



March 2025 Update

NRVRC Board Member Transition

The Regional Commission welcomes a new member, Brooks Dawson, an elected official representing the Town of Pulaski.

Strength in Collaboration: Regional Partnerships Supports Economic Growth

A strong economy is built through collaboration, with local governments, businesses, and institutions working together to support growth, workforce development, and long-term stability. That was the focus of this month's Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce Eggs & Issues panel, moderated by John Provo, Executive Director of Virginia Tech's Center for Economic & Community Engagement.



Regional leaders Brian Hamilton, Director of Montgomery County Economic Development; Katie Boswell, Executive Director of Onward New River Valley; and Kevin Byrd, Executive Director of the New River Valley Regional Commission, shared how partnerships support economic success in the NRV.

The NRV's mix of rural communities and strong educational institutions (Virginia Tech, Radford University, New River Community College, and K-12 schools) positions the region to develop and retain talent. But education alone is not enough. Workforce training, apprenticeships, and partnerships with employers help connect workers to high-wage, high-skill jobs in fields like advanced manufacturing, technology, and healthcare.

[Full Article](#)

Photo above courtesy of the Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce



Town of Rich Creek Comprehensive Plan

The Town of Rich Creek has officially adopted the updated Comprehensive Plan to guide future growth and development. This plan was shaped with input from the community and focuses on areas such as land use, local businesses, downtown revitalization, housing, roads, utilities, public

services, and recreational spaces.

In January, the town held a public meeting where residents could review the draft plan, talk with town officials, and share their thoughts. Feedback from the community helped refine the final version. Now in place, the plan will help the town grow in a sustainable way while keeping its small-town charm. For updates, visit the [Rich Creek website](#).

For more information, contact Bethany Peters, bpeters@nrvc.org.

NRV School Representatives Attend Trauma-Sensitive Schools Conference in Atlanta

Representatives from each of the five school districts and New River Valley Community Action school based-services traveled with the NRV Recovery Ecosystem's Education and Training Coordinator, Julie Fox, to



Claremont Apartments Groundbreaking

Atlanta for the Creating Trauma Sensitive Schools conference. In its eighth year, the annual conference hosted by the Attachment and Trauma Network is one of the largest gatherings of trauma-informed educators. The two-day event offers a variety of workshops on building trauma-responsive schools to improve child outcomes. The Recovery Ecosystem continues to support this work in schools and our community through coordination and collaboration with our local school systems and service providers. Suzanne W. a conference attendee and Narrows High School counselor said, "the conference offered a wealth of ideas and resources that I am eager to share with administrators, teachers, and students within my school division. Beyond the sessions, the conference also fostered meaningful networking opportunities with professionals from across the New River Valley who are dedicated to supporting youth in achieving their fullest potential."

For more information contact Julie Fox, jfox@nrvc.org.



Pulaski County and Town celebrated the groundbreaking of Claremont Apartments, a new affordable housing development project, on January 28th. The former Claremont Elementary School will be redeveloped into 23 new rental apartments and an additional 27 rental units will be constructed on the site, providing a total of 50 new homes to households earning less than 60% of the area median income. This will be the first New River Valley project for Landmark Asset Services, the owner and developer of the project, but the company has years of successful affordable housing experience in other parts of the Commonwealth and North Carolina.

The project was made possible, in part, by an \$812,500 investment from the NRV HOME Consortium and an inaugural award from the NRV Housing Trust Fund totaling \$850,000. Construction is expected to be complete in the beginning of 2026.

For more information contact Jennifer Wilsie, jwilsie@nrvc.org.



Make your own contribution to the future of transportation in the region! In efforts to improve transportation and connect our region, we are hosting a quick survey to gather citizens insights on the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan. Click the link to take a quick survey and help us integrate your transportation needs!

<https://www.engagenrv.org/mpo-2050>



ARC INSPIRE Funding Sought to Support Recovery in the NRV

The New River Valley Regional Commission, in partnership with the New River Mount Rogers Workforce Development Board (NRMWDB), assembled a group of 30 individuals from service and government entities from across the New River Valley to brainstorm the development of an INSPIRE application. There was significant interest and energy to pursue

a proposal rooted in training, support and education for persons in recovery (Peers) and local businesses to integrate a strong and sustainable workforce element into the New River Valley Recovery Ecosystem. The focus of the proposal will be on integrating and cross-training Peers as well as outreach and education of local businesses to address stigma and create incentives for including peer-driven programming in the workplace. This proposal leverages the work from the POWER grant recently completed by the NRMWDB and builds upon the programming and partnerships of the NRV Recovery Ecosystem. The proposal engages several regional partners and will be submitted in mid-March with hopes of funding awarded in the fall.

For more information, contact Holly Lesko hlesko@nrvc.org.

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