

# Your Regional Commission

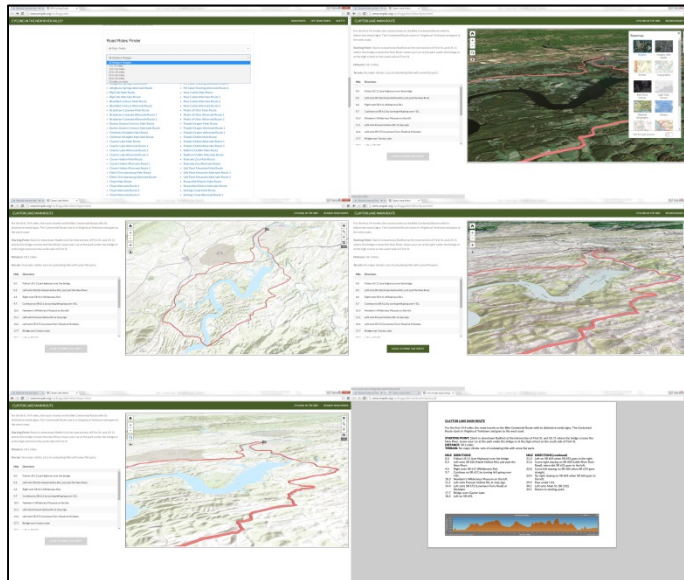
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N R V R C . O R G

## Cycling in the New River Valley

In the late 90s', a handful of local cyclists teamed up to create a guidebook for cycling in the New River Valley. What they did not know is how much the guide would be used over the next 20 years. In February 2015, the New River Valley Bicycle Association partnered with the Commission to update this valuable resource.

So how do you update a cycling guide? A local team of volunteers reviewed the existing guide by riding every mile of the 30 road rides and 58 alternative routes. Additionally, the team reviewed route descriptions to ensure accuracy. Afterwards, the Commission digitized each route, updated cue sheets, and developed a website



([www.nrvpc.org/cyclingguide/](http://www.nrvpc.org/cyclingguide/)) that features an interactive experience for cyclists. Now local cyclists have the ability to search for routes by location and distance, view 3D maps with interchangeable base maps, and print cue sheets that feature turn-by-turn instructions and an elevation profile.

For the cyclists that prefer riding to the very tops of our region's mountain peaks and splashing through the streams in our valley bottoms, there is an interactive map for off-road riders too. The Commission is working with local mountain bikers to digitize some of the known local favorites. While the Commission continues to finalize this section of the site, you can begin exploring the completed trail systems, swap base maps, and explore vertical elevation changes.

The Commission looks forward to continuing the partnership with the New River Valley Bicycle Association, and keeping the website up to date with the latest information. For further information, please contact Elijah Sharp ([esharp@nrvc.org](mailto:esharp@nrvc.org)), 540-639-9313, ext. 210.

### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Cycling in the New River Valley
- Transportation Program
- Project Updates
- NRVPC Meeting Summary
- The Competitive Edge

### UPCOMING MEETINGS:

Transportation Technical Advisory Committee  
Tuesday, September 15<sup>th</sup>, 1:30 p.m.  
NRVBC - Conference Room

Commission Board Meeting  
Thursday, September 24<sup>th</sup>, 6:00 p.m.  
NRVBC - New River Room

Commission Board Meeting  
Thursday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>, 6:00 p.m.  
NRVBC - New River Room

### CONNECT WITH US:

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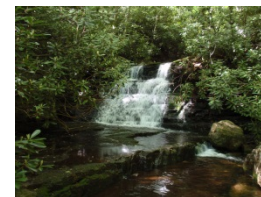
[twitter.com/NRVRCtweets](https://twitter.com/NRVRCtweets)

[youtube.com/nrvrc](https://www.youtube.com/nrvrc)

## Transportation

The Commission is counting! Spring of 2015 the Commission purchased three infrared trail counters utilizing State Planning and Research Funds, administered by VDOT. Knowing the average number of weekday opposed annual users is helpful for various reasons. The counters were initially purchased to help document the number of trail users throughout the region. Knowing how many people use a trail provides a link between the investment of public dollars and benefit to the community. The trail count data can also be combined with local revenue data to determine potential economic impacts of existing trails.

According to the Appalachian Trail Conservancy (AT) website, most long-distance hikers spend about \$1,000 per month. In May, about 200 hikers passed through the New River Valley each week. Some of them may have even stopped by our AT Communities to refresh and resupply. If each hiker spent a week's worth it would have a \$50,000 per week local economic impact on the Towns' of Pearisburg and Narrows. The Appalachian Trail Conservancy website estimates that one in four hikers attempt to "thru-hike" and complete the full 2,185 miles.



Over the last year we learned a lot about the technology. For examples, if you pass one of the counters with a partner, do so in single file so that both of you will be counted! So far, the counters were set up along six trails and have recorded nearly 21,000 users. Depending on the trail, the number of users ranged from nearly 100 to more than 850 per day. Trail usage volumes easily compare to many secondary roads in the region, which can be important to consider when prioritizing transportation improvements. Trail Counter Program reports are always available online here: <http://nrvc.org/what-we-do/transportation-2/>.

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

## Montgomery County Parks and Recreation Plan Update

The Regional Commission continues to assist Montgomery County with its Parks and Recreation (MCPR) Master Plan. NRVRC staff completed a community survey that will be administered throughout the county. NRVRC staff and MCPR staff will administer the survey at different events, and an online survey will be published across different online platforms (social media, county website, email). The survey will be live through September, after which the results will be compiled and analyzed. If you would like to take the survey, please visit <http://www.bit.ly/mcpr2015>, or scan the associated QR code.



For further information, please contact Jennifer Wilsie ([jwilsie@nrvc.org](mailto:jwilsie@nrvc.org)), 540-639-9313, ext. 204 or Michael Gottfredson ([michaelg@nrvc.org](mailto:michaelg@nrvc.org)), 540-639-9313, ext. 205.

## Economic Indicators

Car Registrations			
Jurisdiction	1st Qtr 2015	2nd Qtr 2015	% Change
Floyd County	57	101	77.2%
Giles County	101	117	15.8%
Montgomery County	435	471	8.3%
Pulaski County	153	203	32.7%
Radford City	66	80	21.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>812</b>	<b>972</b>	<b>19.7%</b>

Source: Virginia Automobile Dealers Association.

Truck Registrations			
Jurisdiction	1st Qtr 2015	2nd Qtr 2015	% Change
Floyd County	12	23	91.7%
Giles County	24	31	29.2%
Montgomery County	86	87	1.2%
Pulaski County	46	67	45.7%
Radford City	12	20	66.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>180</b>	<b>228</b>	<b>26.7%</b>

Source: Virginia Automobile Dealers Association.

### New Vehicle Registrations

Car registrations increased in all localities between the 1st and 2nd quarters of 2014 with Floyd County showing the largest increase (44). Truck registrations also increased in all localities with Pulaski County showing the largest increase (21).

# New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board



The New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board (WDB) provides to regional businesses easy access to solutions to meet their workforce needs without them having to navigate the bureaucracies of dozens of programs. Highly coordinated services are essential for all business customers in the region. Given the wide range of services available to businesses, workforce agencies and partner organizations will continue to build a network of seamlessly coordinated services across the communities served by the WDB.

The WDB will provide regional leadership regarding Business Services including but not limited to identification of priority industry sectors, convening and assembling appropriate business development activities, and aligning of resources to more effectively address sector and business needs.

## Business Services Strategy

The WDB and its partners believe that services to the region's businesses should serve the widest possible range of businesses, be individualized and efficient with a single point of contact wherever possible (or a "no wrong door" approach). It is also the intent of the WDB to share information about what services are currently being provided to businesses with partner agencies to avoid unnecessary duplication, including initial assessment and discovery, service plans, service coordination, outcome and follow-up information. In order to mount this collaborative effort the WDB will be cross training each partner in one another's services so that they are able to provide more seamless referrals for needed services as well as being able to speak to the many services available, regardless of what agency may 'own' these services.

## Services offered by various partners

- Peer to Peer Networking Opportunities
- Business Related/Relevant Seminars\*
- No cost job opening advertising
- Job matching
- Applicant screening
- Labor Market Information
- Employment/Unemployment Laws Information
- Tax Credit Information
- Training space\*
- On-the Job Training reimbursement opportunities
- Interns
- Small Business Loan and/or Planning Assistance
- Customized Job Fairs
- Interview rooms
- Assistive technology\*
- ADA assistance (and training)
- Skill assessments (for job applicants and/or employees)\*
- Customized job profiling\*
- Computer lab space and/or computers to train in YOUR space\*
- Customized employee training programs\*
- On-line training programs\*

*\*Service may involve a fee*

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

## NRVPC Meeting Summary

### July 23, 2015 Meeting

Meeting Canceled

### August 27, 2015 Meeting

#### Economic Development::

- The New River Valley Trail Guide for hiking and biking trails was completed in July. The guide contains the top trail assets in Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties as well as the City of Radford. Copies were distributed to all five local tourism offices.
- The Commission received notice the region was not selected for the Strengthening Economies Together (SET) program. The two regions selected were Eastern Shore and Mount Rogers. Both will be conducting a higher-level economic strategy development whereas the New River Valley application was more targeted to a specific asset, the New River.

#### Transportation:

- The Commission is under contract with the NRVMPPO to conduct a Regional Transit Study. The primary purpose of the study is to identify/market key stops where more than one transit system provides service or overlaps as well as determine methods to better promote transit ridership. A project website can be found at [www.nrvpdc.org/regionaltransitstudy/](http://www.nrvpdc.org/regionaltransitstudy/). Currently a rider survey is open through the Fall and can be found at the project website.
- A legislative reception for the NRV Passenger Rail Project was held on August 20<sup>th</sup> at Radford University in the COBE building. The agenda included a welcome from RU President Kyle, the Commission provided an update on the study underway and Jennifer Mitchell, Director of the Department of Rail and Public Transit, provided keynote remarks.

#### Regional:

- The Commission is convening a regional discussion on tourism October 14<sup>th</sup> at 2:00pm with Ms. Rita McClenny, President/CEO of the Virginia Tourism Corporation. This will be an opportunity for Commission members to explore the tourism geography issue with the state agency leadership.

#### Commission:

- The Commission's new website [www.nrvrc.org](http://www.nrvrc.org) launched August 19<sup>th</sup>!
- The FY14-15 Annual Report is being designed by Allison Development Group, the same firm that developed the brand and website. The reports are scheduled to be distributed at the September Commission meeting.
- Jonnell Sanciango, our Data Systems Manager, will be leaving the Commission in late September to return to the Philippines. Over the past two years the agency has benefitted significantly from his skills and expertise in GIS. He shared a presentation at the August Commission meeting covering several of the advancements in our technical capabilities.
- Zachary Swick was hired to fill the Data Systems Manager position and will start September 1st. He has a BA from the University of New Hampshire and a MA from Appalachian State.
- A staff strategic planning retreat was held on August 21st facilitated by Holly Lesko.

AGENDAS AND MINUTES ARE AVAILABLE ONLINE AT  
[WWW.NRVRC.ORG](http://WWW.NRVRC.ORG)



## Local Technical Assistance

**Town of Narrows Comprehensive Plan Update:** Regional Commission staff are completing a draft plan document. Narrows Planning Commission members and staff will be reviewing the draft and providing comments in September.

**Floyd County Solid Waste Management Plan Update:** Through this effort, Regional Commission staff are assisting County staff in developing an update of the plan document, including formulation of waste projections and identification of methods used in other localities.

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

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## Pulaski Adult Day Service and Fall Prevention Center

Pulaski County is hard at work on the adult daycare facility funded through the Community Development Block Grant program. The County has procured Spectrum Design to design a 4,200 square foot adult day services facility and fall prevention clinic on the site of the former Dublin Elementary School. Last spring, after construction bids for renovations at the former Newbern Elementary School came in over budget, the project reevaluated sites and chose instead to build on the Dublin Elementary site.

Since that time, the County has been working through the approval process the change in site and scope prompted from the Department of Housing and Community Development. Once the Dublin site was deemed ideal, the County held a community meeting to receive feedback from the surrounding neighborhood, met with Dublin Town Council for zoning approval, conducted a review of the environmental impacts of the site, and held several public hearings for citizen input.

Construction bids were released in mid-July and construction is slated to begin in September. The facility is designed to serve 30 elderly or disabled participants in addition to two exam rooms designated for the fall prevention clinic. The operating agency, Pulaski Adult Day Service & Fall Prevention Center, Inc., is steadily working towards a Capital Campaign goal of \$500,000 for the facility, which is projected to open for service in August 2016. More information on the project can be found at <http://www.pulaskiadultdayservice.org/>

For Further information, please contact Jennifer Wilsie ([jwilsie@nrvc.org](mailto:jwilsie@nrvc.org)), 540-639-9313, ext. 204.

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## 2015 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy

The annual update cycle for the New River Valley Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) is nearly complete. The process began last fall, when the CEDS committee met to discuss the needed updates to this year's CEDS document, and identify projects to include in next year's CEDS project list. NRVRC completed the requested updates during the spring, and the NRVRC board voted to approve the full version of the annual update to the report at their June 2015 meeting. The 2015 CEDS report is available for download on the economic development section of the NRVRC website.

The final step is the completion of the 'Consumer Version' of the CEDS for approval of the NRVRC board at the September meeting. The Consumer Version of the CEDS provides a one page summary of the latest updates on the regional economy, and more information on this year's top projects.

Some of the top projects in this year's CEDS have started development already, including work on the workforce development, entrepreneurship, tourism, and marketing efforts, which are ongoing projects at the NRVRC. Other top projects on the list will achieve major milestones this year as well, such as the start of construction on the Route 460 bypass interchange at Westgate Drive at Virginia Tech.

In Fall 2015, the NRVRC will complete the New River Valley Agriculture and Agritourism Strategic Plan, which provides recommendations on projects and strategies to support businesses in the region's agriculture sector. The NRVRC and partner organizations will then implement the strategies of the plan as possible, especially those that align with the CEDS.

In January 2016, the NRVRC will complete a preliminary study to identify opportunities to extend passenger rail service to the New River Valley, with a goal of starting service in the year 2020. More information on this project at: <http://www.nrvpassengerrail.org/>.

For further information, please contact Patrick O'Brien ([pobrien@nrvc.org](mailto:pobrien@nrvc.org)) or 540-639-9313, ext. 206.

# THE COMPETITIVE EDGE

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

Doug Hudson  
Incubator Manager

September – October 2015

## NRV Business Center Tenant Profile:

### Workforce Unlimited

The New River Valley Business Center is pleased to house the New River Valley branch of Workforce Unlimited, with their offices in Suite 332 in the West Wing of the building. Workforce Unlimited is a full service employment network with 10 locations in North Carolina and Virginia that provide employee screening and payroll services for companies looking to hire workers. Services for employers include job placement, skills testing, drug screens and background checks, and payroll processing. Services for jobseekers include job search and matching according to location and type of employment requested. Workforce Unlimited has relationships with a variety of major employers around the region who may need temporary workers or job screening services, helping solve workforce issues for workers and businesses from manufacturing, healthcare, and a variety of regional service businesses.

For more information about Workforce Unlimited, visit their website (<http://wfunlimited.com/>), or call their NRV Business Center location: 540-352-3052.

*For further information on the New River Valley Business Center, please contact Doug Hudson ([incubatormanager@nrvc.org](mailto:incubatormanager@nrvc.org)), 540-633-6730.*

**For Business Center information contact:**

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Kevin R. Byrd, AICP Executive Director <a href="mailto:kbyrd@nrpdc.org">kbyrd@nrpdc.org</a>	
Julie Phillips, Newsletter Editor	

**Virginia Offers Telework Tax Credit**

The cleanest trip is the one not taken, and Virginia is making it easier for companies to set up telework programs to allow their employees to work from home. With the telework tax credit, companies can get up to \$1,200 per employee to cover eligible telecommuting expenses such as computer and networking equipment, installation and maintenance, even program assessment.

With local support from RIDE Solutions and state expertise with Telework!VA, starting a telecommuting program has never been easier. Visit [www.teleworkva.org](http://www.teleworkva.org) for more information.

For further information, please contact Christy Straight ([cstraight@nrvc.org](mailto:cstraight@nrvc.org)), 540-639-9313, ext. 209.

**CONGRATULATIONS to Jennifer Wilsie for earning her American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP) Certification in May!**

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