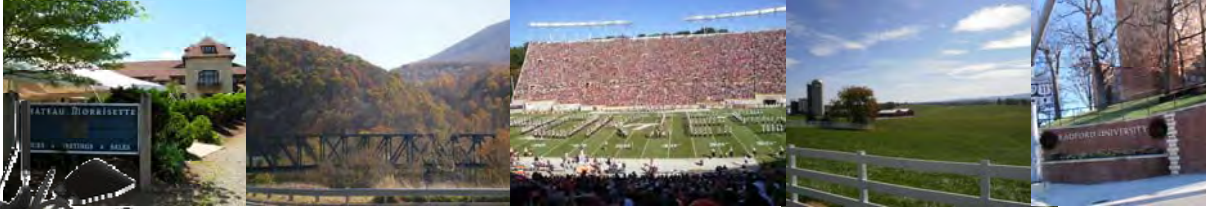


New River Valley News & Views



INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

- Livability Initiative
- Project Updates
- Staff Changes
- NRVPC Commission Meeting Summary
- Economic Indicators
- Transportation Program
- The Competitive Edge



Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Awards New River Valley Planning District Commission Grant for a Two-year Community Health Initiative

The New River Valley Planning District Commission is teaming up with the Virginia Tech Institute for Policy and Governance (VT-IPG) in a \$172,000 grant from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. The project, called Healthy NRV, aims to improve the long-term health of people in the New River Valley through data driven prioritization as well as engaging young people in assessing and offering steps to address health needs in their communities. A “digital storytelling” component of the grant will involve youth from ages 14 to 17 deployed with video cameras to conduct interviews in their communities. The teens will receive instruction in the art of storytelling and also be briefed about their communities’ most pressing health problems. The multimedia materials they produce will then be shared using social media and other channels.

The second major facet of the grant, data gathering, will focus on the collection and refinement of regional health indicators and assessment data to inform regional planning processes such as the NRV Livability Initiative among others. An integral part of the analysis will be on the economic impacts of health needs in the region, best use of available resources, both for private sector and government.

Other partners of the grant include:

- Virginia Health Department-New River District
- Partnership for Access to Healthcare
- Virginia Rural Health Association
- LewisGale Hospital at Pulaski
- Virginia Tech Master of Public Health Degree Program



Radford University

As a key partner on this project, Dr. Molly O’Dell, Health Director of the New River Health Department said, “This project provides a unique opportunity to better understand the health issues in our communities and raise awareness of those issues. Also, this will involve building collaboration between organizations that provide health care alongside of those who are working to make the future of our region the best it can be.”

The issues revolving around the overall health of the region and its economic viability are being evaluated as a part of this effort. Kevin Byrd, Executive Director of the New River Valley Planning District Commission, highlights anticipated outcomes of the project, “Through data collection efforts and working with the project partners we will generate new information about how health issues impact local government budgets and ultimately local tax payers. This information will also be useful in supporting a healthier workforce, a direct benefit to the private sector.”

Both the NRVPC and VT-IPG provided a cash match as part of the requirements of the two-year Roadmaps to Health Community Grant award. The Healthy NRV project team and other Robert Wood Johnson Foundation grantees will build on a model that highlights the critical role that factors such as education, jobs, and the environment play in influencing how healthy people are and how long they live. For further information, please contact Tommi Godwin (tgodwin@nrvpdc.org) at (540) 639-9313, ext. 205.

New River Valley Livability Initiative

- Feedback has been received from approximately 700 citizens to date:
 - 275 at the Kick-off Summit and other community meetings
 - 100 people and counting through an on-line survey
 - 200 through focus groups
 - 125 in working group meetings
- The housing, transportation, energy, arts and culture, natural resources and economic development working groups have met to discuss strengths and challenges in the New River Valley.
- The full lists of the strengths and challenges identified are available on our website under each working group page at www.nrvlivability.org.



Hazard Mitigation

FEMA and VDEM have completed their reviews of the New River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan and approved the plan (pending its adoption by localities who participated in the process). The next (and final step) for the 2011 update is for local councils and boards to adopt the plan. Once the plan has been adopted, all participating localities will continue to be eligible for available FEMA funding for mitigation funding.

One result of the plan is a ranking of the region's hazards. The table below displays the identified risk level of hazards in the New River Valley:

NRV's Hazards and Rankings

High	Medium	Low
Freezing Temperatures	Drought	Landslides
Flooding	Snowfall	Wildfires
High Winds (Non-rotational)	Human-caused	Earthquake
	Ice Storms	Rockfall
		Karst
		Tornado



The plan is the result of many hours of work by a steering committee of locality representatives and regional organizations, working groups (including experts in hazard areas), Radford University, and NRVPCD staff. The plan as preliminarily approved can be found at <http://www.nrvpcd.org/HazardMitigation/2011DraftPlan.html>. For further information, please contact Christy Straight (cstraight@nrvpcd.org) at (540) 639-9313, ext. 209.



The New River Valley HOME Consortium has been working in Giles County, developing two housing projects

that will serve the housing needs of those earning at or below 80% of the area median income. In Giles, this means \$30,700 for a single-person household.

The Town of Rich Creek has selected to fund an assisted living facility; this project combines local HOME funds, State CDBG funds, and State HOME funds and is unique as it is the first assisted living facility ever funded by HOME.

In Giles County 29.3% of total households have at least one resident 65 years old or older. The assisted living facility will create 23 single room occupancy (SRO) units, and become an extension of the existing Riverview Nursing Home located in the Town. This type of complex makes it easier for someone to transition from one level of service to another as they age.

Community Housing Partners will be acting as developer on this project, with construction slated to begin in the spring of 2012. For further information, please contact Jennifer Wilsie (jwilsie@nrvpcd.org) at (540) 639-9313 ext. 204.



New River Valley Revolving Loan Fund

The New River Valley Development Corporation's Revolving Loan Fund (NRVRLF) has been active over the last several months. Two companies within the New River Valley successfully applied for the loan fund and will use the funds to benefit their businesses. The first company is Bootleg BBQ located in Floyd and owned by Jon Beegle. The loan will be used to build a vending trailer with a Health Department approved commercial kitchen and smoker for the purpose of festival vending, street vending and catering. The second company is 3 Birds Berry Farm, formerly Crow's Nest U-Pick Berry Farm, of Blacksburg. 3 Birds Berry Farm, www.3birdsberryfarm.com, is a U-Pick berry farm that will use the funds to build raised beds, improve pathways, and make other improvements; all in an effort to make the farm accessible to everyone. These loans will help these small businesses remain competitive at present and in the future.



Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)

The CEDS Committee began their annual update by meeting on November 16th at the NRV Competitiveness Center. The Committee was joined by the New River Valley Livability Initiative's Economic Development Working Group. The meeting consisted of public and private partners discussing the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats within the New River Valley's economic situation. This exercise led to discussions on data sources for gathering additional data to inform the CEDS process as it moves forward over the following months. The next meeting will be held on December 13th.



For further information on the above items, please contact Brad Mecham (bmecham@nrvpcd.org) at (540) 639.9313 ext. 206.

Farewell and Congratulations

On February 29th **Shirl Quesenberry** will be retiring from the Commission following 35 years of remarkable service to the agency! Shirl joined the PDC staff in 1977 as Secretary to the Director. During her career with the Commission she rose through the ranks serving as Administrative Assistant for 17 years and Director of Finance and Personnel for the last 10 years. Each step along the way Shirl readily accepted increased responsibility and provided leadership that ensured the Commission was financially sound for decades. In order to accomplish this task she excelled in utilizing complex spreadsheets and databases that tracked the well over \$1 million dollar budget annually with upwards of 20 unique funding sources. Over the last year of her service Shirl guided the agency through an accounting software conversion. This effort was monumental and will leave the agency well positioned to manage its complex accounting for years to come. Aside from her professional achievements, Shirl made the PDC more than just a place of work, but a place of community. Her homemade baked goods, personal greeting cards, and selfless giving of time and energy made the PDC a special place.



Janet McNew (left) and Shirl Quesenberry

Shirl will be taking leave for the months of January and February, so please stop by before the end of December to wish her well on the next phase of life!

The Commission is pleased to announce the promotion of **Janet McNew** to fill the Director of Finance and Personnel position. Janet has over 12 years of experience with the Commission serving as Project Manager and Program Administrator. She also has over two decades of private

banking experience. In her Project Management role Janet provided grant administration leadership to the Jacksonville Center for the Arts in Floyd and the Tecoa Youth Center in Christiansburg. Most recently Janet has served as Program Administrator providing financial services to four external agencies, New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board, NRV Development Corporation, Virginia's 1st Regional Industrial Facilities Authority and the Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions. Janet also played a key role in the financial software conversion and is well oriented for the new challenge.

NRVPDC Commission Meeting Summary

October 27, 2011

Economic Development

- Provided technical assistance to the Development Corporation to issue loans through NRV Revolving Loan Fund to small business in Montgomery County, 3 Birds Berry Farm (Prices Fork); and another is being considered in the Town of Floyd.
- Two new CEDS members for appointment consideration at Commission meeting.
- United States Deputy Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Economic Development and Chief Operating Officer, Matt Erskine, coming to visit region on November 9th to observe regional success with TEMCI project and VT CRC.
- Participated in discussion at Mountain Lake concerning their future operations.

Transportation

- VDOT Six-Year Improvement Plan Public Hearing scheduled for October 26th at Montgomery County Government Center at 6:00pm. PDC will display rural transportation plans for the region.
- Coordinated meetings with Dana Martin, the Commonwealth Transportation Board Member for the Salem District, on October 17, 2011. Several localities met with Mr. Martin to discuss upcoming Transportation Enhancement grant applications along with general transportation issues in their community.

Regional

- Volvo Plant Tour POSTPONED from October 27th to December 16th 10:00-12:30. RSVP by December 9th to Ken Hall at khall@nrvpdc.org.
- PDC reconvened Green Infrastructure collaborators on October 13th to discuss wrapping up existing report due on December 1st and determining future directions for the effort.
- Livability Initiative working groups are taking shape in October/November. Please visit www.nrvlivability.org for more information about the project and to engage.

PDC

- GMS (financial software) returned for a site visit October 17-19 and supported further conversion efforts.
- All locality Water Supply Plan adoptions are scheduled to be complete by end of October, just prior to the November regulation deadline.
- Advertisement for Director of Finance and Personnel position closed on October 21. Interviews should occur in early November.
- VAPDC meeting with state agency heads on October 25th to discuss how PDCs can support state agencies from a regional perspective.

NRVPDC Commission meetings are held on the fourth Thursday of every month, 6:00 p.m., at the New River Valley Competitiveness Center in Fairlawn. All meetings are open to the public.

*Season's Greetings from the
New River Valley
Planning District Commission*



Economic Indicators

Provided by the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board

2009 % Living In Poverty									
2008 % Living In Poverty									
2000 - % of Pop. (16 & over) not in Labor Force									
Avg. Unemployment for last 6 months									
September 2011 Unemployment									
2010 Average Unemployment									
2009 Annualized Unemployment									
Qtr 1 2011 Avg. Weekly Wage									
Difference from State Average									
2010 Avg. Weekly Wage									
Difference from State Average									
Median Household Dollar Change									
2009 Median Household Income									
2008 Median Household Income									
2008 Per Capita Annual Personal Income									
Est. Population Change from 2000 to 2010									
2010 Census Count									
2000 Census Count									
Jurisdiction									
Floyd County	15,279	10.1%	13,874	\$36,664	\$41,514	\$26,509	10.1%	15,279	13,874
Giles County	17,286	3.8%	16,657	\$39,421	\$43,322	\$27,594	3.8%	17,286	16,657
Montgomery County	94,392	12.9%	83,629	\$42,785	\$43,176	\$27,102	12.9%	94,392	83,629
Pulaski County	34,872	-0.7%	35,127	\$40,239	\$40,426	\$31,813	-0.7%	34,872	35,127
City of Radford	16,408	3.5%	15,859	\$31,999	\$35,516	\$27,102	3.5%	16,408	15,859

Source: US Census, Weldon Cooper Center, Bureau of Economic Analysis, and the Virginia Workforce Connection

Transportation Enhancement Workshop Roanoke, October 12th

- Reimbursement requests could be delayed. VDOT's financial system is changing in December – requests after October will not be processed until the new system is up.
- Not billing every 90 days can land your project on the “Dormant List” – Feds start wanting money back.
- If land is donated (as in-kind) only the project footprint value can be allocated towards the reimbursement.
- Most states require cash match – VA is unique to offer in-kind services as match.
- No reimbursement for overhead items.
- Professional services should be billed at actual cost – exclude profit mark-ups.



For further information, please contact Elijah Sharp (esharp@nrvpdc.org) at (540) 639-9313 ext. 210.

Chapter 870 Regulatory Changes

Chapter 870 of the 2011 Acts of the General Assembly directed VDOT to review, solicit public comments, and make appropriate changes to the Traffic Impact Analysis Regulations (TIA) (24 VAC 30-155) and the Secondary Street Acceptance Requirements (SSAR) (24 VAC 30-92). VDOT was also directed to review and make changes to the Access Management Regulations (AM) (24 VAC 30-72 and 24 VAC 30-73) with respect to entrances to family subdivisions.

A package of changes to these regulations has been developed and approved at the agency level. The changes are set to go into effect by January 1, 2012. Some of the major changes include:

- Provisions pertaining to subdivision plats and site plans have been removed.
- The trip generation threshold in the TIA regulations requiring the submittal of a rezoning proposal to VDOT has increased from 100 peak hour trips for residential use and 2,500 daily trips for other land uses to a new 5,000 vehicle trips per day threshold for all land uses.
- Elimination of the “connectivity index” requirement and the “area types” provision from the SSAR.
- A “low volume commercial entrance” category is created in the AM regulations for entrances to land uses that do not generate high traffic volumes, but with volumes above those expected from private entrances (i.e., driveways serving one to two homes). The lower cost design standards for private entrances will apply to this new type of entrance, but the entrance will need to meet a stopping sight distance requirement.

The Chapter 870 regulatory changes include modifications beyond those identified above. Further information is available through the following link: www.virginiadot.org/projects/landuse.asp.



New River Valley Planning District Commission
 6580 Valley Center Drive, Suite 124
 Radford, VA 24141

NRVPC Commissioners	
FLOYD COUNTY • FRED GERALD • EVELYN JANNEY	TOWN OF FLOYD • MIKE PATTON, VICE CHAIR
GILES COUNTY • RICHARD MCCOY • VACANT	TOWN OF NARROWS • TOM GARRETT
MONTGOMERY COUNTY • RAY CHAMBERS • ANNETTE PERKINS	TOWN OF PEARISBURG • CHARLES VIA
PULASKI COUNTY • CHARLES BOPP • JOSEPH SHEFFEY • DOUG WARREN	TOWN OF PULASKI • LARRY CLEVINGER • MORGAN WELKER
CITY OF RADFORD • HELEN HARVEY • TIM COX	TOWN OF RICH CREEK • GARY EATON
TOWN OF BLACKSBURG • HOLLY LESKO, CHAIR • CECILE NEWCOMB	RADFORD UNIVERSITY • RICHARD ALVAREZ
TOWN OF CHRISTIANBURG • HENRY SHOWALTER • SCOTT WEAVER, TREASURER	VIRGINIA TECH • DAVID DENT • KEVIN SULLIVAN
Kevin R. Byrd, AICP Executive Director kbyrd@nrvpdc.org	
Jan R. Gilbertson, Newsletter Editor	

(Continued from Page 1)

Some of what we have learned to date is highlighted below:
The New River Valley population is aging. By 2030, 36% of Floyd, Giles and Pulaski counties will be over the age of 60. *Next steps:* How can the New River Valley better support our aging population?
Population growth in our region is uneven. Montgomery County accounts for most of the region's growth (83% from 2000 to 2010), with Floyd at 13% of the total. *Next steps:* What are the current and future impacts of uneven growth on our region?
Self-employed, business owners now outnumber total jobs in manufacturing. *Next steps:* What do we know about the growth in small businesses in the NRV? How can we better support these small business owners? Where are they generating jobs & what are the housing needs of those working for these businesses?

Public participation is essential to the New River Livability Initiative planning process – **please take a moment to fill out our survey and share your ideas about the New River Valley**, and encourage others to do so as well,
<http://www.surveygizmo.com/s3/620128/NRV-Livability-Kickoff-Survey>.

For additional questions, please contact **Kim Thurlow** (kthurlow@nrvpdc.org), (540) 639-9313, ext. 202 or **Carol Davis** (cdavis@nrvpdc.org), (540) 639-9313, ext. 222.

**New River Valley
 Planning District Commission**
 6580 Valley Center Drive, Suite 124
 Radford, VA 24141
 P: 540.639.9313
 F: 540.831.6093
www.nrvpdc.org
nrvpdc@nrvpdc.org

THE COMPETITIVE EDGE

Official Publication of the New River Valley Competitiveness Center
A Small Business Incubator

Shawn Utt/Doug Hudson,
Acting Incubator Managers

December 2011 - January 2012

How to Hire the Right Employees (Part 2)

In the August/September issue of *The Competitive Edge*, we explored innovative approaches to creating the right job description. As you work to create that description, think about the type of person you believe you want in that job, because the right person can make a small business thrive while the wrong choice can be the dagger to the heart of that business.

What qualities are you looking for? This question may require more analysis than you initially think. Consider the particular job at hand and what specific skills and qualities are necessary. If it involves fairly administrative tasks such as data entry and filing, you may not want a creative go-getter who is looking for challenges, but rather a meticulous and methodical worker. Similarly, if the job requires answering the phone, you will want a pleasant phone manner and people skills near the top of your list.

Some small business experts suggest evaluating your own skills first, and then hiring someone who will complement your work style. For example, if you always forget to return clients' phone calls, taking on an extremely focused, conscientious employee could benefit your customer service—and, in turn, your bottom line.

NRV Competitiveness Center Welcomes New Tenant:

MS Contracting

Formed in 2010, the owner of MS Contracting, Mike Sayers, saw a hole to fill in the construction industry. MSC specializes in demolition, grading, site preparation and utility installation. Being licensed, bonded and fully insured, MSC can be the main contractor for your project. For additional information, call Mike at 540-605-0604.



For Competitiveness Center information contact:

Shawn Utt or Doug Hudson,
Acting Incubator Managers

6580 Valley Center Drive, Suite 302, Radford, VA 24141

Phone: 540.633.6730 Fax: 540.633.6768

incubatormanager@nrvc.org or www.nrvdc.org/nrvcc.html