



FY 2006-2007

*Annual Report*

NEW RIVER VALLEY  
PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION



# Virginia's New River Valley



## New River Valley Planning District Commission

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# Executive Director's Report

*Dear Commissioners and Regional Citizens,*

Fiscal Year 2007 was a year with many projects moving toward implementation while others are emerging.

## **Economic Development**

While plant closings and downsizing have continued during the year, there are several exciting initiatives moving ahead. Pulaski Town and County are providing regional leadership to evaluate the opportunities for the region to develop a nanotechnology cluster as a major economic component in the regional economy. The components that support the optimism for success in these efforts include a major provider company of magnetic nano particles, a number of nanotechnology companies throughout the region working on products and pollution prevention projects, and the universal nature to which companies are exploring the benefits of incorporating nanotechnology in their products and manufacturing processes. The success of these efforts will allow the region to leap into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century economy as a strong leader in nanotechnology.

Economic Development Administration funding is being sought to assist the Corporate Research Center with infrastructure funding to support the expansion of the Center by some 90 acres. Also, to support the Commerce Park Participation Committee in meeting its goal to expand its 100,000 gpd water and sewer availability to 1,000,000 gpd.

The Commission has been working hard on developing asset based tourism infrastructure. This year the Commission completed the New River Trail Extension Feasibility Study which examines the benefits and drawbacks of various trail corridors that would extend the New River Trail State Park in the Town of Pulaski to the Huckleberry Trail in Christiansburg. The first phase of the trail was selected to receive transportation enhancement funds to link from the proposed national cemetery in the Town of Dublin to Randolph Park in Pulaski County. Other asset based tourism efforts are gaining

momentum like the development of the Wilderness Road Trail, 'Round the Mountain, and the Crooked Road.

## **Regional Broadband Deployment**

One of the major infrastructure items required for 21<sup>st</sup> Century economy is the availability of broadband services. The deployment of such a service has been in the planning stages for the past several years. This is one of the areas that it is desirable for the public and private sectors to work in partnership. The Economic Development Administration has an application under review for \$2,500,000 of support for construction of the basic fiber network which will support a governmental network to increase governmental services and provide the private sector access to fiber infrastructure to expand the broadband services that they can deliver to businesses and individuals.

## **Sharing of Water Resources**

The regional water supply planning has identified the ability to share water among jurisdictions as one of the major needs in the region to increase supplies and reliability. Radford City and Pulaski County are working on a project which is a start in the needed direction.

## **State Implementation of Land Use and Transportation Planning**

On July 1, 2007 the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the localities in the New River Valley began the implementation of Section 15.2-2222.1 of the State Code requiring coordination of transportation and land use planning. The localities will need to provide VDOT with copies of comprehensive plan amendments, zoning and subdivision regulation changes and site plan reviews. Proposals, meeting certain threshold requirements, will require a traffic impact analysis to be prepared by a certified engineer.

## **Cooperation and Excitement**

Green infrastructure is a term to describe a planning approach recognizing and linking environmental and cultural resources, community and economic development in ways to achieve healthy communities. It recognizes that natural resources – air,

land (open spaces/working farms/greenways/trails), and water – are equal in value to the built infrastructure in a community.

By integrating Green Infrastructure planning, localities will have a basis to accommodate future growth and maintain those landscape characteristics that are important. Historically, state agencies have created many excellent management plans identifying priority lands, and provided data and the science to support important land use decisions. Unfortunately, most of these plans were created in isolation from the other ongoing planning projects such as economic development and transportation. Plans that do not strategically integrate the "Gray" with the "Green" will be unsuccessful in their implementation. Of equal concern, communications between state and local officials are often lacking; resulting in plans that do not consider the importance of local political concerns, community issues and other social factors that will ultimately determine if a plan is implemented locally.

The coordination of this initiative has highlighted how PDCs can function as the mechanism between state and local planning interests to be more effective and efficient with resources and give overall focus to a wide range of planning efforts in the region. We have seen a growing interest among Virginia's natural resource agencies, regional and local governments, and community groups to develop a process to facilitate Green Infrastructure planning. The process developed through this initiative will help to eliminate the duplication of efforts and provide the state with a model to integrate government and non-government planning. The following report provides additional information on the programs of the Commission. Please visit [www.nrvpdc.org](http://www.nrvpdc.org).

Sincerely,

*David W. Rundgren*  
Executive Director

## Regional Cooperation

### **Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facility Authority**

Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facility Authority's first project is the creation of the New River Valley Commerce Park. The work of the Commerce Park Participation Committee is reviewed in another section of this report.

The Authority continues to seek quality economic development opportunities which create local benefits through joint projects.

During FY 07 the Authority authorized the participants in the telecommunications plan to create a Participation Committee. The development of this Committee, in addition to involving local governments, will establish the public/private partnership desired in the implementation of the Community Broadband Network Project. An application for 2.5 million dollars has been filed with the Economic Development Administration.

### **Emerging Regional Cooperative Efforts**

State and local cooperation and coordination appears to be an emerging trend. Communications interoperability, water supply, stormwater management, transportation, and land use are all appearing more often on agendas with the focus of inter-jurisdictional cooperation.

The calls for cooperation are also becoming more detailed. Cooperation in specialized services and emergency events have surfaced across the region. The coordination

and cooperation are expanding in context as well. In the area of emergency preparedness, tourism, and natural resources, there are many relationships beginning to emerge.

### **Vision 2020: Putting Community First**

The NRVPC continues to monitor progress on the region's Vision 2020 strategic plan, *Community First*. Several regional initiatives in the areas of telecommunications, regional housing assessment, and cooperative regional governmental forums have begun under the impetus of this vision. Greater connections between and among governments, the non-profits, and grassroots community groups can also be attributed to efforts under the regional *Community First* umbrella.

#### Administrator's Forum

The Commission continues to organize meetings of city and town managers, and county administrators. The participant list has been expanded to include Craig, Bland, Carroll, and Wythe Counties and the Town of Wytheville. Meeting agendas include time for sharing, review of regional projects, and consideration of state and federal programs. The Administrator's Forum also meets semi-annually with a similar group of administrators and managers from the Roanoke Valley.

#### NRV Planner's Forum

The NRVPC supports communication and training between local government planning departments by coordinating a Regional Planning Forum. The Regional Planning Forum meets bi-monthly at a rotating host community to discuss the latest issues concerning planning in the region. The Planner's Forum has


made it their goal to provide at least one training session annually open to all Planning Commission members in the region. The NRVPC hosted the first training session on March 1<sup>st</sup> of 2007.

The session consisted of three local government attorneys and one citizen planning educator. The topics of presentations ranged from general planning commission orientation to handling conflicts of interest. The session was well attended with close to 70 Planning Commissioners. Plans are underway to hold another training session in March of 2008.

### **'Round the Mountain**

Southwest Virginia's Artisan Network, 'Round the Mountain, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote sustainable economic development of the region's communities by assisting local artisans with marketing, educational, and entrepreneurial opportunities. The PDC serves on the Board of Directors for the organization. During the past year, the PDC assisted with creating a model trail network and provided guidance in developing the website.

### **New River Valley HOME Consortium**

 Under the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the HOME program provides an opportunity for localities to plan for and address housing needs on a regional basis. As of July 1, 2007, the New River Valley HOME Consortium, which comprises the counties of Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski, the City of Radford, and the Towns of Pulaski, Blacksburg, Christiansburg, and Pearisburg, had submitted their Consolidated Plan and was able to draw down funds

allotted by the HOME program. As a consortium, these localities were able to leverage over \$800,000 to support HOME activities. The HOME Consortium has designated down payment assistance, homeowner rehabilitation, and other homebuyer activities as top funding priorities.

## Economic Development

### **New River Valley Development Corporation**

The Development Corporation is chartered to be an economic development organization and continues to seek opportunities to be a force in developing economic initiatives throughout the NRV. The Corporation's staff remained active in economic development activities during the year. The Corporation's 501(c)3 status was used to apply for grants from Rural Development for a regional water study project, Business Technical Assistance and Revolving Loan program.

Keeping in line with the Corporation's mission, they have continued to provide technical assistance at the Competitiveness Center to businesses owners and entrepreneurs in developing long-term business goals and plans, counseling with respect to market opportunities and access to business financing, assisting in the utilization of technology to expand or transition markets, and provide coordination between entrepreneurs, the region's incubators, and other business development resources located within the New River Valley.

The Center opened its fiscal year with a 95 percent occupancy rate. In January 2007, the Center

graduated four incubator tenants and helped two other expanding companies relocate within the New River Valley. Trenia b and Company, Woodworks Restoration, Austin-Morgan Trucking, and Lurleen Collins Services located to the City of Radford, while Staff Contracting, Inc relocated to Pulaski County and Aspen Investment Advisors moved their operations to Blacksburg, VA. Graduation is a wonderful accomplishment for these companies and a testament for the Center's programs. However, their success left the Center with over 6,200 square feet of manufacturing and office space available to market.

The following report presents the highlights of the past year.

### **New River Valley Competitiveness Center**

The Competitiveness Center is a small business incubator located in the Fairlawn section of Pulaski County. It provides approximately 35,000 square feet of space for rent



to entrepreneurs and regional economic development groups. The Center opened in 1999 and added a second phase in 2003. In addition to the leaseable space, there is approximately 20,000 square feet of common areas, support space and meeting rooms.

Tenants in the Competitiveness Center receive value added services and amenities to help grow and transition their businesses. Amenities and services include: receptionist services, postal service, Fed Ex discount program, utilities, internet access, digital telephone service, use of office equipment including laser printers, meeting

rooms, business assistance with business, marketing, and financial planning. Currently, there are 13 business incubator tenants and 8 regional tenants in the facility.

The following new tenants expanded their business within the Competitiveness Center in fiscal year 2007.

### **Ground Vibration Consultants**

Ground Vibration Consultants, Inc. has been in continuous operation since its founding by Bobby Payne in 2000. They provide pre-blast and post-blast surveys, vibration monitoring programs, special vibration studies and seminars. Over the years, they have effectively met the vibration monitoring and analysis needs of numerous mines, quarries, construction companies, local, state and federal agencies and insurance carriers. From inception, their single-minded goal has been to provide the entire blasting industry with independent, professional, problem-solving, state-of-the-art monitoring equipment, software, data analysis services and training. The company has refocused and has acquired approximately 950 square feet of office and storage space.

### **Hall and Sons Developers, Inc.**

Hall and Sons Developers moved into the Center in January 2006, occupying a small office with expectations of needing more space. On May 1, 2006 they expanded into an adjoining office and added two employees. In June 2007, Hall and Sons moved into new offices more than doubling the space the business occupies in the Center. Hall and Sons credits the move to continuing growth of business. The company now occupies approximately 500 square feet in four offices.

Hall and Sons is developing approximately 23 acres in the Pulaski County Technology Park.

Their first construction, a custom restaurant complete with a microbrewery, should be operational by year's end. The developers have cleared the land, are constructing a building, and planning additional commercial projects.

### **ServiceMaster Janitorial Service**

Adam Thompson opened this franchise in September 2005 to provide janitorial service to businesses throughout Southwest Virginia. They leased a 110 square foot space to begin service October 1, 2005. They added a 322 square foot storage space in October of 2006 and converted an existing 110 square foot storage space into an office.

### **Mobile Medical Diagnostic Services of New River Valley, LLC**

Leigh-Anne Cumbee, Executive Vice President and Manager of MMDS has a mobile x-ray operation. The company has vans with mobile x-ray units, which are transported to a patient's site for processing the x-rays that are capable of transmitting images digitally to radiologists for remote reading. MMDS continues to grow new accounts in the NRV and Roanoke areas. MMDS has moved their office from room 317 to 327, a 249 square foot space.

### **Revolving Loan Fund Recipients**

**Woodworks Restoration.** Ed Dixon, owner of Woodworks Restoration continues to expand business opportunities in the remodeling of historical buildings. To keep the business on track and continue to grow the business, he increased the quality services to clients in order to help them maximize the return on their investment.

The company received operational funding through the Revolving Loan Fund Program administered by the Development Corporation.

### **Special Programs and Marketing**

The Center continues to rent room space to the **Partners for Self-Sufficiency** Job Readiness program. Additionally, meeting space is available for non-profits, profits, and regional tenants. The meetings on site expose the Center, aid in identifying new entrepreneurs, introduce services, and generate additional revenue.

The Competitiveness Center hosted planning meetings for the fourth Fall Job Fair presented by the **Partners for Self-**

**Sufficiency.** This group is composed of the Social Service Agencies, NRCC, NRVDC, NRVPDC and VDBA. The job fair was held March 30, 2007 and more than 400 job seekers attended.

### **New River Valley Commerce Park**

The economic development world has changed during the last five years and the Commerce Park Participation Committee is keeping pace with the changes. The Commerce Park is a joint economic development location which was not affordable by individual local governments. It was envisioned as a premiere location for computer chip manufacturing or other high end computer based manufacturing which required space, high investments in machinery and the tools of production, quality water supplies, and potentially international travel and shipping. The Commerce Park includes nearly 900 acres, is immediately adjacent to the New River Valley International Airport where US Customs is providing Port of Entry Services and is in a suitable location

with low potential for natural disaster interruption of business.

The eleven member Participation Committee has elected Chris McKlarney, Giles County representative, as its Chairman and Clay Goodman, Montgomery County representative, as Vice Chairman.



Mr. McKlarney and Mr. Goodman are leading the Committee's effort to establish an action plan to jointly take advantage of the changing world economy and emerging industrial sectors for the enhancement of the economy in *Virginia's* First Region. The localities who jointly invested in the future include the Counties of Bland, Craig, Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski, and Roanoke, the Cities of Radford and Roanoke, and the Towns of Dublin, Pearisburg, and Pulaski.

### **Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy**

The Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy is updated annually by the PDC staff and reported to the Economic Development Administration and the Appalachian Regional Commission. The goals and strategies as outlined in the CEDS for 2006-2007 includes leadership, education and training, human resources, natural and cultural environments, economic development, and physical infrastructure. The Commission

provides leadership in the development and updating of the CEDS, however, the strategy is a document of the region and partner organizations as illustrated below.



The NRVPC CEDS report reflects information provided by the local governments, as well as regional projects being sought by multi-jurisdictions. While project types link the project to the CEDS Goals and Strategies, there are other important factors and criteria in ranking of individual projects. This year the criteria included investment relationship, regional participation, unemployment of the locality, relationship to public investment and previous investments, readiness to initiate projects, and participation of a public/private partnership. Level 1 priority projects included water, sewer, and communications, as well as entrepreneurial small business assistance, local school & educational facilities, employment creation and retention of technology and industry, roads, and technology career facilities.

### Town of Floyd Downtown Revitalization

In June of 2006, the Town of Floyd received a \$1,000,000 Community

Development Block Grant from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development. A portion of grant funds, coupled with investments from the Town and

private sources will be used for improving the downtown area including over 12 facades. The idea behind the façade improvements is to restore the storefronts to their original condition. Architectural elements such as balconies, awnings, and cornices will be enhanced.

The Town is also using the grant funds to operate a revolving loan fund. These funds assist small business owners in job creation. Overall, the Town will see an increase in local workers as a result of this program. Examples of businesses who have benefited from this program include a restaurant and art gallery.

Public enhancements include the installation of public restrooms, creation of public park space, and an increase in downtown parking. The improvements will make the downtown area inviting and accessible to residents and visitors alike.



Drawing produced by Hill Studio. Image represents artistic rendering, not actual work elements.

## Human Services



### Housing Partnership of the New River Valley

The Housing Partnership continues to serve as a forum for housing providers and service providers to discuss housing issues and opportunities in the region. The Partnership met on a monthly basis to discuss availability of services to those who are homeless or who are endangered of becoming homeless. Critical challenges facing the group include access to funds for service, reaching the clients who are most in need, and educating the public about rural homelessness and poverty issues.

### City of Radford CDBG

The NRVPC staff continued to assist the City of Radford with the administration of their Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Projects funded with CDBG funds in Radford include housing rehabilitation, site revitalization, and youth training. Over a two year period, more than 100 City residents have benefited from the CDBG program. The City looks forward to the fourth year of this program beginning July 2007.

### New River Valley Disability Services Board

The NRVPC continues to serve as staff support to the New River Valley Disability Services board (NRVDSB). The NRVDSB is working to meet the goals and objectives outlined in the Needs Assessment completed in 2006. Staff support worked with New River Senior Services (regional

transportation provider for the disabled) and localities to secure funding for FY 2006-2007 to improve the transportation needs in the region. The NRVDSB participated in Real World Day at Radford University on October 26, 2006. The DSB set up a table at the event and used the day as an opportunity to discuss the issues the Board confronts. Staff worked to monitor recipients of 2006-2007 RSIF grant funds to ensure that outcomes and objectives were being met.

### **Partners for Self-Sufficiency**

For the past seven years, Partners for Self-Sufficiency (PSS), comprised of the five Department of Social Services in the New River Valley, has worked diligently to aide those with multiple barriers to employment. The Virginia Department of Social Services will continue to support this collaborative program, entitled the Partners for the Advancement of Competitive Employment (PACE), with grant funding through November 2007. The current PACE program uses a regional employment placement, retention, and advancement model to access and build community resources and partnerships with the goal of helping individuals and families achieve self sufficiency. This program offers a team-based, tiered approach that provides wrap around services to address employment barriers and service needs. The PSS continues to improve the program model so that they may expand their network of employers and human service providers and increase their capacity to help. The PSS recently submitted a proposal to renew its funding.

The participants in this program face multiple barriers to employment, many of which involve their families and life situations. Whether the client needs help with interviewing and basic job

skills, identifying the type of job they would like to pursue, or raising their self-esteem, this program offers a myriad of individualized services. The program serves Virginia Initiative for Employment Not Welfare (VIEW) participants by preparing them for entry-level positions with employers who offer benefit packages, greater job security, and some potential for upgrading skills. PACE Program services spans the entire process of moving TANF participants from public assistance to self-sufficiency, including job and community resource development, comprehensive assessment, barrier-alleviation, job readiness, job search, job follow-up, job retention and advancement services. PSS also helps disabled participants through the SSI/SSDI application process and helps local agencies better evaluate these TANF recipients. All of these support services better educate the community and allow participants access to the resources they need for gaining self sufficiency.

The Virginia Tech Institute for Policy and Governance (VTIPG) is a key community partner in the PACE program. The VTIPG offers technical and project management support through its team of Vocational Specialist, Project Coordinator, and other research staff. In addition to the formal partnership created by the PSS collaborators, there are many informal partnerships that further the PACE Program goals. New River Community College, New River Valley Community Services, NRV Mental Health Association, Carilion Health Network, HCA Health Network, and many regional employers provide the training and services participants in this program need to lift barriers so that they may enter, succeed, advance in the workplace.

## **New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board (WIB)**

The following is a summary of the PY'06-07 program year:

### Regional Coordination

In an effort to enhance Regional Coordination, the New River / Mount Rogers WIB has been partnering with the Roanoke Area WIB and the Christiansburg Institute to establish trade classes on the campus of the Christiansburg Institute to not only meet the training needs of their clients, but to also meet the skills training needs of regional employers.

### Special Projects

Utilizing Incentive Funds, the WIB partnered with the New River Community College's Middle College Program and Goodwill Industries of the Valleys to fund a special project called "Middle College Bridge". This collaborative project was designed to educate "at-risk" youth about the importance of postsecondary education and/or skills training by directly counseling with youth by publishing a brochure and producing a public service commercial to be aired on channels directed at the youth audience. Their goal was to serve 40 youth in the Middle College Bridge Project with 90% transitioning into postsecondary skills training.

Also utilizing \$15,000 of Incentive Funds, the New River / Mount Rogers WIB in partnership with Virginia Highlands Community College, Wytheville Community College, Mount Rogers Regional Adult Education Program and the Virginia Tobacco Commission, shared in funding a \$135,000 program to transition GED recipients into postsecondary

education. The program will focus on the importance to the economic prospects of less educated adults and to employers seeking skilled workers of transition from adult basic education (ABE) to Community College certificate and degree programs and will implement strategies that successfully promote such transitions. The program will also include collection and analysis of outcome measures and postsecondary program enrollment retention and completion data for students who transition from ABE. During the first year, a minimum of 15 students will be served at each of the two community colleges.

#### Job Fairs PY 06

**NRV Job Fair Expo - Fall**  
Wednesday, October 18, 2006  
Held at the Event Center in Christiansburg with over 60 employers and over 200 job seekers served

Partners: Career Pathways, DRS, Partners for Self Sufficiency (the 5 NRV DSS offices), NRCC, NRCC Workforce Development, NRV Competitiveness Center, NRVPCD, NR/MR WIB, VEC, and Virginia Department of Business Assistance

**NRV Job Fair Expo – Spring**  
Friday, March 30, 2007  
Held at NRCC in Dublin with over 70 employers and over 300 job seekers served

Partners: Career Pathways, DRS, Partners for Self Sufficiency (the 5 NRV DSS offices), NRCC, NRCC Workforce Development, NRV Competitiveness Center, NRVPCD, NR/MR WIB, VEC, and Virginia Department of Business Assistance

**Wytheville Job Fair**  
Friday, April 13 and Saturday April 14, 2007  
Held at the Wytheville Meeting Center in Wytheville with over 50

employers and over 300 job seekers served

Partners: Joint Industrial Authority, NR/MR WIB, Bland & Wythe DSS, Wythe/Bland/Wytheville Chamber of Commerce, Wythe Manufacturing Council, WCC, VEC, and Virginia Department of Business Assistance

#### Community Roundtable Meetings

During the last program year, the WIB Executive Committee started a series of Community Roundtable meetings to be held in the following groupings of jurisdictions: Carroll County, Grayson County and Galax City; New River Valley; Washington County and Bristol City; Smyth County, Wythe County and Bland County.

The purpose of the meetings was to bring local elected officials, education representatives, economic development representatives, service organizations, area business leaders and other interested parties to the table to speak to the Executive Committee concerning local workforce issues and needs as well as how the Workforce Investment Board might be of assistance in meeting those needs.

During the last program year, Community Roundtable meetings were held in the first two groupings of jurisdictions, with the remaining two to be held during this program year. Response from local representatives has been very positive and both meetings were well attended.

#### Collaborative Grant Application

As a result of the Community Roundtable meeting held in Carroll County, Grayson County and Galax City, the New River / Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board, in collaboration with the 13 school

superintendents in WIA 2, has started the process of applying for funds under the Governor's Discretionary Grant to pay for Career Readiness Certificate testing for high school seniors that are in vocational programs, at the high school, and plan to enter the workforce upon high school graduation. It is envisioned that this will be of great benefit to the students and will assist them in their job search efforts. The benefit of the CRC Certificate has been and continues to be heavily marketed to the business community in WIA 2.

#### Incentive Award

The WIB was awarded \$50,000 in Incentive Funds by the Virginia Workforce Council for achieving exemplary program performance for the last program year.

#### Rapid Response Funding

The WIB requested and received \$309,431 to provide training and services to displaced workers from multiple employers in WIA 2 through June 2007. As a result, 231 displaced workers had been served with 206 still active and 25 exited. All 25 exited have been placed in unsubsidized employment with an average placement wage of \$11.00 per hour.

The Workforce Investment Board's performance standards are listed on the following page.

Performance

During the period July 1, 2006 to June 30, 2007, the Workforce Investment Board achieved the following performance standards.

<u>Performance Standard</u>	<b>PY'06 Negotiated Level</b>	<b>PY'06 Actual Performance</b>
Adults Entered Employment Rate	76.0	82.4
Adult Retention Rate for 6 Months	82.0	82.4
Adult Average Earnings Change in 6 Months	\$7,000	\$7,633
Adult Employment and Credential Rate	63.7	62.6
Dislocated Worker Entered Employment Rate	81.0	87.5
Dislocated Worker Employment Retention Rate at 6 Months	87.8	85.4
Dislocated Worker Earning Change in 6 Months	\$12,000	\$11,326
Dislocated Worker Employment and Credential Rate	61.7	76.5
Older Youth Entered Employment Rate	70.4	74.4
Older Youth Employment Retention Rate	81.1	88.6
Older Youth Average Earnings Change in 6 Months	\$1,850	\$2,914
Older Youth Credential Rate	38.0	69.6
Younger Youth Skill Attainment Rate	84.0	94.4
Younger Youth Diploma or Equivalent Attainment	64.2	77.8
Younger Youth Retention Rate	56.1	75.6

Adult/Dislocated Workers Served - 486  
Funds Expended - \$1,200,000

Youth Customers Served – 374  
Funds Expended - \$762,896

### **Pulaski County Comprehensive Plan**

The NRVPC is assisting Pulaski County in the update to their Comprehensive Plan. The County is divided into five planning areas and the effort during 2006-2007 focused on the Northeast planning area of the County with adoption slated for early fall 2007. Also during 2006-2007, the PDC worked with the Pulaski County Planning Commission on the North and South Planning Areas. The North Planning area is scheduled for public hearings late fall/early winter of 2007, while the South Planning Area will proceed in early 2008. Only two planning areas remain-Draper and Central. Both will be examined during 2007-2008 with the intention to complete the Comprehensive Plan update by June 2008.

### **Pearisburg Comprehensive Plan**

The NRVPC is assisting the Town of Pearisburg with the update to their Comprehensive Plan. The planning process kicked-off in the fall of 2006 with the Town Council and Planning Commission holding a joint input session. Since that time several input sessions were held to gather community insight towards the future of the Town. Drafts of the Plan were delivered to the Planning Commission for review in September. The Public Hearing process is anticipated for late fall/early winter of 2007.

### **Pembroke Comprehensive Plan**

The NRVPC worked closely with the Town of Pembroke Planning Commission to update their Comprehensive Plan during 2006-2007. The Pembroke Plan is unique because the Town includes the Hazard Mitigation Plan and ultimately provides a wealth of information. The Planning Commission will hold a joint public hearing with the Town Council to consider adoption of the Plan at the Council's regularly scheduled meeting in November 2007.

### **Rich Creek Comprehensive Plan**

In November 2006 the NRVPC began working with the Town of Rich Creek Planning Commission and their staff to update their Comprehensive Plan. Following several Plan development meetings with their Planning Commission, the Town will receive drafts of the Comprehensive Plan for review in November. Highlights for their Plan update include downtown revitalization along with identification of growth potential and working with the Town of Glen Lyn on connecting wastewater treatment systems.

### **Town of Floyd Zoning Ordinance Update**

The Town of Floyd is undergoing several changes due to recent investments from state and federal programs. As a compliment to the work being completed, the NRVPC is working with the Town to update their Zoning Ordinance. Their existing ordinance was adopted in 1987, and since that time numerous changes have occurred in zoning practices. Most notably the Town

revised the Sign Chapter of the ordinance to promote a unified streetscape in downtown. The zoning ordinance is scheduled for completion in the winter of 2008.

### **Local Emergency Planning Committee**

The NRVPC serve as staff to the Montgomery/Blacksburg Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), and participates in Pulaski County's LEPC. For the Montgomery County/Blacksburg LEPC, staff collected and disseminated the SARA Title III Tier II inventory reports for those businesses obligated to make hazardous material data available to the public. The LEPC continues to broaden its partnerships to include industries, citizens, and local emergency response staff. Recent efforts to this end include direct mailing invitations to potential participants and ensuring an educational speaker for each meeting.

Pulaski County LEPC held a tabletop training exercise in August 2007 at the NRV Medical Center in Montgomery County. The exercise was based on a flooding event in the Town of Pulaski affecting government and emergency response facilities. The LEPC will be disseminating critiques from the exercise to the numerous emergency responders who participated and observed the training session.

### **Giles County Water Service Extension**

The regional water system serving Giles County and the five towns within the County continues to expand its reach throughout the County. Giles County officials have completed the planning stages of a water line extension planned

for the Route 100 South corridor, just south of Pearisburg. The PDC partnered with Giles County officials to meet all of DHCD's 90-day criteria, as well as Rural Development's Letter of Conditions. The subdivisions of Oney and Mutter, which have been operating on private, spring-fed water systems for over 30 years, will be connected to the County's public water supply. A recent drought has shown that these springs are in danger of not being able to reliably provide enough water to all 106 households in the project area. Construction is expected to begin in the fall of 2007.

### **NRV Freight Study**

The Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) of Blacksburg, Christiansburg, and Montgomery County asked the NRVPC to analyze freight movements in the MPO area. The NRVPC obtained freight data from VDOT pertaining to rail, truck, and air to prepare a report identifying the major corridors for transporting freight. The report also details freight volumes, commodities, value, and origination/destination.

### **NRV Water Source Study**



In cooperation with the New River Valley Development Corporation, the NRVPC has led a

series of regional water source studies. Year one (2003-2004) examined the physical and financial feasibility of interconnecting public water systems among the New River Valley. Year two (2004-2005) examined providing water to largely un-served areas such as Floyd County and southern Pulaski County. Year three (2005-2006), provided an opportunity to conduct

an extensive engineering analysis. A consortium of three engineering firms performed a region-wide analysis; Anderson and Associates, Draper-Aden, and Thompson-Litton. The engineering study provided detail on the types of interconnections required to move water across the region between providers. During year four (2006-2007) more focused engineering reports examined the City of Radford providing water to the Commerce Park and areas south of Claytor Lake, both in Pulaski County. Agreements are in place to broker water between the City of Radford and Pulaski County.

### **NRV Water Supply Planning**

The State Code of Virginia (9 VAC 25-780) requires local governments to prepare and submit a water supply plan to the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) by the year 2011 (deadline determined by population/regional plan). The first half of the Water Supply Plan regulation requires extensive data collection pertaining to existing water source (treatment capacity), existing water use (demand), and existing resource information (natural resources). The second half of the regulation requires water demand projections 30 to 50 years into the future, a statement of community needs/alternatives, a conservation management statement, and a drought response plan.

In an attempt to meet the regulations in the most efficient manner, the Planning District Commission coordinated a funding request to DEQ on behalf of thirteen New River Valley governments. The Commission was successful in obtaining two cycles of funding from DEQ with support from USDA-Rural Development. Considering the success in funding,

the plan participants are only required to provide an in-kind match.

The New River Valley Water Supply Plan Draft is currently available via the NRVPC website and is scheduled for a preliminary review by DEQ staff in October 2007. Local governments will review the document beginning in November 2007, four years ahead of the 2011 deadline.

### **New River Valley Community Broadband Network Plan**

For the previous three years, the Commission's Telecommunications Committee has received funding to detail the implementation of the NRV community broadband network plan. With the planning complete and the need for increased telecommunications services on the rise, the planning is beginning to manifest into a potential construction project of 60-miles of fiber optic cable, providing the backbone of a government network, while interconnecting between networks in Southside and Southwestern Virginia, bridging the critical broadband gap that exists in the New River Valley.

Once constructed, the network will allow for the development of a government network, interconnecting local government operations and schools systems to a state of the art broadband network at a reduced cost with increased services. In addition, through a private-public partnership, the business plan allows for the leasing of broadband infrastructure to private enterprise in order to increase telecommunications services in the New River Valley.

## **Pulaski County Water and Sewer Projects**

The Pulaski County PSA has been awarded funding to construct water and sewer service extensions. This funding package includes three grants and loans totaling over \$6.5 million from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Office of Rural Development. With these funds, the PSA plans to serve 353 households with clean water and 827 households with public sewer service.

The first of these projects, which will extend water and sewer service to five mobile home parks in the County, is the Pulaski Central Water and Sewer project. This is one of the largest projects, both in terms of funding and connections.

Construction of water and sewer infrastructure has been completed in the Polyester Mobile Home Park in the Fairlawn area. Engineering designs are being completed for the remaining four parks, with construction work to be bid in November/December 2007.

The other two projects will extend the public sewer infrastructure to serve four subdivisions in the Dublin area of the County. The neighborhoods that will benefit from this extension of sewer services are Orchard Hills, Vista, Rolling Hills, and Highland Park. The Planning District Commission staff is currently in the final stages of gathering easements from the property owners to allow for the routing of the sewer lines through these neighborhoods. It is expected that construction of these projects will begin in the spring of 2008.

## **Glen Lyn Housing Rehabilitation Project**

The Town of Glen Lyn was awarded a \$500,000 grant from the

Department of Housing and Community Development in January of 2005 for the rehabilitation and reconstruction of 14 houses within the Town. To date, four houses have had significant rehabilitation work completed, one house has been built as a "relocation house" for project participants, one house has been demolished and replaced by a new home which is nearing completion. Another rehabilitation project has been through the bidding process with construction to begin in September 2007. Phase II will begin in November of 2007 with another round of rehabilitations taking place.

## **Transportation**

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) allocates a portion of its State Planning and Research (SPR) funds, available through the Safe, Accountable, Flexible Transportation Equity Act (SAFTEA-LU), to provide transportation planning assistance for rural areas of the State. In VDOT's program guidelines, rural areas are defined as those "outside the metropolitan study area boundaries approved by metropolitan planning organizations under Section 134 of Title 23, United States Code." VDOT delivers this planning assistance by partnering with Virginia's Planning District Commissions (PDCs). Through this partnership, PDCs assist VDOT in meeting State Planning Process requirements for rural, non-metropolitan areas. Annual funding agreements, which include specific scopes of work, are established between VDOT and each PDC.

Funding support from VDOT enables the NRVPC to maintain a

rural transportation planning effort. To facilitate the rural planning partnership with VDOT, the NRVPC provides staff support to the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) which meets 5 to 6 times each year. The TAC includes representatives of local governments, regional bodies, and State institutions in the New River Valley, as well as representatives of VDOT. The TAC advises the NRVPC on transportation matters and serves as a forum for discussion of regional transportation issues. The TAC is responsible for drafting a rural transportation planning scope of work each year for recommendation to the NRVPC. The TAC also annually drafts comments on regional highway and transportation needs for recommendation to the NRVPC and eventual presentation to the Commonwealth Transportation Board. The TAC provides guidance and input to PDC staff responsible for carrying out project activities identified in the rural transportation planning scope of work.

This year the PDC began the first of a four phase effort to create a Long Range Transportation Plan. In July of 2006 the New River Valley Planning District Commission joined with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) in a Statewide initiative to develop regional transportation plans for rural areas which are intended to complement the transportation plans which are required for the metropolitan areas of the State. The purpose of the plans is to provide an evaluation of the transportation system in rural areas. Together with land use information, local desires and goals, the plans will present a range of transportation improvements to provide for the effective, safe, and efficient movement of people and goods.

The plan is to envision the next 20 years, regional development, population change, and employment growth as they impact the transportation system. The Rural Long Range Transportation Plans will be the subject of a continuous, comprehensive, and coordinated process which addresses the needs of the federally classified routes of minor collector and above.

Four phases of the planning process have been identified by VDOT: Phase I Goals and Data Collection; Phase II Analysis and Problem Identification; Phase III Public Outreach and Recommendation Development; Phase IV Public Endorsement and Regional Adoption. It is envisioned that each of the phases will require approximately a year to address.

### **Trails, Greenways, and Bicycle/Pedestrian Facilities**

A final feasibility study detailed locations, challenges, cost, etc. to build trails that would link the communities of Blacksburg/Christiansburg/Radford/Dublin/Pulaski. The report can be found at [www.nrvpdc.org/transportation/alternativetrans.html](http://www.nrvpdc.org/transportation/alternativetrans.html). The Commission has been working closely with the Department of Recreation to work out right of way issues with NS Railroad on the proposed routes.

This year the regional Bikeway-Walkway working group of the Transportation Advisory Committee of the Rural Planning Organization worked on developing a regional Bikeway-Walkway Policy for the New River Valley and worked with localities to appoint citizen representatives to the Committee. This group consists of members from local government, local bike/pedestrian advocacy groups, state agencies and other institutions like

Radford University and Virginia Tech. The primary purpose of this group is to address regional bike and pedestrian safety issues, communicate trail development efforts within local communities, provide outside resources and connections to trail implementation efforts and more.

The Commission has also provided resources to localities to develop Safe Routes to School Programs to local elementary and middle schools. This includes scheduling two separate workshops for the localities and their citizens.

The Commission organized a regional green infrastructure and trails conference: Building Trails to a Greener Future: Linking the Economy, Environment, and Local Communities in Radford, VA. Topics included economics of green space, trail management issues, and Blueway and green infrastructure.

Also, PDC staff sits on the board of BikeWalk VA, a statewide trails/bike/pedestrian group and attends local bike advocacy group meetings to communicate locality needs to volunteer organizations, and citizen needs to the localities.

### **Blueway/Canoe Trail**

The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation continues to pursue development of a blueway/canoe trail along the New River. The Trails illustrated map has not been released, although the Commission provided local business data for the map. It is expected to be available this year.

### **New River Trail Extension**

The New River Trail Extension is the term utilized to describe “regionally linked Trail System” as envisioned in the strategic plan.

Many groups and individuals worked to identify routes and opportunities to interconnect trails throughout the region. The backbone of the system is connecting the New River Trail State Park to the Huckleberry Trail in the Blacksburg/Christiansburg area. Locations have been evaluated in Montgomery and Pulaski Counties and the City of Radford. Among the criteria for location is the ability to interconnect community trails.

### **Annual Green Home Tour and Seminar**

The NRVPCDC worked with a diverse group of partners to organize the New River Valley’s first green residential home tour. This effort will be reproduced on a yearly basis. The seminar and tour were designed so that residents in the New River Valley will have greater understanding of green building issues and how they can implement them in their own homes. This was achieved by showing what has already been built around the Valley and to show what is attainable for area residents through local resources and businesses.

The seminar portion had presentations on topics such as: why residential green building is important, designing a green/energy efficient home, working with green builders and architects, how to save energy in your home, financial and market considerations of green building, and more. Additionally, local area green building businesses exhibited their wares, and participants learned more about the work of local organizations in their efforts to promote sustainable living.

The tour featured several categories of homes, from those that don’t

necessarily look “green or alternative” but are extremely energy efficient in their design and construction; to homes that utilized renewable energy systems, or homes that utilized local building materials.

Partners with the PDC were: Appalachian Sustainable Development (ASD), Association for Energy Conservation Professionals (AECOP), the Community Design and Assistance Center (CDAC), Shelter Alternatives, Town of Blacksburg, Montgomery County, and NRV Living Real Estate.

**The New River Valley Green Infrastructure Partnership**

In the Fall of 2006, the New River Valley Planning District Commission (NRVPDC) kicked off the first phase, a three stage process to promote planning that would maintain the quality of life and rural heritage experienced by current day residents in the Valley. Those three stages include: Stage 1) Education/Outreach/Needs Assessment/Capacity Building; Stage 2) Integration of existing natural resource and built infrastructure information for formal plan development and land prioritization by the localities and communities; and Stage 3) Adoption of Green Infrastructure plan/priorities and implementation process.



Community meeting held in June in Montgomery County.

For those that are unfamiliar with Green Infrastructure, it can be explained in much of the same way as gray infrastructure, which includes roadways, bridges, sewers and power lines. Green Infrastructure (GI) includes water resources, agricultural lands, outdoor recreation and trail networks, cultural resources, natural areas, parks and conservation lands. Both systems attempt to establish a framework for the proper growth and development within a community and more importantly, both need equal consideration and value within the planning process. Most often, gray infrastructure planning does not take into context the services the existing green infrastructure is already providing, while historically, conservation planning does not take into account the existing or future gray infrastructure plans and the effects of those plans on what realistically can be implemented. We are working to promote more context sensitive planning by working to raise an awareness of the value of the Green Infrastructure components within the landscape.

This summer, a series of community meetings took place in Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties and the City of Radford where citizens learned more about the value of green infrastructure and comment on what issues are of importance to them.

This spring a Leadership Group will be formed to begin the second phase of the Green Infrastructure Initiative- the development of a regional plan. The leadership group will have representation from various stakeholders in the region. In order to prepare for this upcoming process there will be a two day educational workshop on creating a GI plan at Mountain Lake on November 7-8. All future members of the leadership group will attend the workshop.

**Building Trails to a Greener Future: Linking the Economy, Healthy Communities and the Environment**

The Planning District Commission partnered with the Department of Forestry, Department of Recreation,



Department of Transportation, Virginia Tourism Corporation, Radford University, the Appalachian Trail Conservancy

and many more to hold a regional conference on Trails and Green Infrastructure. The conference attracted over 130 participants who were interested in learning more about funding sources and programs for implementing trails and green infrastructure within their communities. Participants also learned about the economic benefits of green infrastructure and trails for localities; programs available for recreational small business development, water trail design and management issues; state initiatives for recreational access along active rail lines; the *Safe Routes to School* program; recreational liability and easement acquisition, and much more!



Laura Lee, from Congressman Boucher's office, receives a tobacco walking stick from Gary Boring of the New River Highlands RC& D at the Green Infrastructure and Trails Conference held in May. Abigail Convery, Regional Planner for the NRVPDC is at the podium.

Administrative  
Operations

**FY 2006 - 07 Commissioners**

**Floyd County**

Fred Gerald  
Evelyn Janney

**Giles County**

Richard McCoy  
Leon Light

**Montgomery County**

Mike Harvey  
Annette Perkins, Chair

**Pulaski County**

Joe Sheffey  
Pete Crawford

**Radford City**

Tom Starnes  
Helen Harvey

**Town of Blacksburg**

A.T. Leighton  
Stuart Mease

**Town of Christiansburg**

Scott Weaver, Treasurer  
Brad Stipes

**Town of Floyd**

Mike Patton

**Town of Narrows**

Richard Skidmore

**Town of Pearisburg**

Rebecca Moses

**Town of Pulaski**

Dan Talbert, Vice Chair  
Joe Weddle

**Town of Rich Creek**

Darlene French

**Radford University**

Norleen Pomerantz

**Virginia Tech**

David Dent  
Kevin Sullivan

**FY 2006 - 07 Staff**



**Full Time**

**David Rundgren**

Executive Director

**Shirl Quesenberry**

Director of Finance and Personnel

**Yolanda Hunter**

Incubator Manager

**Jan Gilbertson**

Information Systems Manager

**Janet McNew**

Program Administrator

**Ali Whitaker**

Regional Planner II

**Kevin Byrd**

Regional Planner II

**Abigail Convery**

Regional Planner

**Keith Holt**

Regional Planner

**Patrick Hughes**

Regional Planner

**Brett Lovell**

Regional Planner

**Phil Gilbertson**

Cartographer

**Part Time**

**Dave Ratcliff**

Regional Planner

**Daphne Smith**

Maintenance

**WIB**



**Ronnie Martin**

Executive Director

**Clay Stein**

Assistant Executive Director

**Angela Alley**

Systems Administrator

**Marty Holliday**

Program Planner

**Bonnie Lawson**

Administrative Assistant

Statement of Revenues & Expenditures Year Ended June 30, 2007		
	<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>ACTUAL</b>
<b>REVENUES:</b>		
Floyd County	14,786.00	14,788.50
Town of Floyd	475.00	475.00
Giles County	12,267.00	11,152.00
Town of Narrows	2,322.00	2,322.00
Town of Pearisburg	3,002.00	3,002.00
Town of Rich Creek	732.00	732.00
Montgomery County	29,820.00	29,820.00
Town of Blacksburg	34,840.00	34,840.00
Town of Christiansburg	18,642.00	18,642.00
Pulaski County	28,219.00	28,219.00
Town of Pulaski	10,420.00	8,000.00
City of Radford	14,572.00	14,572.00
Radford University	2,873.00	2,873.00
Virginia Tech	8,650.00	8,650.00
<b>Total Local Revenue</b>	<b>181,620.00</b>	<b>178,087.50</b>
Interest Income	0.00	1,347.25
Contract Income	447,341.00	385,254.12
Miscellaneous Income	0.00	12,699.56
Revenue from the Commonwealth:		
DHCD Operating Grant	90,000.00	90,000.00
WIA	346,300.00	390,821.28
Department of Rehab. Services	13,040.00	13,380.00
Department of Environmental Quality (State Water)	35,712.00	78,686.48
Department of Emergency Management	0.00	3,600.00
Virginia Department of Transportation	48,000.00	48,000.00
Revenue from the Federal Government:		
Appalachian Regional Commission	77,578.00	61,956.00
ARC Telecommunications	0.00	29,650.00
Economic Development Administration	60,000.00	60,000.00
Other	0.00	22,018.32
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<b>1,117,971.00</b>	<b>1,197,413.01</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>1,299,591.00</b>	<b>1,375,500.51</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		
Salaries	741,041.15	762,170.02
Benefits	211,468.32	222,294.26
Travel	44,683.79	36,425.35
Office Space	46,951.40	49,116.72
Telephone	7,486.94	5,672.99
Office Supplies	29,365.16	19,733.64
Postage	8,750.56	6,051.95
Printing/Copies/Plotting	17,367.26	16,807.47
Map Purchases	0.00	0.00
Media Adv.	3,050.63	5,110.32
Equip. Rent/Equip. Maint.	18,663.68	14,668.19
Dues & Pubs	6,930.00	6,847.44
Training	1,134.99	89.00
Comm. Comp. (now included in salaries)	0.00	0.00
Depreciation	4,392.00	2,764.17
Insurance	6,103.00	6,583.00
Capital Outlay	5,437.33	14,459.60
Contract Serv.	236,949.92	129,066.79
Audit Fee	4,725.00	5,400.00
Misc.	2,379.70	2,724.43
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>1,396,880.83</b>	<b>1,305,985.34</b>
<b>RESERVES/FUND BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF YEAR</b>	<b>251,794.19</b>	<b>251,794.19</b>
<b>RESERVES/FUND BALANCE AT END OF YEAR</b>	<b>154,504.36</b>	<b>321,309.36</b>