New River Valley RES

Regional Economic Strategy

2026









NRVRC

new river valley regional commission







TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	2
About the Region	3
SWOT Analysis	10
Resilience	11
Action	13
Appendix	21
Projects List	22
Evaluation Framework	34
RES Members	37













INTRODUCTION

The New River Valley Regional Economic Strategy (RES), also known as the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS), is designed to create broad goals to develop the region's economy in partnership with the region's communities. Implementing these goals will promote regional and local growth. Input from a range of partners representing private and public sectors informed the creation of the RES. The committee reviews economic conditions, sets priorities, and offers guidance for this strategy to shape the economic focus for the region.

The RES contains the following sections:

1. **About the Region:** An overview providing context and information about the current state of the New River Valley (NRV) and its effects on the economy.
2. **SWOT Analysis:** A collaborative process utilized to determine regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The SWOT tool identifies priorities to promote and expand the region's economic capacity.
3. **Resilience:** An exploration of the region's ability to prevent, withstand, and recover from disruptions to its economy, particularly the COVID-19 pandemic.
4. **Action Plan:** Informed by the SWOT analysis and Resilience sections, the Action Plan sets regional priorities and strategies for economic development and documents the region's priority projects.
5. **Evaluation Framework:** A means of identifying and prioritizing RES projects that will positively impact the region's economy and enable the commission to track the progress of economic priorities and development over time.

ABOUT THE REGION

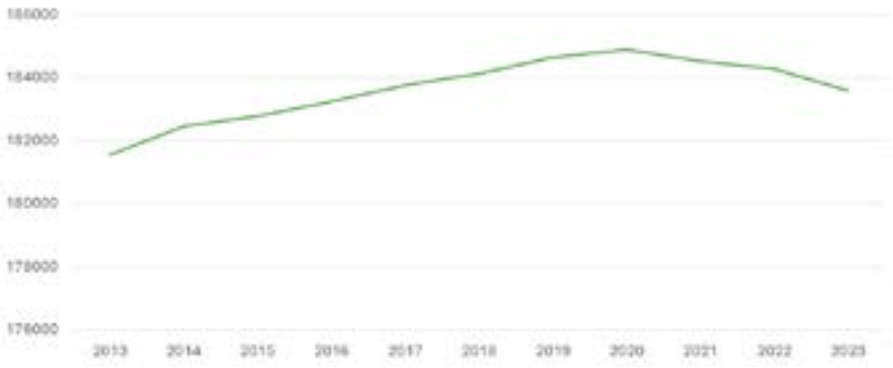
The NRV comprises the counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski, the City of Radford, and 10 incorporated towns. The region also has three higher education institutions: Virginia Tech, Radford University, and New River Community College.

Additional data about the region can be found at https://nrvrc.org/data.

Demographics

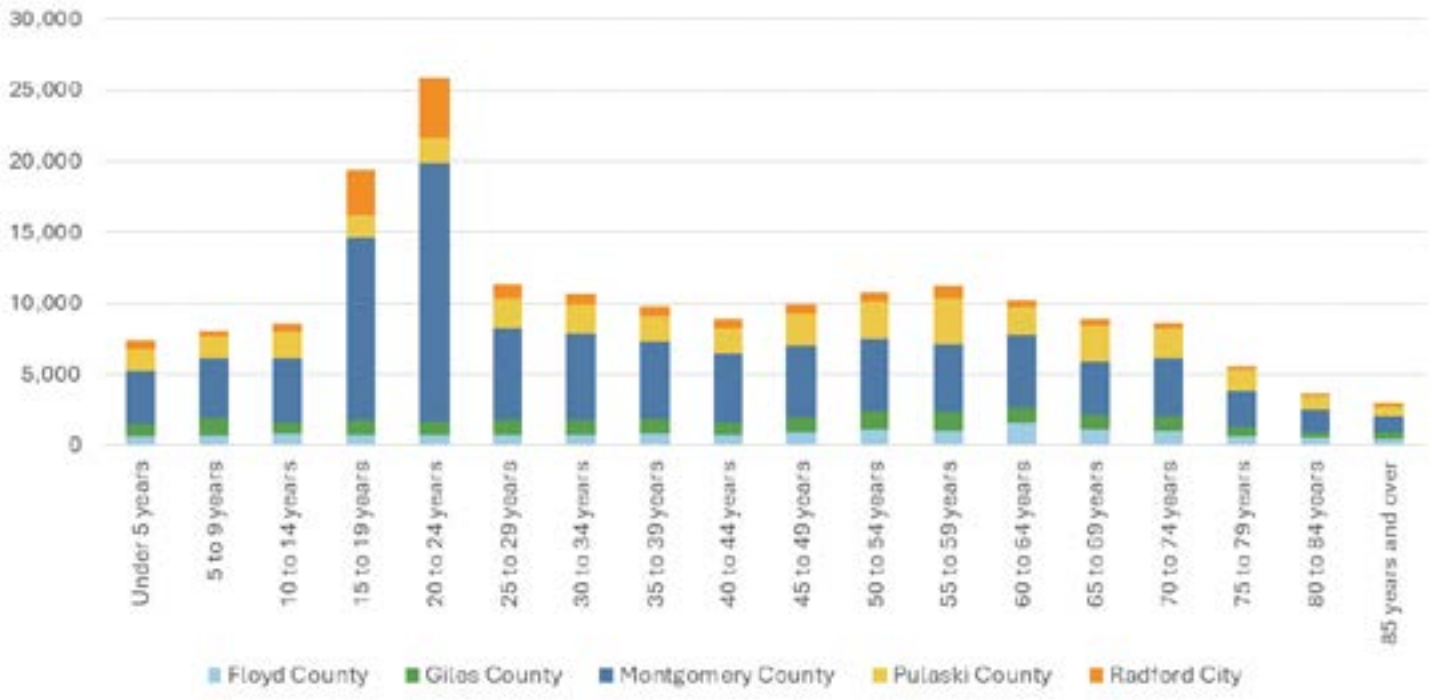
The pandemic has notably impacted regions worldwide, and the NRV is no exception. With an estimated population of 183,586 as of 2023, the NRV is projected to experience a decrease of 0.4% through 2030. In contrast, the Commonwealth's projected population growth rate is 4.6% over the same time period.

Total Population of the New River Valley 2013-2023



Weldon Cooper Center of Public Service, 2023. Total Population Estimates: Counties, and Cities: 2013-2023. https://demographic.coopercenter.org/virginia-population-estimates (accessed February 5, 2024)

Population Total by Age

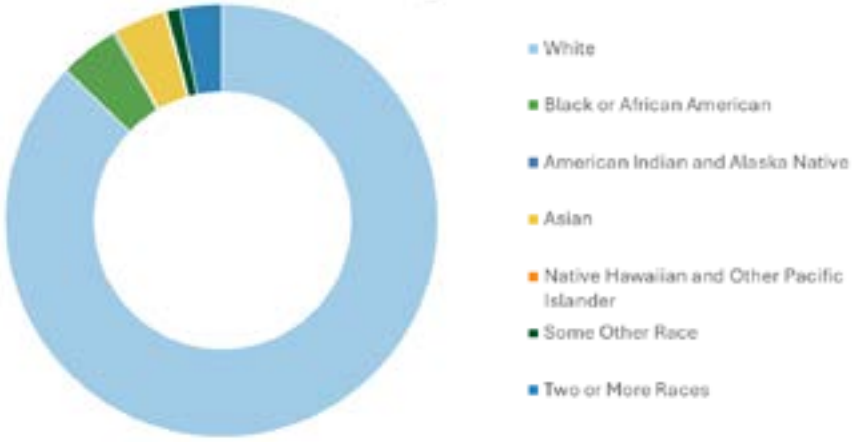


U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. https://data.census.gov/(accessed February 9, 2024).

Virginia Tech and Radford University attract over 40,000 students annually. The large student population shifts the median age, particularly in Montgomery County at 29.7 years and Radford at 23.3 years. The median age for the NRV is 38.8 years and is slightly above the Commonwealth's median age of 38.5 years. Counties with small numbers of students have median ages well above the Commonwealth, with median ages between 45.4 to 48.4 in Giles, Floyd, and Pulaski Counties. The higher the median age in these counties suggests that part of our region's permanent population is aging.

The population primarily identifies as white/Caucasian within the NRV. Of residents in the NRV, 12.7% identify as a minority, and 3% identifies as Hispanic. In Virginia, the minority population makes up 37.8% of the population, and 10% of the population identifies as Hispanic.

New River Valley Race and Ethnicity

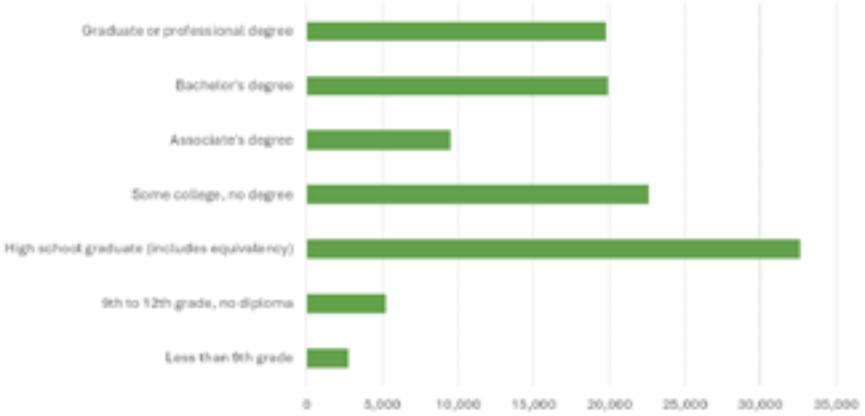


U.S. Census Bureau, 2022 American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates. https://data.census.gov/(accessed February 9, 2024).

Educational Attainment

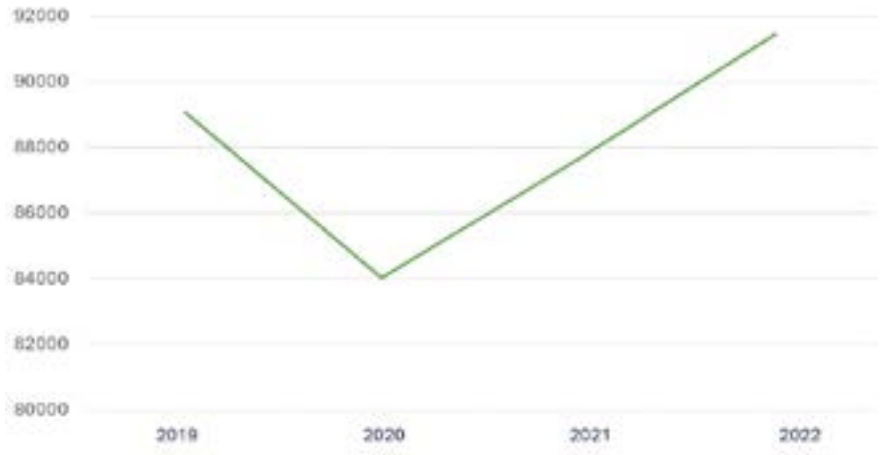
Radford University, Virginia Tech, and New River Community College offer quality higher education and draw students worldwide. Compared to Virginia, the region has a 1.8% better rate of high school graduations or higher than the state, and a 5.7% lower rate of baccalaureate degree or higher awards. However, at the national level, the NRV performs 3.8% higher for high school and above, and 1% for a bachelor's degree or higher.

Educational Attainment



U.S. Census Bureau. 5 Yr. ACS,2022. Educational Attainment of NRV population 25 and older. https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2022.S1501 (accessed February 9, 2024).

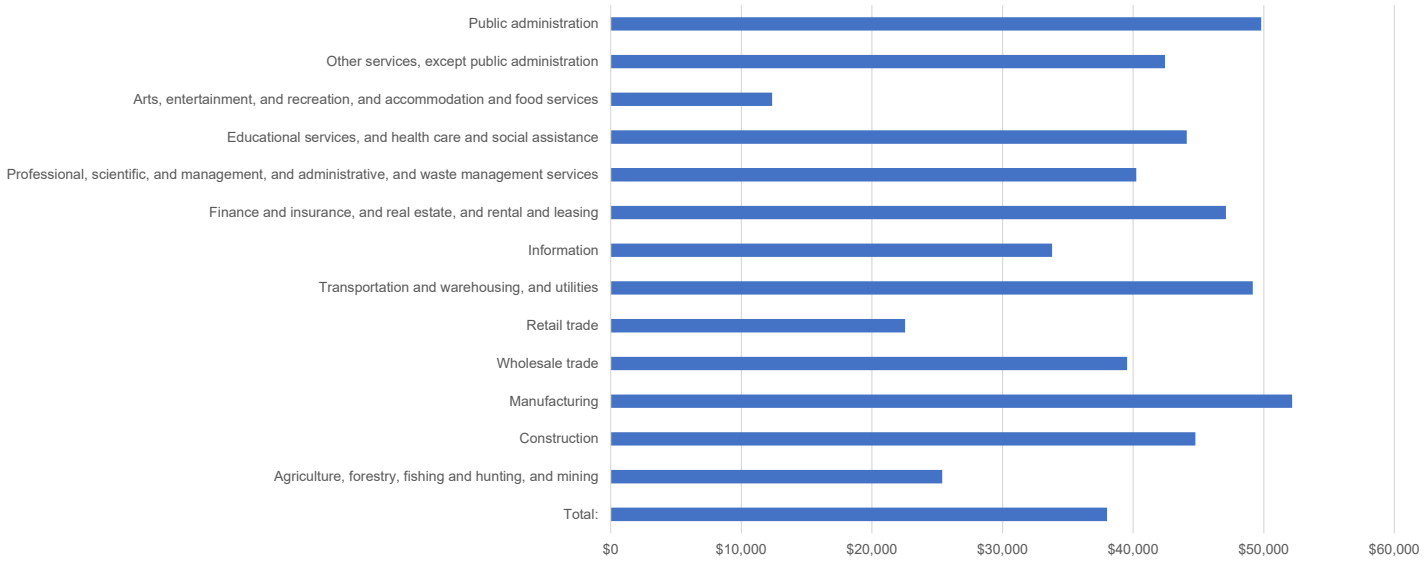
Employment for New River Valley



Virginia Employment Commission, Virginia Works, Local Area Unemployment Statistics https://virginiaworks.com/Local-Area-Unemployment-Statistics-LAUS (accessed January 8, 2024).

Employment

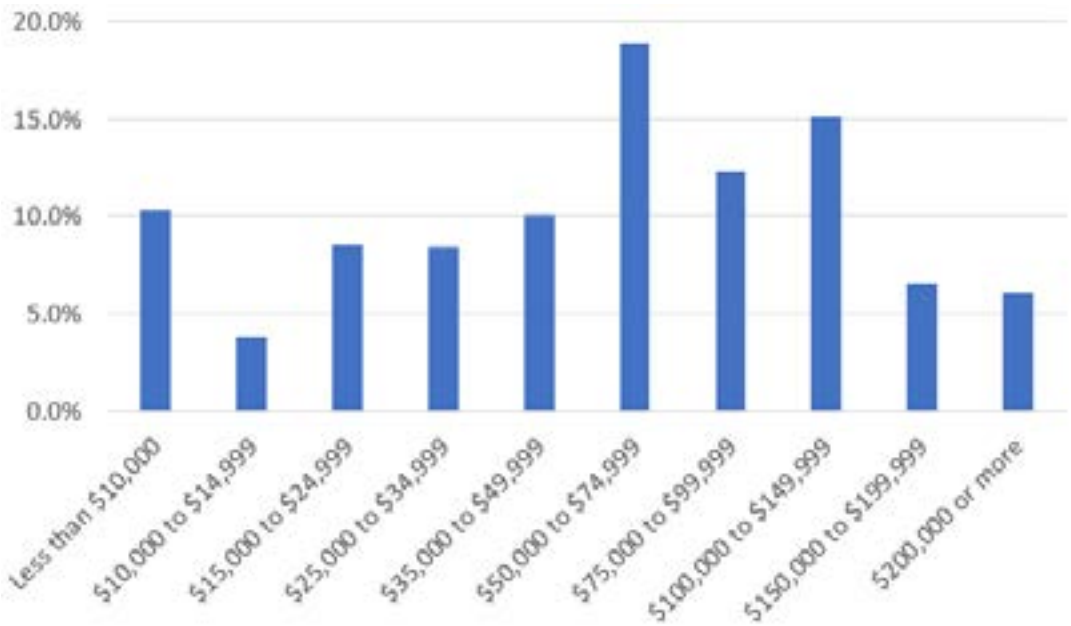
In 2020 the region experienced a notable spike in unemployment. Pulaski surpassed other localities, likely a result of saturation in the manufacturing sector. Since then, the NRV has seen a stabilization and reduction in unemployment rates, with most localities outperforming both Virginia and national averages in the post-pandemic period. However, Radford's unemployment rates have remained higher, aligning more closely with national figures. In 2022, the total number of those employed in the NRV rose to 91,463 surpassing the pre-pandemic numbers from 2019.



U.S. Census Bureau. 5 Yr. ACS,2022. Selected Economic Characteristics. https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST1Y2022.S2403 (accessed February 9, 2024).

In 2022, workers in the NRV earned a median wage of $51,579 annually. This is lower than the state and national levels of $63,335 and $57,337 respectively.

Household Income



U.S. Census Bureau. 5 Yr. ACS,2022. Income in the past 12 months. https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S1901?q=S1901 (accessed Febraury 7, 2024).

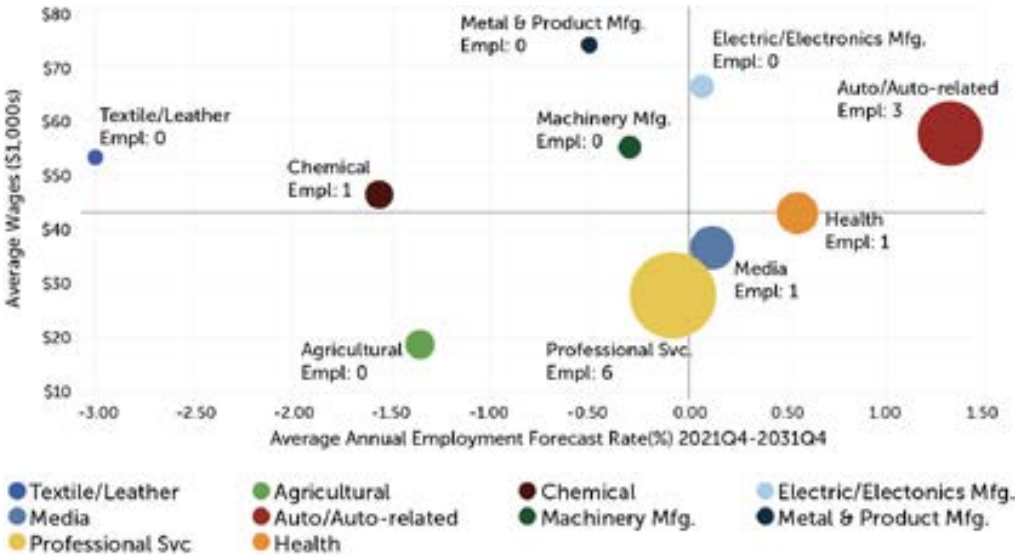
The median household income for the NRV was $61,672 in 2022. This is lower than the state and national average at $87,249 and $75,149 respectively. However, the NRV is relatively affordable compared to other Virginia metro areas.

Target Sectors

Target sectors are any business activity type that is strategically pursued by an economic development organization and its partners for growth and development. Virginia's Initiative for Growth and Opportunity in Each Region (GO Virginia) is a statewide, bipartisan, business-led economic development initiative. By analyzing regional workforce, economic, and geographic similarities, and potentials, GO Virginia regions develop growth and diversification plans which recommend industry areas that offer high paying, growing economic opportunities and encourage development within these sectors within their economies.

The GO Virginia Region 2 Council, which includes the New River Valley as well as the Roanoke and Lynchburg regions, has identified several target industry clusters for the region to develop including transportation/automated vehicles; materials/machinery; life sciences/ healthcare; and information and emerging technologies.

Industry Clusters for New River CDP, VA as of 2021 Q4



JobsEQ. Cluster Analysis 2021 Q4. Accessed May 24, 2021.

Advanced Manufacturing

Advanced manufacturing comprises 164 companies and approximately 12,633 employees within the NRV. This sector has grown by around 12% over the last five years. AM2, the Additive Manufacturing and Advanced Materials Hub, builds on GO Virginia and EDA-supported planning to strengthen advanced manufacturing across Southern and Southwest Virginia. An active implementation phase focuses on technology adoption, commercialization, and workforce alignment to help manufacturers become more competitive and resilient.

Primary sub-sectors: chemicals, plastics & materials, automotive, and motion control systems.

Unmanned Systems and Automation

Regional assets to assist sector development includes 2 FAA-Designated UAS test sites, 2.8 Miles of VTTI Smart Road Test Track, and an 85 ft. high netted drone park within the New River Valley.

Primary sub-sectors: component manufacturing, software & cybersecurity, research & development, unmanned vehicle systems assembly.

Emerging Tech and IT

The sector comprises 90 companies within the New River Valley. These companies employ approximately 1562 people and have grown by around 5% in the last five years.

Primary sub-sectors: software development, cybersecurity, IT support, and digital creative services.

Food Processing and Agribusiness

The sector comprises 2,294 farms totaling over 400,000 acres and 73 food and beverage processors within the New River Valley. The Region also has 1.7 billion gallons of average daily river flow, making the NRV ideal for value-added food production.

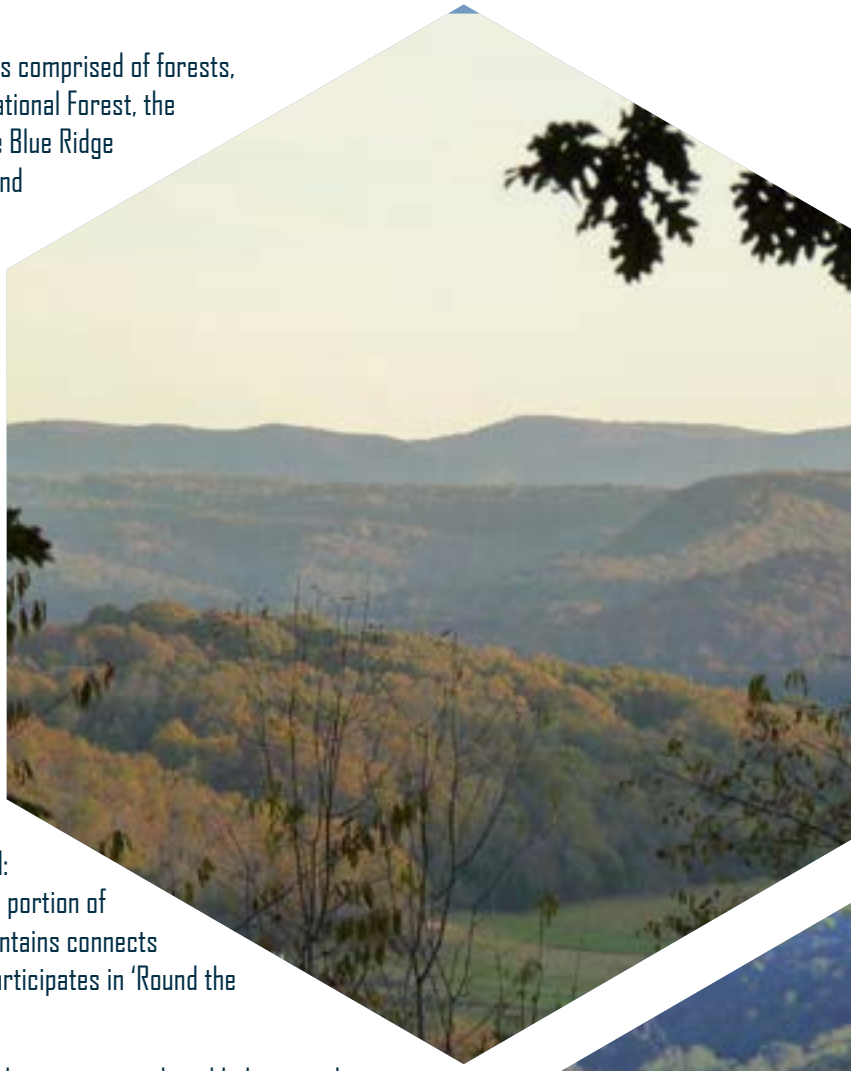
Primary sub-sectors: specialty food & beverage, breweries, wineries, distilleries, value-add agriculture, packaging.

Natural Resources

Land Resources

The NRV has many natural amenities that promote regional identity and generate tourism. The average elevation within the region is 2,500 feet above sea level. Elevation in the region ranges from 1,470 feet in Glen Lyn to 4,348 feet at Bald Knob.

The region is categorized as predominantly rural and its landscape is comprised of forests, mountains, and farmland. Major land resources include Jefferson National Forest, the Appalachian Trail (a portion of which runs through Giles County), the Blue Ridge Parkway, Gatewood Park, Buffalo Mountain Natural Area Preserve, and others.



Water Resources

The New River, for which the NRV is named, is the oldest river in North America. The New River, and its tributaries, flows through Giles, Pulaski and Montgomery Counties and Radford City and serves as the main stem of the New River basin. The Little River, Peak Creek, Big Walker Creek, and Dodd's Creek are a few of the tributaries of the New River. This abundance of water resources has spurred the area's agribusiness sector and draws visitors for outdoor recreation year-round.

Cultural Resources

In addition to many natural resources, the NRV boasts rich cultural resources and history. The region is home to many skilled local artisans and local musicians who keep these Appalachian traditions alive. Among the many attractions of the region is The Crooked Road: Southwest Virginia's Heritage Music Trail. A 330-mile driving trail (a portion of which runs through Floyd County) through Southwest Virginia's mountains connects music venues and festivals over Southwest Virginia. The NRV also participates in 'Round the Mountain, Southwest Virginia's artisan network.

The region also has many historic "downtown" commercial centers that serve as cultural hubs in each community. These commercial districts support small business, particularly in the retail, restaurant, and service sectors, and provide residents with quality of life and visitors with a sense of place.



Historical Resources

The NRV was originally used as hunting grounds by Native American populations for centuries before Europeans arrived. These settlers came along the Great Wilderness Road as development expanded westward. The area became an outpost for routes leading towards the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers in the late 18th and 19th centuries. The NRV also became contested ground in the Revolutionary and Civil Wars.

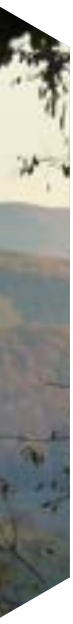
Today, the region is home to many other historical landmarks and places, including the Glencoe house in Radford, Mabrey Mill in Floyd County, and the Andrew Johnson House in Giles County.

Transportation

Roads

Interstate 81 and U.S. Route 460 are major routes for freight trucking within the region and throughout the state. Recent upgrades to expand capacity and address maintenance issues on Interstate 81 in the region ensure that these routes are effective avenues to transport goods. Additionally, most of the region's population travels by car. The average commute time is approximately 22 minutes. Less than 1% of the region's population does not own a vehicle.

The communities of Radford, Pulaski, and Blacksburg/Christiansburg offer bus and transit options for residents, while also addressing university and college student transportation needs. Due to limited transit service areas, public transit is often not a feasible means of travel for many of the region's rural residents. Even with this limitation, the NRV has a more robust transportation system compared to many similarly-sized counterparts in other areas of the state.





Rail

Norfolk Southern's Heartland and Crescent Corridors intersect east of Radford. Both corridors are of national significance for freight movement. These rails move freight for Pulaski, Giles, and Montgomery Counties, and Radford City. Rail has lower fuel costs and is more efficient for transporting more goods faster.

While no passenger rail exists in the NRV currently, service will be extended from Roanoke to Christiansburg. The Virginia Passenger Rail Authority will be working with the NRV Passenger Rail Station Authority to oversee this work, slated for completion within the next five years.

Airports

There are two general aviation facilities in the NRV: the Virginia Tech Montgomery Executive Airport in Blacksburg and the New River Valley Airport just north of Dublin in Pulaski County. The New River Valley Airport is a registered foreign trade zone and international port of entry. The nearest commercial passenger airport is Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport, approximately ten miles east of the region.





Utilities

Water and Sewer

The region has varying degrees of water and sewer system availability. The region's towns and the City of Radford are served by public water and sewer, while the remainder of residents are served by private wells and septic systems. However, aging infrastructure and population changes have made it necessary to upgrade public utility systems to ensure continued, reliable access.

Energy

The NRV's energy prices have reached the national average recently after historically being low. As these prices have increased, alternative means of producing energy at a lower cost to residents have been considered. Programs such as SolarizeNRV have been implemented to encourage residents and business owners to consider investing in solar energy installation. Pulaski County also recently approved special use permits to develop a solar farm that will produce 300MW, enough energy to power an estimated 57,000 homes.

Broadband and Cell Service

Multiple wireless providers exist in the region; however, coverage remains limited. The NRV still has many rural residents whose "last-mile" connection and high internet service costs are often barriers to broadband access. Currently, Montgomery, Giles, and Pulaski counties are pursuing projects to expand fiber-to-the-home and increase access to high-speed internet. Virginia, in partnership with Virginia Tech, has developed a mapping tool that allows communities to view gaps in broadband coverage for planning purposes. This can be viewed at: https://commonwealth-connection.com/



SWOT ANALYSIS

The NRV's RES Committee discusses regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats during its meetings. In 2025, an extensive update to the SWOT analysis and revisions were made based on recent events within the region.

Strength - a region's competitive advantages (e.g., industry supply changes, specialized workforce, stakeholder collaboration, etc.); these characteristics are often internal.

Weakness - a region's competitive disadvantages (e.g., change-resistant culture), also often internal by nature.

Opportunity - openings of regional progress (e.g., expansion of regional life science sector); often these are external forces that impact the region.

Threat - foreseen possible negative impacts on the region which cause decline (e.g., global pandemic). These are often external events that impact the region.

Strengths

- **Strong culture of community collaboration**, regional pride, and stakeholder engagement, with robust cross-sector partnerships and placemaking efforts.
- **Diverse industries and highly skilled trade workforce**, emphasizing the importance of nurturing trades.
- **Variety of community types** (rural, suburban, urban) offering unique living options and intentional lifestyles.
- **Commitment to workforce development through partnerships** across healthcare, local governments, private businesses, and industries.
- **Progress in trade and small business education** supporting local entrepreneurship.
- **Collaborative housing initiatives** addressing regional needs (e.g., Home Consortium, Housing Trust Fund).
- **Resilient IT sector** in Blacksburg-Christiansburg supporting innovation and skilled employment.
- **Public lands and outdoor recreation** enhancing quality of life, tourism, and regional identity.
- **Accessibility via major transportation corridors**, including interstates I-81 and I-77.

Weaknesses

- **Wage disparities** discouraging pursuit of skilled training and certifications.
- **Limited workforce availability to support industries**, compounded by talent and business loss to larger metropolitan areas.
- **Shortage of affordable and available housing**, with wages not keeping pace with rising housing costs.
- **Insufficient industrial sites and properties** for business growth and corporate relocations.
- **Training programs are limited in scope**, inclusivity, and should focus more on job quality and career growth opportunities.
- **Limited job opportunities for trailing spouses** of relocating professionals.
- **Gaps in healthcare access**, particularly OB-GYN and senior services.
- **Public transit and rural transportation** infrastructure remain inadequate despite progress with passenger rail expansion.



Opportunities

- **Enhanced placemaking to improve quality of life** and attract tourism.
- **Growth in life sciences and target industries**, with inspiration from regional success stories like GOVA Region 2's clean room.
- **Attracting remote workers and families** by leveraging broadband improvements and quality of life.
- **Development of outdoor recreation as a destination** through strategic regional collaboration.
- **Strengthened K-12 and business partnerships** to educate students about local opportunities and build a future workforce pipeline.
- **Expansion of higher education opportunities through partnerships** with Virginia Tech, Radford University, and local community colleges.
- **Retaining local university graduates** through stronger connections to the region's workforce and industries.

Threats

- **Slower IT sector growth** potentially impacting long-term economic stability.
- **Continued gaps in healthcare access** diminishing quality of life and talent retention.
- **Persistent housing shortages** hindering workforce attraction and retention.
- **Lack of public transportation** limiting regional accessibility and economic momentum.
- **Childcare shortages** creating challenges for families and reducing workforce participation.
- **Federal funding uncertainties** jeopardizing regional programs and initiatives.
- **Limited venture capital** forcing businesses to relocate to better-funded regions.
- **Exposure to extreme weather events** and ongoing risks threatening infrastructure and regional assets.
- **Tariff uncertainties and shifting trade policies** disrupting supply chains, increasing costs, and complicating long-term business planning.

RESILIENCE

Disasters occur when extreme events encounter vulnerable communities. According to the National Risk Index (NRI), the NRV has a very low risk of being impacted by natural disasters. The region is fortunate to encounter fewer extreme events than other communities within the Commonwealth. However, recent flooding and extreme weather events have demonstrated the increasing vulnerability of some communities.

New River Valley Risk Index

County	Rating	Score
Floyd	Very Low	3.25
Giles	Very Low	7.06
Montgomery	Very Low	26.41
Pulaski	Very Low	9.61
Radford	Very Low	3.34

FEMA. National Risk Index. Accessed on March 21, 2025. https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/map#.

The ability of a community or region to improve after a disaster is known as resilience. Historically, when disasters have occurred in the NRV, the region has been more resilient than the surrounding regions and often the State. The relative safety and resilience of the NRV has not lessened the emphasis placed on disaster preparedness and emergency response planning within the region. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, the NRV has faced a compounding disaster that has affected many aspects of society. By capitalizing on regional strength, communities have banded together to ensure thier resident' health, safety, and well-being.

New River Valley Social Vulnerability

County	Rating	Score
Floyd	Very Low	9.93
Giles	Very Low	13.30
Montgomery	Relatively Low	31.32
Pulaski	Relatively Low	33.29
Radford	Moderate	41.85

FEMA. Social Vulnerability Index. Accessed on March 21, 2025. https://hazards.fema.gov/nri/map#

In a survey conducted by Onward NRV and Virginia Tech Center Economic and Community Engagement in September 2020, regional manufacturing and technology companies were asked about COVID's impact on their business and the prospects for their business in the upcoming year. Sixty-two percent of manufacturers and 63% of technology companies expected to retain their employees. Sixty-two percent of manufacturers had unfilled production worker and engineer positions that needed to be filled, and 38% of tech companies needed software engineers, account executives, and production schedulers. Both sectors' businesses generally had a positive outlook for the following year. The most significant concerns among companies were the health and safety of employees.

In a follow-up survey, NRV manufacturing and technology companies were asked to evaluate their business nearly two years after the initial survey. Follow-up results from the 2022 survey show that regional manufacturing and technology companies have performed strongly since the pandemic. Relative to pre-pandemic levels, the majority of firms —75% of manufacturing firms and 83% of technology firms— report maintaining or increasing the number of employees at their firm. Furthermore, firms in both sectors anticipate employment growth into the future. Most manufacturing firms (82% report unfilled positions, such as purchasing agents, accountants, engineers, machine operators, technicians, and assemblers. Just over half of technology firms (56% have unfilled positions, such as developers, engineers, administrators, and various business and operations managers. Manufacturing firms report workforce recruiting and retention to be their main concerns, while technology firms report employee morale and company culture to be their main concerns.

Strengthening industrial resilience has become a regional priority. For manufacturing-intensive communities, resilience includes improving power reliability, reducing foreign material dependence, strengthening domestic supply chains, and integrating advanced technologies that enable faster recovery from disruptions. Regional initiatives such as AM2 support this strategy by coordinating technology adoption, commercialization support, and industry collaboration.



ACTION

Regional Economic Priorities

1. Support Business Development and Entrepreneurship
2. Preparation and Continued Support of Qualified, Available Workforce
3. Utilize Available Land and Expand Quality Infrastructure
4. Preserve and Promote the Natural and Cultural Resources in the Region
5. Encourage Business Friendly Governance and Organizational Representation

1. Support Business Development and Entrepreneurship

The NRV has many thriving businesses that provide high-paying jobs and promote a diverse regional economy. The region must continue to demonstrate that it can offer facilities, transportation networks, cultural amenities, workforce resources, and support services to meet business needs and attract companies to locate within the region.

Fifty-one percent of the region's local good and service providers employ less than five (5) employees and 95% employ 50 or fewer employees. Despite their size, small businesses are essential to the regional economy and communities. These businesses offer crucial goods and services as well as jobs, economic growth, and financial stability for employees. Unfortunately, pandemic-related financial hardships have put tremendous stress on these enterprises and emphasized how critical the need is for comprehensive business assistance programs.

The Virginia Small Business Development Center (SBDC) is a resource to business owners in the region and assists them with technical training, best practices, and financial assistance. The New River Valley has continued to expand local business support resources, with several localities adding dedicated staff and programs to support entrepreneurs and small businesses. In 2021, Pulaski County created the first Small Business Department, with Christiansburg creating a support role in 2023, and the Business Solutions Manager for the Town of Blacksburg also serving as a local resource for business support. Other regional resources, including the Entrepreneur Resource Center at the Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center, further support entrepreneurs and small businesses through connections to advising, programming, and startup resources.

Additionally, local economic development offices and organizations such as Onward NRV and the New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board have been working with industry partners to actively attract and retain high-quality jobs, investment, and talent to promote the economic vitality of the region.



Priority 1 Strategies

Strategy 1.1 - Provide a comprehensive array of support services for small business development and growth.

a. Encourage micro and small business success in downtown and commercial districts, through revitalization and promotion of community individuality.

b. Develop and support peer networks and events to bring together small businesses in similar industries, such as tourism/outdoor recreation, technology, and health.

c. Coordinate and improve accessibility of counseling, technical assistance and financing resources offered to local business owners by local, regional, and state partners, including resources for trades-based businesses and entrepreneurs.

Strategy 1.2 - Improve the region's ability to foster and retain fast-growing businesses in target sectors.

a. Improve access to capital for high-growth firms through the development of angel investor groups and promoting partnerships between capital sources and fundable firms.

b. Support the development of university technology commercialization and industry research partnerships, including structured lab-to-market acceleration models and additive manufacturing technology transfer initiatives advanced through the AM2 consortium, building on existing efforts in unmanned systems, health/medical technology, and cloud computing/internet/IT.

c. Support and develop business incubator and technical resources targeted to firms with growth potential.

d. Diversify regional supply chains to protect against global disruptions.

e. Support the continued development of the Additive Manufacturing and Advanced Materials (AM2) Tech Hub, by advancing AM2 programming, convenings, and partner engagement that strengthen the regional ecosystem of support.

f. Accelerate adoption of AM2 and other technologies among small and mid-sized manufacturers through coordinated access to technical assistance, testbeds, and commercialization support.

Strategy 1.3 - Promote entrepreneurship and provide resources for NRV residents to start their own business.

a. Support local entrepreneurship promotion initiatives, such as business plan competitions and youth entrepreneurship initiatives.

b. Coordinate local incentives to encourage business development in targeted sectors that align with local economic development strategies, such as tourism, agribusiness, manufacturing support services, etc.

c. Develop incubators, co-working, and maker spaces and other resources to allow low-cost options to support entrepreneurs through the start-up phase.

d. Develop and maintain a coordinated ecosystem for small business support by connecting businesses with variety of resources and organizations within the region.

Strategy 1.4 - Focus local and regional economic development marketing efforts on target industries and firms that build on the region's strengths.

a. Assess and improve the ability of the region to meet the workforce, infrastructure, and facility requirements of firms in the region's target industry sectors and prioritize projects that address these needs (industrial sites, workforce initiative, energy requirements, etc.).

b. Coordinate and promote the technical expertise, research capabilities, and pipeline of skilled graduates that the region's community college and universities can provide to business and industry.

c. Target recruitment to firms with significant supplier relationships to existing NRV firms and firms that can benefit existing regional assets, including foreign trade zone, interstate access, Commerce Park, university research, etc.

d. Seek representation on state commissions and committees and the Go Virginia Region 2 Council.

e. Provide input to state agencies from regional economic development organizations and NRVRC to ensure state policies and programs address local issues.

f. Support police, fire, and medical operations throughout the region.

g. Coordinate state's regional resources to expand the capacity and resources of local governments to implement desired economic development programs.

2. Preparation and Continued Support of Qualified, Available Workforce

The region's higher education programs draw many qualified people to develop skills and gain qualifications. Although there is a promising pipeline for talent and the ability to train for many different careers, there is often a disconnect between employers' desired qualifications and the available skills of workers. The New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board has been developing "career ladders" that work with industry leaders to identify various career paths within an industry and explore qualifications, degrees, and skills that employers seek for these positions.

While the region has a surplus of talent in some job sectors, other sectors struggle to recruit enough talent. For many years the region has experienced a decrease in skilled tradespersons. Across the state and nationwide, skilled tradespersons are aging, and efforts to recruit and retain qualified replacements have had limited success. Reasons for this include:

- Fairweather workers (willing to work in nice weather but will seek other employment during winter months)
- The stigma that trades do not produce a living wage
- New hires do not retain their position because of a lack of soft skills

A significant barrier to the region's workforce is the shortage of affordable childcare facilities and programs. Other services that workers struggle to access include healthcare and tuition assistance. Improving workers' access to critical services advances the ability of communities to attract and retain top-tier talent as well as foster better opportunities for the employees themselves.

Priority 2 Strategies

Strategy 2.1 - Align education and training programs with the current and future needs of the region's existing employers and target industry sectors.

a. Establish partnerships between industry/business and all levels of education and provide students with more "real world" learning opportunities.
b. Improve awareness of career options in local industries among K-12, community college, and university students and graduates.
c. Develop a career pathways approach to ensure regional colleges and universities provide training, credentials, and degrees that allow workers to advance their careers in local industries. This includes expansion of additive manufacturing and advanced materials curriculum, stackable credentials, and work-based learning aligned with AM² Career Network initiatives.

Strategy 2.2 - Establish a strong foundation for lifelong learning and career success for NRV residents.

a. Ensure quality, affordable pre-school programs are available throughout the NRV.
b. Ensure career counseling, technical education, early career exposure, hands-on learning, and pathway-building opportunities are available throughout the region to support K-12 students' plans and preparation for careers or post-secondary education.
c. Expand digital learning and literacy opportunities that help residents access education, training, and essential services.

Strategy 2.3 - Increase the availability and accessibility of supporting services that NRV residents need to participate fully in the workforce.

a. Increase the availability of quality, affordable childcare facilities for all areas of the NRV.
b. Assure access to quality, affordable healthcare and wellness options for physical, mental, and social well-being and safety.
c. Coordinate resources to provide low-cost options or tuition assistance for residents seeking college degrees or workforce training.
d. Collaborate with local businesses to reduce stigma around substance use disorder and incarceration by promoting second-chance hiring, supporting employees in recovery, and advocating for full participation in the labor force.



Strategy 2.4 - Ensure the NRV is competitive in its efforts to attract and retain talented workers in the region's target industry sectors.

a. Coordinate industry recruitment and economic development marketing efforts to address shortages of specific technical workers or skilled professionals that hamper growth in target industries.
b. Implement projects that improve the quality of life and increase the availability of workforce housing and services to meet the needs of the region's current and future workforce.
c. Encourage and promote work from home and telework opportunities to keep and attract remote talent within the region.
d. Develop strategies for talent recruitment and retention, with a focus on lessening the impact of costs associated with rehiring and retraining.
e. Support experiential learning partnerships among employers, higher education institutions, community colleges, and workforce partners to help students gain real-world experience in the region's target industry sectors

3. Utilize Available Land and Expand Quality Infrastructure

Land and infrastructure are essential commodities for thriving businesses. Transportation, broadband internet, available commercial and residential property, and alternative energy sources are some of the areas the region has prioritized.

Transportation

Transportation is an essential factor influencing workforce and product availability and encourages the transfer of resources, goods, services, and consumers between the region and other locations worldwide. Interstate 81, US 460 and other secondary roads are critical corridors for truck freight and commuter mobility throughout the region. Rideshare programs like RIDESolutions support the reduction of single-occupancy vehicle commuting.

Passenger rail is expected to extend to the region within the next five years. Amtrak's Northeast Regional Service will extend operation to Christiansburg, VA. The addition of passenger rail in the NRV will connect the region to metropolitan areas such as New York, Philadelphia, and Washington D.C. which offers opportunities to expand visitorship and increase workforce connectivity.

Broadband

The pandemic underscored the need for quality internet to conduct business, engage in education, and access goods and services. The region has also been working to bring quality high-speed internet regionwide. In 2021, the NRV received funding for a multi-regional broadband project to address the gaps in affordable broadband access within the region. Other localized projects are also underway. It is estimated that by 2026 the entire NRV will have access to high-speed internet.

Available Property

A continued barrier to business attraction and growth is the limited availability of industrial, commercial, and residential building stock and property. Intense demand is outstripping supply, and because of these shortages, the region is often passed over for other communities who can offer adequate employee housing and commercial space.

Alternative Energy

Increasing utility costs have led many localities and business leaders to pursue alternative energy options. Alternative energy solutions such as solar, wind, and geothermal energy generation are sought after by industry and offer a way for households and communities to reduce emissions and may decrease overall energy costs. Additionally, the installation of electric charging stations has become increasingly important, especially for travelers along the I-81 corridor. Having chargers at key places in the region, such as employers and walkable spaces like downtown, not only provides convenience for electric vehicle users but also serves as a significant draw and economic driver for the area.



Strategy 3.1 - Expand transportation options to meet the needs of businesses and residents.

a. Develop and expand regional transit systems, rideshare programs, and other initiatives that connect population centers to employment centers to improve access for rural residents.
b. Promote land-use policies that maximize the opportunities of regional access to transportation networks, including interstates and major highways, freight rail, and airports.
c. Promote and support the development of a passenger rail station in the NRV.
d. Expand the regional walking and biking trails, bike lanes, and pedestrian safety improvements.

Strategy 3.2 - Identify opportunities to expand and improve the region's high-speed internet available to residents and offer services to meet the needs of households and businesses within the NRV.

a. Encourage the development of broadband networks in unserved rural areas and improve the capacity of broadband connections in underserved communities.
b. Support local service providers' efforts to bring fiber to the home.
c. Encourage the development of network redundancy around critical services (emergency services, health care facilities, schools, government buildings, etc.) to be prepared for emergency and disaster situations.
d. Retrofit historic buildings to provide improved broadband options.

Strategy 3.3 - Develop and maintain adequate and affordable housing stock within the region.

a. Develop and encourage youth programs that offer on-the-job training in construction and other related skilled trades (electricians, HVAC technicians, plumbers, masons, etc.) related to the housing industry.
b. Reinvestment in housing stock to provide renovation and retrofitting to older homes.
c. Investigate programs that establish regional purchasing power for building materials to reduce building material costs.
d. Business support for construction firms to improve business practices and cash flow.
e. Promote proactive home maintenance programs to extend the lifespan of existing housing stock and reduce long-term repair costs.

Strategy 3.4 - Develop and maintain available sites and buildings to meet the needs of industrial and commercial users.

a. Incentivize rehabilitation of deteriorating structures in historic downtown districts and encourage mixed-use development in growth areas and downtown districts.
b. Inventory and assess vacant industrial and commercial properties, identify appropriate uses for the buildings and related retrofitting needs.
c. Promote and support shovel-ready mid and large-sized industrial site projects, including planning for utility capacity, electric service needs, transportation access, and other readiness factors, using brownfields funding when available.
d. Promote and support building energy efficiency through efforts to increase demand for these features through public education and valuation for energy efficiency improvements.
e. Identify and assess brownfield sites and other underutilized properties that could support industrial development, workforce housing, mixed-use redevelopment, or community revitalization.

Strategy 3.5 - Explore and implement alternative energy options within the region.

a. Promote and support the ability of government, business, residents to invest in alternative renewable energy sources and infrastructure.
b. Education programs to inform citizens about options and benefits of alternative energy for residents.
c. Promote the NRV's alternative energy efforts as an asset for regional business attraction.
d. Inventory electric charging stations in key locations such as employers, walkable spaces like downtown areas, and other strategic points to attract I-81 travelers.
e. Coordinate with utilities, local governments, and economic development partners to better understand utility capacity needs for business attraction, housing development, and long-term infrastructure planning.

4. Preserve & Promote the Natural and Cultural Resources in the Region

The NRV has rich natural and cultural resources that shape the identity of each locality and offer many opportunities for the region's economy. These options include raw material production, outdoor recreation and other tourism opportunities, and rich cultural history to provide a unique place to live and work. During the COVID-19 pandemic, outdoor recreation amenities gave communities both continued economic development opportunities and a means for safer social interaction.

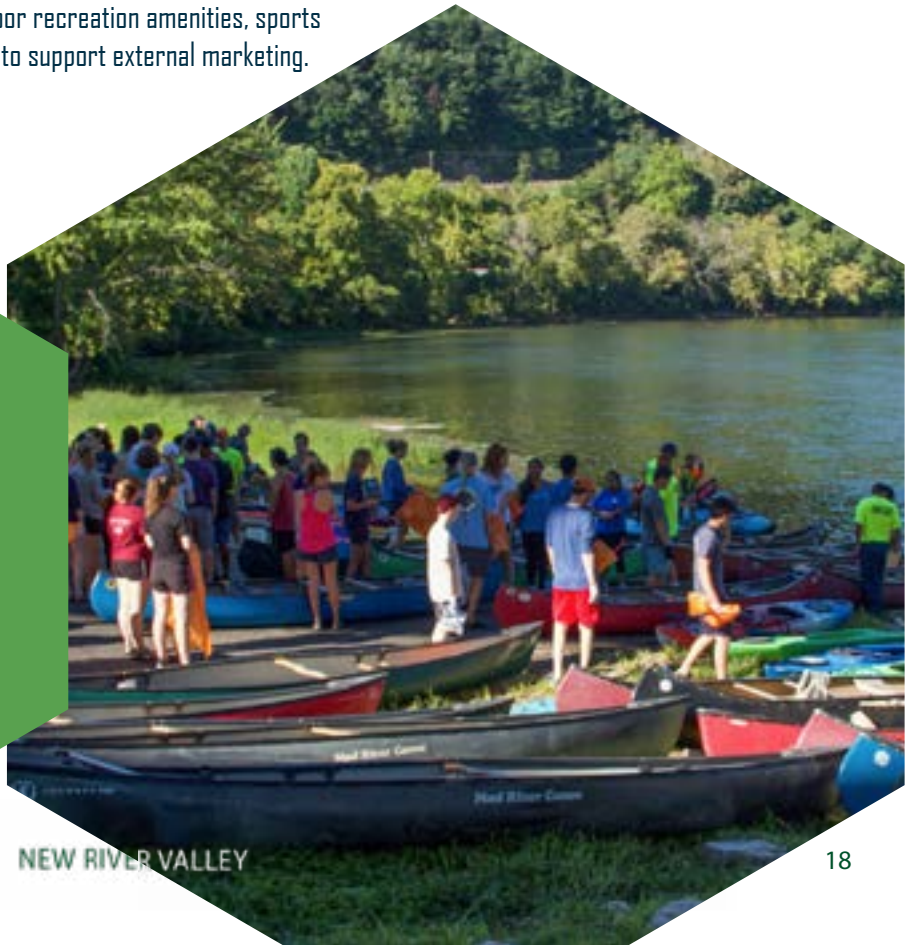
Priority 4 Strategies

Strategy 4.1 - Preserve the NRV's natural and historic assets to protect the character and quality of the regional environment.

a. Support and encourage the continuation of family farms through efforts to increase the market for local agricultural products, including farmers markets, regional aggregation facilities, and "farm to school" programs.
b. Utilize tourism initiatives to preserve open spaces, historic sites, and vital natural attractions with local non-profits, historical societies, conservation groups, etc.
c. Coordinate conservation, outdoor recreation, and tourism initiatives related to the New River within the region and neighboring regions, and strengthen collaborative efforts through the New River Watershed Roundtable, which acts as a forum for information and knowledge of the New River.
d. Improve land use planning and practices to preserve the region's rural character and encourage development in existing population and employment centers.

Strategy 4.2 - Coordinate marketing and promotion campaigns to create a consistent brand and message for the NRV.

a. Implement options to provide regional support and coordination for tourism promotion campaigns of the county, city, and town destination marketing organizations.
b. Leverage state and regional tourism and economic development marketing programs aligned with NRV marketing initiatives.
c. Identify, develop, and package the region's historical and cultural assets, arts natural features, outdoor recreation amenities, sports tourism assets, and events to support external marketing.



5. Encourage Business Friendly Governance & Organizational Representation

Partnerships between the public and private sectors are key to the success of many of the region's initiatives. Stakeholders can capitalize on regional strengths and opportunities and lessen regional weaknesses and threats by working together.

Regional collaboration proved an effective tool for navigating the pandemic. Multi-disciplinary groups of local government representatives, businesses, first responders, and other volunteers worked together to limit disease transmission, hold vaccination clinics, and organize business support and assistance. Utilizing these relationships, regional and local stakeholders can continue to tackle issues that face the region.

Priority 5 Strategies

Strategy 5.1 - Promote a business-friendly environment through governments cooperating with businesses at the local level and advocating for them at the state and federal levels.

a. Seek representation on state commissions and committees and the Go Virginia Region 2 Council.
b. Provide input to state agencies from regional economic development organizations and NRVRC to ensure state policies and programs address local issues.
c. Support police, fire, and medical operations throughout the region.
d. Coordinate state's regional resources to expand the capacity and resources of local governments to implement desired economic development programs.

Strategy 5.2 - Develop and maintain partnerships among organizations, educational institutions, and government entities.

a. Build relationships between groups to collaborate to facilitate the exchange of information to benefit the region.
b. Collaborate with multi-disciplinary partners to develop strategies and tackle priority regional projects.
c. Foster cross-organizational relationships and skill development by establishing a Center for Regional Leadership Advancement. This facility would provide space for public and private sector partners to deliver training, host critical leadership meetings, and serve as the region's continuity of operations in the event of a large-scale emergency or public health crisis as experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic.
d. Support structured regional consortia models that coordinate industry, higher education, workforce, and economic development partners to implement long-term sector strategies.



EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

RES Committee members review and update the regional evaluation framework annually to ensure that project identification and prioritization remain aligned with the region's current economic development needs, opportunities, and implementation capacity. This process includes reviewing the Local Project List, discussing ranking criteria, and updating project information based on local partner input and changing project conditions.

The framework reflects the goals, priorities, and strategies identified through the Regional Economic Strategy process. Projects are reviewed for their connection to regional priorities, potential economic impact, readiness to move forward, ability to strengthen regional competitiveness, and alignment with broader infrastructure, workforce, housing, business development, and site readiness needs.

This annual review helps the region maintain a practical and up-to-date project pipeline. The Local Project List in the appendix provides additional detail on identified projects across the region, including local lead partners, estimated costs, timeframes, and connections to RES goals.





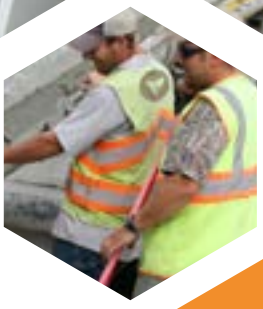


APPENDIX

Local Project List
Evaluation Criteria
NRVRC Commission & RES Committee Members
RES Meeting Agendas
Glossary of Acronyms






2026 Local Projects

Description	RES Goal	Area	Estimated Cost	Responsible Agency	Estimated Construction Date
Preparation of newly graded building sites at NRV Commerce Park. Site readiness to move Lot J (120 acres) from Tier 4 to Tier 5.	Goal 3	NRV	$728,000.00	Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facilities Authority	2023
Development of Broadband Infrastructure and Internet Availability Implement recommendations of studies in local jurisdictions (Montgomery, Pulaski). NRV will continue to pursue additional funds for underserved areas.	Goal 3	NRV	$68,000,000.00	Private Internet Service Providers, APCO, and NRV Localities	2022-2024
Implement sector strategies focused on workforce development programs to meet needs in target industry sectors. Develop relationships between regional businesses and education, economic development, and related stakeholder organizations to provide services that ensure success of these industries in the region. Enhance integrated 'career pathways' workforce curriculum to develop workforce skills that address needs of targeted industry sectors, especially manufacturing, IT and healthcare.	Goal 2	NRV	$25,000,000.00	NRMR-WDB, Educational Providers, Local Industry, SBDC	2022-2024
Manage, promote, and expand the NRV Revolving Loan Fund deploy funds to small businesses and entrepreneurs across the region. Secure funds to recapitalize the loan fund to target scale up opportunities and emergent business sectors.	Goal 1	NRV	$100,000.00	NRVRC, NRV RLF Committee, SBDC	Ongoing
SBDC Business Preparedness Program NRV. Develop and implement a business preparedness program to help NRV businesses strengthen continuity planning, disaster resilience, and long-term sustainability through advising, workshops, mentorship, and business continuity planning.	Goal 1	NRV	$107,435	Greater Roanoke & New River Valley SBDC, NRV Localities	2026-2028
Coordinate with the Virginia Passenger Rail Authority, the New River Valley Passenger Rail Station Authority, local governments, higher education partners, state agencies, and public/private railroad stakeholders to support the return of passenger rail service to the New River Valley. This project focuses on regional coordination, service planning, stakeholder engagement, and advocacy needed to advance passenger rail connectivity for the region	Goal 3	NRV	$4,500,000.00	NRV Localities, Higher ED, State Agencies, Public/Private Railroad Companies, NRVRC	2028

NRV Passenger Rail Station Renovation. Renovate the historic passenger rail station in the Cambria area of Christiansburg to support expanded passenger rail service in the New River Valley. The project will rehabilitate the existing depot structure to provide a safe, reliable, climate-controlled station with passenger amenities, including restrooms, indoor waiting areas, accessibility improvements, building system upgrades, and other improvements needed for passenger rail use while preserving the historic character of the facility.	Goal 3	NRV	$3,390,645	NRV Localities, New River Valley Passenger Rail Authority, Virginia Passenger Rail Authority, NRVRC, Higher ED, State Agencies, Public/Private Railroad Companies,	2028
Coordinate Regional Destination Marketing Organizations (DMO). Explore options to increase coordination of regional DMOs and tourism promotion initiatives, and support local tourism marketing campaigns to promote New River Valley communities as a tourist destination, and increase visitor spending. Upgrade regional tourism website.	Goal 4	NRV	$100,000.00	NRV Localities, Tourism Offices, NRVRC	2024
New River Watershed Roundtable. Convene regional partners and act as a forum for information and knowledge of the New River. Coordinate environmental stewardship related to the New River as an identity, source of outdoor recreation and economic opportunity, as well as a public health amenity. Continue regional coordination of river clean-up events to preserve the water quality and condition of the New River.	Goal 4	NRV	$25,000.00	NRVRC, local governments, VA Dept. of Environmental Quality (DEQ), Tourism Offices, Radford University	Ongoing
New River Water Trail Expansion Project. Support regional and local efforts to develop outdoor recreation tourism amenities related to the New River and other natural resources, such as boat ramps and access, signage, marketing, education, safety, stewardship and other recreation supportive projects.	Goal 4	NRV	$2,500,000.00	NRVRC, local governments, Norfolk Southern, Tourism Offices, Radford University	2025
Coordinate marketing and business support efforts for arts and cultural amenities in the New River Valley. Promote and support the development of arts and cultural-related events and institutions through targeted incentives and support for arts-related development. Coordinate with Friends of Southwest Virginia, Crooked Road, 'Round the Mountain and local arts-based non-profits.	Goal 4	NRV	$300,000.00	Localities, civic groups, business groups, Tourism Offices, SBDC	Ongoing
Commercial District Revitalization efforts. Encourage micro and small business success in downtown and commercial districts, through revitalization and promotions of community individuality, redevelopment of blighted properties, and small business support services	Goal 1	NRV	$100,000.00	NRVRC, Participating Towns, SBDC	Ongoing

Provide technical assistance services to regional manufacturers. Engage university experts and industrial consultants to provide product testing/prototyping, market analysis, process improvement, and other technical assistance services to support the competitiveness of suppliers to large regional manufacturers	Goal 1	NRV	$1,000,000.00	US EDA, VT, Onward NRV, Local Economic Developers, Private Business, SBDC	Ongoing
Target Industry Business Development Program. Develop educational programs through the community college and universities that support the development and/or recruitment of small businesses/industries in regional target sectors, including advanced manufacturing, IT/cybersecurity, life sciences, and food and beverage processing.	Goal 1	NRV		Virginia Tech, Radford University, NRCC, School Divisions, Onward NRV, SBDC	
NRV Regional + Local Housing Study Update The New River Valley Regional Commission, in partnership with the Virginia Center for Housing Research at Virginia Tech and HousingForward Virginia, will work with regional partners to update the 2021 Regional + Local Housing study, a critical planning document that provides the foundation for the public and private sectors to collaboratively address regional housing needs	Goal 3	NRV	$280,000	NRVRC, Virginia Center for Housing Research at Virginia Tech, HousingForward Virginia, NRV Localities, Regional Housing Partners	Ongoing
Develop regional 'small scale manufacturing' capability. Creation of a regional maker space and coordination of regional fabricators to support prototyping and small-run manufacturing for entrepreneurs	Goal 1	NRV	$1,000,000.00	SBDC	
Create utility standards for service providers to follow while coordinating digging between localities and service providers to install conduits or other utilities	Goal 3	NRV		APCO, PSAs, Internet Service Providers, Local Governments	
Explore the creation of a Regional Recreation Authority to oversee and manage multi-jurisdiction trails, including water trails	Goal 4	NRV		Localities, Civic Groups, NRVRC, Educational Institutes	2025
Valley to Valley Trail Study. Perform analysis combined with consensus building to result in a recommended alignment that will connect the Roanoke River Greenway to the New River Trail while connecting to other recreational facilities in the region such as the Huckleberry Trail in Christiansburg.	Goal 2	NRV		VDOT, NRVRC, NRVMPO	2022
Interstate-81 interchange improvements Exits 89,94,98,105,114.	Goal 3	NRV		VDOT	2020
Route 100 widening between Pulaski County and Giles County.	Goal 3	NRV		VDOT, Delegate’s Office	Ongoing
Create Regional Revolving Loan Fund for Energy Audits and Retrofits Fund for NRV businesses and residents.	Goal 3	NRV		NRVRC	
Support Carpooling Efforts/Initiatives throughout the New River Valley Support the expansion and marketing of Ride Solutions while exploring potential for carpooling app	Goal 3	NRV			Ongoing

Create Network of Growers and Producers in the region linking NRV farmers to markets to increase profitability.	Goal 1	NRV		Thrive Network, Farmers Markets, Eat Work Grow, VA Cooperative Extension Offices, SBDC	
Support for local craft brewery, winery, and distillery business growth. Marketing and business development support for these businesses' growth.	Goal 1	NRV		NRV Economic Developers, Local DMOs (Tourism Offices), SBDC	2024
Centralize marketing of energy efficiency options create a "one-stop-shop" where people can evaluate typical "payback" on upgrades, find a qualified energy auditor/retrofitter, navigate various financing options.	Goal 3	NRV		NRVRC, Localities	
Multi-Jurisdictional Trails: used as both a tourism asset and an alternative/green method of transportation.	Goal 3	NRV	$10,000,000.00	NRVRC, Localities, Education Institutions, civic groups, Tourism Offices	2018
Develop and implement a program to support small family farms using a trade collective and professional development model similar to "Cultivating Success".	Goal 1	NRV		Local Economic Developers, Cooperative Extension, Sustain Floyd, Live Work Eat Grow, Blue to New	2026
Scenic Byway Designation study- Look at Route 8 (Floyd) and Route 460 (Elliston) (Pre-concept Phase)	Goal 4	NRV			
Establish initiatives that help connect educational institutions with local employers, fostering a pipeline that guides students into relevant careers through internships and collaborative projects, while also raising student awareness of local career opportunities in key industry sectors such as transportation/automated vehicles, materials/machinery, life sciences/healthcare, and information technology.	Goal 2	NRV		Onward NRV, NR-MR WDB, Regional Public School Systems, NRCC, Radford University, Virginia Tech	
Develop a comprehensive workforce training strategy for industrialized construction, aiming to reduce costs, waste, and emissions while addressing housing affordability challenges.	Goal 2	NRV		Virginia Tech, Local Industry	

Target Technologies: automated vehicles, additive manufacturing, sustainable materials. Virginia Tech leads a coalition in the Southern and Southwest Virginia region that aims to support the local transportation and logistics cluster and accelerate the adoption of electric and automated vehicles. The coalition plans to build upon its existing strengths in vehicle manufacturing, digital technology R&D, and vehicle test and evaluation. The coalition proposes to support this cluster through three distinct projects providing more accessible technology testbeds and networks for tech transfer, business development support, and talent development services. If provided an implementation grant, the coalition aims to catalyze regional economic growth by aligning regional assets, accelerating the adoption of critical vehicle technologies, and achieving global prominence in automated electric delivery.	Goal 1	NRV	$24,000,000.00	Virginia Tech	Ongoing
NRV Recovery Ecosystem. New and expanded programs with agencies in the New River Valley will be tapped to address the impacts of opioid addiction and associated concerns such as transportation, housing, prevention and treatment strategies, recovery and harm reduction, as well as delivering education in schools and to the general public.	Goal 2	NRV	$3,300,000	NRV Localities, NRVRC,	Ongoing
NRV Site Advancement Strategy. Update and expand upon the 2019 VBRSP assessment by evaluating industrial sites across Floyd, Giles, Montgomery, and Pulaski Counties, along with the City of Radford. The project will identify infrastructure gaps, environmental constraints, and site development needs, providing a clear path for advancing sites through the VBRSP tiers.	Goal 3	NRV	$95,000	NRVRC, Onward NRV, NRV Localities	2025-2026
Planning Commissioners Training. Annual training event for local planning commissioners offering hands-on learning and expert presentations, fostering knowledge-sharing, networking, and best practices in land use planning.	Goal 5	NRV		NRVRC, NRV Localities	Ongoing
GO TEC Launch in the New River Valley and Roanoke County. Establish six middle-school GO TEC Career Connections Labs, providing students with hands-on learning in precision machining, welding, IT/cybersecurity, robotics, automation, advanced materials, and health sciences to strengthen talent development in high-demand industries.	Goal 2	NRV + Roanoke County	$995,000	NRVRC, Montgomery County Public Schools, Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, participating school divisions, GO TEC	2025-2026

GO TEC Career Connections Lab Expansion. Establish 11 GO TEC Career Connections Labs across participating GO Virginia Region 2 school divisions, including the New River Valley, Roanoke County, Amherst County, and Amelia County, to provide middle school students with hands-on career exposure in technical fields and strengthen early career pathways for advanced manufacturing and other high-demand industries.	Goal 2	NRV	$2,035,000	NRVRC, Montgomery County Public Schools, Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, participating school divisions, GO TEC	2026-2028
Digital Opportunity Roadmap for NRV Broadband Accessibility and Adoption. Develop a regional plan to expand broadband access and adoption, identifying existing assets, connectivity gaps, and strategies to enhance digital equity. Stakeholder engagement will guide solutions for education, healthcare, workforce development, and economic growth.	Goal 3	NRV	$125,000	NRVRC, NRV Localities	2025
Virginia's Additive Manufacturing and Applied Materials Tech Hub Strategic Planning Grant	Goal 1	NRV + City of Danville	$555,000	NRVRC, Virginia Tech, Onward NRV, Radford University, NRCC, Local Industry	2026
AM2 GO Virginia Implementation Grant. Implement the Additive Manufacturing and Advanced Materials Hub across Southern and Southwest Virginia, including the New River Valley, Roanoke, Lynchburg, and Southern Virginia regions. The project supports technology adoption, commercialization, and workforce alignment through AM² Studios, Fellows, and Career Network activities, helping manufacturers adopt additive manufacturing, advanced materials, and Industry 4.0 technologies.	Goal 1	NRV / Roanoke / Lynchburg / Southern Virginia	$ 4,230,160	NRVRC, Virginia Tech Center for Economic and Community Engagement, Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, GENEDGE, Roanoke-Blacksburg Innovation Alliance, Onward NRV, Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance, AM² consortium partners, regional economic development partners, higher education partners, and industry partners	2026-2028
AM2 EDA Tech Hub Implementation. Pursue federal implementation funding to scale the Additive Manufacturing and Advanced Materials Hub beyond the GO Virginia implementation grant by expanding reduced-cost services to manufacturers, adding technical testing and prototyping capacity, strengthening commercialization support, developing AM²-specific workforce credentials, and increasing national industry outreach.	Goal 1	NRV / Roanoke / Lynchburg / Southern Virginia	$44,100,000	NRVRC, Virginia Tech Center for Economic and Community Engagement, Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, GENEDGE, Roanoke-Blacksburg Innovation Alliance, Onward NRV, Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance, AM² consortium partners, regional economic development partners, higher education partners, and industry partners	2026-2028
Huckleberry Trail Extension. Assist in the construction of the Huckleberry Trail extension from Prices Fork to Glade Road. Grading, site amenities, and surfacing are needed.	Goal 4	Blacksburg	$100,000.00	Town of Blacksburg, Friend of the Huckleberry Trail	**Completed**
Housing Development - affordable multi-tenant development. Legacy on Main affordable multi-tenant housing development in Blacksburg. Project includes 56 affordable 2- and 3-bedroom apartments and is expected to open in 2026. Additional homeownership projects include Airport Acres Homebuyer Townhomes with Habitat and Strouble Ridge Single Family Homebuyer with CHP.	Goal 3	Blacksburg		Private industry, NRV HOME Consortium	Ongoing
Retail Cooperative and Small Business Incubator	Goal 1	Blacksburg		Town of Blacksburg, Local Economic Developers, SBDC	2026

Business Solutions Manager will serve as the primary liaison to the business community promoting the economic vitality of the Town and assisting new small business owners as they open businesses in town. This position will coordinate the 414 N. Main Street project, the future location of a retail cooperative, in partnership with Downtown Blacksburg, Inc.	Goal 1	Blacksburg		Town of Blacksburg, Local Economic Developers, SBDC	Completed
Signature Park: Development Phase I includes four full-sized rectangular fields, two picnic pavilions, a splash pad, a small and large dog park, an inclusive playground, an adult fitness zone, a challenge course, nearly two miles of trails, and green space for passive recreation.	Goal 2	Christiansburg	$18,000,000.00	Town of Christiansburg	2024. Funded, Work Ongoing
Farmers' Market Structures - New permanent structure, ARC funded	Goal 1	Christiansburg	$275,000.00	Town of Christiansburg	2024
Phase III of the Downtown Enhancement Project N. Franklin Street-new sidewalks, planting, paving, Main to Depot intersection improvements.	Goal 1	Christiansburg		Town of Christiansburg	2025
Christiansburg Institute - Cultural Experience, Cultural Learning Curriculum, Oral History, and Site Preservation.	Goal 4	Christiansburg		Christiansburg Institute	2027
N. Franklin St. - Peppers Ferry Road Connector Route Phase I Not in draft SYIP – Smart Scale project	Goal 3	Christiansburg	$12,000,000.00	VDOT, Town of Christiansburg	2027
N. Franklin St. - Peppers Ferry Road Connector Route Phase II Not in draft SYIP – Smart Scale project	Goal 3	Christiansburg	$12,000,000.00	VDOT, Town of Christiansburg	2029
Public Works Complex. Moving current complex out of the floodplain	Goal 3	Christiansburg	$10,000,000.00	Town Christiansburg	2027
Upgrade of Wastewater Plant to accommodate 2 million gallons more per day.	Goal 3	Christiansburg		Town of Christiansburg	
Future Emergency Services Station (location TBD)	Goal 2	Christiansburg	$6,000,000.00	Town of Christiansburg	2026
Drain improvement - College St. area	Goal 3	Christiansburg		Christiansburg Public Works	
Marketplace redevelopment-housing	Goal 3	Christiansburg		Private industry, Town of Christiansburg	
Clifton Town Center – mix of commercial and residential along Peppers Ferry Road	Goal 3	Christiansburg		Private industry, Town of Christiansburg	
Phase II Development of Floyd Regional Commerce Center. Develop building pads on Lots 1 and 2 (51 acres); have funds to do road access and utility extension.	Goal 3	Floyd	$4,000,000.00	Floyd County, Floyd County EDA	2027
Floyd Regional Commerce Center Phase 2 Stage 2 Site Development. Create approximately 25 acres of building pads in Phase 2 of the Floyd Regional Commerce Center. The project will also include drilling a new PSA well and connecting into the Commerce Center main, and may include extending three-phase power.	Goal 3	Floyd	7,000,000	Floyd County, Floyd County EDA	2026-2027

Constructing Shell building on Lot 8. Construction of a building in the Floyd Regional Commerce Center. The building will be designed to be able to serve more than one tenant.	Goal 3	Floyd	$6,050,000.00	Floyd County, Floyd County EDA	2023. Funded, Work Ongoing
Marketing Floyd Growth Center Phase 2 of Regional Commerce Center.	Goal 1	Floyd	$100,000.00	Floyd County	Ongoing
Route 8 Improvements. Road Improvements on Route 8 between I-81 and Floyd Town	Goal 3	Floyd	$10,000,000.00	VDOT	2026
Floyd County EDA Revolving Loan Fund. Expand revolving loan pool.	Goal 1	Floyd	$80,000.00	Floyd County EDA, SBDC	Ongoing
Add parks and trails (pedestrian, biking, and hiking). Extension of trail corridors from the town to the county as outlined in the comprehensive plan. More sports fields are needed.	Goal 4	Floyd	$2,000,000.00	Floyd County, Floyd County EDA, Floyd County Tourism	2024-2026
Stream Gauge and Rain Gauges for Hazard Mitigation. Floyd County's Little River Watershed experienced a significant flash flood in 2015 with more than 25 houses destroyed or significantly damaged. There are no stream gauges in this area and no real-time rain gauges. These are needed to protect lives during flash flooding.	Goal 3	Floyd	$110,000.00	Floyd County	2025
Extending Water and Sewer to areas of Floyd Co. Also need to protect recharge and well-head areas.	Goal 3	Floyd	$5,000,000.00	Floyd County	2025
Improving Access to the Floyd Regional Commerce Center from Route 8 and 221. Remove sharp turns to improve truck access.	Goal 3	Floyd	$800,000.00	Floyd County, Floyd County EDA, VDOT	2026
Expansion of the Floyd Innovation Center	Goal 1	Floyd	$7,000,000.00	Floyd County EDA	2026
Loan funding for farming, food and beverage (concept)	Goal 1	Floyd			
Building renovation and mixed development utilizing brownfields funding, historic tax credits to encourage private investment	Goal 3	Floyd		Floyd Town, and Floyd County	2024-2026
Floyd County-Solid waste & recycling (convenience)	Goal 3	Floyd			2024-2026
Housing Projects- development of a wider range of homeowners opportunities and rental, development of greenfield site for housing.	Goal 3	Floyd		County, Town, EDA, Private Industry	2024-2028
Scattered Site Housing Rehabilitation- improvements to 15 homes in the county	Goal 3	Floyd	$1,000,000.00	Floyd County	2024
Floyd County Scattered Site Efficiency Planning Grant	Goal 3	Floyd	$50,000	Floyd County, DHCD, SERCAP, NRVRC, etc.	2024
Floyd County Scattered Site Housing Rehab Round 2	Goal 3	Floyd	$1,200,000	Floyd County, DHCD, SERCAP, NRVRC, etc	2024
Floyd County Transportation Plan	Goal 3	Floyd	$150,000.00	Floyd County, Floyd Town	2024-26
Phlegar House Restoration Facility in great disrepair. If restored, it could be the trail head in the Floyd Regional Commerce Center Greenway. (concept phase).	Goal 4	Floyd	$1,000,000.00	Floyd County Historical Preservation Trust, Floyd County EDA	2026

Town of Floyd Donnkenny Redevelopment Planning. Complete planning, architectural, engineering, and community engagement activities to support redevelopment of the former Donnkenny property in downtown Floyd for mixed-use development, including potential housing, commercial, and community-serving space.	Goal 3	Floyd (town)	$100,000	Floyd Town, Floyd	2026-2027
Ongoing public improvements streetscape, trails, building improvements, parking improvements, wayfinding study	Goal 3	Floyd (town)		Floyd Town	Ongoing
Digital Opportunities: capitalize on completed fiber deployment to fully benefit residents and businesses, including training programs and/or equipment purchases. Planning funds and implementation funds.	Goal 2	Floyd	$500,000	Floyd County, Citizens Telephone Cooperative, Floyd County EDA	2024-2026
Eggleston Water Extension Phase 2-Extend water service to 160 residencies	Goal 3	Giles	$1,400,000.00	Giles County	2026
Route 635 Water-Extension provide public water to approximately 150 residents in the Big Stoney Community of Giles County	Goal 3	Giles	$3,000,000.00	Giles County	2026
Clendennin Water Extension-provide public water to approximately 50 residents in the Clendennin community of Giles County.	Goal 3	Giles	$2,000,000.00	Giles County	2024
Giles County Trails Center - at Mountain Lake Lodge and connection to the Appalachian Trail	Goal 4	Giles		Giles County, Mountain Lake Lodge	2024
Housing Production- development of 240 houses and house lots	Goal 3	Giles		Giles County, Private Developer	2022
Public Transportation Connections to Blacksburg, Virginia Tech, and other major employment centers. Specific projects in local transit plans and 2016 Regional Transit Study.	Goal 2	Giles	$2,000,000.00	Giles County, NRV MPO (data hub)	2018
Wheatland EcoPark Site Development	Goal 1	Giles	$400,000.00	Giles County,	2024
Glen Lyn Power Plant: Industrial site reuse planning grant	Goal 3	Giles	$250,000	Giles County	2025
Route 8 Widening Project -widening Route 8 from the Montgomery and Floyd County line to the Town of Christiansburg	Goal 3	Montgomery		VDOT	
Expansion of Falling Branch Industrial Park Phase II, Lot 2 -Land is ready for water, sewer, and road improvements	Goal 1	Montgomery		Montgomery County EDA	2022
Trail Around Falling Branch Corporate Park Phase I - Status Conceptual To develop a walking trail around Falling Branch Corporate Park.	Goal 2	Montgomery		Town of Christiansburg	2023
Housing Development significant housing construction (up to 1000 plots) along Prices Fork Road - private development. Will need an update on road and traffic study from MPO.	Goal 3	Montgomery		Montgomery County, Blacksburg, VDOT	

Project Eagle. The Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center (VTCRC), a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Virginia Tech Foundation (VTF), in partnership with the city of Roanoke, Montgomery County, and Johnson & Johnson JLABS, will support a three-prong approach to grow the region's health and life science cluster. Project Eagle+ will pilot a shared lab facility in Blacksburg at the VTCRC to meet the demand from small, early-stage companies, many of which are spinoffs from Virginia Tech and/or alumni of the Regional Accelerator & Mentoring Program (RAMP).	Goal 1	Montgomery	$600,000.00	Virginia Tech	
Upgrades and improvements at Mill Creek Nature Park - improve access, upgrades to parking area, restroom facility (water/sewer). Additional support from Virginia DCR	Goal 4	Narrows	$120,000.00	Town of Narrows	2025-2026
Upgrade/replacement of Narrows Volunteer Fire Department equipment building (continuing)	Goal 5	Narrows	$2,500,000.00	Town of Narrows, Fire Department	2026-2028
Replace existing sewer collection system piping and upgrade wastewater plant and RBC system	Goal 3	Narrows	$1,500,000.00	Narrows, Giles County, NRVRC	2025-2028
Replacement of Wastewater Treatment Plant in conjunction with Pearisburg	Goal 3	Narrows	$20,000,000.00	Town of Narrows	2027-2030
Upgrades to HVAC at library	Goal 2	Narrows	$75,000.00	Town of Narrows	2028
Refurbishing facilities at Town Park	Goal 3	Narrows	$200,000.00	Town of Narrows	2026-2028
Water Line Replacements	Goal 3	Narrows	$400,000.00	Town of Narrows	2024-2034
Pearisburg Wastewater Treatment Plant UVA Project – Replace chlorine gas disinfection with UVA disinfection to eliminate safety concern with current treatment method.	Goal 3	Pearisburg	$150,000.00	Town of Pearisburg	2018
Old Town Shop Property Redevelopment-Adaptive reuse of former public works building and property.	Goal 1	Pearisburg		Town of Pearisburg	2018
Community Center Renovation of Old School for Community Center - Including new electrical, mechanical and plumbing	Goal 2	Pearisburg	$2,000,000.00	Town of Pearisburg	2020
Claremont School Redevelopment-housing 52 units (affordable units Landmark Development)	Goal 3	Pulaski		Private Developer, Pulaski County	2023
Pulaski Middle-150 apartments market rate (Eschelon Development)	Goal 3	Pulaski		Pulaski County, Private Developer	2024
Green Government approach- Sol Smart gold standard, development of 3rd largest solar farm on the East Coast- 3000 acres; hydro dam; wind farm; methane conversion at landfill.	Goal 3	Pulaski		Pulaski County, Sol Smart, Private Developer	2024
Launch small business solutions department at the County – Pulaski County Innovation Center – transition to an incubator – properties manager which is to support small business and entrepreneurship	Goal 1	Pulaski		Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facilities Authority, Pulaski County, SBDC	2021 Funded.

Expansion of County Tourism Department- assistance to tourism related/hospitality business	Goal 1	Pulaski		Pulaski County Tourism	2021
State Trail Welcome Center-Draper Cottage	Goal 4	Pulaski		VTC/State Park Collaboration	
Transition County Welcome Center into Sale Center	Goal 1	Pulaski		Pulaski County	
Housing Development 498 units Countryside Landing – behind the middle school (near Dublin) already building homes; High Bridge (152 units – near innovation center – start soon)	Goal 3	Pulaski		Pulaski County , Private Developer	ongoing
New River Trail Extension	Goal 4	Pulaski	$5,000,000.00	VDOT,Pulaski County	
Rt. 99 Water/Sewer Extension Extend water and sewer lines to Exit 94, to encourage commercial development.	Goal 3	Pulaski	$1,500,000.00	Pulaski County, Town of Pulaski	
Housing Rehabilitation and Blight Remediation. Address housing concerns for low- to moderate-income residents and remove slum and blight issues in residential neighborhoods.	Goal 3	Pulaski (town)	$1,250,000.00	Town of Pulaski	Completed
Formalized Project Revitalize. Continue blight elimination efforts through the Town's vacant building registry and building maintenance code enforcement.	Goal 3	Pulaski (town)	$200,000.00	Town of Pulaski	ongoing
Bicycle Lane and Trail Improvements. Improve bike accessibility for critical pathways throughout the Town. Multimodal study to be completed in 2026, with the Town working toward suggested changes.	Goal 2	Pulaski (town)	$1,000,000.00	Town of Pulaski	2026
Recreational Amenities (Skate Park)	Goal 2	Pulaski (town)	$221,000.00	Town of Pulaski	Completed
Recreation amenities - Mountain Bike Park (8 acres of variety of skills – right off I-81 & New River Trail)	Goal 2	Pulaski (town)		Town of Pulaski	Completed
Recreation amenities – Municipal splash pad	Goal 2	Pulaski (town)		Town of Pulaski	Completed
Derelict Building Redevelopment – Downtown Brewery in old Foundry Building	Goal 1	Pulaski (town)	$2,000,000.00	Pulaski Town Redevelopment & Housing Authority	Completed
Planning and Imagining the Redevelopment of Pulaski Furniture. Continue pre-concept planning for redevelopment of the former Pulaski Furniture property.	Goal 1	Pulaski (town)			Ongoing
Convert Main Street into Two-Way Street, and Streetscape — Jefferson to Washington. Downtown streetscape improvements.	Goal 3	Pulaski (town)		Pulaski Town, VDOT	Completed
Hotel Study-Looking at a building Downtown as possibility	Goal 1	Pulaski (town)			
Town of Pulaski Water/Sewer 2026 Improvements. Complete near-term water and sewer improvements, including backwash tank replacement to enhance water filtration, pressure reducing valve installation, and sewer pump station evaluation/PER for future capital projects.	Goal 3	Pulaski (town)		Pulaski Town	2026
Town of Pulaski Water/Wastewater System Rehabilitation. Advance major water and wastewater system rehabilitation, including Water Treatment Plant and raw water system improvements, Pulaski Sewer Interceptor rehabilitation, and future sewer pump station improvements.	Goal 3	Pulaski (town)		Pulaski Town	2028-2029
Town of Pulaski Bridge and Streetscape Improvements. Advance bridge replacements and downtown public realm improvements, including Commerce Street Bridge replacement, Rt. 99 and Newbern Road bridge replacements, and E. Main Street streetscape improvements from Washington to Madison.	Goal 3	Pulaski (town)		Pulaski Town	2026-2029

Dublin EPA Brownfields Multipurpose Grant. The Town secured EPA Brownfields grant funding to support the assessment, cleanup, and redevelopment of underutilized or contaminated properties in Dublin, fostering economic revitalization, community health, and sustainable development. The project will identify priority sites, engage stakeholders, and develop strategies for site remediation and redevelopment.	Goal 3	Dublin	$1,000,000	Town of Dublin, NRVRC	2024-2029
Replace approximately 3,225 linear feet of 6-inch water main and 40 service lines in the Radford Village residential area to improve service reliability, water flow, and reduce issues associated with older cast iron/galvanized service connections. The project remains listed in Radford's capital improvement planning documents.	Goal 3	Radford	$117,500.00	City of Radford	2023-2026
West Radford Commerce Park / Former Radford Foundry-VCI Property. Redevelop the former Radford Foundry/VCI property into the West Radford Commerce Park, advancing reuse of an 80-acre publicly owned brownfield with approximately 30 acres of developable industrial land. The project leverages a $3.5 million Virginia Business Ready Sites Program award to support site due diligence, DEQ-coordinated remediation of contaminated soil, site preparation, and removal of legacy concrete pad/site infrastructure to position the property for future business investment and job creation.	Goal 3	Radford	$3,500,000.00	City of Radford	2024 - ongoing

Project Evaluation Criteria

The following project evaluation criteria used to rank projects that localities submitted for inclusion in the RES. Projects are ranked to evaluate readiness and competitiveness as they align with the US Economic Develop Administration and other funding source's priorities, should a project seek funding. This Ranking method is used to determine the region's Top 10+ Projects.

Tier 1: Project Readiness and RES Goal Alignment

The following criteria ranked all RES projects. These criteria reflect RES goals and objectives and were used to rank all submitted RES projects. Tier 1 evaluation ranks projects based on ability to address RES priorities and readiness for implementation.

1. Does the project address one or more RES Goals? (2 pts each)

Support small business development and entrepreneurship
Preparation and continued support of qualified, available workforce
Available land and quality infrastructure
Preservation of natural and cultural resources
Business-friendly governance and representation

2. What is the regional impact of the proposed project?

Region-wide or Multi-regional impact (8 pts)
Two or Three Jurisdictions participating or impacted (2 pts)
Four or five jurisdictions participating or impacted (4 pts)
One jurisdiction participating or impacted (1 pt)

3. Does the proposed project have jurisdictional commitment?

Yes (8 pts)
No (0 pts)
Unknown (1 pt)

4. Is there a project plan available for the project?

Final plans available (4 pts)
Preliminary plans available (2 pts)
No plans exist (0 pts)
Unknown (1 pt)

5. Has funding been identified and secured for this project?

Fully funded (8 pts)
No funding identifed (0 pts)
Partially funded or further funding needed (4 pts)
Funding identified (2 pts)
Unknown (1 pts)

Tier 2: Economic Competitiveness

The following criteria evaluated the expected positive economic impact a project will have or its ability to elevate socioeconomic indicators, and its ability to address regional vulnerability and resilence.[1]

1. What is the expected economic impact for this project?

Project is expected to have a substantial economic impact. (5 pts)
Project is expected to have some economic impact. (3 pts)
Project is expected to have limited economic impact. (1 pt)
Project is expected to have no economic impact. (0 pts)

2. Does the project target occupations with higher than state average unemployment rates?

Yes (2 pts)
Same as (1 pt)
No (0 pts)

3. Does the project support skill-building or career training?

Yes (2 pts)
No (0 pts)

4. Is the project expected to create high wage positions?

Yes (2 pts)
No (0 pts)
Unknown (1 pt)

5. Will this project contribute to geographic concentration of clusters?

High geographic concentration (5 pts)
Low geographic (3 pts)
No geographic concentration (0 pts)

6. Will this project contribute to supply chain concentration of clusters?

High supply chain concentration (5 pts)
Low supply chain concentration (3 pts)
No supply chain concentration (0 pts)

7. Does this project relate to target industry sectors identified by Onward NRV?

Yes (2 pts)
No (0 pt)
Unknown (1 pt)

8. What percentage of the population is estimated to have lower than average per capita income (average of all jurisdictions involved in project)?

< 60% of local per capita income (3 pts)
61-74 % of local per capita income (2 pts)
> 75% of local per capita income (1 pt)

9. What is the relationship to previous investments?

New facility or service (3 pts)
Expansion of existing services or facilities (2 pts)
Replacement of existing services or facilities (1 pt)
No new services or facilities are being created or expanded (0 pts)

10. Using the CDC's Social Vulnerablity Index Map[2] for overall vulnerability by county, what is the project's vulnerablity ranking? (Use average for multi-jurisdiction projects.)

High between .7501-1 (5 pts)
Limited between .2501-.5 (2 pts)
Moderate between .5001-.75 (4 pts)
Low between 0-.25 (2 pts)

11. Using the composite fiscal stress prepared by the Commission of Local Government, what is the relative strengths of the project jurisdictions (for multi-jurisdiction projects use the highest index ranking among parcipants)?

High (4 pts)
Below average or low (1 pt)
Above Average (3 pts)

Tier 3: Regional Alignment

Criteria rates a project's alignment with other national, state, and regional initiatives and goals.

1. Does the project align with EDA investment priorities?[3]

Yes
No

2. Does this project address one or more of GoVirginia Region 2 priorities?[4]

Yes
No

3. Does the project support "in-demand occupations" as defined by the New River Mount Rogers Workfoce Development Board?

Yes
No

4. Does this project promote regional livability goals?[5]

Yes
No

Endnotes

1 Regional vulnerability criteria were established using the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index Documentation 2018, available at atsdr.cdc.gov/placeandhealth/svi/documentation/SVI_documention_2018.html.
2 CDC SVI created by the Agency of Toxic Substances and Disease Registry, https://svi.cdc.gov/map.html.
3 For guidance regarding EDA priorities, see https://eda.gov/about/investment-priorities/

4 See Region 2 GoVirginia 2021 Growth and Diversification Plan, available https://cece.vt.edu/GOVAR2/GOVADocumentation.html
5 See Livability Goals found in the New River Valley Livability Plan strategies available at https://nrvrc.org/images/pdf/NRV_Home_Report.pdf

FY 2025-2026 New River Valley Regional Commission Members

Chair – Mr. Hil Johnson
Vice-Chair – Ms. Susan Anderson
Treasurer – Mr. Leon Law

Past-Chair – Mr. Michael Maslaney
At-Large – Mr. David Horton
Ms. Linda DeVito Kuchenbuch
Mr. Larry Clevinger

Floyd County:	Ms. Linda DeVito Kuchenbuch* 539 Dobbins Hollow Road Riner, VA 24149	Mr. Michael Maslaney PO Box 908 Floyd, VA 24091	
Giles County:	Mr. Richard McCoy* 505 Tyler Avenue Pearisburg, VA 24134	Mr. Leon Law 1809 Cascades Drive Pembroke, VA 24136	Mr. Perry Martin* 728 Mountain Lake Rd, Newport VA 24128
	Town of Pearisburg: Ms. Amanda Davis* 617 Hale Street Pearisburg, VA 24134	Town of Rich Creek: Mr. Makhail Mann 985 Highland Court Rich Creek, VA 24147	Town of Narrows: Mr. Tom Spangler* 208 Southview Ave Narrows, VA 24124
Montgomery County:	Mr. Anthony Grafskyi* 301 Royal Lane Blacksburg, VA 24060	Brian S. Wheeler 509 Stonegate Drive Blacksburg, Va 24060	Town of Pembroke: CB Andrews PO Box 505 Pembroke, VA 24136
Pulaski County:	Mr. Jeffery Reeves* 5985 Alum Spring Road Dublin, VA 24084	Lara Ramsey 100S Main Street Blacksburg, VA 24060	Town of Dublin: Mr. Wayne Seagle* 525 Church Street Dublin, VA 24084
City of Radford:	Mr. David Horton* 106 5th Street Radford, VA 24141	Mr. Jeff Martin 107 Bird St. Radford, VA 24141	Town of Floyd: Mr. Will Griffin* Floyd, VA 24091
Town of Blacksburg:	Ms. Susan Anderson* 700 Preston Avenue Blacksburg VA 24060	Mx. Michael Harvey 803 Willard Drive Blacksburg, VA 24060	
Town of Christiansburg:	Mr. Hil Johnson 140 Brilliant Drive, N. W. Christiansburg, VA 24073	Mr. Tanya Hockett* 80 Somerset Street Christiansburg, VA 24073	
Town of Pulaski	Mr. Brooks Dawson* 1086 Red Fox Lane Pulaski, VA 24301	Mr. Larry Clevinger 1128 Well Street Pulaski, VA 24301	
Radford University:	Dr. Angela Joyner PO Box 6901 Radford, VA 24143		
Virginia Tech:	Ms. Liza Morris VA Tech Blacksburg, VA 24061	Mr. Richard Gibson 1715 Pratt Drive, #1000 Blacksburg, VA 24061	
New River Community College:	Dr. Robert Brandon 5251 College Drive Dublin, VA 24084		

*** = Elected Official**

2026 Committee Members

Name	Affiliation	Sector
Ann Cassell	Blacksburg Partnership	small business
Matt Hanratty	Blacksburg, Town of	local government
Angie Marcolini	Blacksburg, Town of	local government; small business support
Retta Jackson	Christiansburg, Town of	local government
Miles Campbell	Christiansburg, Town of	local government; small business support
Lydeana Martin	Floyd County	local economic development
Cora Gnegy	Giles County	local economic development; tourism
Jeff Dinger	Giles County	local economic development
Heather Fay	Greater Roanoke + NRV SBDC	small business support
Anthony Grafsky	Greater Roanoke + NRV SBDC	small business support
Ernie Maddy	Locus	finance institution
Brian Hamilton	Montgomery County	local economic development
Samantha Livesay	Montgomery County	local government; tourism
Terry Nicholson	Narrows, Town of	local government
Mark Rowh	New River Community College	higher education
Jenny Bolte	New River Workforce Development Board	workforce; economic development
Kevin Byrd	NRVRC	regional staff
Leo Priddy	NRVRC	regional staff
Emma Carroll	NRVRC	regional staff; tech hub
Katie Boswell	Onward NRV	regional economic development
Erika Tolbert	Pulaski County	tourism
Lydia Crockett	Pulaski County	local government; small business support
Drew Foxx	Pulaski County EDA	local economic development
Shannon Ainsley	Pulaski, Town of	local economic development
Kim Repass	Radford City	local government; economic development
Angela Joyner	Radford University	higher education; economic development
Nichole Hair	Radford University	higher education; economic development
Erin Burcham	Roanoke Blacksburg Innovation Alliance	regional innovation; economic development
Elli Travis	Virginia Tech	higher education
Emily Gibson	VT local government liaison	higher education

New River Valley Regional Economic Strategy
Committee Meeting

November 14, 2025
New River Room + Virtual

10:00 a.m.

Agenda

1. **Welcome & Introductions**
2. **Data & Discussion (Workforce & Industry)**
3. **Local Projects (New Online Form)**
4. **Next Steps**
    a. **Updating our Top Projects, Strategies, etc.**

Next meeting: January 16, 2026

New River Valley Regional Economic Strategy
Committee Meeting

January 16, 2026
Pulaski Innovation Center New River Room + Virtual

11:00 a.m.

Agenda

1. **Welcome & Introductions**
2. **Why Lending Matters to the Regional Economic Strategy**
3. **Small Business Lending Landscape**
4. **Local & Regional Lending Tools and Programs**
5. **Takeaway & Next Steps**

Next RES meeting:

Friday, February 27, at 10:00 a.m. at New River Room + Virtual

New River Valley Regional Economic Strategy
Committee Meeting

February 27, 20258
Pulaski Innovation Center New River Room + Virtual

10:00 a.m.

Agenda

1. **Welcome & Introductions**
2. **RES Content & Strategies Updates**
    a. **Proposed AM² Edits**
    b. **Updated Energy infrastructure Edits**
3. **Next Steps**
    a. **April 24: Project List Updates**
    b. **Update draft approval**
    c. **Commission Review in May/Adoption in June**

Next meeting:

Friday, May 8, at 10:00 a.m. at New River Room + Virtual

New River Valley Regional Economic Strategy
Committee Meeting

May 8, 2026
Pulaski Innovation Center New River Room + Virtual

10:00 a.m.

Agenda

1. **Welcome & Introductions**
2. **RES Content & Strategies Updates**
3. **Project List Updates**
4. **Next Steps**
    a. **Update Draft Approval**
    b. **Commission Review and Adoption in June**

2026 Glossary of Acronyms

Acronym	Full Term
DMO	Destination Marketing Organization,
NRMR WDB	New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board
NRV	New River Valley
NRV HOME	New River Valley Housing Opportunities Made Equal
NRVMPO	New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization
NRVRC	New River Valley Regional Commission
RIFA	Regional Industrial Facilities Authority
SBDC	Greater Roanoke & New River Valley Small Business Development Center
VDOT	Virginia Department of Transportation