



April 2022 Update

Town of Pulaski West Main Street Improvements

The Town of Pulaski recently completed a downtown revitalization project that included the rehabilitation of 11 building facades, streetscape and public space improvements, street furnishings, and other general enhancements along West Main Street. For this particular project, the Town established a partnership with the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) in October 2018. Nearly \$700,000 in grant funding was matched with \$906,838.06 in private investments, local cash, and documented in-kind match. The work attracted new local businesses and has helped to restore several historically significant downtown properties.

While the initial scope of work included a handful of other property improvements, the Town staff was able to exceed expectations by tripling the local match commitment and investing more in downtown aesthetics and furnishings. If it's been a while since you've visited downtown, you might want to check out West Main Street!

The Regional Commission was pleased to support the Town of Pulaski with grant administration and regulatory compliance associated with West Main Street improvements. For more information contact Elijah Sharp esharp@nrvrc.org.



Huckleberry Trail Plan

A group of enthusiastic stakeholders braved the rain last month to participate in a Huckleberry Trail engagement event with Amy Camp from Cycle Forward. The engagement session was part of the Huckleberry Trail planning process that began last fall in partnership with the NRV Metropolitan Planning Organization and Friends of the Huckleberry. With project support, the Regional

Commission contracted Amy Camp, who facilitates trail workshops across America to help inspire communities and generate support for trail planning. In mid-February, a group of stakeholders came together for a dynamic morning of on-trail observations and an afternoon group strategy session. Attendees represented a wide range of businesses, organizations and communities. Stakeholder engagement contributes to the planning process in several crucial ways: to collect formal feedback, understand existing conditions, and inspire collaboration that ultimately helps form priorities around plan policies and objectives. The event was extremely fruitful and invigorating as the process moves toward plan creation!

For more information, contact Kathleen Armstrong at karmstrong@nrvrc.org





RIDE SMART CHALLENGE

PRESENTED BY

RIDE SOLUTIONS

APRIL 20TH- MAY 4TH



Join RIDE Solutions in taking 1,000 clean commute trips by participating in the Ride Smart Challenge!

Bike, walk, carpool, take the bus, vanpool or telework instead of driving alone for trips throughout the event period. Every trip counts – your telecommute for work, your bike trip to the grocery store, your bus trip to see a friend: every mile taken off the road helps! This is also a great way to save money you would have otherwise spent on gas!

Every trip you log brings us closer to 1,000 clean commutes. And every trip also earns you points you can cash in for valuable rewards, as well as the chance to win prize drawings for RIDE Solutions swag, gift certificates, and more!



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FUN!



ridesolutions.org/event/2022-ride-smart-challenge/

LYNCHBURG ● NEW RIVER VALLEY ● ROANOKE VALLEY ● WEST PIEDMONT

Business Continuity Team Update

On March 21, 2022, the Safety and Health Codes Board voted to revoke the Permanent Standard for Infection Prevention of the SARS-CoV-2 Virus that causes COVID-19. The revocation was effective March 23, 2022. Under the OSH Act and Va. Code §40.1-51.1.A, employers are responsible for providing a safe and healthy workplace free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm. All of VOSH's standards that apply to protecting workers from infection remain in place. These mandatory VOSH standards include: requirements for PPE (part 1910, Subpart I (e.g., 1910.132 and 133)), respiratory protection (1910.134), sanitation (1910.141), protection from blood borne pathogens (1910.1030), VOSH's requirements for employee access to medical and exposure records (1910.1020), and requirements in the VOSH Administrative Regulations Manual. Employers are also required by the General Duty Clause, Va. Code 40.1-51.1.A, to provide a safe and healthful workplace free from recognized hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm.

While employers are no longer required to adhere to Department of Labor and Industry's COVID standard, businesses are encouraged to remain vigilant regarding illness in the workplace. If you have questions, concerns or need assistance with COVID-19 or other employee health concerns please contact the BCT. We are able to provide onsite education, vaccination and testing for COVID-19 as well as other infectious diseases.

For more information contact Melanie Morris (mmorris@nrvrc.org) or Holly Lesko (hlesko@nrvrc.org).

NRVRC Introduces Emily Warren

Emily joined the Commission in March 2022 as a finance technician, a newly created position. She is a recent graduate from Radford University where she obtained a Bachelor's degree in Finance as well as a certification in Excel. While in school, she was Vice President of Sigma Alpha Omega, an organization that strived to do community service wherever possible. She also organized and ran fundraisers to help local business and shelters. She recently moved to the New River Valley full time and joined the Commission to help make an impact in her community.

Emily can be reached at ewarren@nrvrc.org.



April is Fair Housing Month!

The New River Valley celebrates April as Fair Housing Month. There are many resources available to increase your knowledge about the Fair Housing Act. Passed in 1970, the Fair Housing Act prohibits discrimination based on one or more of the Act's seven protected classes: race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, and disability. Virginia has expanded that to include elderliness, sexual orientation, gender identification, military status, or source of funds.

This month, the Virginia Fair Housing Office is hosting a "Lunch and Learn" workshop series that covers a variety of topics:

- Wednesday, April 14, 2021 at 12:00 PM: Sexual Orientation, Gender Identity & the Virginia Fair Housing Law
- Wednesday, April 21, 2021 at 12:00 PM: Veteran Status and the Virginia Fair Housing Law
- Wednesday, April 28, 2021 at 12:00 PM: Let's Talk About It: Anything You Want to Know About Fair Housing

Local government staff and elected officials, property managers, property owners, landlords, real estate agents, banks, savings institutions, credit unions, insurance companies, mortgage lenders, and appraisers in the region are encouraged to attend.

More information on these workshops can be found

at <https://www.dpor.virginia.gov/sites/default/files/Virginia%20Fine%20Housing/VFHO%20Lunch%20and%20Learn%202021.pdf>

For more information on Fair Housing in Virginia visit:

<https://www.dpor.virginia.gov/FairHousing>



Plant Southwest Virginia Natives Campaign

On March 19th, as part of the Plant Southwest Virginia Natives Campaign, the New River Valley Regional Commission partnered with Sustainable Blacksburg, Sustain Floyd, Friends of Peak Creek, Live, Work, Eat, Grow and the Virginia Outdoors Foundation to distribute 1000 native trees and shrubs across the New River Valley. The effort hosted pickup locations in Pulaski, Floyd and Blacksburg and has grown from the previous year when it distributed 200 native trees. The campaign is an effort to increase the awareness, appreciation and application of native plants across the region. The Three main reasons to plant native include: 1. support of wildlife, 2. support of healthy landscape systems, such as clean air, water, food, medicine, and recreation, 3. support of our beautiful home in the Appalachian Mountains. More information about the Plant SWVA Natives Campaign and how you can support native plants can be found [here](#).

If you would like to partner in future distribution efforts and host a pickup location, please contact Nicole Hersch at nicole@nrvrc.org.



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New River Valley Regional Commission | nrvrc.org



New River Valley Regional Commission | 6580 Valley Center Drive, Suite 124, Radford, VA 24141

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