001, the Town Council adopted the plan. Goals of the Comprehensive Plan include ideas of bolstering the Town's economy, increasing the number of recreational opportunities for the town and its youth, and finding a new use for the historic MacArthur House. As a result of this plan, the MacArthur House is in the process of being renovated by a private investor. Such uses include a possible museum, small office spaces, and efficiency apartments.

Town of Pembroke Comprehensive Plan

With assistance from the NRVPC staff, the Pembroke Planning Commission is preparing an update to its Comprehensive Plan. The Town is very eager to evaluate its alternative futures and define its direction. The work will begin in the Fall of 2002.

Floyd-Floyd County Comprehensive Plan

The Floyd-Floyd County Planning Commission held a final central public input meeting to gather preliminary input for the Comprehensive Plan. Attendees generally were concerned about the pace of change and growth (Floyd County had 16% population growth rate from 1990 to 2000). Citizen recommendations included preparation and adoption of a zoning ordinance, maintaining farming, and encouraging more people to use private conservation easements.

The Floyd-Floyd County Planning Commission completed a draft of the Comprehensive Plan and scheduled a work session with the Floyd County Board of Supervisors and the Floyd Town Council.

Floyd County Business Incubator Feasibility Study

NRVPDC staff conducted a feasibility study for a mixed-use business incubator in Floyd County. The study concluded that a mixed-use incubator would “capitalize on underutilized assets in the County,” including a vacant textile building, an excellent fiber optic network, an independent spirit that is ripe for entrepreneurship, and specific skills and experiences. Specifically, it was recommended that the incubator include a community center, a shared-use commercial kitchen (for value-added processing of produce), and affordable non-profit and public space.

The Feasibility Study concluded that grant funding would be essential for renovation work. Potential funders include the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification Commission and the Appalachian Regional Commission.

Floyd County Water Study

NRVPDC continued efforts to research well permit data at the Floyd County Health Department to better understand drought and development impacts. According to Health Department summary data, 40% of all new wells in Floyd County in the past three years have been replacement wells (only 11% for the rest of

the New River Valley). Research further indicates that more than 45% of new wells in Floyd County have a yield of 5 gallons or less per minute. This research will become part of the GIS system for Floyd County, allowing spatial analysis of well data. Theresa Kanter and Renee Sigmon, interns from the Virginia Water Resource Center, provided invaluable assistance to NRVPDC staff in this effort.

Radford Riverfront

NRVPDC staff assisted the Radford Riverfront Committee in developing a Riverfront Plan for the City of Radford. The Committee consisted of City staff as well as representatives of the Radford Planning Commission, Radford University, Main Street, the Chamber of Commerce, Beautification Committee, and Pathways for Radford. The Plan’s goal is to balance natural, recreational, and economic aspects of the Riverfront area.

Pulaski Flood Mitigation Plan

In response to its flooding history, the Pulaski Town Council initiated a flood mitigation planning process by creating the Town of Pulaski Flood Mitigation Committee (PFMC) in 2001. Staffed by the Town and the NRVPDC, the Committee is developing a Flood Mitigation Plan with several goals. The goals include enhancing public safety, minimizing property damages, and increasing funding eligibility for federal and state programs, and potentially reducing National Flood Insurance Program premiums through the Community Rating System. The 14-member Committee includes Town residents, Town business owners, and Town staff. To-date, staff and the Committee have completed hazard identification, risk assessment, analysis of current mitigation efforts, and a review of other mitigation options. The final steps of the planning process will include a newsletter and survey to residents in the floodplain, prioritizing mitigation options, and development of an action plan.

New River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan

NRVPDC staff, in partnership with the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), has begun work on a New River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan. All local governments, colleges and universities, employers, non-profits, and private citizens have been invited to participate. FEMA will require an “all hazards” plan from each local government by November 1, 2003, for that government to be eligible for FEMA mitigation funding. The regional plan will meet this requirement. A mitigation plan must include analysis of each possible hazard, its likely impact (including place and dollar impact), mitigation options, and mitigation recommendations.

At the first meeting in June, the NRV Hazard Mitigation Planning Task Force decided to focus exclusively on natural hazards, as this meets FEMA’s requirement. Future phases may look beyond natural disasters to hazards such as terrorism when new organizational decisions and reports have been completed at the federal and state levels.

Regional Stormwater Management

NRVPDC staff participated in regional stormwater management meetings. The group is working toward a model stormwater ordinance and a model stormwater authority. With its new “small urban area” status, Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Montgomery County will have to meet new “MS4” Phase 2 requirements from the Environmental Protection Agency.

Pulaski County Water and Sewer Extension Project

NRVPDC staff has been assisting Pulaski County with securing funds to extend water and sewer lines to several communities throughout the County. The first project to be funded was announced in August. The Pulaski County Central Water and Sewer project will receive USDA Rural Development funding in the form of a \$1,687,000 grant and \$865,900 in low-

interest loans. This project will provide water and/or sewer service to 6 different mobile home parks consisting of over 400 families. The project is expected to begin construction in early Spring of 2003 and should be completed by late summer. Other projects include the Dublin Area Sewer Extension, consisting of over 250 families to be provided sewer service, and the Highland Park Sewer Extension, consisting of approximately 230 families. There are several more projects still in the planning phase.

Town of Pulaski Brownfield Resource Guide

NRVPDC staff began to develop a local Brownfield Resource Guide to assist the Town of Pulaski and others in understanding options concerning sites that have real or perceived contamination. The Town of Pulaski’s main brownfield, known as the “old Allied Chemical site” is a Superfund site. Furthermore, part of it is in the floodplain along Peak Creek. Theresa Kanter and Renee Sigmon, interns from the Virginia Water Resource Center, provided invaluable assistance to NRVPDC staff in this effort.

Town of Floyd

The Town of Floyd is interested in pursuing streetscaping improvements and a Town park. NRVPDC staff has provided preliminary guidance in identifying partners and funding sources.

Floyd County Subdivision Ordinance

The Floyd-Floyd County Planning Commission recommended tightening the Subdivision Ordinance in the County, since it is the principal land-use regulation in the County. Changes included increasing the minimum lot size to 2 acres when public water and sewer are not available and increasing width requirement for those lots to 250 feet. Furthermore, the new Ordinance specified that the residual parcel of any new subdivision was part of that subdivision, and therefore must be surveyed. The Floyd County Board of Supervisors adopted

the new Ordinance in December 2001. NRVPCD staff also worked with County staff to prepare a “checklist” for would be sub-dividers.

Blue Ridge Institute for Community

NRVPDC staff provided community development assistance to the Blue Ridge Institute for Community (BRIC), a new citizen group in Floyd County. BRIC seeks to encourage “Dialogue,” deliberate, respectful conversation in Floyd County to begin to bridge gaps between diverse groups. Several Dialogues were hosted on a variety of topics, including water issues in Floyd County. NRVPCD staff also participated in Dialogue facilitator training provided by BRIC.

VT KnowledgeWorks

In May 2002, the NRVPCD assisted Virginia Tech Foundation, Inc., in preparing a \$2 million EDA application for the implementation of Phase 1 of the \$5.8 million VT KnowledgeWorks project. This project will establish the VT KnowledgeWorks facility, a 45,450 square foot business accelerator, which will provide the region’s emerging companies and entrepreneurs with expert support from premier national level companies. VT KnowledgeWorks will promote the rapid commercialization of Tech’s intellectual property by creating start up companies and providing these portfolio companies with the mentoring and support services needed to become fully operational within six to twelve months.

New River Community Action Head Start

NRVPDC staff assisted the New River Valley Community Action Head Start program with writing a funding application to establish an Early Head Start program in the New River Valley. If funded, this new program will provide childcare in a learning environment to low income children between the ages of 6 months and 3 years. Funding through the United States Department of Health and Human Services has been made available for Early Head

Start classrooms throughout the United States. If funded, this program will set-up approximately 6 classrooms throughout the NRV and should be up and running by September 2003.



Head Start

New River Valley Education

NRVPDC staff hosted school superintendents and local government administrators in a facilitated session on a “well-educated, well-trained workforce.” A common concern was adequate funding for operations, capital needs, and especially technology. Priority potential regional projects included a regional alternative school (for students who do not fit the Standards of Learning mold).

Miscellaneous Grant-writing Assistance

NRVPDC staff assisted with various grant applications. Staff completed the New River Valley Free Clinic Relocation and Expansion Community Development Block Grant application. Montgomery County did receive funding for this project. Other grant work was completed for the Jacksonville Center and Floyd County.

Recycling Industrial Technical Assistance

This integrated solid waste management and innovative recycling technical assistance project has been operating within the NRVPCD since 1992, and continued to receive funding from a

variety of sources. Services include: direct on-site technical assistance, training workshops, waste audits, waste exchanges, information resources, and publications.

Transportation

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) allocates a portion of its State Planning and Research (SPR) funds, available under the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), to provide transportation planning assistance for non-urbanized portions of the State. VDOT delivers this assistance by partnering with Virginia's Planning District Commissions (PDCs). Annual funding agreements, which include specific scopes of work, are established between VDOT and each PDC.

Through this partnership with VDOT, the NRVPC maintains a rural transportation planning program. To facilitate the rural planning partnership with VDOT, the NRVPC established and provides staff support to the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) which meets 5 to 6 times each year. TAC includes representatives of local governments, regional bodies, and State institutions in the New River Valley, as well as VDOT.

TAC advises the NRVPC on transportation matters and serves as a forum for the discussion of regional transportation issues. TAC is responsible for drafting a rural transportation planning scope of work each year for recommendation to the NRVPC. TAC also annually drafts comments on regional highway and transportation needs for recommendation to the NRVPC and eventual presentation to the Commonwealth Transportation Board. TAC provides guidance and input to PDC staff responsible for carrying out project activities identified in the rural transportation planning

scope of work. Projects undertaken during FY 2002 included the following:

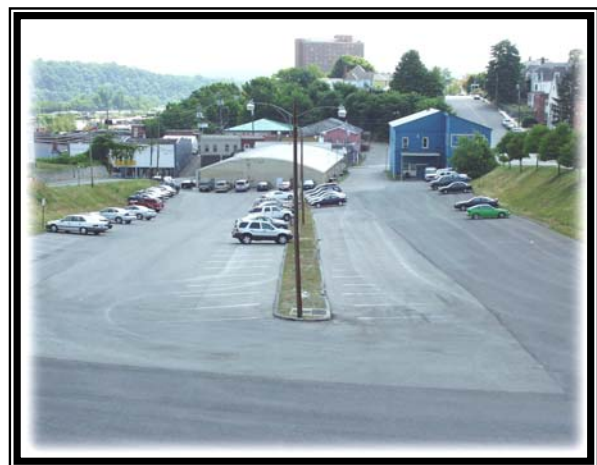
Franklin Pike Study - This project documented land use, traffic, and transportation facility conditions along the Franklin Pike corridor in Floyd County. The project report identifies issues and offers recommendations.

Park and Ride Study Phase 2 - The first phase of this project in FY 2001 identified several candidate locations for potential future development of park and ride lots in the New River Valley. Through this phase 2 effort, existing parcels were identified in the vicinity of some of the potential park and ride locations initially highlighted in the first phase.

Through this project, potential bikeway/walkway destinations/connections outside the City of Radford were identified to assist in planning of future trail projects.

Radford Transit Planning - This effort focused on development of service scenarios and associated costs.

Downtown Radford Parking Study - Through this study, the use and function of on-street and City-owned parking in three commercial areas was assessed.



Third Avenue Parking Lot, City of Radford

Administrative Operations

FY 2001 - 02 Commissioners

Floyd County
Fred Gerald, Chair
Evelyn Janney

Giles County
Howard Spencer
Leon Light

Montgomery County
Beth Hanson
Annette Perkins

Pulaski County
Joe Sheffey
Tom Owen

Radford City
Tom Starnes
Helen Harvey

Town of Blacksburg
John Randolph
A.T. Leighton
Michael Chandler

Town of Christiansburg
Scott Weaver
Brad Stipes, Vice Chair

Town of Floyd
Robert Shelor

Town of Narrows
Tom Garrett

Town of Pearisburg
Steve Stewart

Town of Pulaski
Charles Stewart
Leland Tucker

Town of Rich Creek
John Lovely

Radford University
David Burdette

Virginia Tech
J.B. Sutphin
John Phillips

FY 2001 - 02 Staff



Full Time

David Rundgren
Executive Director

Shirl Quesenberry
Administrative Assistant

Wayne Carpenter
Incubator Manager

Jan Reynolds
Information Systems
Manager

Janet McNew
Project Manager

Kim Alger
Office Manager

Lydeana Martin
Regional Planner

Shawn Utt
Regional Planner

Patrick Burton
Regional Planner

Shelia Smith
Regional Planner

Pat Therrien
Regional Planner

Phil Gilbertson
Senior Cartographer

Travis Elkins
Cartographer

Part Time

Holly Larson Lesko
Regional Planner

Nora Green
Intern

New River/Mount Rogers



Workforce Investment Board

Ronnie Martin
Executive Director

Clay Stein
Assistant Director

Missy Bray/Angela Alley
Executive Assistant

Marty Holliday
Program Planner

Bonnie Lawson
Administrative Assistant

**Statement of Revenues and Expenditures
Year Ended June 30, 2002**

	BUDGET	ACTUAL
REVENUES:		
Floyd County	9,327.00	9,327.00
Floyd Town	309.00	0.00
Giles County	8,713.00	8,713.00
Narrows Town	1,407.00	1,407.00
Pearisburg Town	1,526.00	1,526.00
Rich Creek Town	472.00	472.00
Montgomery County	20,510.00	20,510.00
Virginia Tech	5,767.00	5,767.00
Pulaski County	18,275.00	18,275.00
City of Radford	9,627.00	9,627.00
Radford University	1,907.00	1,907.00
Town of Christiansburg	11,792.00	11,792.00
Town of Blacksburg	18,798.00	18,798.00
Town of Pulaski	6,983.00	6,983.00
 Total Local Revenue	 115,413.00	 115,104.00
Interest Income	0.00	3,992.58
Contract Income	305,460.00	332,844.45
Miscellaneous Income	0.00	3,952.74
Revenue from the Commonwealth:		
DHCD Operating Grant	80,410.00	81,273.67
DHCD Competitiveness Grant	9,990.00	300,000.00
WIA	297,770.00	285,775.91
Virginia Department of Transportation	48,000.00	46,340.68
Revenue from the Federal Government:		
Appalachian Regional Commission	60,421.25	54,274.00
Economic Development Administration	52,000.00	52,000.00
 Total Other Revenue	 854,051.25	 1,160,454.03
 TOTAL REVENUES	 969,464.25	 1,275,558.03
EXPENDITURES		
Salaries	594,362.20	590,916.25
Benefits	166,409.92	165,245.63
Travel	40,959.20	35,447.10
Office Space	29,513.97	29,513.97
Telephone	6,266.74	5,119.18
Office Supplies	19,843.33	19,477.81
Postage	8,048.27	7,154.46
Printing/Copies/Plotting	29,968.76	24,344.07
Map Purchases	0.00	0.00
Media Adv.	4,575.78	3,979.48
Equip. Rent/Equip. Maint.	8,523.63	7,845.27
Dues & Pubs	5,882.01	5,186.81
Comm. Comp.	8,300.00	5,950.00
Insurance	9,036.00	11,287.00
Capital Outlay	22,657.27	18,000.35
Contract Serv.	24,504.38	26,152.63
Audit Fee	5,035.00	4,918.00
Misc.	8,818.69	11,875.50
Regional Competitiveness	0.00	300,977.49
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	992,705.15	1,273,391.00
RESERVES/FUND BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	133,641.44	133,641.44
RESERVES/FUND BALANCE AT END OF YEAR	110,400.54	135,808.47

New River Valley Planning District Commission Staff



Seated: Clay Stein, Ronnie Martin, Marty Holliday, Janet McNew, Lydeana Martin
2nd row: Jan Reynolds, Shirl Quesenberry, Bonnie Lawson, Shelia Smith, Angela Alley, Holly Lesko
3rd row: David Rundgren, Wayne Carpenter, Shawn Utt, Patrick Burton, Kim Alger, Phil Gilbertson



6580 Valley Center Drive, Box 21
Radford, VA 24141

Phone: (540) 639-9313 FAX: (540) 831-6093
nrvpdc@nrvdc.org
www.nrvpdc.org