



## January 2025 Update

### The Town of Dublin joins the Regional Commission!

On November 21st the Dublin Town Council unanimously passed a resolution of membership joining the New River Valley Regional Commission effective January 1, 2025! This is a significant milestone as Dublin's participation marks 100% of local governments in the region being members of the agency. That brings the membership to 14 local governments (nine towns, four counties and one city), along with three institutions of higher education. The Regional Commission looks forward to supporting the town of Dublin on several technical assistance projects and welcoming them to the regional table in the new year.

For further information, please contact Kevin Byrd, [kbyrd@nrvc.org](mailto:kbyrd@nrvc.org).

### Regional Commission Board Transitions

The Regional Commission would like to thank Michael Reis for his service to the board. Mr. Reis is an elected official who represented the Town of Pulaski from 2022 until 2024. The Regional Commission would like to welcome Brian Jaunarena. Mr. Jaunarena is a citizen appointee representing Pulaski County.

## Learning from Hurricane Helene

In the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, it is crucial to re-examine our current land use policies and zoning regulations. We need to assess the effectiveness of these policies, especially given the flooding that occurred. Additionally, we must evaluate whether current policies are inadvertently promoting non-resilient practices, draw lessons from our recent experiences, and enhance future preparedness. As part of the Regional Commission's work on updating comprehensive plans and zoning ordinances with local communities, we intend to incorporate changes that will help mitigate the negative impacts of future climate hazards.

For more information contact Aphi Fancon, [afancon@nrvc.org](mailto:afancon@nrvc.org).

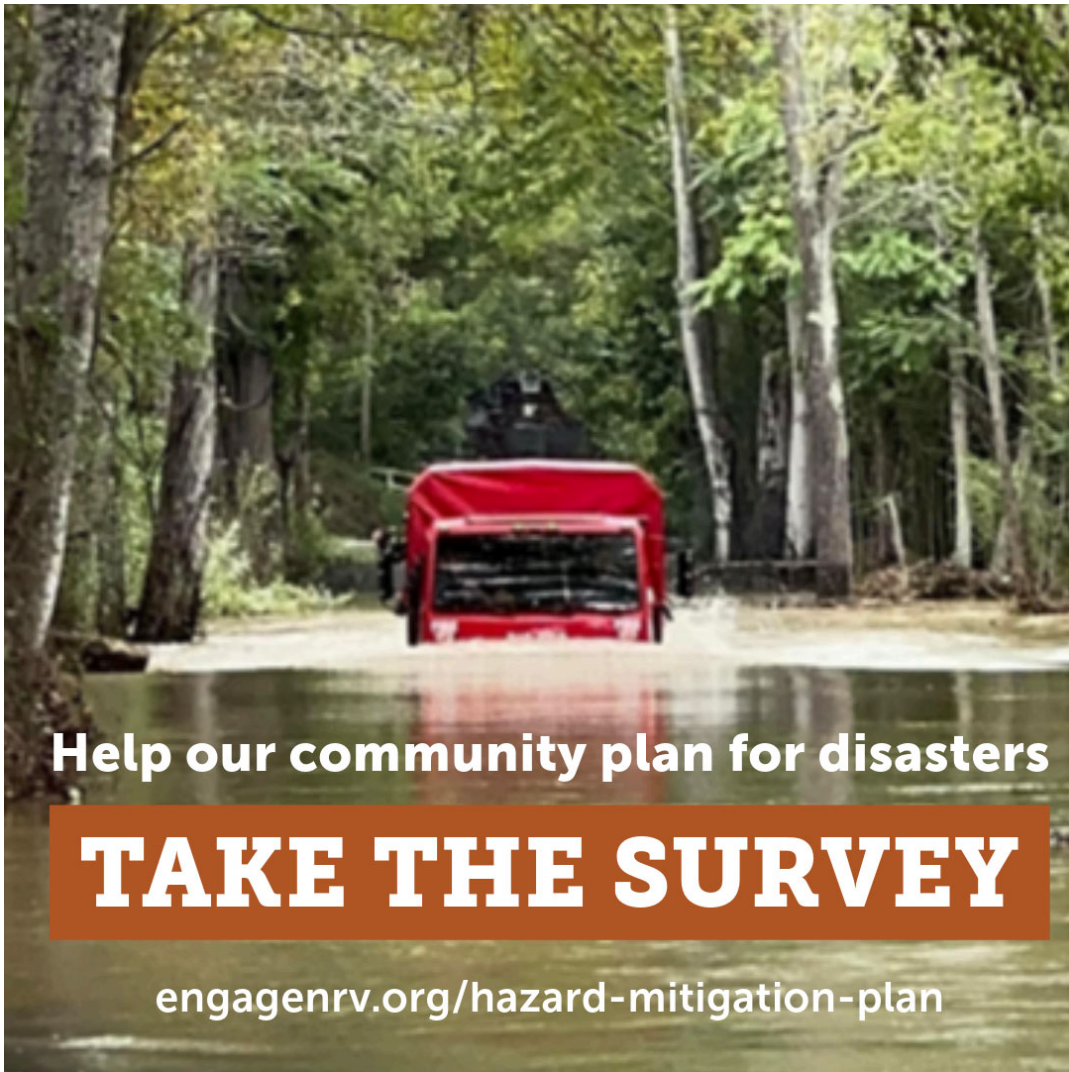


## New River Valley Housing Trust Fund

The New River Valley Housing Trust Fund (NRVHTF) was established to provide an additional and locally controlled source of funding for the development of affordable housing throughout the region. The NRVHTF is the first regional housing trust fund in the Commonwealth, with pilot funds provided by Virginia Housing under its PDC Housing Development grant. A first round of awards was made in 2023, assisting in the development of two rental development projects in the towns of Pulaski and Blacksburg.

Since then, the Regional Commission has pursued local funding for FY25, with an annual goal of \$600,000 split 50/50 between local government and non-government partners. To date, all the local governments have committed funding; additionally, Virginia Tech and Carilion Clinic are also participating as funding partners. This is a tremendous milestone and represents the first time these partners have come together to commit funding towards housing at a regional level.

For more information contact Jennifer Wilsie, [jwilsie@nrvc.org](mailto:jwilsie@nrvc.org).



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## NRV Resiliency Network

The Regional Commission's Community Health Education and Training Coordinator Julie Fox has stepped into the co-chair position of the NRV Resiliency Network. The NRV Resiliency Network is the New River Valley's Trauma Informed Community Network (TICN). Virginia currently has over thirty TICNs operating throughout the state. These community networks focus on building resiliency and creating a more trauma-informed culture. The NRV Resiliency Network will begin meeting monthly in January, alternating in-person and virtual meetings each month. The network is open to all and anyone interested in joining future meetings can contact Julie at [jfox@nrvc.org](mailto:jfox@nrvc.org).

VAPDC

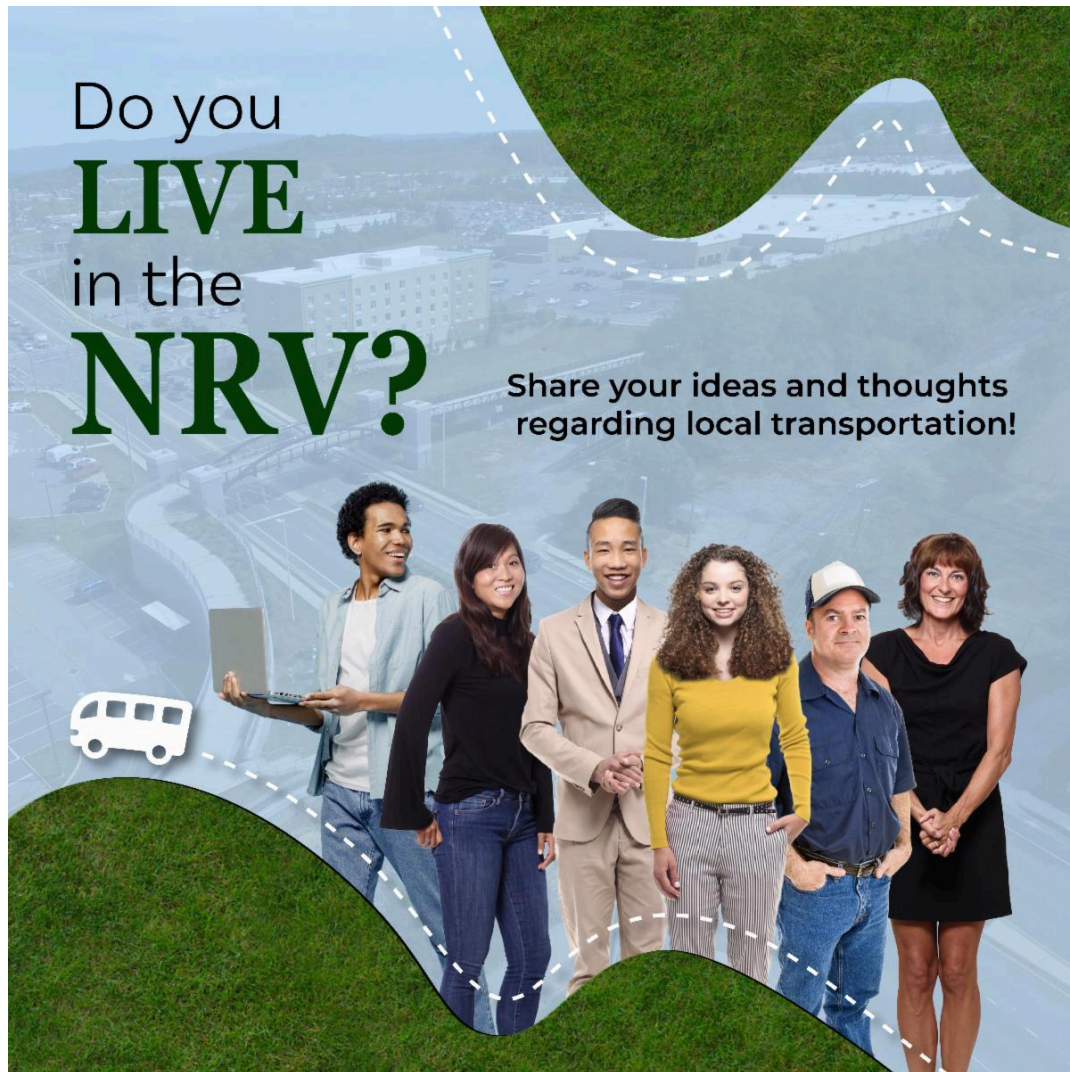
Training Conference

Regional Commission team members attended the [Virginia Planning District Commission](#) (VAPDC) Training Conference at the Virginia Housing Center on November 19-20, 2024. The conference focused on enhancing skills to support PDC work across Virginia, with sessions covering broadband, housing, transportation, public speaking, and artificial intelligence (AI).



Thanks to VAPDC and Virginia Housing for organizing the conference and providing valuable tools and strategies to meet the challenges of the future!

## Share your ideas about transportation in the New River Valley!



The New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization is updating its Long-Range Transportation Plan and wants to hear from you! The plan is intended to be used as a guide

for public investment through 2050, so your input is important. Stay up to date and contribute your ideas by visiting: [www.engagenrv.org/mpo-2050](http://www.engagenrv.org/mpo-2050)

## Broadband Update

The 2024 General Assembly, allocated up to \$30 million in funding to Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) for the Virginia Make Ready Initiative (VMRI) grant program. These funds are to be used as supplemental funds for “make-ready” costs associated with the VATI grant projects funded. More specifically, these funds are targeted for VATI projects awarded during fiscal year 2022 that include funds from either the State and Local Recovery Fund or the Capital Projects Fund of the American Rescue plan Act of 2021.

The VMRI program will provide reimbursements for make ready costs, which are defined as utility pole replacements and mid-span pole installations, and in certain instances, undergrounding costs. The State recognized that the make ready work/costs were causing significant delays on the broadband projects, and these funds will help to keep the FY2022 projects on track.

The Regional Commission is happy to announce that the Montgomery/Bland Broadband Project was awarded an additional \$797,739 in VMRI funds from DHCD to cover some of the make ready fees that exceeded the original amount budgeted for this task. The reason for these additional fees is due to the fact that both the number of poles and the cost per pole was estimated in the original budget. As the project progresses and the design for each section is finalized, it has become apparent that the number of poles and that the cost per pole (in some areas) is higher than anticipated.

For more information contact Chris Owens, [cowens@nrvc.org](mailto:cowens@nrvc.org).

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