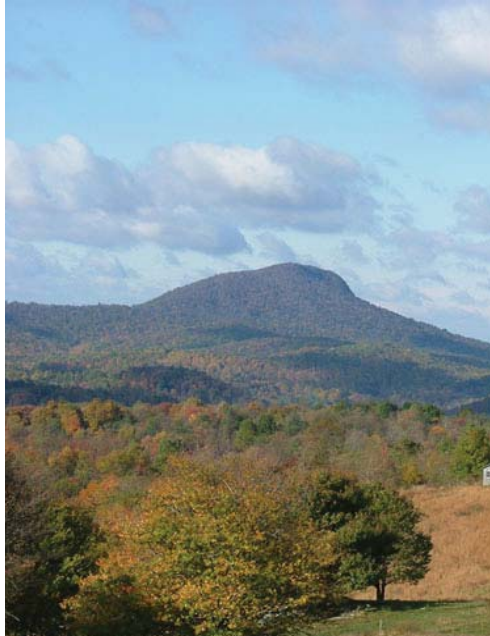


# New River Valley Planning District Commission

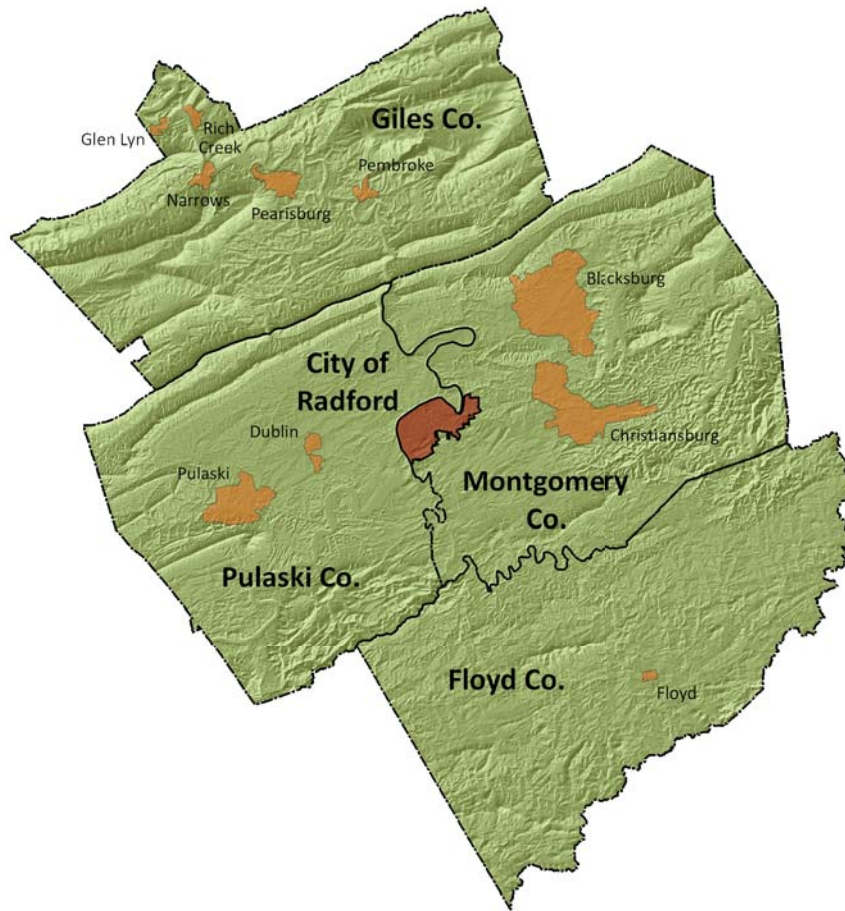


## FY 2010 - 2011 Annual Report



# THE NEW RIVER VALLEY

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# PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

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The New River Valley Planning District is one of 21 planning districts in Virginia whose commissions are chartered under Virginia law. Also known as PDC 4, the organization encompasses the counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski, and the City of Radford.

The Commission serves the local governments in the area and their citizenry by providing a number of different services ranging from economic development to regional broadband. The purpose of the Planning District Commission is to promote regional cooperation, to coordinate the activities and policies of member local governments, and to provide planning assistance to local governments. The Commission is financed by a combination of local, state, and federal funds.

The New River Valley Planning District Commission is comprised of one elected official and one appointed representative from each member organization. An additional elected official is appointed to the Commission for a two year term. In 2000, the Universities and small towns were added to the Commission representation.

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

## FY 2010-2011 Commissioners

### **Floyd County**

Evelyn Janney  
Fred Gerald

### **Town of Floyd**

Mike Patton, Vice Chair

### **Giles County**

Richard McCoy  
Vacant

### **Town of Narrows**

Tom Garrett

### **Montgomery County**

Annette Perkins  
Mike Harvey

### **Town of Pearisburg**

Becky Moses

### **Pulaski County**

Charles Bopp  
Joseph Sheffey  
Doug Warren

### **Town of Pulaski**

Larry Clevinger  
Morgan Welker

### **City of Radford**

Tim Cox  
Helen Harvey

### **Town of Rich Creek**

Gary Eaton

### **Town of Blacksburg**

Don Langrehr  
Holly Lesko, Chair

### **Radford University**

Richard Alvarez

### **Town of Christiansburg**

Scott Weaver,  
Treasurer  
Henry Showalter

### **Virginia Tech**

David Dent  
Kevin Sullivan

# EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

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*Dear Board of Commissioners and  
Citizens of the New River Valley,*

Throughout Fiscal Year 2010-2011 the New River Valley experienced several positive economic changes and worked together on numerous occasions to make the region a better place to live, work and play. Even in the face of the recent economic challenges this past year, all four counties and the city were able to celebrate economic development announcements that resulted in job creation or retention. Building upon these successes and the relationships in the region, the New River Valley continues to create a bright future. With the true spirit of cooperation the region took on, and is finding success, with the following programs.

In February, the region was successful in competing for a \$1.0 million dollar grant from the Federal Partnership for Sustainable Communities consisting of the U.S. Dept. of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), the U.S. Dept. of Transportation (DOT) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The New River Valley is utilizing this funding to develop the NRV Livability Initiative, a three year planning process to identify a menu of choices for implementation by local governments, the private sector and non-governmental organizations. To date, this is the most substantial opportunity the region has received to plan for the future.

This effort will be focused on ten planning elements which include housing, energy, transportation, technology infrastructure, water infrastructure, arts and culture, natural resources, food systems/agriculture, economic/workforce development, and community health.

The NRV Livability Initiative will be reaching out to as many people in the region as possible to gather ideas on how to deal with our challenges while maximizing our competitive advantages. To learn more about the project and to participate, please visit [www.nrvlivability.org](http://www.nrvlivability.org)

The region made strides this year in a couple of competitive advantages including advanced manufacturing and deployment of open access broadband infrastructure. First, the New River Valley is working with adjoining planning district commissions at Mt. Rogers and Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission to implement a program that supports the advanced manufacturing sector of the economy. The program is called TEMCI, an acronym for Transportation Equipment Manufacturing Competitiveness Initiative. The program matches faculty at Virginia Tech with private sector manufacturers to accomplish one of three objectives: create a new product, improve processing, or develop green technologies. The intention is to utilize expertise at Virginia Tech in helping companies in the region remain globally competitive.

The second competitive advantage to highlight, broadband fiber, is currently being deployed. This project demonstrates that regional infrastructure is a team sport that takes commitment over time. The initial vision for broadband in the region was established in the early 2000's. Several grant applications later and a lot of hard work by multiple partners; finally the region was successful and will be reaping the benefits by the close of 2012. The competitive advantage of broadband fiber cannot be understated. This project will be expanding the region's internet capacity by a factor of 10,000.

While looking toward the region's future, this is one advantage that will serve everyone well for remaining competitive.

An emerging competitive advantage for the region is the increase of tourism, particularly for cultural heritage and natural resources. Both of these assets are non-exportable and unique to the communities in the region. To support the emerging tourism sector the region launched a tourism website in May ([www.explorenewrivervalley.com](http://www.explorenewrivervalley.com)). This site is dedicated to the unique assets of the region and highlights the outdoor and cultural amenities. With the opening of Heartwood, the cultural heritage gateway to southwest Virginia in Abingdon, in conjunction with the new regional website and existing marketing efforts, the region is well positioned to take advantage of additional tourism expenditures in the coming years.

The region has endured the peaks and valleys of the economic landscape quite well over the past few years. By continuing to work together, future regional success will follow while yielding an even more resilient region. As we embark on another year we will endeavor to provide the necessary planning, coordination, and cooperation to make the New River Valley the most competitive and desirable region possible.

The following report describes many more projects the Commission worked on during the FY 2010-2011 year.

Sincerely,

Kevin R. Byrd, AICP  
Executive Director

# REGIONAL COOPERATION



The New River Valley was awarded a \$1,000,000 Sustainable Communities Planning Grant in the fall of 2010. This national grant program was offered through a partnership between the Department of Transportation, the

Office of Housing and Urban Development, and the Environmental Protection Agency. The New River Valley Planning District Commission acted as Lead Applicant on the grant and partnered with 14 other members to form the NRV Sustainable Communities Consortium in order to administer the three-year grant program.

The Mission of the Initiative is “To enhance the livability of the New River Valley by integrating as a rural, regional community that honors the existing values while building economic competitiveness and capitalizing on the unique local characteristics and diversity of the region.”

This Livability Initiative will be guided by public input and element area working groups which will work to identify regional issues and needs as well as options for improving efficiency, reducing costs, and leveraging existing resources to make the entire region stronger in the following ten elements areas: (1) Housing (2) Transportation (3) Energy (4) Arts/Culture (5) Economic/Workforce Development (6) Natural Resources (7) Food Systems/Agriculture (8) Technology Infrastructure (9) Water Infrastructure (10) Community Health.

The effort will result in a 20+ year Livability Plan that will lay out a menu of options for local governments, the private sector, community organizations, and individuals to consider when addressing the needs identified in these areas.

In May 2011, two new staff were hired to direct program activities: a program coordinator and outreach facilitator. A major focus of their work is region-wide public engagement (especially of under-represented populations) in the planning process, to better understand priority needs and interests within individual communities and populations and to build a constituency of knowledgeable and committed supporters who will work to translate the plan into reality. To launch this public engagement process, a kick-off public summit was held at Claytor Lake on August 11, 2011 with over 100 participants. For further information on the New River Valley Livability Initiative please visit [www.nrvlivability.org](http://www.nrvlivability.org).



Photo: New River Community College



Community First: *Regional Partners in a Global Marketplace* is the 2009 update to the New River Valley’s Vision 2020 Strategic Plan. Recognizing the value of working together to accomplish long- and short-term goals and the need to

share resources across political lines, the area’s citizens built a plan highlighting “regional” goals, objectives,

projects and programs in this newest update. Its vision areas include People, Business/Industry and Employment, Natural and Cultural Resources, and Infrastructure. Several regional initiatives in the areas of telecommunications and regional housing assessment have begun under the impetus of this vision. Greater connections between and among governments, non-profits, and grassroots community groups can also be attributed to efforts under the regional Community First umbrella. A new addition to the process for updating the regional strategic plan this year included a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee made up of private and public representatives.

### **Regional Planning Forum**

The Commission 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 Planning Forum has made it their goal to provide at least one training session annually open to all local government Planning Commission members in the region. The Commission hosted the fourth training session on April 27th of this year.

The training session included dinner followed by a panel discussion of Water and Wastewater Alternatives for Cluster and Conservation Developments. The discussion featured Jesse Richardson of Virginia Tech, Mike Heatwole of May Supply in Harrisonburg and the Virginia Water Well Association, and Eric Rorrer of Rorrer Well Drilling in Christiansburg. The event was attended by 24 local planning commissioners and six local planning staff representing a total of eight localities in the planning district. Another training session will be held in 2012.

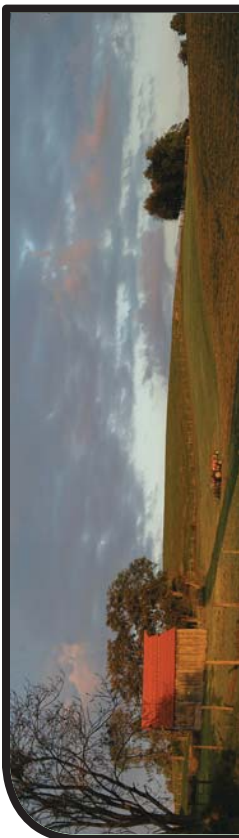


### **New River Valley Tourism Website**

For nearly two years a group of tourism stakeholders comprised of local governments, chambers of commerce and tourism businesses in the New River Valley have been meeting and discussing projects to accomplish together. A joint website project was identified as their top priority. In October 2009, the group asked the PDC to assist in preparing a grant application to the Virginia Tourism Commission for Marketing Leverage Funds. The project was funded and the PDC provided grant administration and project management for 1 1/2 years before launching the website, ExploreNewRiverValley.com, on May 31, 2011. It provides information on outdoor recreation (paddle sports, fishing, trails), cultural activities (events, museums, music), and other tourist attractions and destinations in the NRV.

## **Green Infrastructure Initiative**

During FY 2010-2011 the primary activity under this goal was the continued operations of the Green Infrastructure Initiative. In October 2010, the NRVPCD was awarded a large grant from HUD for Sustainable Communities planning. A portion of the proposed three year planning project will be dedicated to natural resources planning and its role in creating a sustainable community. In 2011, the NRVPCD kicked off this project and hopes to move forward with some of the natural resources planning that has been initiated during the Green Infrastructure Initiative. In addition, the NRVPCD has been involved with a group of researchers from Virginia Tech in drafting a grant application for research related to the HUD Sustainable Communities grant. The proposed research will utilize geospatial analysis to compare selected development alternatives based on the ecosystem services rural landscapes provide. The goal of the research is to develop a decision-support system that will assist various stakeholders making decisions about rural land use. If funded, this research will be conducted in conjunction with the Sustainable Communities planning work. The Green Infrastructure website can be accessed at: <http://www.nrvpcd.org/GreenInfrastructure/greeninfrastructure.html>.



## Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facility Authority

Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facility Authority's first project was 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. During FY 2010-2011, the Authority has been working on strategic planning with regional partners and organizational changes within the organization. The Authority continues to seek quality economic development opportunities which create local benefits through joint projects.



### 'Round the Mountain, Southwest Virginia's Artisan

**Network**, is a non-profit organization working to foster economic development in Southwest Virginia by focusing on the craft and culture of the region. Through this work 'Round the Mountain is developing the reputation of Southwest Virginia as an important region for the handmade and homegrown, one that will be known and respected far and wide, a place recognized for its natural beauty, its quality of life and its arts and crafts. 'Round the Mountain represents 19 counties and 4 cities, with the New River Valley serving as its northernmost boundary. This year the Southwest Virginia Cultural Heritage Commission, an umbrella organization for 'Round the Mountain and the Crooked Road, celebrated

a major milestone in opening Heartwood. Heartwood is a significant facility in Abingdon serving as the gateway to cultural experiences in southwest Virginia. Heartwood's primary purpose is to attract visitors into the 19 county region for unique cultural experiences. Since the creation of trail brochures for all 19 counties in FY 10, some counties, such as Floyd, are finding ways to maximize the resource. In June, Floyd County artisans hosted an "open house" for five days when all artisans on the trail were open for business on regular hours. The initial economic impact for the five day event appears to be significant enough to develop plans for a similar event in 2012. Floyd County artisans approached their event with the mindset of creating a model for other communities to utilize their trail brochures to the fullest extent and network among artisans to create an economic presence.



June 30, 2011 marked the successful completion of the New River Valley HOME Consortium's fourth year of funding, funds designed to create affordable housing for low to moderate-income households. Funds are eligible for activities such as homeowner rehabilitation, new construction of single family or multi-family homes, acquisition of property, and demolition of substandard housing as well as architectural fees, feasibility studies, homebuyer's counseling, and other finance-related costs. The HOME funds require a 25% non-federal match by the Consortium, a way of ensuring commitment from the localities.

Over the past year, the NRV HOME Consortium completed the following activities:

- An 84-unit rental complex was rehabilitated in Montgomery County serving households making 50%

of the area median income or below.

- Work is underway on the Dora Highway project in the Town of Pulaski. This project will include homeowner and investor-owned rehabilitation, substantial reconstruction, water/sewer improvements, street improvements, and the construction of six new homes for homeownership.
- Construction is about to begin in the Baskerville Neighborhood Rehab project in Pulaski County. One million dollars of CDBG funds were also awarded to this project, slated to rehab or substantially reconstruct 18 homes in the neighborhood.
- \$280,000 was committed to the creation of eight one-bedroom apartments in downtown Radford serving households making 60% of the area median income or below.
- \$315,000 was committed to the Town of Rich Creek for the construction of an assisted living complex to serve low-income individuals.
- \$275,000 was committed to the Town of Narrows for the creation of eight two-bedroom apartments in downtown Narrows. VHDA funds were also leveraged for this project.

The HOME Consortium Board meets quarterly.

# ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

## Transportation Equipment Manufacturing Competitiveness Initiative

An Economic Development Administration (EDA) grant was awarded to the New River Valley Planning District Commission (PDC) which will partner with the Mount Rogers Planning District Commission and Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission. This multi-PDC effort is a public-private partnership funded by the EDA's Trade Adjustment Assistance program and aimed at strengthening the region's transportation equipment manufacturers and their suppliers. The EDA grant will provide technical assistance to private companies through Virginia Tech's Center for High Performance Manufacturing as well as GENEDGE ALLIANCE. Volvo Trucks North America has also pledged a significant amount of match funding.



Technical assistance projects can be summarized into three categories: 1) Product Development; 2) Process Improvement; and 3) Green Technologies. The first round of funding produced several applications from the region's transportation equipment manufacturers/suppliers and nine projects were funded in April 2011.

*Photo: Volvo Trucks North America*

## New River Valley Commerce Park

The Commerce Park is a joint economic development site that would not otherwise be affordable by individual local governments. The park was originally envisioned as a premiere location for technology-based manufacturing which required space, high investments in machinery and the tools of production, quality water supplies, and the potential for access to international travel and shipping. Changing market conditions have led the Commerce Park owners to reevaluate how the site is marketed to prospects. Those efforts have been ongoing this year.

The Commerce Park includes over 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 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. The eleven member Participation Committee elected Basil Edwards, City of Radford representative, as its Chairman; Chris McKlarney, Giles County representative, as Vice Chairman; and Shawn Utt, Pulaski County representative as Secretary/Treasurer.

During FY 10-11, the Participation Committee has provided as-needed assistance to the Pulaski County Public Service Authority for the water and sewer capacity expansion project.

## New River Valley Development Corporation

The Development Corporation is chartered as 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 Development Corporation disseminated business information, produced printed promotional materials, helped build resources and networks, and assisted with financial packages for small businesses and entrepreneurs.

### *New River Valley Revolving Loan Fund*

The New River Valley Revolving Loan Fund (NRVRLF) was established in 1995. The purpose of the Fund, as well as the Development Corporation, is the creation and/or retention of local jobs by assisting in the financing of qualified businesses in the New River Valley. The NRVRLF works with private lenders or other primary lending sources to provide long term financing for the acquisition of, or improvement of, fixed assets including land, buildings, and equipment; and to provide working capital.





## Incubator Services

The Corporation has continued its work in developing a management and training incubator network among the incubator facilities in the New River Valley. The following report presents highlights of the past year.

## New River Valley Competitiveness Center

The New River Valley Competitiveness Center, a small business incubator, completed its 12th year of operation. Since the beginning of the Center in April 1999, 53 new businesses have been assisted with the creation of over 360 new jobs. Twenty-two tenants, including seven regional agencies, currently occupy the incubator which is now at 80% occupancy. By the end of June 2011, the Center, through a partnership with the County of Pulaski, provided business technical assistance to several additional clients not located in the Center.

In November 2009, the County of Pulaski assumed management of the incubator in an effort to make the operations more efficient and less costly. The County has partnered with Beans & Rice, Inc. (a local community development and educational non-profit with a goal of increasing the education and marketability of the local workforce) to begin providing small business classes, such as the CoreFour and FastTrak seminars to tenants and prospective small businesses. To date, these classes have been provided around the region. Beginning in September, 2010, they became a focus of the Competitiveness Center to encourage existing and prospective tenants to take full advantage of their offerings.

The Micro Solutions Program sponsored by a coalition of entities, including the Development Corporation, allows the Center to help clients connect to area business technical assistance programs to further grow their business, by providing services that include lending, training, technical assistance and mentoring to current and aspiring entrepreneurs.

The following new tenants expanded their businesses within the Competitiveness Center in fiscal year 2010:

- *Bishop Insurance (Brian Bishop, Agent)* – a newly created agent for Horace Mann Insurance, which was founded in 1945 by a group of educators and is the largest multi-line insurance company that focuses on the education community. Bishop Insurance also provides retirement planning as well as auto and life insurance coverage.
- *Enertronics* – a start-up working on next generation electronic products for renewable energy and utility grid applications. At its initial R & D stage, prototypes of utility scale transformer and electric vehicle fast chargers

have been developed for field testing. The company has teamed with major utilities and equipment manufacturers to continue the development and testing. For further information, please contact enertronics@comcast.net.

- *New River Security & Investigations, Inc. (NRSI)* – a diversified outsourcing services company based in Wytheville, Virginia, was formed in 1986 expressly for the purpose of providing a variety of quality security support and investigative services for personal, corporate, non-profit and government organizations. NRSI professionals are specifically trained in state of the art surveillance equipment to obtain and document the evidence their clients require.



## Special Programs and Marketing

**BREW:** The New River Valley Development Corporation continued to partner with the Entrepreneur Coalition to provide free start-up Business Resource Entrepreneur Workshops (BREW) to Pulaski County entrepreneurs and businesses. BREW workshop classes were open to the public and were taught by New River Valley business professionals. These sessions were designed to provide the beginner entrepreneur vital information on how to start a business.

**Competitiveness Center Works With External Clients:** Business incubation programs catalyze the process of starting and growing companies by providing entrepreneurs with the expertise, networks and tools they need to make their ventures successful. The Center focuses on start-up needs by providing assistance in preparing a formal business plan, building networks, locating tools to market a business, and aiding in generating an infusion of cash to get their businesses off on the right foot. This is why it is important for Small Business Incubators to team up with local Small Business Development Centers (SBDC's), private economic development partnerships, and officials from towns and counties to create a local environment that stimulates balanced economic growth through job creation and business assistance.

The Competitiveness Center continues to partner with networks to nurture start-up firms who wish to retain and foster the growth of existing businesses, attract new businesses, and bring career opportunities to local residents by providing training courses and creating a way to increase local entrepreneurs' chance of securing capital through private and federal programs.

# HUMAN SERVICES

## Housing Partnership of the New River Valley

The Housing Partnership is comprised of housing and service providers in the New River Valley which meets monthly to discuss issues that affect low-to-moderate income households. These meetings allow members to share relevant projects within their agencies, discuss methods of collaboration or coordination, and share funding opportunities available for homelessness or homelessness prevention.

This past fiscal year, the PDC was involved in the bi-annual Point In Time Count, which documents individuals and families who are homeless in order to be eligible for potential future funding to serve these families. After the count, 94 men, women, and children were documented as being homeless, whether living in a temporary shelter or living unsheltered.

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

The following is a summary of PY'10.

### *Special Projects*

Utilizing Incentive funds, the New River/Mount Rogers WIB partnered with various organizations to support the following special projects:

- In partnership with People Inc. of Virginia, Rooftop of VA – CAP, Virginia Highlands Community College and Wytheville Community College, funded a Career Exploration Camp for WIA Youth. This camp offered exposure to various career occupations throughout a weeklong camp. Seventy (70) WIA Youth from the counties of Washington, Smyth, Wythe, Bland, Carroll, Grayson as well as Bristol City and Galax City explored several different occupations. The camp had guest speakers and various activities designed to expose the youth to as many career occupations as possible.
- In partnership with Goodwill Industries of the Valleys, supported a “graduation awards ceremony” for youth graduating from high school. Twenty youth were honored during this ceremony.
- Conducted four strategic planning round table sessions throughout our area to solicit input from area partners and local business leaders on our employment and training needs and how to meet those needs.

### *Job Fairs PY'10*

Crossroads Career Expo – Spring  
March 17, 2011 held at Crossroads Institute in Galax.  
Over 20 employers and over 250 job seekers were served  
Partners: CREATES\*, Crossroads Institute, NR/MR WIB, Wytheville Community College

NRV Job Fair Expo – Spring  
March 31, 2011 held at NRCC in Dublin. Over 62 employers and over 350 job seekers served

Partners: CREATES\*, DRS, Partners for Self Sufficiency (the 5 NRV DSS offices), New River Community College (NRCC), NRCC Workforce Development, NR/MR WIB, and the Virginia Employment Commission

### *Abingdon Job Fair - Spring*

(to help the communities impacted by the April tornado) June 30, 2011 held at the SWVA Higher Ed Center in Abingdon. Over 62 employers and over 700 job seekers served.

Partners: SWVA Higher Ed Center, Virginia Employment Commission, Virginia Department of Business Assistance, Virginia Highlands Small Business Incubator Virginia Small Business Development Center, Southwest Virginia Alliance for Manufacturing, People Inc., Washington County Economic Development Office Smyth County Economic Development Office, Virginia Highlands Community College, New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Area

\* Funding for CREATES is provided via the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act through a US Department of Labor Energy Training Partnership grant.

### *Regional Collaboration*

The WIB, through its partnership with surrounding Workforce Investment Areas or through a statewide collaborative effort, has received funding for participation in the following grant initiatives.

Green Grant Initiative: Western Virginia CREATES (Construction, Retrofitting, and Energy-Efficiency Assessment Training and Employment Systems) is a regional partnership that was funded through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) with a U.S. Department of Labor “Energy Training Partnership” grant (award total \$3.8 million) to teach workers the skills

required in emerging energy efficiency and renewable energy industries and to connect those workers with employers needing to move their businesses forward in the green economy. This collaborative partnership includes Community Housing Partners, Virginia Tech, New VA Corridor Technology Council, New River Community College, Wytheville Community College, Virginia Western Community College, New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board and Virginia Western Workforce Development Board and covers 21 jurisdictions in Southwest Virginia. CREATES service activities for PY'10 were as follows:

- 354 – Applications accepted
- 295 – Sent to training
- 148 – Are employed (146 of those are employed in a related field)
- 138 – Are still in training
- 9 – In active job search



Western Virginia HITE Grant: Western Virginia HITE (Health Information Technology Education) initiative is a regional partnership that was funded through a U.S. Department of Labor “Community-Based Jobs Training” grant (award total \$4.7 million) to provide training opportunities for medical records specialists/health information technicians, medical assistants, pharmacy technicians, licensed practical nursing (LPN) and registered nursing (RN) occupations. The HITE initiative provides training to incumbent workers, unemployed and underemployed in electronic medical records management through the five community colleges. HITE service activities for PY'10 were as follows:

- 225 – Total number of applicants
- 135 – Total in training
- 72 – Applications in process
- 18 – In job search

Statewide On the Job Training Grant: This statewide collaborative initiative will provide funding of \$1.5 million across the state to support on the job training for displaced workers who are experiencing prolonged unemployment. Participants will be given a chance to “earn and learn” which means they will develop applicable occupational skills while earning a paycheck. Employers

participating in this on the job training project will receive partial reimbursement to offset the extraordinary cost of training workers. This project will help workers become proficient in needed skills more quickly, which will serve to encourage employers to hire workers sooner than perhaps initially planned, facilitating the private sectors hiring of well-qualified individuals to contribute to their bottom line and spur economic recovery. Through June 30, 2011, the WIB has achieved the following outcomes:

- 80 – Individuals have been referred for placement into OJT
  - 50 – Employers have been contacted regarding the program
  - 21 – Clients have been placed into OJT’s with six employers
  - 13 – Clients have completed OJT with one being terminated.
- The placement rate is 92% with an average wage of \$11.73.

Regional Workforce Center: The New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board is partnering with Washington County, Smyth County, Bristol City, Virginia Highlands Community College and various regional partners in the funding solicitation from the Tobacco Commission for planning and a feasibility study for a Regional Workforce Center in the western end of WIA 2. If funded, this site would become a regional training center and area One Stop Center to enhance service delivery and training opportunities for the citizens in our area.

**PY'10 Service Levels**

- During the period July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011, the Workforce Investment Board achieved the following service levels.
- Adult/Dislocated Workers Served – 1,016
  - Funds Expended - \$1,352,000
  - Youth Customers Served – 274
  - Funds Expended - \$ 680,000

**FY 2010-2011 NR/MR WIB STAFF**

- Ronnie Martin**, Executive Director
- Marty Holliday**, Deputy Director
- Traci Mitchell**, Compliance Review Officer
- Mary Gilmer**, Compliance Monitor (Part-time)
- Beverly Burke**, Systems Administrator
- Rhonda Womble**, Program Specialist II
- Lynette Dawson**, Program Specialist I
- Della Meadows**, Administrative Assistant

## **Town of Floyd Comprehensive Plan**

PDC staff continued to assist the Town of Floyd Planning Commission and staff in development of the Town's first Comprehensive Plan document focusing solely on the Town. In the past, the Town and Floyd County maintained a joint comprehensive plan that covered both localities. This effort continues into FY 2012.

## **Pulaski County Local Planning Assistance**

The PDC provided staff assistance to Pulaski County in developing refinements to its Wind Energy Ordinance. At the time of its adoption, Pulaski County's Wind Energy Ordinance was the first such local regulation in the Commonwealth to address large, medium, and small wind energy facilities in a single ordinance.

PDC staff also began an effort to assist the Pulaski County Planning Commission and staff in updating the County's Subdivision Ordinance. This effort involves an advisory committee consisting of representatives of the Planning Commission, the development community, and County staff. This project continues into FY 2012.

## **City of Radford Local Planning Assistance**

PDC staff began an effort to assist the City of Radford Planning Commission and staff in updating the City's Subdivision Ordinance. An advisory committee consisting of City Planning Commission members will be involved in developing the update. This effort got underway near the end of the reporting period and will continue into FY 2012.

## **Local Emergency Planning Committee**

The NRVNWA serves 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 required 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.

## **Rocky Knob Sustainable Tourism Centerpiece Project**

Rocky Knob is a planned visitor experience along the Blue Ridge Parkway between Floyd and Patrick Counties. The PDC is serving as grant administrator on behalf of the non-profit, Blue Ridge Heritage, Inc. (BRH, Inc.), the recipients of a federal grant through SAFETEA-LU funding. The PDC is also performing an environmental review prior to site acquisition. Currently BRH, Inc. is working diligently to develop their site programming focused on "A Century of Change in Mountain Heritage." During the coming year, BRH, Inc. anticipates pursuing site acquisition and physical site development.

## **New River Network Wireless Authority**

During FY 09-10, the New River Valley Network Wireless Authority (NRVNWVA) completed and submitted several grant applications to fund the construction of approximately 60 miles of fiber in Pulaski, Giles, and

Montgomery County. The NRVNWVA partnered with Citizens, a telephone cooperative headquartered in Floyd County, for submission of a second round application for ARRA funding from the National Telecommunications and Information Administration. This application was submitted in March '09 and accepted. The final project resulted in a 186 mile project stretching from Wythe County to Botetourt County, including Floyd, Giles, Pulaski, Montgomery, and Roanoke County as well as the cities of Radford, Roanoke, and Salem. The environmental assessment was completed and the Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) was issued in June 2011. Construction will begin in FY 11-12 and is anticipated to conclude in 2013.

## **Pulaski County CDBG**

Pulaski County is under contract with the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for a \$1,000,000 Housing Rehabilitation Community Development Block Grant. The award is for the Baskerville neighborhood outside of Dublin and will include housing rehabilitation, demolition of blighted structures, and street and water line improvements. In total, 12 homes will be rehabilitated and six homes will be torn down and rebuilt. Pulaski will be working with the PDC to administer this grant, scheduled to be completed by the end of 2012.

## Pulaski County Water/Sewer Improvements

The Pulaski County Public Service Authority (PSA) is expanding water and sewer service in the eastern part of the county to serve residents and the New River Valley Commerce Park. The \$6.4 million project is funded in part by a \$3 million grant from the U.S. Economic Development Administration. The project will increase the water and sewer capacity of the New River Valley Commerce Park to one million gallons per day (MGD) and allow for an additional 1 MGD in the eastern part of Pulaski County.

The NRVPC provided grant administration assistance, easement acquisition, and environmental clearance for the Pulaski County PSA and will continue to provide assistance, including grant administration and Davis Bacon wage



compliance for the coming year. The project team has spent the past year in the construction phase with seven contracts awarded for the work. The project will provide a two-million gallon per day water source from the City of Radford to serve both the Commerce Park and the eastern portion of Pulaski County. Plans and



specifications were completed for six parts of the project: upgrades for pumping at the Commerce Park and at the City of Radford water treatment plant; a 24-inch water line that will cross the New River; a 12-inch water main; a force main for the sewer; a new 1 MGD water storage tank; and water and sewer service lines at the Commerce Park.

The project should be completed by September 2012.

## Skyview Sewer Extension Environmental Review

The NRVPC prepared the environmental report for USDA-Rural Development to facilitate approval of funding for public sewer service extension to the Skyview Community and the New River Valley Fairgrounds.

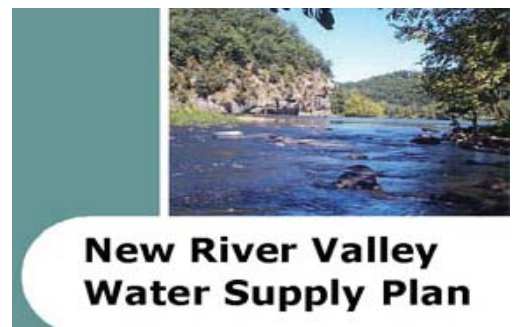
The project will provide sewer service to New River Valley Fairgrounds and Skyview Subdivision located in the center of Pulaski County adjacent to Route 100, Cleburne Boulevard north of the Town of Dublin

corporate limits. This will include gravity sewer to provide service to 18 single-family dwellings and the fairgrounds and sewer lines to serve the majority of Skyview Subdivision (50 dwellings & two commercial ventures).

## Water Supply Plan

In FY '11, final comments were received from the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality on the New River Valley Water Supply Plan. This plan is being written in accordance with the requirements of the Local and Regional Water Supply Planning Regulation (9 VAC 25-780). The study area covers the New River Valley Planning District, except for the Towns of Blacksburg and Christiansburg in Montgomery County. The localities participating in this planning process include the Counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski, the City of Radford, and the Towns of Dublin, Floyd, Glen Lyn, Narrows, Pearisburg, Pembroke, Pulaski, and Rich Creek. The plan includes sections on water source and use information, existing resources information, projected water demand into the future, water demand management, drought response and system needs and alternatives.

More than half of the participating localities adopted the plan prior to June 30. The remaining localities are scheduled to adopt prior to the regulation deadline of November 1, 2011 for regional plans. A revised version of the plan is currently available on the NRVPC website at: <http://www.nrvpc.org/watersupply.html>.



## **Department of Labor Grant Administration**

The Jacksonville Center for the Arts received a Department of Labor grant for job training. The NRVPCDC was retained to handle all fiscal reporting for the earmark grant: "Employability Enhancement: Intermediate & Advanced Small Business Skills Training." Assistance included coordinating with center staff and the Department of Labor project representative to ensure funds are spent and accounted for within federal guidelines.

## **NRV Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan**

A Hazard Mitigation Plan is required by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) for localities that wish to apply for federal funds to mitigate the impacts of natural hazards on their communities. Mitigation is defined as sustained actions taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk from hazards and their effects. For example, some communities have used mitigation funds to acquire flood-prone properties and turn them into community green spaces and parks. The Hazard Mitigation Plan is developed to identify the hazards specific to our communities and analyze the risks associated with those hazards. Once the hazards have been identified and the risks assessed, communities develop strategies to mitigate the risks and identify specific projects to pursue.

The original NRV Hazard Mitigation Plan was developed in 2004 and approved by FEMA in 2005. FEMA requires an update of the plan every five years, so in 2009 the NRVPCDC received funding to collaborate with Radford University to complete this update.

In this past fiscal year, a steering committee has been meeting to discuss the plan and regional hazards. The group has been providing assistance and direction to project staff in collecting data and developing mitigation plan goals. Committee members have also been providing review and input for the beginning chapters of the draft plan. The committee is composed of representatives from NRV localities, regional emergency response organizations, public works authorities, and state and federal agencies.

Working groups have been meeting for in-depth discussions of individual hazards and to brainstorm mitigation strategies specific to each hazard. Working group meetings were conducted monthly throughout the rest of the fiscal year. The groups were organized around the following hazards: drought, geologic hazards (landslides, rockfall, karst, and earthquakes), severe weather, flooding, wildfire, and human-caused. They met to review the data prepared by project team member Radford University's geography department and to develop mitigation strategies.

NRVPCDC staff completed an inventory of critical facilities in the region (including VDOT identified structures), housing stock (specifically for low-to-moderate income families) and hazardous materials locations. They also worked with the regional Disabilities Services Board and created a web-based GIS system to display visual data to the public. This new and additional information will provide unique and valuable insights for this planning process.

As part of the update, new mapping has been created by Radford University. Some of this mapping is unique to the NRV and sets it apart from other regions in the state with its higher level of analysis and the new information for our communities. The plan has been submitted to the state and federal regulatory agencies for review. Adoption of the plan is anticipated in the coming fiscal year. Information about the project is available at [www.nrvpcdc.org/HazardMitigation/HazardMitigationPlanning.html](http://www.nrvpcdc.org/HazardMitigation/HazardMitigationPlanning.html) as an additional means to inform the public and solicit comments on the plan.



# TRANSPORTATION

## Mobility Management

The PDC recently completed a working transit resource manual which provides a comprehensive overview of all the region's transit options. Extensive data was collected on each existing transit provider in the New River Valley through site visits and follow-up conversations with each provider.

The manual was printed in hardcopy and distributed to each local government. The manual will also be translated to an online interactive website, allowing the public to access this information as well.

In the future, the PDC will partner with an existing provider to hire a Mobility Manager to implement the project through direct customer support, region-wide outreach, and related transportation education across the region.

Ultimately, the goal of the project is to serve the transit-seeking public who may otherwise go unserved when unable to find the best provider to meet their needs.

This grant was provided by the Department of Rail and Public Transportation under its New Freedom program.

## Regional Transit Organization Analysis

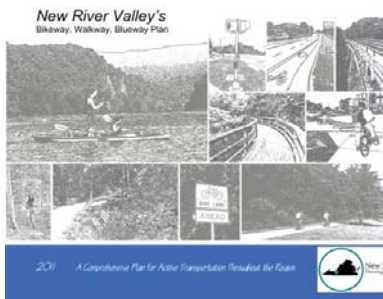
The Regional Transit Organization Study was initiated by the New River Valley Planning District Commission (PDC) and the Blacksburg-Christiansburg-Montgomery Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The purpose of the study is to evaluate the long term organization models identified in the Department of Rail and Public Transportation's (DRPT) Transit Service Plan for City of Radford/Radford University, prepared in December 2009. The PDC and MPO are both aware that the interest in public transportation in the region is growing, and there may be opportunities to develop partnerships that would benefit local communities.

The planning process is being led by a stakeholder committee that consists of transit operators and local partners that contribute funding to provide services. A draft of the study is expected in Fall 2011.

## Grant Writing

In October, Commonwealth Transportation Board representatives visited the region to talk about the Transportation Enhancement Program. 2010 applicants were able to present their project ideas and receive preliminary feedback to strengthen their applications.

This year the PDC assisted Pulaski County in managing the grant for their Newbern Historical Museum project; the town of Glen Lyn in upgrading pedestrian access to the town park and the New River; the town of Rich Creek in upgrading both pedestrian and vehicular flow in the downtown area and Giles County for sidewalk improvements in Pearisburg. The grant applications resulted in a \$200,000 grant to Rich Creek and \$100,000 grant to Glen Lyn to continue their downtown enhancement projects. The PDC also assisted local governments in addressing Davis-Bacon requirements for federally funded projects in the region.



The **New River Valley's Bikeway, Walkway, Blueway 2011** plan was developed from the ground up, starting in early 2009. As opposed to a simple plan update, the PDC's Bikeway-Walkway Committee felt that the plan could be a better resource if each jurisdiction provided individual input.

After meeting with all 4 counties, 1 city, and 8 out of 10 towns in the region – PDC staff found that each community was in different stages of development and subsequently had different needs. Based on these individual meetings, the document needed to become more flexible, so that a range of solutions could be explored by the local community and partnering stakeholders.

Ultimately, the 2011 plan is a resource that identifies multi-jurisdictional connections, establishes common goals and priorities, serves as a resource for local or statewide planning, and provides materials that can be used to pursue funding.

A new web page has also been created for the draft plan and public comment is welcome. The plan is currently under review by each jurisdiction and is scheduled to be on the Commission's agenda in late Fall 2011. The website also features access to an interactive Google map that showcases existing facilities and access points in the region. For more information, please visit <http://www.nrvpdc.org/Transportation/bwwwbw.html>.



RIDE Solutions' presence in the NRV began with just 56 NRV participants and now has over 1500 New River Valley commuters participating as of June 2011. The focus of the New River Valley program has been to increase membership through workplace partnerships. The significant increase is a reflection of a stronger partnership with Virginia Tech. This year we continued to provide financial support for their Commuter Alternatives Program and secured expanded communications to employees and unique publicity for RIDE Solutions.

Staff also engaged in promotional activities in the New River Valley community at large to bring attention to RIDE Solutions and educate and assist residents and commuters in their transportation choices by exhibiting and presenting at events in the region, such as the following:

- New River Valley Job Fair
- Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce Expo
- Warm Hearth Green Living Festival



Staff have also been building recognition of RIDE Solutions through press releases, publications and presentations. RIDE Solutions staff continue to be involved in go green NRV – a regional organization offering

local businesses an avenue to “green” their business practices – to help further their success and promote sustainable transportation and the resources RIDE Solutions can offer to participating businesses.

Activities with the NRV RIDE Solutions program this year include producing several events with local partners:

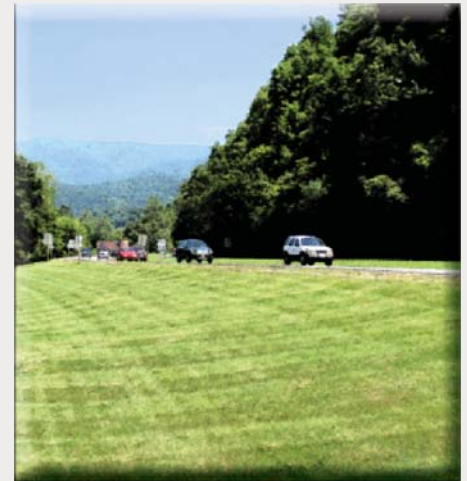
- Blacksburg Fix Fest and Bike Swap (with New River Bicycling Association, Sustainable Blacksburg and the Town of Blacksburg)
- Blacksburg Clean Commute Friday (also with New River Bicycling Association, Sustainable Blacksburg and the Town of Blacksburg)
- Bike/Walk to School Day with several of Blacksburg's Safe Routes to School elementary schools

Working with local businesses, RIDE Solutions is looking to make the most impact with limited funds. RIDE Solutions' NRV staff is helping local businesses plan and implement promotional campaigns, educational outreach and rideshare matching for their employees. These efforts are reducing commuters' costs, helping businesses retain employees who might look for work closer to home without alternative transportation options, and improving regional air quality by reducing the number of vehicle miles traveled.

RIDE Solutions continued to provide assistance to existing Workplace Partners through workplace promotions to boost carpool participation, employee surveys, technology solutions, and event exhibits.

## Statewide Transportation Plans

Each year the Commission participates in statewide planning initiatives that are led by the Virginia Department of Transportation, Department of Rail and Public Transportation, and other state/federal agencies as requested. This year, the PDC continued to work with VDOT on the 2035 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan. Public meetings were held to gather input and a final draft was completed in June 2011. The final document is set to be reviewed/endorsed by the Commission in September 2011. Additional information about the plan, or other VDOT related plans, can be found online at [www.vdot.virginia.gov](http://www.vdot.virginia.gov).



The PDC also worked with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation to develop Transit Development Plans (TDP). In 2010, Blacksburg Transit and Pulaski Area Transit completed their plans. The purpose of TDPs is to evaluate existing performance, define current services, develop a feasible and equitable financial plan, recommend modifications, and identify future plans/needs for the next six years. The new process not only helps local transit operators to have plans in place, but it also allows DRPT to understand their future needs to support local demand.



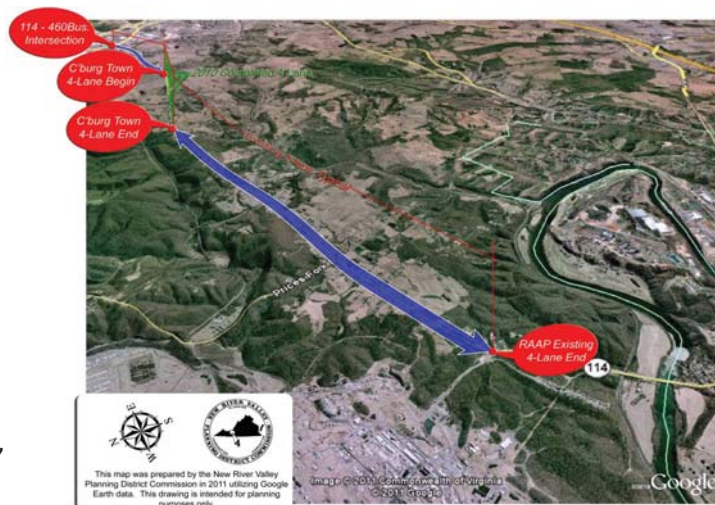
# ANNUAL RURAL TRANSPORTATION WORK PROGRAM

Each year the PDC partners with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to provide transportation planning assistance to the rural communities (areas outside of the MPO) in the region. In 2010, the PDC put the rural transportation dollars to work in Floyd County, the Town of Floyd, Montgomery County, and the City of Radford. Assistance was provided to shape the transportation component of local comprehensive plans, begin a corridor study aimed at addressing access management, and provide technical assistance to develop a new transit system.

The Rural Work Program also provides critical funding to provide staffing for the Transportation Technical Advisory Committee and the Bikeway/Walkway

Committee. The TAC advises the NRVPC on transportation matters and serves as a forum for discussing regional transportation issues. The TAC is also responsible for establishing the framework of the Rural Work Program. The Bikeway/Walkway Committee is a subcommittee to the TAC. In addition to providing leadership to develop the Bikeway, Walkway, Blueway Plan, the committee provides planners, engineers, local

organizations, and others interested in bicycle and pedestrian improvements a means to communicate on a regular basis.



## FY 2010-2011 NRVPC STAFF

**Kevin Byrd, AICP**  
Executive Director

**Jack Whitmore**  
Regional Planner

**Kim Thurlow**  
Project Coordinator

**Shirl Quesenberry**  
Director of Finance and Personnel

**Christy Straight**  
Regional Planner

**Carol Davis**  
Community Outreach Facilitator

**Jan Gilbertson**  
Information Systems Manager

**Elijah Sharp**  
Regional Planner

**Part Time**

**Janet McNew**  
Program Administrator

**Bradley Mecham**  
Regional Planner

**David Ratcliff**  
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**Jennifer Wilsie**  
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Regional Planner II

**Ken Hall**  
Regional Planner

**Regina Elsner**  
Regional Planner

**Phil Gilbertson**  
Senior Cartographer

**Justin Blackburn**  
Cartographer

# FINANCIAL OPERATIONS

## Statement of Revenues & Expenditures Year Ended June 30, 2011

	BUDGET	ACTUAL
<b>REVENUES:</b>		
Floyd County	16,534.00	16,534.00
Town of Floyd	531.00	531.00
Giles County	13,717.00	13,717.00
Town of Narrows	2,597.00	2,597.00
Town of Pearisburg	3,357.00	3,357.00
Town of Rich Creek	818.00	818.00
Montgomery County	33,344.00	33,344.00
Town of Blacksburg	38,958.00	38,958.00
Town of Christiansburg	20,845.00	20,845.00
Pulaski County	31,554.00	31,554.00
Town of Pulaski	11,652.00	11,652.00
City of Radford	16,294.00	16,294.00
Radford University	3,213.00	3,213.00
Virginia Tech	9,717.00	9,717.00
<b>Total Local Revenue</b>	<b>203,131.00</b>	<b>203,131.00</b>
Interest Income	0.00	61.76
Contract Income	364,316.00	336,440.44
Miscellaneous Income (Includes sale of surplus property)	0.00	15,803.40
Revenue from the Commonwealth:		
DHCD Operating Grant	66,062.00	66,062.00
WIA	494,526.00	434,889.88
Virginia Department of Transportation	58,000.00	58,000.00
DOF	9,625.00	8,335.28
VT (Rideshare)	0.00	0.00
Revenue from the Federal Government:		
Appalachian Regional Commission	70,072.00	82,696.92
Economic Development Administration	70,000.00	87,547.25
Other/Funds Carried Forward	86,574.26	86,574.26
<b>Total Other Revenue</b>	<b>1,219,175.26</b>	<b>1,176,411.19</b>
<b>TOTAL REVENUES</b>	<b>1,422,306.26</b>	<b>1,379,542.19</b>
<b>EXPENDITURES</b>		
Salaries	840,380.77	780,590.27
Benefits	243,013.92	266,596.31
Travel	72,421.90	40,948.47
Office Space	53,583.60	53,582.04
Telephone	10,368.24	10,413.16
Office Supplies	26,827.05	25,810.69
Postage	9,356.64	5,197.58
Printing/Copies	21,159.58	14,022.59
Map Purchases	0.00	0.00
Media Adv.	2,017.60	4,244.35
Equip. Rent/Equip. Maint.	20,854.04	13,647.55
Dues & Pubs	9,764.27	7,678.22
Training	1,100.00	1,225.00
Meeting Costs	136.00	4,958.10
Depreciation	2,891.88	2,891.88
Insurance	8,700.00	4,875.00
Capital Outlay	5,000.00	3,012.55
Contract Serv.	26,689.00	66,680.18
Audit Fee	8,295.00	7,475.04
Misc.	59,746.77	41,076.25
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURES</b>	<b>1,422,306.26</b>	<b>1,354,925.23</b>





## New River Valley Planning District Commission

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