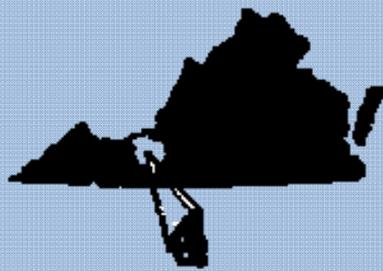
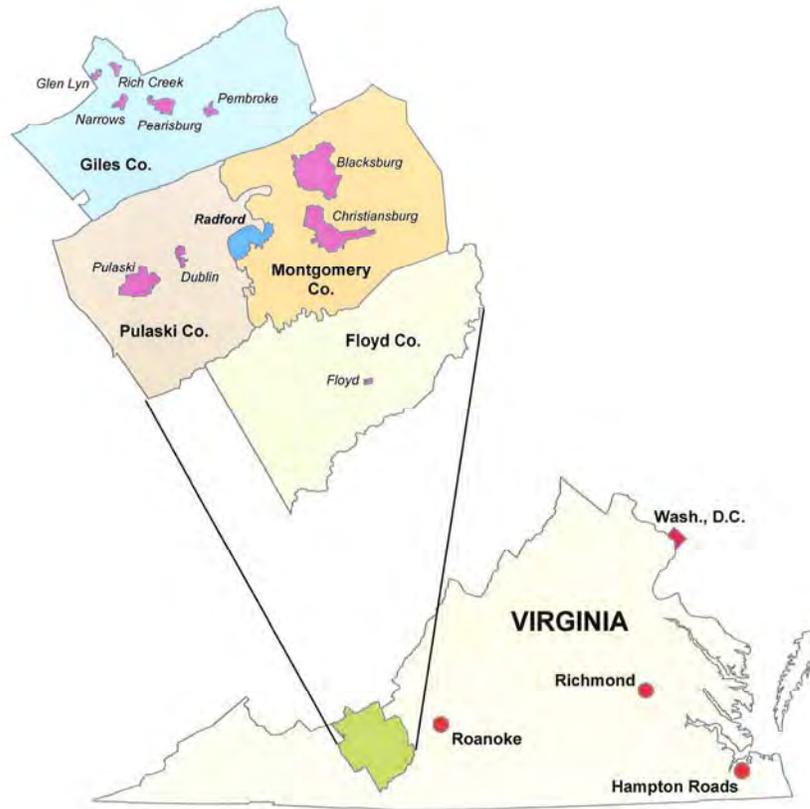


New River Valley
Planning District Commission

FY 2008-2009
Annual Report



Virginia's New River Valley



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Executive Director's Report

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

Fiscal Year 09 has been an extremely busy year, even in the face of an extreme slowdown in the world's economy along with increasing costs, particularly energy costs. These are just some of the issues that are helping shape the regional agenda.

FY 09 marked a major update to the region's economic strategy, Vision 2020. As in the past, Vision 2020 is the Region's Strategic Plan, incorporating action steps for partners in the planning process as well as other organizations undertaking projects suggested by the regional goals and objectives. Participants in the process identified several unifying themes: regional cooperation in project development is essential; a focus on sustainability is required; converting research to product manufacturing is critical, particularly research from Virginia Tech; high speed internet is critical for survival in a 21st Century economy. Four vision areas became evident when attempting to categorize action items included in **Community First...Regional Partners in a Global Marketplace**: People, Business/Industry and Employment, Natural and Cultural Resources, and Physical Infrastructure.

Last year I introduced the beginning of the Pulaski Town and County Economic Adjustment Strategy. The localities received financial support from the US Economic Development Administration to prepare an economic adjustment strategy to recover from the loss of the textile and furniture industries and the downsizing of the automotive field. The study identified Communities of Opportunity in Recreation, Education and Business for Pulaski County. The Community of Opportunity including nano manufacturing is a promising prospect for the entire New River Valley. The region is well placed to be the center of a developing cluster of nanotech

manufacturing companies, while possessing the assets to support a transition from research in nanotechnology to the manufacture of nano products. The region is working together to create Virginia's Nanotechnology Park, establishing a presence in this 21st Century manufacturing sector and providing much-needed jobs to the workforce in the region.

Employment Mobility

The soaring cost of energy and its impact on transportation caused an increased interest in ridesharing and influenced the results of the Employment Mobility Study. The employment mobility study surveyed employees through employers and those utilizing park and ride lots to determine the level of interest in utilizing public transportation. The study found that the Route 460, Rt. 114, Rt. 11 and Rt. 8 corridors are major commuting routes in the region. The above list is basically in priority order for developing public transportation services primarily for citizens commuting to work.

New River Valley Regional Wastewater Study

The New River Valley Regional Wastewater Study provides the region with a comprehensive evaluation of wastewater needs. The study was funded by the General Assembly through its Southern Rivers Program. The focus of the study is the maintenance of water quality in the region's waterways. This is the first comprehensive update of the region's wastewater needs since the Water Quality Management Planning of the early 1970's. Projects were identified in two categories, centralized projects and decentralized projects. Of the 116 identified centralized projects, 20 ranked high on the selection criteria for improving water quality. Eighteen decentralized projects were identified in areas where there is a concentration of homes that cannot be served by centralized systems. Of these projects, six also ranked highly to improve water quality.

Central Pulaski County Transportation and Land Use Master Plan

The Planning District Commission provided staff support to the towns of Dublin and Pulaski as well as the County as they evaluated the transportation needs in the Central core of the County. The Central Pulaski area is an important transportation corridor for all of the New River Valley. The study evaluated the existing conditions in the corridor, land use changes, and proposed projects to keep the transportation system working efficiently and meeting needs locally as well as across the region.

The work discussed above illustrates the strong interconnections between the region's people and their service needs. Addressing issues together identifies solutions that may not otherwise be considered. When these completed projects are considered alongside the ongoing work initiated last year, including expansion of the Corporate Research Center (CRC) at Virginia Tech, the sharing of potable water resources, regional broadband deployment, Green Infrastructure and sustainability, as well as the upcoming requirements for stormwater management, the need for regional solutions is clearly evident.

The following report describes these and many other projects the Commission worked on during the FY 08-09 year.

Sincerely,

David W. Rundgren
Executive Director



Regional Cooperation

Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facility Authority

Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facility Authority's first project was the creation of the New River Valley Commerce Park. The work of the Commerce Park Participation Committee is reviewed in another section of this report. During FY09, the Authority created an additional Participation Committee: the Nanotechnology Park Participation Committee, which is developing the prospectus and marketing strategy for recruiting members both public and private as well as proceeding with conceptual site plans and preliminary engineering.

The Authority continues to seek quality economic development opportunities which create local benefits through joint projects.

Emerging Regional Cooperative Efforts

Coordination and cooperation continue to be a desired condition. The State is looking for opportunities to work with localities and regionally in such programs as Green Infrastructure planning, Hazard Mitigation, alternative energy development and energy conservation. Work continues between the State and localities in coordination of land use decisions and the adequacy of the transportation infrastructure.

Water source sharing is the subject of several discussions,

notably between Pulaski and Radford, in support of joint needs at the Commerce Park and also assuring that VDOT designs into the Rt. 114 bridge replacement with the ability to carry water between Pulaski and Montgomery counties.

Stormwater management and broadband communications interoperability are topics shared by localities and the State.



The *Vision 2020* regional strategic plan *Community First: Harnessing Change and Building Connections* (2003) was updated in 2009.

Community First: Regional Partners in a Global Marketplace is the 2009 update to the New River Valley's Vision 2020 Strategic Plan. Recognizing the value of working together, to accomplish long- and short-term goals, and the need to share resources across political lines, the area's citizens built a plan highlighting "regional" goals, objectives, projects and programs in this newest update.

The 2009 *Vision 2020* Update, *Community First: Regional Partners in a Global Marketplace*, was made possible by the concentrated efforts of numerous New River Valley visionaries. Contributors included local government

officials, members of nonprofit organizations, civic leaders, teachers and school administrators, business community members, and many others committed to a bright and community-guided future for the New River Valley. The revision of the projects and update of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy was completed in June 2009.

The vision areas from the 2003 update were modified to **People, Business/Industry and Employment, Natural and Cultural Resources, and Infrastructure**. Ideas were generated for these areas by answering the following two questions:

1. What can be done immediately to shore up our local businesses, organizations and people?
2. What are things we need to do today to support a bright future for our children?

Six *Community Conversations* were held throughout the region so that citizens, community leaders, educators and local elected officials could come together and share their opinions and ideas about the future of the New River Valley. The *Community Conversations* were held in Dublin, Radford, Floyd, Christiansburg, Pearisburg, and Shawsville.



A final area-wide meeting was held on April 30, 2009 where all the ideas gathered were reviewed and prioritized. Most of the region's Planners attended that session and participated in the final round of prioritization of the project and program ideas.

Throughout the process, citizens provided input, suggestions, comments, and concerns on many issues facing the New River Valley and its individual jurisdictions. Several common themes presented themselves: a need to be more regional in our planning and program development; a need to provide residents, businesses and industry with affordable broadband services to enable greater participation and global access; a need to grow and support small local business (especially high, bio and nanotech); a need to make energy conservation and education an integral part of our everyday life; and a need to preserve our cultural and natural heritage (this includes supporting and encouraging growth in family farms).

With the advancement of technology and the world wide web, businesses in the New River Valley are competing with businesses from all over the world. *Community First* can be achieved by focusing on the immediate needs of our people and businesses in these uncertain economic times through initiatives to "buy local," and to cultivate and preserve local culture and heritage. And we can become more competitive in the global marketplace by becoming *Regional Partners* (and not regional competitors) in economic strategies. The strength of the New River Valley has

always been its people and their commitment to education, innovation, and preservation of the area's history and natural resources.

Several regional initiatives in the areas of telecommunications, regional housing assessment, and cooperative regional governmental forums have begun under the impetus of this vision. Greater connections between and among governments, the non-profits, and grassroots community groups can also be attributed to efforts under the regional *Community First* umbrella.

NRV Planner's Forum

The Commission supports communication and training between local government planning departments by coordinating a Regional Planning Forum. The Regional Planning Forum meets bi-monthly at a rotating host community to discuss the latest issues concerning planning in the region. The Planning Forum has made it their goal to provide at least one training session annually open to all local government Planning Commission members in the region. The Commission hosted the third training session on April 30th of this year.

The session was an overview of Cluster Development implementation and techniques. Landscape Architects, a professor at Virginia Tech and others involved with a local private business, gave overviews of cluster development from the perspective of an applicant. The session was well attended with close to 70 area Planning Commissioners. Plans are underway to hold another training session in April of 2010.



Southwest Virginia's Artisan Network, 'Round the Mountain, is a non-profit organization whose mission is to promote sustainable economic development of the region's communities by assisting local artisans with marketing, educational, and entrepreneurial opportunities. 'Round the Mountain represents 19 counties and 4 cities, with the New River Valley serving as its northernmost boundary. Preliminary community meetings have begun this year in the New River Valley bringing together interested artisans and farmers to provide details on the RTM organization and its mission, membership, and what it hopes to accomplish in the future. After these meetings, each county (or partner counties) is tasked with identifying their locality's artisans and farms to compile in an informational brochure. Floyd County has already completed its brochure, with Montgomery County scheduled for production in spring of 2010. The PDC serves on the Trail Development Committee for the organization.

New River Valley HOME Consortium

June 30, 2009 marked the end of the New River Valley HOME Consortium's second year of funding. The HOME Program, established in 1990 by the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), is the largest Federal block grant to State and local governments designed exclusively to create affordable housing for low to moderate-income households.

Funds are available for activities such as owner occupied home rehabilitation, new construction of single family or multi-family homes, acquisition of property, and demolition of substandard housing as well as architectural fees, feasibility studies, homebuyer's counseling, and other finance-related costs. The HOME funds require a 25% non-federal match by the Consortium, a way of ensuring commitment from the localities.

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

- The Consortium unanimously approved a revised allocation system to rotate the funds annually among the member localities. This helps the member localities to leverage other funds more effectively, improve long term planning, and increases the impact of the Consortium to address housing needs. During the past fiscal year, Montgomery County, Pulaski County and the City of Radford were the target areas for assistance.
- Construction on the duplex in Blacksburg was completed and homeowners were selected.
- Program guidelines were established for the Homebuyer Program.
- The loan was closed and construction started on a mixed-use rental project in the City of Radford.
- Four down payment assistance loans were made.
- The Town of Blacksburg developed an Affordable Housing Program to best coordinate HOME funds with its annual allocation of CDBG Entitlement funds.

- Community Housing Development Organization (CHDO) Operating funds were added as an eligible activity.



Dedication of a new construction duplex in Blacksburg for two low-to-moderate income families.



Future site of a mixed-use commercial and rental unit project in the City of Radford.

Green Infrastructure Planning

In the past year, the Green Infrastructure Initiative, coordinated by the NRVPCDC has shifted its focus from outreach and education to a technical analysis of the region's natural assets. This process began with a set of meetings dedicated to identifying themes upon which to build the region's green infrastructure network. The themes identified included: forest and farms, water, natural hazards, habitat and ecosystem diversity, recreation and health, and cultural heritage. Each of these components was identified as being critical to the overall concept of green infrastructure in the NRV. A link to these themes

and their related goals is provided at: www.nrvpdc.org/GreenInfrastructure/greeninfrastructure.html.

Based on the development of these themes and goals, the NRVPCDC, along with the New River Land Trust and several other steering committee members, has been working with the Green Infrastructure Center of Charlottesville. The GIC provided guidance and advice on how to overcome some obstacles that had become difficult with the previous mapping methodology the group was using. Concurrent with this collaboration, working groups composed of members of the steering committee met several times to discuss each of the themes. These groups were tasked with identifying data sets and specific characteristics that spatially represent their assigned theme.

Already, the new methods provided by the GIC have yielded draft maps of the region's green infrastructure network as well as overlays depicting each of the previously discussed themes. The working groups provided valuable insight and review of the draft overlays as they were created by PDC staff. A set of final draft maps should be available in the fall of 2009.

The steering committee will begin shifting its focus again toward the outreach and education that is so crucial to the public and government acceptance and endorsement of these planning efforts. A communications strategy and "roll-out" plan is currently under discussion and is slated to begin in early winter 2009 and 2010.



New River Valley Development Corporation

The Development Corporation is chartered as an economic development organization and continues to seek opportunities to be a force in developing economic initiatives throughout the NRV.

The Corporation's staff remained active in economic development activities during the year.

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

Additionally, the program has provided support to downtown businesses, localities, non-profit organizations, individuals and entrepreneurs located within the New River Valley as well as the New River Valley Competitiveness Center Business Incubator tenants, keeping in line with the Corporation's mission.

Incubator Services

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

New River Valley Competitiveness Center

The New River Valley Competitiveness Center, a small business incubator, completed its tenth year of operation. Since the beginning of the Center in April 1999, 42 new businesses have been assisted with the creation of over 328 new jobs. Twenty-one tenants, including seven regional agencies, currently occupy the incubator; it is now at 53% occupancy. By the end of June 2009, the Center provided business technical assistance to eight external clients and helped two clients expand their companies within the New River Valley.

Responding to the sharp economic downturn facing the nation's micro and small businesses, the Development Corporation has partnered with several non-profits that offer lending and support services to small businesses to take swift action to help entrepreneurs challenged by higher costs, declining sales, and tightening credit. The Micro Solutions Program allows the Center to help clients connect to area business technical assistance programs to further grow their business, by providing services that include lending, training, technical assistance and mentoring to current and aspiring entrepreneurs.

The Center will continue to offer an in-house revolving loan fund for business expansion to several incubator tenants. The overall strategy of the Fund is to use a public/private partnership to finance viable projects that typically would not otherwise

meet conventional lending standards. In the end, it all comes down to helping clients get what they need to grow their business. The following new tenants expanded their business within the Competitiveness Center in fiscal year 2009.

- **North South Partners, Inc.** produces "the best beef naturally". They are determined to provide the best product for the consumer and the soundest genetic seed stock for the farmer.
- **Blue Ridge Satellite** provides Dish Network services among other products and services.
- **Boscan Web Services** is a web center that supports small and medium sized businesses to leverage their information, products and goods on the Internet. They also promote wealth and health through Market America.
- **Woodmen of the World Financial Society** provides valued financial solutions and engages their members in volunteer community services.

Special Programs and Marketing

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

information on how to get a business started.

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

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

Zambia Delegates Visit the NRV Competitiveness Center: The New River Valley Competitiveness Center for the first time hosted delegates from Zambia and it was a pure delight. They were the most attentive, interested and educated delegates

who represented vocational, technological, and entrepreneurial training; individuals who were fascinated with sharing best practices for small business incubators.



The delegates spent the week meeting with incubator managers and representatives from the New Century Venture Center in Salem, the Jacksonville Center in Floyd, and the Southwest Regional Enterprise Center at the Crossroads Institute in Galax to gain understanding of managing an incubator. The Zambians had appointments with Woodworks Restoration & Remodeling and Trenia B and Company, Competitiveness Center graduates, to discuss the Center's role in their business development and success. Residing incubator tenants Safe Water, Luxine Inc., Signs Direct, and Smiling Bulldog Enterprises shared with the delegates the advantages and disadvantages of being located within a small business incubator while developing a startup business. Incubator managers and representatives, graduates, and tenants agreed that the whole week was a success. This visit was worthwhile and could lead to further business exchanges.

New River Valley Commerce Park

The economic development world has changed during the last five years and the Commerce Park Participation Committee is keeping pace with the changes. The Commerce Park is a joint economic development location which was not affordable by individual local governments. It was envisioned as a premiere location for computer chip manufacturing or other high-end computer based manufacturing which required space, high investments in machinery and the tools of production, quality water supplies, and the potential for access to international travel and shipping.

The Commerce Park includes nearly 900 acres, is immediately adjacent to the New River Valley International Airport where US Customs is providing Port of Entry Services, and is in a suitable location with low potential for natural disaster interruption of business.

The localities who jointly invested in the future include the Counties of Bland, Craig, Giles, Montgomery, Pulaski, and Roanoke, the Cities of Radford and Roanoke, and the Towns of Dublin, Pearisburg, and Pulaski.

The eleven member Participation Committee has elected Chris McKlarney, Giles County representative, as its Chairman; Basil Edwards, City of Radford representative, as Vice Chairman; and Shawn Utt, Pulaski County representative as Secretary/Treasurer. During FY 08-09, the Participation Committee, as co-applicant with

Pulaski County Public Service Authority, completed the application to the U.S. Economic Development Administration to increase water and sewer capacity to 1 million gallons per day. This application was successful and a \$3 million grant was awarded in September 2008. This capacity is important to meet line flow as well as supplies for potential major industries. Project NEEMO (Nanomaterials for Energy, Environmental and Medical Operations) has identified a significant potential opportunity for the regional focus in nanotechnology and is proposing to locate at a site in the NRV Commerce Park. Pulaski Town and County are leading the effort to establish the Virginia Nanotechnology Park and a Participation Committee within the *Virginia's First* framework.



Housing Partnership of the New River Valley

The Housing Partnership is comprised of housing and service providers in the New River Valley which meets monthly to discuss issues that affect low-to-moderate income households. With the downturn in the economy, the Partnership has also realized that issues of paying utility bills, buying groceries each month and providing school clothes and supplies for children, are all interrelated issues coexisting with housing. The Housing Partnership has identified that most challenges involve the coordination of resources, duplication of services,

available funding, and the education of respective clients in essential life management skills.



As of June 30, 2008, the Department of Rehabilitative Services experienced budget cuts that eliminated staff support funding for the New River Valley Disability Services Board (DSB). Fortunately, the PDC was able to bring in additional funding in order to continue the service it normally provides to the DSB. This past fiscal year the DSB worked to update its Needs Assessment; a new survey was created and distributed across the New River Valley. The surveys received a higher response rate than the previous Needs Assessment, but the Board is already working to improve its survey strategy for the upcoming year.

This year, the DSB also provided input and feedback in the Transportation and Housing Alliance Grant administered by the Planning District Commission, a supplemental grant to the Employment Mobility Study.

New River/Mount Rogers Workforce Investment Board

The following is a summary of the PY 08 program year.

Special Projects

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

- Provided Junior Achievement Success Skills Training to 135 WIA Youth customers in partnership with local school districts and WIA Program Operators across our service area.
- In partnership with local Adult Education providers and the Tobacco Commission, held an Adult Education Forum. This Forum brought together regional Adult Education and Workforce professionals, business representatives and government officials to discuss the need for Adult Education in Southwest Virginia.
- In partnership with People Inc. of Virginia and Virginia Highlands Community College, funded a Career Exploration Camp for WIA Youth. This camp offered exposure to various career occupations throughout a week-long camp. Fifty-three (53) WIA Youth from the counties of Washington, Smyth, Wythe and Bland as well as Bristol City explored several different occupations. The camp had guest speakers and various activities designed to expose the youth to as many career occupations as possible.
- In partnership with Goodwill Industries of the Valleys, provided funding for work experience incentives to WIA youth within the New River Valley.
- In partnership with the New River Community College-Middle College program, provided funding for seven

(7) WIA youth to participate in the “Enhancing Student Aptitude and Attitude” project conducted by New River Community College.

Job Fairs PY 08

NRV Job Fair Expo – Fall October 21, 2008 held at the New River Valley Mall. Over 64 employers were represented and an estimated 300 job seekers were served.

Partners: Career Pathways, DRS, Partners for Self Sufficiency (the 5 NRV DSS offices), NRCC, NRCC Workforce Development, NRV Competitiveness Center, NRVPDC, NR/MR WIB, and VEC.

NRV Job Fair Expo – Spring April 2, 2009 held at New River Community College. Over 50 employers were represented and an estimated 350 job seekers were served.

Partners: Career Pathways, DRS, Partners for Self Sufficiency (the 5 NRV DSS offices), NRCC, NRCC Workforce Development, NRV Competitiveness Center, NRVPDC, NR/MR WIB, and VEC.

Regional Collaboration

A group of regional partners made up of representatives from five Community Colleges, two Workforce Investment Boards (Area 2 and 3), the NRVPDC, Virginia Tech (VT), two community service agencies and four regional employers, have begun the process for grant development to apply for one of the Energy Training Partnership grants for developing Career Pathways Systems in industries and occupation clusters of Building Retrofitting and/or Alternative Energy Technology.

Rapid Response Funding

The WIB requested and received \$250,000 bringing the total Rapid Response funding up to \$830,599 to provide training and services to displaced workers from multiple employers in WIA 2 through June, 2009. During PY 08, 486 displaced workers were served with 278 active as of June 30, 2009. 110 clients were placed in unsubsidized employment with an average placement wage rate of \$11.00 per hour.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act

The WIB received in excess of \$1.8 million under ARRA for service to Dislocated Workers, Adults and Youth effective May 1, 2009. ARRA funds will be used to provide employment and training services to 155 Dislocated Workers, 100 adults and 375 youth clients. One main emphasis of ARRA funding is the “Summer Only” component for Youth. It is envisioned that 350 youth in this area will receive work experience and work readiness activities during the period May 1, 2009 through September 30, 2009. ARRA funds are available through June 30, 2011, however, the emphasis is to serve citizens and expand funds as rapidly as possible. The ARRA funding is in addition to the PY’09 WIA formula allocation received which is in excess of \$1.9 million.

PY’08 Service Levels

During the period July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009, the Workforce Investment Board achieved the following service levels.

- Adult/Dislocated Workers Served – 310
- Adult/Dislocated Workers Placed – 111

- Placement Rate – 75%
- Funds Expended - \$900,000
- Youth Customers Served – 215
- Funds Expended - \$540,000



Pulaski County Comprehensive Plan

The NRVPDC is assisting Pulaski County in the update to their Comprehensive Plan. The County was divided into five planning areas, those adopted include the Northeast (Fairlawn, Belspring, Parrott), North (Back Creek, Little Walker Creek), South (Snowville, Allisonia, Hiwassee), and Draper (Draper, Peak Creek). The Central Planning Area (Towns of Dublin and Pulaski) is awaiting approval.

During 2008-2009, the PDC facilitated two public input sessions associated with the Central Planning Area to gain as much local insight as possible. The five planning areas constitute the second volume of the Comprehensive Plan. Volume One of the plan was also formulated during FY09. Volume One includes additional areas of focus including Community Facilities, Housing, Natural Resources, and Economy and Demographics. These elements are used to highlight areas of the County for planning purposes. The Volume One Plan also includes the Goals and Objectives of the County. The Goals and Objectives are one of the most important pieces of the plan,

showing accomplishments that have been achieved during the life of the plan.

Floyd County Comprehensive Plan

Floyd County began the process of updating their Comprehensive Plan in mid 2009. The Plan was last updated in 2002 and will include numerous updates related to mapping, demographics, and functional land uses. The challenges associated with growth management will be better handled via the updated plan as a result of the residential growth that has affected the County. Other issues highlighted for update include transportation (both roadways and trails) and goals and objectives.

Town of Floyd Land Development Regulations

The Town of Floyd completed the update of the Zoning Ordinance in the summer of 2009. This Ordinance includes numerous changes to the previous document including Signage, Permitted Uses, and Open Space Requirements. With the updated ordinance the Town will have the ability to better manage development while still providing a unique place to live and work. An update to the Town Subdivision Ordinance is currently being reviewed with scheduled adoption in the fall of 2009.

Pearisburg Subdivision and Zoning Ordinance Update

The NRVPC completed the update of the Town of Pearisburg Subdivision Ordinance Update in

late 2008. This update included reviews of the permissible subdivision types allowed in Town and updated processes for simple lot line revisions and other types of subdivision. This Ordinance also included a review of the Town Charter to clean up language related to subdivision.

Following the completion of the Subdivision Ordinance, the Town began the process of updating the Zoning Ordinance. Updates are still being completed and this process is expected to continue through 2009. A review of Zoning Districts, the Official Town Zoning Map, and permitted uses were discussed and are being incorporated into the document.

Local Emergency Planning Committee

The NRVPC serves as staff to the Montgomery/Blacksburg Local Emergency Planning Committee (LEPC), and participates in Pulaski County's LEPC. For the Montgomery County/Blacksburg LEPC, staff collected and disseminated the SARA Title III Tier II inventory reports for those businesses required to make hazardous material data available to the public. The LEPC continues to broaden its partnerships to include industries, citizens, and local emergency response staff. Recent efforts to this end include direct mailing invitations to potential participants and ensuring an educational speaker for each meeting.

Central Pulaski County Transportation and Land Use Master Plan

The Commission was awarded funds in July of 2007 through VDOT's Multimodal Grant Program to conduct a study of transportation and land use issues in the central portion of Pulaski County. The study area includes the towns of Pulaski and Dublin and the County area in between. The primary goal for the project was to create a plan that identified future transportation corridors, improvements to the existing network, and the land use regulations that will assist in implementing projects.

The project was guided by a stakeholder committee that consisted of three members from each locality, a staff member, an appointed official (planning commissioner), and an elected official. The Commission facilitated the stakeholder committee while the project consultants, Anderson and Associates, and Draper Aden Associates provided technical expertise for transportation projects. Major transportation projects identified by the stakeholders committee included interchange improvements to I-81 Exit 98 with Route 100 and a Route 100 Bypass off of I-81 Exit 101 extending north to Rt. 11.



The final plan was submitted the last day of June 2009 and included a series of illustrated improvements and comprehensive planning updates.

The Central Pulaski Transportation and Land Use Master Plan reflected improvements to accommodate existing and future passenger and freight traffic levels by integrating multiple modes of transportation through the improvements of existing corridors, planning of new corridors, and incorporation of non-motorized corridors. The goal of the master plan was to prepare a multimodal transportation system that enhanced the quality of life and health, strengthened communities, increased safety, reduced congestion, increased connectivity of localities and resources, benefited the environment, supported existing land use, and accommodated future development. Detailed intersection improvement plans were also highlighted as a result of having poor safety or congestion related issues.

New River Valley Community Broadband Network Plan

The Commission's Telecommunications Committee received funding to detail the implementation of the NRV community broadband network. With the planning complete and the need for increased telecommunications services on the rise, the planning is beginning to manifest into a potential construction project of 60 miles of fiber optic cable, providing the backbone of a government network, while interconnecting

between networks in Southside and Southwestern Virginia, and bridge critical broadband gaps that exist in the New River Valley.

During FY08 the localities of Giles and Pulaski formed the New River Valley Network Wireless Authority which secured a grant from the Economic Development Administration to support the project with \$2.5 million in construction funds. The Authority could not secure the remaining \$2.5 million in match funding and continues to search for financial support to implement this critical infrastructure project.

It is envisioned that the Authority will contract with a public/private partnership created by the Virginia's First Regional Industrial Facility Authority for system operations.

Once constructed, the network will allow for the development of a government network, interconnecting local government operations and school systems to a state of the art broadband network at reduced or stable costs and increased services. In addition, through a private-public partnership, the business plan allows for the leasing of broadband infrastructure to private enterprise in order to increase telecommunications services to businesses and individuals in the New River Valley.

Pulaski County CDBG

Pulaski County has submitted a request for a 2009 CDBG Planning Grant to the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). The County has selected the

Baskerville neighborhood outside of Dublin for housing rehabilitation, demolition of blighted structures, and street and water line improvements. Pulaski will be working with the PDC to leverage additional funds and complete its full grant application for DHCD by spring 2010.



Pulaski Area Economic Adjustment Strategy

The Town and County of Pulaski received a grant from the Economic Development Administration (EDA) to conduct several studies and planning efforts related to locating a nanotechnology facility in the region and establishing an economic adjustment strategy. The Pulaski Area Economic Adjustment Strategy (EAS) analyzed assets and developed a strategy that can lead to an economic transformation through attracting and creating new jobs.

The strategy identified three economic sectors for which the County is well positioned to see expanded economic opportunities. Pulaski is a Community of Opportunity for Recreation, a Community of Opportunity for Education, and a Community of Opportunity for Business and Industry. The establishment of **Virginia's Nanotechnology Park (VNTP)** and the construction of the Park's first multi-tenant Anchor

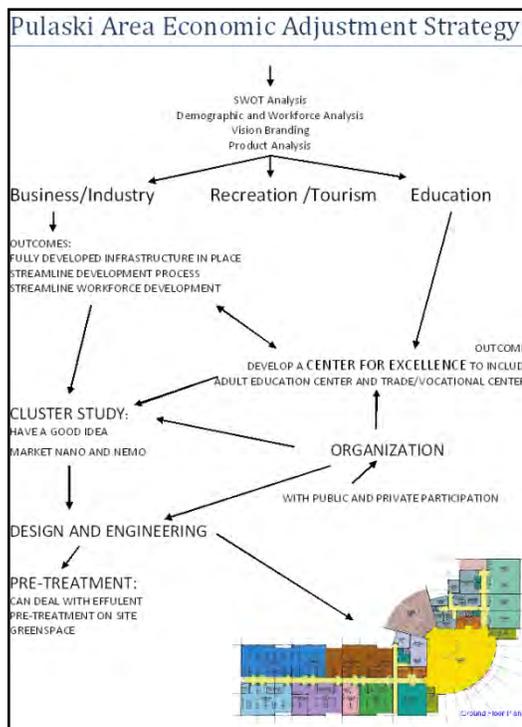
Building are the area's number one priority projects designed to lead in the transformation of the economy from traditional manufacturing to a major position in the economy of the 21st Century Virginia. The concept of Virginia's Nanotechnology Park has been a major component in the preparation of the Economic Adjustment Strategy.

Workforce development and preparedness is a key to the successful transition of the area's economy. A **Center for Manufacturing Excellence**, co-located with the Anchor Facility at the VNTP, allows many benefits to both employers and workers. The concept of such a Center that has associations with the community college, the universities, apprenticeship programs, and employers has been in the community for a period of time. The State has committed funding to assist in its establishment, the educational institutions have committed teaching resources, and businesses see a need for such a Center.

The **I-81 Route 100 Interchange** has been identified as a priority project because of the opportunity to create a front door interchange at Exit 98 that serves the needs of the traveling public as well as the business and industry in the area. Recent developments are increasing the usage of the interchange including additional business and industry, Virginia Tech's membership in the Atlantic Coast Conference for sports activities, and the

establishment of the Southwest Virginia Veterans Cemetery just outside of Dublin.

Currently, the interchange has capacity limitations due to outdated design. Evaluations of traditional design alternatives leave little hope that conditions can be improved. The costs of additional right of ways, the elimination of businesses, and the cost of major interchange construction coupled with tight budgets are causes of great concern.



Pulaski County Water/Sewer Improvements

The Pulaski County Public Service Authority and *Virginia's* First received an award from the Economic Development Administration for \$3 million to increase the water and sewer capacity of the New River Valley Commerce Park to one million gallons per day.

The project will provide a two-million gallon per day water source from the City of Radford to serve both the Commerce Park and the eastern portion of Pulaski County. In addition, onsite improvements will be made to the New River Valley Commerce Park including water and sewer lines, a water storage tank, and a sewer force main.

Engineering design, the environmental reviews, and easement acquisition began in April. The project will continue through 2011 with construction projected to begin in late 2009. The NRVPCD is assisting with grant administration, managing the environmental review process, and acquisition of easements.

Regional Water Supply Planning

In an effort to meet the requirements set forth in the State Code of Virginia (9 VAC 25-780) that local governments prepare and adopt a water supply plan, the NRVPCD has been working with 13 localities since 2007 to prepare a regional plan. This plan was submitted to the Department of Environmental Quality in early 2008 for review.

In late 2008, the committee working on the regional water supply plan came back together to discuss the comments and requirements returned with the draft of the plan. The NRVPCD received funding from DEQ to revise the plan and assist localities in drafting and adopting drought ordinances. As of the end of Fiscal Year 2009, most sections of the plan had been returned to DEQ for final review. Upon return of

these sections from DEQ, the NRVPCDC will be working with the participating localities to adopt the plan, as well as appropriate drought ordinances. Final adoption should be completed by the end of calendar year 2009.

The draft of the water supply plan sent to DEQ in 2007 is currently available on the NRVPCDC website. Upon completion of its revision, a new draft will be posted.

Southern Rivers and the NRV Regional Wastewater Study

In May 2009, the New River Valley Regional Wastewater Study was completed for the Southern Rivers Watershed Enhancement Program. This project, generously funded by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, sought to improve water quality in local streams and local quality of life through the provision of public wastewater collection and treatment.

The New River Valley Regional Wastewater Study is intended to address water quality improvement through the development of sewage collection and treatment alternatives. The study's goals included identifying the need for sewer service in the region, identifying and prioritizing projects, finding and identifying funding sources for these projects, and eliminating the health hazards and environmental problems associated with inadequate septic systems. The study

also identified projects that due to their remote location, topographic situations, small size or soil conditions, would benefit from non-traditional de-centralized wastewater systems. It is envisioned that the study will serve as a road map for future implementation of sanitary sewer collection, treatment and disposal projects in the New River Valley.

During the course of this 11 month study, the Advisory Management Team, comprised of local sewer providers, state agency representatives, citizens, and others examined approximately 134 projects. These projects were analyzed and prioritized based on the degree of health hazard, elimination of water quality problems, the number of customers served, construction cost per connection, facility availability, as well as residential and industrial growth potential. The project rankings led to a recommendation to pursue 20 centralized projects and 6 decentralized projects across the region.

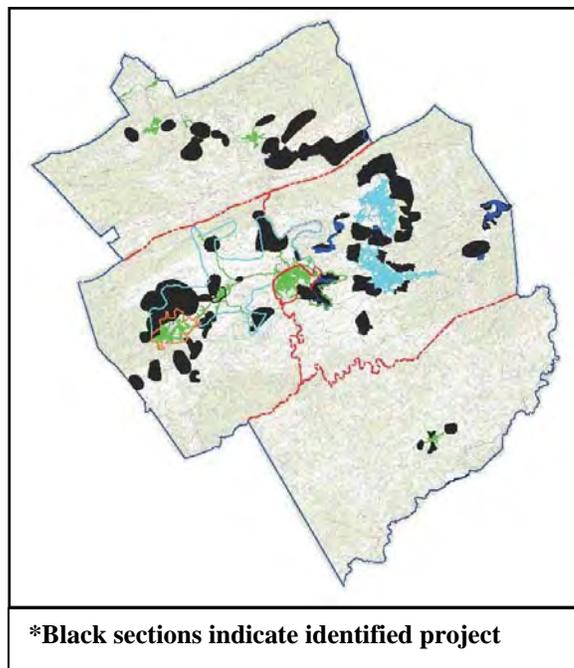
The 20 centralized projects will serve more than 3,135 connections at a cost of \$67,404,744. The six decentralized projects will serve 424 connections at a cost of \$5,562,970.

A number of next steps have been identified, including organizing educational sessions with PSA boards to discuss decentralized sewer projects and actively pursuing funding to construct primary priority projects. This study is the beginning of a process to update and expand current wastewater facilities and expand public sewer service to previously un-served areas. Other sewer projects remain unstudied, but have the potential to become priority projects in the future.

New River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan

The New River Valley Hazard Mitigation Plan kick-off meeting was held on June 30, 2009 and included members of the steering committee (representing the region's localities, local, state, and federal agencies, and other regional organizations), PDC staff, and Radford University project team members. FEMA awarded funding for a partnership between NRVPCDC and Radford University to produce an updated plan that will include more extensive mapping to improve the mitigation planning for the region.

The plan will continue to be updated in FY2010. The updated plan must be completed and approved by FEMA for participating localities to maintain eligibility for hazard mitigation assistance



funds. The PDC is partnering with Radford University's Geography Department to prepare a revised plan that will maintain the region's eligibility for FEMA's disaster mitigation program funds. The hazard mitigation workgroup is updating the plan by further identifying known hazards, assessing potential risks, and developing mitigation strategies to protect lives and property and prepare the region for disasters that may strike.

MPO Freight Study

The NRVPC in 2008 completed the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) of Blacksburg, Christiansburg, and Montgomery County Freight Study. The NRVPC obtained freight data from VDOT pertaining to rail, truck, and air to prepare a report identifying the major corridors for transporting freight. The report also details freight volumes, commodities, value, and origination/destination.

Mobility Management

The PDC was awarded a Mobility Management grant by the Department of Rail and Public Transportation under its New Freedom program. The grant will allow the PDC to gather extensive data on each existing transit provider in the New River Valley for the purpose of creating a working resource manual. One of the visions for the Mobility Manager is to research, plan, and help implement employment related transportation services across the region. The need for such a role is well established and will alleviate the difficulties existing service providers experience when trying to match

a user with their service while ultimately trying to serve multiple users on single trips to lower costs.

Employment Mobility Study

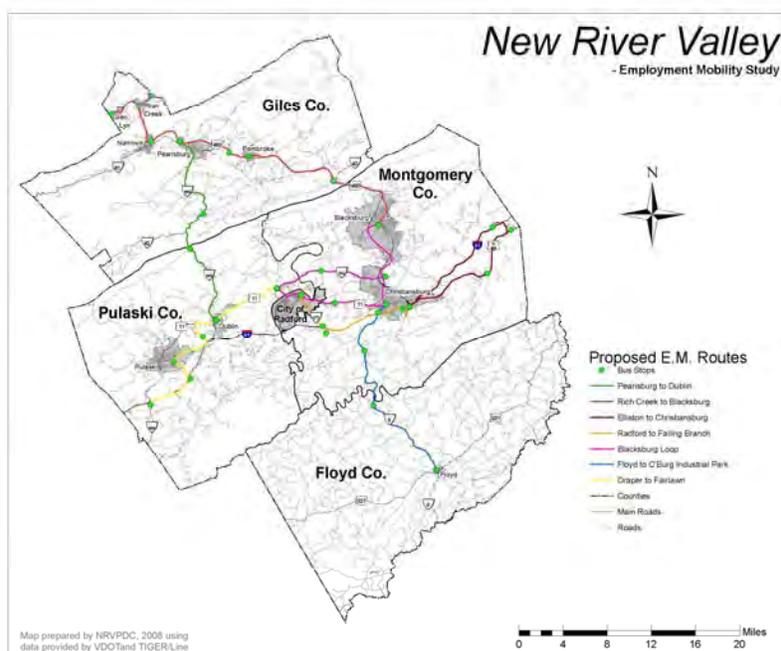
The Employment Mobility Study was funded under the Multimodal Planning Grant administered by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) in order to develop a vision for rural transportation within the New River Valley. The eighteen month project, completed in January of 2009, analyzed commuter patterns, barriers to transportation, and explored transportation solutions through two surveys and the guidance of a knowledgeable stakeholder group.

Project progress was overseen by a stakeholders group that was tasked with providing input concerning survey creation, identifying both formal and informal existing Park & Ride lots as part of the survey process,

and promoting the survey after its completion. The stakeholders played an active and continuous role during the Employment Mobility Study, meeting regularly throughout the project to provide input and feedback.

The first survey, administered in person at Park & Ride lots across the region, was created in order to address how formal and informal Park & Ride lots are being utilized, and assess the ability for these lots to serve as rural bus stops along a fixed or semi-fixed transit route. To broaden the project's demographics beyond Park & Ride lot users, a more comprehensive survey was created in order to target employees across the entire region. This survey focused on four main categories:

Transportation Information, Transportation Barriers, Transportation Solutions, and Demographics. Demand was illustrated through a series of maps.



As an enhancement to the project, the PDC applied for and was awarded grant funds through the Transportation and Housing Alliance Toolkit (THA) program to develop maps of the region identifying and analyzing disabled, aging, and low-income populations within the project area who could benefit from the Employment Mobility Study. The Transportation and Housing Alliance Toolkit provided the PDC the opportunity to map demographic data at the block group level, including disabled populations, low income, multi-unit housing facilities and several other demographic categories. These maps serve as indicators for transportation need. An additional set of geo-coded maps illustrate points of demand for disadvantaged populations such as health care providers, departments of social services, and financial institutions.

Results of both surveys pointed to an overall interest in both carpooling and public transportation. Using this data, the project relied on the expertise of existing transit providers Blacksburg Transit (BT), Pulaski Area Transit (PAT), and Community Transit (CT) to analyze the survey data and draft recommendations for future route placement, route connectivity, proposed budget, and vehicle type. Additional transportation services to transport riders from transit stops to their employment centers were proposed in the form of a network of vanpools running on semi-fixed routes. A phased approach is recommended to implement the transit providers' recommendations.

The Employment Mobility Study was a recipient of a 2009

Innovation Award given by the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO). NADO's Innovation Awards program recognizes regional development organizations and partnering organizations for improving economic and community competitiveness.



RIDE Solutions has now completed two full fiscal years in the New River Valley and is entering its third year. The program began with 56 NRV participants before the New River Valley program was established; 369 New River Valley commuters are participating as of June 2009. The focus of the New River Valley program is to increase membership through workplace partnerships. Workplace partners added this year include Carilion NRV, Montgomery County Public Schools, VT YMCA, Kollmorgen/Danaher Motion, and Montgomery Regional Hospital. Staff also engaged in promotional activities in the New River Valley to bring attention to RIDE Solutions at related events such as the New River Valley Job Fair, the Christiansburg High School Environmental Fair, and through publications including several New River Valley websites and press releases.

Working with local businesses, RIDE Solutions is looking to make the most impact with limited funds. RIDE Solutions' NRV staff is helping local businesses plan and implement promotional campaigns,

educational outreach and rideshare matching for their employees. These efforts are reducing commuters' costs, helping businesses retain employees who might look for work closer to home without alternative transportation options, and improving regional air quality by reducing the number of vehicle miles traveled.

RIDE Solutions staff also completed the 2009 Park-and-Ride Study: Inventory, Use, and Need for the Roanoke and New River Valley regions and identified long-term needs for popular locations and potential sites. The regional and statewide TDM (transportation demand management) Plan process also kicked off and will continue through FY09-10. The regional plan will address the strategic goals for RIDE Solutions and will be incorporated into the statewide plan.



Funding support from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) enables the NRVPCD to facilitate the rural planning partnership by providing staff support to the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) which meets bi-monthly throughout the year. The TAC includes representatives of local governments, regional bodies, and State institutions in the New River Valley, as well as representatives of VDOT.

The TAC advises the NRVPCD on transportation matters and

serves as a forum for discussion of regional transportation issues. The TAC is responsible for drafting a rural transportation planning scope of work each year for recommendation to the NRVPCD. The TAC also annually drafts comments on regional highway and transportation needs assessment for recommendation by the Commission for consideration by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. The TAC provides guidance and input to PDC staff responsible for carrying out project activities identified in the rural transportation planning scope of work.

This year the PDC completed the third of a four phase effort to assist VDOT in creating its Rural Long Range Transportation Plan for the State.

Four phases of the planning process have been identified by VDOT:

- Phase I - Goals and Data Collection
- Phase II - Analysis and Problem Identification
- Phase III - Public Outreach and Recommendation Development
- Phase IV - Public Endorsement and Regional Adoption.

Each phase will take approximately one year to complete.

In July of 2006 the New River Valley Planning District Commission joined with VDOT in a statewide initiative to develop regional transportation plans for rural areas. The plan is intended to complement the transportation plans which are

required for the metropolitan areas of the State. The purpose of the plan is to provide an evaluation of the transportation system in rural areas. Together with land use information, local desires and goals, the plans will present a range of transportation improvements to provide for the effective, safe, and efficient movement of people and goods.

The plan is to envision the next 20 years in terms of regional development, population change, and employment growth as they impact the transportation system. The Rural Long Range Transportation Plans will be the subject of a continuous, comprehensive, and coordinated process which addresses the needs of the federally classified routes of minor collector and above.

Pedestrian Facilities

A final feasibility study detailed the locations, challenges, cost, etc., to build trails that would link the communities of Blacksburg, Christiansburg, Radford, Dublin, and Pulaski. The report can be found at www.nrvpcd.org/transportation/alternativetrans.html. The PDC has been working closely with the Department of Conservation and Recreation to solve right of way issues with Norfolk Southern Railroad on the proposed routes.

This year the regional Bikeway-Walkway working group of the Transportation Advisory Committee of the Rural Planning Organization worked on developing a regional Bikeway-Walkway Policy for the New River Valley. This group consists of members from local government, local bike/pedestrian advocacy groups, state agencies

and institutions such as Radford University and Virginia Tech. The primary purpose of this group is to address regional bike and pedestrian development issues, communicate trail development efforts within local communities, and provide outside resources and connections to trail implementation efforts.

The PDC also provided resources to localities to develop Safe Routes to School Programs to local elementary and middle schools. This includes scheduling two separate workshops for the localities and their citizens.

New River Trail Extension

New River Trail Extension is the term used for the spine of the region's trail network. This project is envisioned to connect the New River Trail State Park at its current terminus in the Town of Pulaski with the Huckleberry Trail in the Blacksburg-Christiansburg area. In the beginning of June 2009 a request for proposals for preliminary engineering for the section of trail between the existing trail terminus in the Town of Pulaski to Dublin Elementary School was advertised. Many groups and individuals continue work to identify routes and opportunities to interconnect trails throughout the region, particularly routes that extend the New River Trail and other routes that connect to the spine.



FY 2008 - 09 Commissioners

Floyd County

Fred Gerald
Evelyn Janney

Giles County

Richard McCoy
Leon Light

Montgomery County

Mike Harvey
Annette Perkins

Pulaski County

Joe Sheffey
Shawn Utt

Radford City

Tom Starnes, Chair
Helen Harvey

Town of Blacksburg

A.T. Leighton
Holly Lesko

Town of Christiansburg

Scott Weaver, Treasurer
Henry Showalter

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Mike Patton

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Tom Garrett

Town of Pearisburg

Rebecca Moses, Vice Chair

Town of Pulaski

Larry Clevinger
Joe Weddle

Town of Rich Creek

Darlene French

Radford University

Norleen Pomerantz

Virginia Tech

David Dent
Kevin Sullivan

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Full Time

David Rundgren

Executive Director

Shirl Quesenberry

Director of Finance and Personnel

Yolanda Hunter

Incubator Manager

Jan Gilbertson

Information Systems Manager

Janet McNew

Program Administrator

Kevin Byrd

Regional Planner II

Jennifer Wilsie

Regional Planner

Regina Elsner

Regional Planner

Jack Whitmore

Regional Planner

Christy Straight

Regional Planner

Elijah Sharp

Regional Planner

Phil Gilbertson

Cartographer

Part Time

Dave Ratcliff

Regional Planner

Ken Hall

Regional Planner

Daphne Smith

Maintenance

WIB



Ronnie Martin

Executive Director

Marty Holliday

Program Planner

Angela Alley

Systems Administrator

Teena Vernon

Compliance Review Officer

Dellamae Meadows

Administrative Assistant

**Statement of Revenues & Expenditures
Year Ended June 30, 2009**

	BUDGET	ACTUAL
REVENUES:		
Floyd County	16,534.00	16,534.00
Town of Floyd	531.00	531.00
Giles County	13,717.00	13,717.00
Town of Narrows	2,597.00	2,597.00
Town of Pearisburg	3,357.00	3,357.00
Town of Rich Creek	818.00	818.00
Montgomery County	33,344.00	33,344.00
Town of Blacksburg	38,958.00	38,958.00
Town of Christiansburg	20,845.00	20,845.00
Pulaski County	31,554.00	31,554.00
Town of Pulaski	11,652.00	11,652.00
City of Radford	16,294.00	16,294.00
Radford University	3,213.00	3,213.00
Virginia Tech	9,717.00	9,717.00
Total Local Revenue	203,131.00	203,131.00
Interest Income	0.00	975.00
Contract Income	593,521.24	554,618.48
Miscellaneous Income	0.00	15,221.00
Revenue from the Commonwealth:		
DHCD Operating Grant	85,500.00	84,217.00
WIA	323,038.00	305,555.00
Department of Rehab. Services	13,040.00	13,040.00
Virginia Department of Transportation	48,000.00	46,380.00
DEQ	6,000.00	13,000.00
DOF	25,000.00	13,157.35
VT (Rideshare)	0.00	1,500.00
Revenue from the Federal Government:		
Appalachian Regional Commission	66,155.49	51,647.00
Economic Development Administration	60,000.00	60,000.00
Other	0.00	0.00
Total Other Revenue	1,220,254.73	1,159,310.83
TOTAL REVENUES	1,423,385.73	1,362,441.83
EXPENDITURES		
Salaries	782,065.69	753,547.42
Benefits	223,469.67	222,029.78
Travel	53,297.07	31,301.55
Office Space	53,583.72	53,582.04
Telephone	5,666.68	5,458.61
Office Supplies	17,350.80	16,205.81
Postage	8,947.24	5,255.52
Printing/Copies/Plotting	26,437.12	12,964.19
Map Purchases	0.00	0.00
Media Adv.	2,457.60	2,275.44
Equip. Rent/Equip. Maint.	17,867.90	16,665.64
Dues & Publications	11,664.00	8,720.48
Training	299.00	199.00
Comm. Comp. (now included in salaries)	0.00	0.00
Depreciation	4,933.08	4,933.08
Insurance	6,900.00	5,714.00
Capital Outlay	1,700.00	3,684.99
Contract Serv.	194,790.60	183,756.05
Audit Fee	7,475.00	7,475.04
Misc.	4,480.56	2,307.18
TOTAL EXPENDITURES	1,423,385.73	1,336,075.82
RESERVES/FUND BALANCE AT BEGINNING OF YEAR	331,273.00	331,273.00
RESERVES/FUND BALANCE AT END OF YEAR	331,273.00	357,639.01

Who's Turning 40?

The New River Valley Planning District Commission

The New River Valley Planning District Commission began its service to the local governments and the people of the New River Valley in September 1969. The Counties of Floyd, Giles, Montgomery and Pulaski, the City of Radford and the Towns of Blacksburg, Christiansburg, and Pulaski created the Commission under 1968 legislative authority granted by the General Assembly with the passage of Virginia's Area Development Act.

The Act was among a package of legislative recommendations made to the General Assembly by the Metropolitan Areas Study Commission. The Commission was popularly known as the Hahn Commission after its Chairman, then President of Virginia Tech. The Hahn Commission made a sweeping set of recommendations to reduce the proliferation of special purpose Authorities and Boards to serve joint action of local governments.

The Area Development Act was adopted by the General Assembly in 1968, effective July of that year. By September 1969 a majority of the state's local governments had agreed to create and participate in a Planning District Commission. It was not envisioned that a Planning District Commission would implement the plans it developed or assisted in developing. A companion piece of legislation authorized the creation of Service Districts to undertake implementation of regional projects. No local governments created a Service District, however, with the revision of the Area Development Act, to the Regional Cooperation Act, the provision of services requested by local governments was authorized by the General Assembly as a purpose for Planning District Commissions.

In September 2009, the New River Valley Planning District Commission will celebrate 40 years of serving as an extended staff for the local governments, assisting with the preparation of comprehensive plans, subdivision regulations, and zoning ordinances, as well as leadership and planning to establish numerous regional authorities and organizations. The Commission has assisted localities, agencies, and other organizations with the preparation of grant applications and their implementation totaling in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

The Commission and Staff look forward to an exciting time of service to the localities and people of the New River Valley during the **next forty years**.

