



Your Regional Commission

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N R V R C . O R G

ReNew the New – Regional New River Clean-up

On August 27, 2016, leaders from the New River Valley region, representing Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties, and the City of Radford, led a river clean-up event in Radford, VA. Over 450 volunteers representing student groups, businesses, river advocacy groups, and the general public attended the event and removed *an estimated 2 tons* of garbage and hundreds of tires in first regional river clean-up event in the New River Valley.



Meeting at the Glencoe Museum in Radford, two river-bound groups set out to clean up two stretches of the New River on canoes donated by local outfitters and the Boy Scouts of America. Each group was led by a series of captains, and were supported by public safety and public service employees from the surrounding localities. A land crew also picked up trash at Wildwood Park, in Radford.



This river clean-up event represents the expansion of successful clean-up efforts in Giles County, led by the ReNew the New Committee, over the past 14 years. Beginning in December 2015, County and City administrators from the region agreed to use the ReNew the New model for a regional river clean-up effort. Coordinated by the New River Valley Regional Commission,

the localities chose a stretch of the New River near Radford as the first clean-up site, with the intent that future regional clean-up events would follow annually at different locations within the New River Valley.

For further information, please contact Michael Gottfredson (michaelg@nrvc.org), 540-639-9313 x205.

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

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- Project Updates
- NRVRC Meeting Summary
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UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facilities Authority
Wednesday, September 14th 12:00 p.m.
NRVBC – New River Room

HOME Consortium Board Meeting
Thursday, September 22nd, 2:30 p.m.
NRVBC - Conference Room

Commission Board Meeting
Thursday, September 22nd, 6:00 p.m.
NRVBC - New River Room

Commission Board Meeting
Thursday, October 27th, 6:00 p.m.
NRVBC - New River Room

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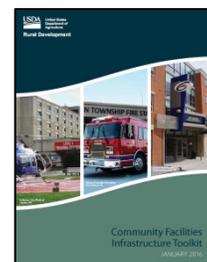
 We're on Instagram! Connect with us at : [Instagram.com/nrv_rc](https://instagram.com/nrv_rc)

USDA Rural Development Roundtable Recap

This time of year is always crunch time for grant writers, particularly those seeking roadway improvements, new trails, or safety enhancements. While substantial infrastructure projects tend to make more headlines, each community has substantial transportation needs that can sometimes be taken for granted. Projects like upgrading a garbage truck for solid waste, a fire truck for the local volunteer fire department, police cruisers for public safety, and perhaps a refrigerated truck to ship unused food to underserved populations.

The Regional Commission hosted USDA Rural Development staff on August 11th to share the latest news about their programs, which include funding options for critical community transportation needs. Projects such as a fire trucks are eligible for funding under the Community Facilities Grant Program, grants up to \$50,000 can be combined with low interest loans (1.625%). Curbs, gutters, and sidewalks are also eligible and can be financed for a period of 20 years. Other eligible items such as equipment and buildings can be financed for terms of 10-12 and 40 years respectively.

Rural communities under 20,000 (can be defined at Census Block level) are eligible for the program. Project ideas are encouraged to be submitted in January/February each year. Priorities are given to projects that incorporate multiple loans and matching funds. Have questions? No worries, USDA Rural Development has developed a Community Facilities Infrastructure Toolkit, available online here: www.rd.usda.gov/files/RDCFIToolkit_Jan2016.pdf



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

NRV Data Dashboard

The NRV Data Dashboard is an interactive data tool that will change the way local governments, grant writers, non-profit organizations, and New River Valley citizens access data. This dashboard makes regional demographic, economic, transportation, education, and community health data not only more accessible, but also easier to interpret. The dashboard can be accessed on the NRVC website as a central location for regional data and will be maintained by the Regional Commission. You can find the dashboard here, <http://nrvc.org/datadashboard>.

Since 1969 the Regional Commission has provided data to the region by publishing the Regional Data Book. The original data book was made available in print form and later as an electronic PDF document. The New River Valley Regional Data Dashboard incorporates various data points in an intuitive and interactive interface using *Tableau*, *ARC GIS online*, and other technologies. The Regional Commission is partnering with the Community Foundation of the NRV to provide a Livability Data Dashboard that includes data specific to the initiative. The Regional Commission is also working with the New River Valley Health District to explore ideas for incorporating dashboards related to their Community Health Improvement Plan.

For more information please contact James Jones (jjones@nrvc.org), 540-639-9313x203.



Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update

The Regional Commission kicked off the 2016 update to the regional hazard mitigation plan on September 2 with a stakeholder steering committee meeting. FEMA requires every locality to maintain a hazard mitigation plan that examines the risk and impact of natural disasters and provides strategies for reducing impacts to people and property. Every five years this plan must be updated to ensure continued access to FEMA's grant funds for mitigation projects.

The plan will identify potential hazards and rate their relative impact on the region, evaluate risks to human life and property, and develop goals for reducing these risks, which will be supported by mitigation strategies and projects in every participating locality and at the regional level.

The steering committee is composed of representatives from participating localities as well as regional, state, and federal agencies that have expertise to offer in hazard mitigation. Working groups for each of the hazards will meet during this process to more fully evaluate the data and develop the plan details.

A webpage will be posted to the Regional Commission website in the next few weeks where more information about the project, along with meeting agendas and draft documents, can be found and comments from interested parties can be submitted.

For further information, please contact Christy Straight (cstraight@nrvc.org), 540-639-9313 x209.

New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board



The New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board (NR/MR WDB) has been awarded \$1.2 million in State Rapid Response funds to coordinate and oversee a Regional Rapid Response initiative to serve individuals and supply chain companies impacted by the large number of plant layoffs and closures throughout the region. This initiative will cover three Workforce Development Areas (WDA's); Western Virginia, New River/Mount Rogers and Southwest Virginia, which includes 29 jurisdictions in Southwest Virginia (Planning Districts 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5).

The purpose of Rapid Response is to promote economic recovery and vitality by developing an ongoing, comprehensive approach to identifying, planning for, or responding to layoffs and dislocations, and preventing or minimizing their impacts on workers, businesses and communities.

It is the intent of the NR/MR WDB to be a leader in the region in developing an on-going, comprehensive approach system in which the processes of regional engagement, program alignment and communication will be agile and flexible, enabling the region to adjust and/or respond to economic disturbances and shifts. The Plan for this initiative can be found here: <http://nrmrwib.org/business-solutions/strategic-plan/>.

The strategies and action items listed are intended to build on and/or leverage other activities and initiatives taking place in the region (e.g. POWER Grant, Sector Partnerships, etc.) though they may not be specifically mentioned, consideration has been given. Most of the strategies and action items will span all three WDAs, but some may not (based on need and/or desire of the Area).

Although the Rapid Response funds to support noted activities are only available until August 31, 2017, this Plan is intended to put processes in place that will create an environment that enables economic transition for the region. This Plan is just the beginning. Outcomes and results from some activities in this initiative may not be fully realized for several years to come.

A Project Management Team has been designated and there will be three local Workforce Area Implementation Teams (yet to be determined). These teams will be at the forefront of ensuring the success of the Plan by bringing to the table their own expertise and by pulling in other regional experts to guide activities and processes and to evaluate outcomes.

For further information please contact Marty Holliday (marty.holliday@nrmrwib.org), 540-633-6764.

NRVRC Meeting Summary

July 2016 Meeting
CANCELLED

August 25, 2016 Meeting
Economic Development:

- Governor McAuliffe announced the GO Virginia state-level board on August 12th. The first meeting was held August 15th and focused on Regional Council geography. The current map draft includes NRV in a region with Roanoke and Lynchburg. A public comment period will be available.
- Pembroke and Narrows held downtown revitalization design workshops with Hill Studio on August 9-10. Both communities had strong participation with exciting visions taking shape.
- Giles County recently received notification of planning grant funds to support Pearisburg, Rich Creek and Glen Lyn to conduct similar visioning exercises to Pembroke and Narrows.

Transportation:

- The NRV Passenger Rail project hosted a legislative reception on August 16th at Radford University. The event was well attended by local, state and federal elected officials. One key take-away includes working to advance funding for the Rail Control Modeling Study in the current six-year improvement plan scheduled for FY19 to FY17 or FY18.
- Transportation projects for 2016 seeking House Bill 2 prioritization, now called Smart Scale, are due September 30.

Regional:

- ReNew the New regional river clean-up event was held on August 27th.
- A POWER grant application is being submitted for Giles County to include three boat launches and funds for a multi-purpose River Center. Commission staff is working on a cluster development project around Unmanned Systems/IT/Advanced Manufacturing to foster internships between local industry and higher education along with marketing content for the NRV Economic Development Alliance. This project is designed to support Pulaski and Giles Counties, both POWER eligible, and will have regional impact.

Commission:

- Audit was completed on August 10-11. Final report will most likely be available in September. Board Chair, Joe Carpenter, and Treasurer, Leon Law, met with Corbin Stone, our auditor, to get acquainted with financial operations. Board involvement with the audit process is very much appreciated.

**AGENDAS AND MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT
WWW.NRVRC.ORG**

Floyd County Supports Entrepreneurs with Floyd C⁴ Program and Pitch Night Competition

Communities in Floyd County have a strong 'do-it-yourself' ethic, and a long tradition of entrepreneurs and start-ups who make their own opportunities. From farmers and craftspeople, to restaurants, shops and entertainment venues, Floyd has a sizeable community of experienced entrepreneurs, and a variety of resources to help others to develop their own business. Resources include the Floyd Economic Gardening program, which provides Floyd-based small businesses with market research and counseling from a national network of consultants (more at: <https://floydva.nationalcenter.org/>), and the newly completed Floyd Innovation Center, which provides a variety of flexible production and office spaces with access to high-speed broadband and other amenities (more at: <http://yesfloydva.org/>).

Continuing with this success, the Floyd County Economic Development Authority (EDA) has announced the second annual entrepreneurship training and business plan competition, called "Floyd C⁴: Creators, Curriculum, Coaches, Challenge" program. Participants in the Floyd C⁴ program will receive training and guidance in a variety of business development topics, including product development and innovation, marketing, financing, and customer service. In addition, counselors from the Small Business Development Center and other entrepreneur support organizations will provide one-on-one counseling, and successful entrepreneurs will participate as mentors and advisors.

The Floyd C⁴ program culminates in a 'Pitch Night' competition on November 1st, with participants presenting their business ideas to a panel of judges for a chance to win a package of prizes, including cash, loans, and discounted office space and other free or reduced business services the help them start or expand their business ventures. All participants will receive access to a network of business development support services and networks of peers.

The Regional Commission is proud to support the C⁴ competition once again. Patrick O'Brien is presenting information on the NRV Development Corporation's revolving loan fund, and serving as a judge at the competition. For more information about Floyd C⁴, please contact Patrick O'Brien (pobrien@nrvc.org), 540-639-9313, ext. 2016 or Lydeana Martin at the Floyd County Economic Development Authority (lmartin@floydcova.org). Good luck to all the participants as they start their new business ventures!

Local Technical Assistance

Town of Pulaski Zoning Ordinance Update: Regional Commission staff are assisting the Town Planning Commission and staff in drafting an update of the zoning ordinance. An initial focus of the effort involves the ordinance sections related to industrial zoning districts.

Giles County Comprehensive Plan Update: Regional Commission staff are assisting the County Planning Commission and staff in drafting an updated comprehensive plan. Initial work is focused on updating descriptive data. Next steps will involve review of existing goals and objectives, identifying accomplishments, and developing a list of new initiatives and/or areas of concern to be reflected in draft update.

For further information, please contact Patrick Burton (pburton@nrvc.org), 540-639-9313, ext. 217.

Planners Group Discusses Development Data

The Regional Commission convenes the New River Valley Planners Forum on regular basis to help local planning departments discuss and address issues of mutual concern. At a meeting of the Planners Forum held on August 26th, the group heard about an effort related to Livability Strategy Implementation. The Livability Leadership Team is trying to identify development patterns and trends across the region as a whole. There is some variation among localities in terms of how development-related data is captured or collected and retained. Ultimately, it would be useful to find a way to compare data across jurisdictions to allow patterns and trends to be identified related to impacts on rural character. The purpose of the Planners Forum discussion was to document and further understand development data tracking practices so that steps to create more consistent data across the region can be identified.

For further information on the Planners Forum, please contact Patrick Burton (pburton@nrvc.org), 540-639-9313, ext. 217. For further information on the Livability Leadership Team, please contact Kevin Byrd (kbyrd@nrvc.org), 540-639-9313, ext. 212.

THE COMPETITIVE EDGE

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

Michael Solomon
Incubator Manager

September - October 2016

New River Valley Business Center welcomes MicroXact

The New River Valley Development Corporation is happy to welcome MicroXact as a new tenant at the New River Valley Business Center. MicroXact develops and produces semiconductor and micro-electrical-mechanical systems (MEMS) prototypes and testing equipment for clients around the world. Products include standard and specialty probe stations, a variety of accessories, and equipment that incorporates a variety of new advances, such as nanomaterials and next generation thermoelectric technologies. For more information, visit their website <http://microxact.com/our-company/>.

MicroXact was founded in 2004 as a Semiconductor and MEMS machining and prototyping facility. Since then, the company has consistently provided process development, engineering design and product manufacturing on-time and under budget resulting in a high level of customer satisfaction. The repeat-customer base ranges from university labs and start-up companies to government labs and Fortune 100 corporations. The MicroXact team has diverse expertise covering the areas of industrial physics, optical physics, condensed matter physics, advanced electronic design, harsh-environment system design and semiconductor fabrication.

MicroXact is located in Bay #312, in the west wing of the Business Center. The NRV Business Center has a variety of spaces available, with lease rates including utilities, and access to meetings spaces and other shared amenities. For more information please visit: <http://www.nrvdc.org/nrvbc.html>.

*For further information on the New River Valley Business Center, please contact
Michael Solomon (incubatormanager@nrvdc.org), 540-633-6730.*

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Pulaski Adult Day Service and Fall Prevention Center

Construction is complete for the Pulaski Adult Day Service and Fall Prevention facility. Final landscaping, furnishing, and equipping the building is currently underway. The building is approximately 4,200 square feet and is designed to serve 30 elderly or disabled participants in addition to two exam rooms designated for fall prevention clients. Many local partners have contributed time or materials to the building such as James Hardie, Lowe’s, and Sherwin Williams. Pulaski Adult Day Service & Fall Prevention Center, Inc. is currently accepting enrollment applications and plans to hold an enrollment event for interested participants at the beginning of September. Interest in the facility has been extremely strong, and the facility is projected to open for service in early fall. The project is funded through a partnership between Pulaski County, Pulaski Adult Day Service & Fall Prevention Center Inc., and the Department of Housing and Community Development’s Community Development Block Grant program. More information on the project can be found at <http://www.pulaskiadultdayservice.org/>

For further information, please contact Jennifer Wilsie (jwilsie@nrvc.org) or 540-639-9313 ext.204.

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