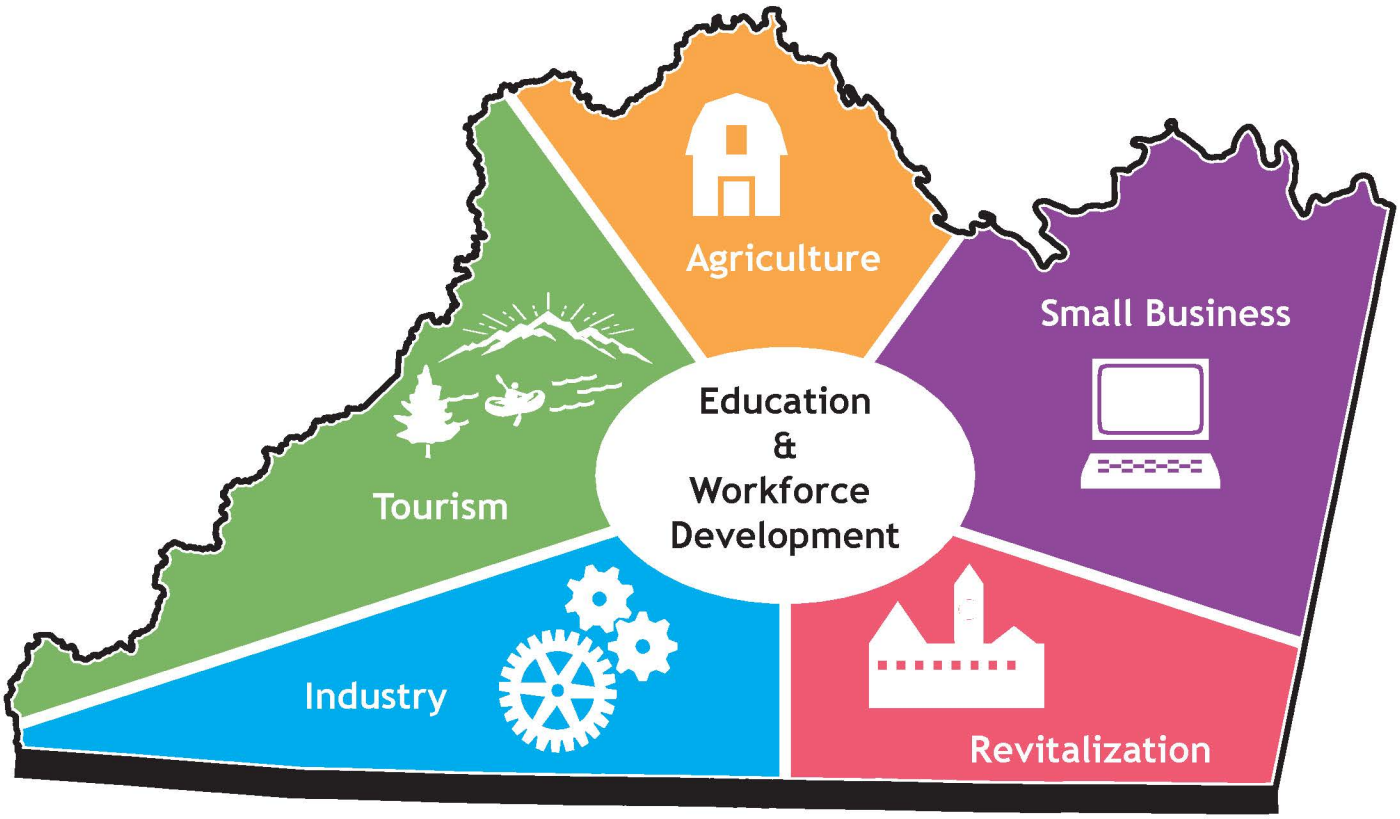
West Piedmont Economic Development District

2019

Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy



Serving the Counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania
Cities of Danville and Martinsville; and Town of Rocky Mount

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SUMMARY

This Annual Report of the West Piedmont Economic Development District's Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy was prepared using the regulations governing the CEDS (see 13 C.F.R. § 303.7), prepared by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA). As noted by EDA, "*The CEDS is a strategy-driven plan for regional economic development. It is a key component in establishing and maintaining a robust economic ecosystem by helping to build regional capacity (through hard and soft infrastructure) that contributes to individual, firm, and community success. The CEDS provides a vehicle for individuals, organizations, local governments, institutes of learning, and private industry to engage in a meaningful conversation and debate about what capacity building efforts would best serve economic development in the region.*' The following sections of the report are summarized below. A vision for the Region and Project Priority List also are included in the document.

Chapter 1, "*Development Strategy*," the link between the front-end analysis of the area's economy and development potentials and the resulting programs, activities, and projects that are the product of the CEDS process. The development strategy encompasses both a set of goals and the resource utilization criteria by which the CEDS Committee identified appropriate development programs, activities, and projects. The development strategy is the multi-year course of action including programs, activities, and projects for the long-term economic development of the area. Also included in this section is the *SWOT Analysis* which provides an in-depth analysis of regional strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The identified goals and strategies build on the findings from the SWOT analysis.

Chapter 2, "*The District and Its Economy*," summarizes the area's situation based on the analysis of relevant data about the Region. In addition to background information, the chapter summarizes the adequacy of infrastructure and services including transportation, water and sewer utilities, energy, education, workforce initiatives, and medical facilities. Further, it provides an overview of the area's economic conditions and describes the overall economic development activities within each of the localities in Planning District 12, the West Piedmont Planning District. These localities include the cities of Danville and Martinsville; the counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania; and the Town of Rocky Mount. This section also includes important elements of economic development in the Region such as industrial parks, small business/entrepreneurship, revitalization efforts, tourism and recreation/culture, agriculture and forestry.

Chapter 3, "*Resiliency*," describes the area's economic resiliency as well as ways to plan for and implement resilience. This section identifies specific vulnerabilities and provides an overview of mitigation strategies to help address various issues.

Chapter 4, "*Implementation Plan*," includes a Regional Vision for the West Piedmont Economic Development District. It also describes a short-term implementation plan for the actions set by the CEDS Committee for the next one to two years. This section precedes the Region's Project Priority List for initiatives to be implemented in the next five years or so. Following that is a list of Transportation Priorities for each locality and the Region.

CHAPTER 1

DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Introduction

In accordance with Section 403 of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965 (Public Law 89-136), the Assistant Secretary for Economic Development of the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration, announced the designation of Planning District 12 as an Economic Development District on June 24, 1992. Planning District 12--the West Piedmont Planning District--is comprised of the cities of Danville and Martinsville; the counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania; and the Town of Rocky Mount. Each member jurisdiction has three representatives on the Planning District Commission Board--two elected officials and one appointed citizen representative. This designation represents a partnership among the West Piedmont Planning District Commission, its member local governments, and the U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA) and assists with establishing regional priorities for projects and investments through the annual development of a Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) document. The Economic Development Administration Reform Act of 1998 identifies a CEDS as a requirement to apply for assistance under the EDA Public Works and Economic Adjustment Programs. Since the original Public Works and Economic Development Act was enacted in 1965, economic development planning has been a key element in achieving EDA's long-range goals. The purpose of the CEDS is to establish a process that will help create jobs, foster more stable and diversified economies, and improve living conditions. It is a continuous planning process that addresses the economic problems and potentials of an area, providing a blueprint to strengthen economies through regional strategies which focus on economic and workforce development, quality of life, transportation and other vital infrastructure.

The Charter of the West Piedmont Planning District Commission was adopted on March 15, 1970, and amended on March 15, 1973. The West Piedmont Planning District Commission is one of twenty-one planning districts/regional councils within the Commonwealth of Virginia, created as a result of the Virginia Area Development Act of 1968 to promote the orderly and efficient development of the physical, social, and economic elements of the region and of the jurisdictions within its boundaries.

As the West Piedmont Economic Development District, staff has established a process for annual updates to its CEDS document. The plan development is ongoing, with development of document updates beginning as soon as submission to EDA occurs each year. The staff is responsible for collecting and analyzing information on the economy, identifying strategy options, and preparing detailed implementation plans as well as the preparation of applications invited for submission by the Economic Development Administration. The staff also is responsible for development of performance measures (i.e., program evaluation and implementation activities) for the Economic Development District utilizing EDA's program guidelines.

In 2010-11, the West Piedmont Planning District Board of Commissioners, which serves as the Economic Development District's Planning Organization, initiated establishment of a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee, to meet EDA's guidelines at that time. The CEDS Committee includes public officials, community leaders, representatives of workforce development boards, representatives of institutions of higher education, minority and labor groups, and private-sector individuals. In 2012, a CEDS Working Committee, a subset of the full CEDS Committee, was formed as a clearinghouse for document review. Each of these committees plays a key role in the development and update of this document.

To ensure citizen participation in the planning process, a copy of the CEDS document is made available on the Commission's website at www.wppdc.org. The CEDS document is placed on the PDC/EDD website so that interested parties from across the region may provide input over a 30-day period. Advertisements are published in local

newspapers to make the public aware of the availability and opportunity to provide comments/input. Any comments received through this process are considered for inclusion in this update. The document is distributed in key library locations for public review as well. Copies of the PDC/EDD agendas with CEDS review information are available to the media and public on the PDC's website.

Assumptions Regarding Economic Trends

For several decades, the West Piedmont Planning District was noted for its high degree of industrialization when compared with other regions of the state. Employment in the region traditionally was concentrated in the manufacture of textile and furniture products. However, the region lost a significant number of jobs in these sectors due to globalization as a whole and, subsequently, local and regional unemployment rates increased. Efforts to attract diversified manufacturing and support industries have helped to broaden the economic base of the region and mitigate the impacts of globalization upon the region. In addition, the area has continued efforts to transition the economy by promoting entrepreneurial opportunities with new start-ups, boosting tourism, and expanding agricultural interests.

> Although the region has experienced plant closings and downsizings, there have been positive signs of economic growth and diversification in the region.

Over the years, textile/apparel and wood product manufacturers experienced plant closures and downsizings which were accompanied by significant job losses. This trend continued due to the national, state, and local economic situation and the stagnant conditions in the housing market. Chapter 2, "*The District and Its Economy*," gives a summary of job losses. Moreover, the region has continued to diversify its employment base to help assuage future economic downturns. Some of the emerging employment sectors include healthcare and social assistance, biotechnology, advanced manufacturing, tourism, retail trade, and other service industries. To further this cause, the region is working to align education, workforce training, and economic development. Concerted efforts continue to nurture the youth and create social stability in order to ensure that they will have local employment opportunities and encourage them to remain in the region.

The region, which has been a leading producer of flue-cured tobacco and dairy products in the Commonwealth of Virginia, also has experienced changes in the agricultural component of its economic base due to changes in regulations and the elimination of tobacco quotas in 2004, and the expiration of the Tobacco Transition Payment Program (TTPP). With regard to tobacco, four Virginia counties accounted for over half (67.4%) of the state's tobacco production based on 2012 data. Among the four, Pittsylvania County in the West Piedmont Region accounted for 25.8% and was the top producer in the Commonwealth and the thirteenth largest in the United States. As Virginia adjusts to a smaller tobacco industry, the key factor will be alternative uses available for land, labor, and capital that were used in tobacco production.

With regard to the region's agricultural base, Franklin County ranked second out of 68 milk-producing counties in Virginia. However, the number of dairy farms in the County has declined from 77 to 72, according to the 2012 Census of Agriculture. Changes in regulations and milk prices have brought about these problems. With the current national economic situation, farmers across the region are caught in a money squeeze with the cost of fertilizer, chemicals, and transportation services. In some cases, credit also has been tight for farmers during the economic downturn. In recent years, the region has seen a transition in agriculture with a trend in local food initiatives such as the "Farm to School" and "Farm to Table" programs, agritourism which may include "Pick Your Own" and winery tours, and other notable efforts such as regional and national marketing of products.

Industrial recruitment and retention have become extremely sophisticated and competitive in the last decade. With many localities across the country competing for manufacturing jobs and investment, industries can afford to be very selective in their choices, requiring communities to provide quality industrial sites and amenities, a well-trained and positively motivated workforce, and a tax structure which is conducive to industrial well-being. The challenge to the localities of the West Piedmont Planning District is to create the economic climate desired by industry executives, meet specific needs for services such as water and sewer, retain a tax structure which is attractive to industry, provide a highly skilled workforce, and an enhanced quality of life.

Although the region has experienced plant closings and downsizings in the past, there have been positive signs of economic growth and diversification in the region. This may be attributed to the commitment of the local governments,

economic development organizations, higher education institutions, and private foundations in improving the local business climate and quality of life factors.

Shopping trends and patterns of the region provide yet another facet of the region's economy. During the past few years, the region has experienced growth in commercial establishments in order to compete with larger but more distant commercial shopping complexes in Roanoke, Greensboro, and Winston-Salem. These larger communities offer a wider range of shopping opportunities and the increased competition set up by these larger markets, along with the fact that the ability to buy at bulk wholesale prices creates more competitive pricing among stores offering similar merchandise. In addition, since a significant number of residents in the region work outside the Planning District in and around these larger market areas, it takes little effort to do their major shopping near their work sites. It is important that additional commercial establishments be lured to the Planning District to increase competition and to attract shoppers from the region. Danville is one area of the region that has realized consistent growth in retail establishments.

There are several professional economic development organizations across the region which deal with industrial and business prospects and are instrumental in bringing new jobs and private investment to the region's localities. Formed in 2011, the Southern Virginia Regional Alliance currently serves the counties of Halifax, Patrick, and Pittsylvania, and the city of Danville. The Economic Development District staff works closely with the economic development offices which include the Southern Virginia Regional Alliance, Danville Office of Economic Development, Franklin County Office of Economic Development, Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corporation, Patrick County Office of Economic Development, and Pittsylvania County Economic Development. Assistance is provided to these organizations upon request. In addition, the West Piedmont Economic Development District works with area chambers of commerce on economic development-related matters, as requested. Collaboration with workforce development boards on workforce and job training initiatives is also provided, as needed or requested. The development of effective programs for entrepreneurs and small businesses are encouraged through the chambers of commerce, economic development organizations, and other resources to provide outreach, business planning, and other technical assistance to small businesses. Further, there is great need for support of more outlying rural areas with no dedicated small business organizations.

The West Piedmont Economic Development District has developed goals, along with detailed strategies for the region. These District Goals are set forth in the following section.

District Goals & Strategies

Goal 1: Increase economic growth and global competitiveness

1.1 Advocate local industries/businesses to expand and invest in the region; advocate regional economic diversity; promote and create innovative industry clusters to compete in a global economy; create sustainable jobs that provide living wages and focus on job placement efforts for dislocated workers, those who are underemployed and those with barriers

1.2 Create programs and facilities to support existing (as well as new) industries and small businesses/startups; assist existing industry/business growth to expand within the region

1.3 Recruit new diversified manufacturing and service sector industries that will utilize the region's workforce, complement the regional economy, and strengthen support of the existing network; develop regional marketing approach and branding to promote the region

1.4 Promote entrepreneurial growth and an entrepreneurial ecosystem to optimize resources; establish a more business-friendly environment; expand venture capital; further develop small and minority businesses and promote SWaM certification program; support awareness, usage, and expansion of existing incubator facilities

1.5 Preserve agricultural base and promote modern agricultural enterprises, bio-technology, and research for alternative energy opportunities; attract agribusiness and industry to the region as a complement to existing agricultural enterprise; explore business development options in agricultural diversification in areas like nutraceuticals and aquaculture

Goal 2: Improve infrastructure needed to grow the regional economy

2.1 Promote regional cooperation among jurisdictions in developing industrial land, infrastructure, and other collaborative efforts including regional revenue-sharing opportunities and regional industrial parks

2.2 Develop technology parks and necessary infrastructure; construct new industrial shell buildings and promote an ongoing industrial shell building program

2.3 Ensure that new and existing industrial sites have adequate power supplies, state-of-the-art telecommunications including broadband, adequate access roads to industrial sites and link the region through highway and rail to major trade centers, access to public water and wastewater infrastructure; advocate development of fiber-optic network, more cell tower service and last-mile connectivity for broadband throughout the region; and enhancement of industrial park amenities

2.4 Improve regional multimodal transportation infrastructure; provide adequate transportation services; preserve, promote, and enhance transit systems

2.5 Promote redevelopment of Commercial/Central Business Districts and revitalization of small towns in the region; rehabilitate vacant, underutilized buildings for business and industrial development purposes

Goal 3: Grow, retain, and attract talent

3.1 Attract and retain young professionals to ensure a future talent pipeline; strengthen public participation and leadership skills; enhance a pipeline of emerging next-generation leaders by strengthening existing programs and cultivating new leadership programs

3.2 Increase educational opportunities and advocate more facilities and programs, especially with respect to technology that would include STEAM-H (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, Math, and Health) Initiatives

3.3 Strengthen connection between workforce skills and training programs; develop a regional approach to workforce development to create a high-skill, high-wage workforce and develop/attract future talent; recognize "transferable" skills when determining industry targets and launch different workforce models which are aligned with industry needs; advocate the continued implementation of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act at local and regional levels and in support of the Workforce Development Boards that serve the region as collaborative governing structures to oversee the planning, development, implementation, and assessment of a comprehensive set of workforce strategies

3.4 Continue to advocate and provide resources to advance educational opportunities with more dual enrollment, advanced placement opportunities, more flexible programs offering on-line curricula/degrees; create and expand entrepreneurial programs within the K-12 and higher education systems

3.5 Support and expand advanced technical training programs and regional technology centers, including those to support career and technical training at secondary and post-secondary levels, Adult Education Centers; credentialing programs, experiential learning opportunities (internships, apprenticeships, job shadowing, and on-the-job training), and services and training programs for target populations such as youth, veterans, and returning citizens.

Goal 4: Enhance quality of life

4.1 Promote and advocate the development of tourism and agritourism efforts in the region

4.2 Promote best management practices; stewardship of historic resources and publicly-owned natural resources; promote access to trails and blueways with a connection of natural resources and recreational/greenspace; expand recreation opportunities for residents and tourists

4.3 Promote amenities such as public arts/museums and advocate the arts, museums, and other cultural amenities and programs in the region

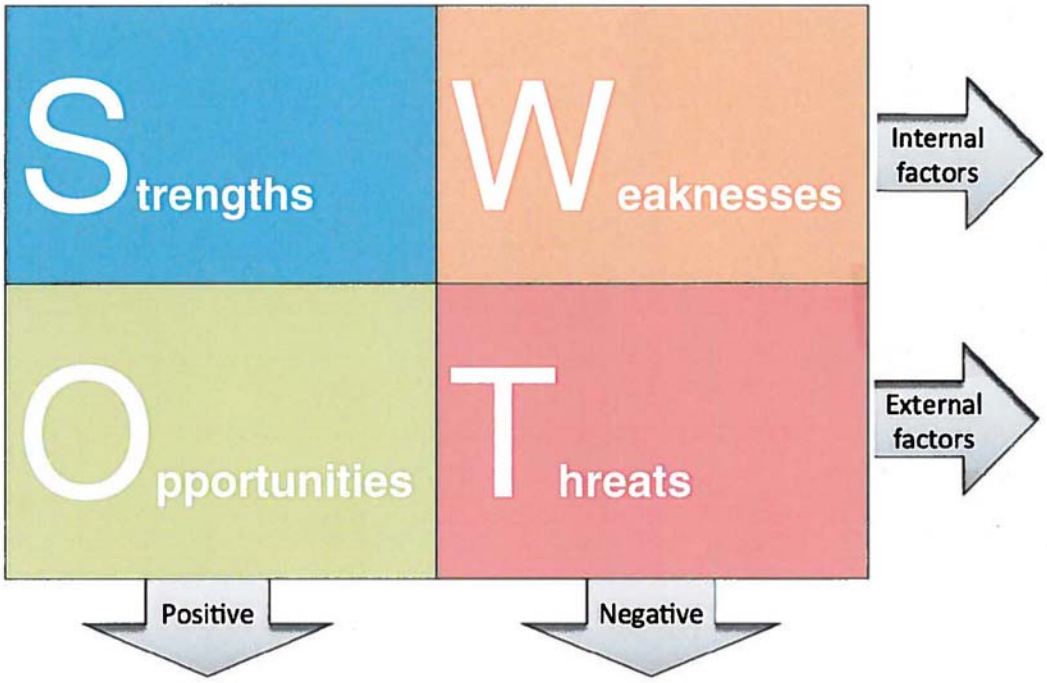
4.4 Promote programs and resources which advocate healthy lifestyles; promote health and well-being summits; advocate access and expansion of the region's healthcare system to more fully serve its residents

4.5 Improve accessibility and quality of childcare

SWOT Analysis

The following analysis identifies the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOT) within the West Piedmont Region. This analysis provides a comprehensive picture of overall economic conditions and available resources. Strengths and opportunities help to define the area's marketability, while weaknesses and threats reflect challenges within the region to be overcome. Strengths are considered internal, positive characteristics on which to capitalize and opportunities, in many cases, rely on external factors for new possibilities to succeed in economic growth. When identifying opportunities, it is wise to examine strengths and weaknesses for any potential openings to build upon the strengths or eliminate the weaknesses.

Weaknesses are identified as internal barriers and threats are generally external factors that may be due to government policies, regulations, financial constraints, and other impediments that are out of our control. Investments and new initiatives will help offset these threats. Strategic planning, significant goals, and detailed strategies can assist in implementing changes to overcome these limitations.



Strengths	Weaknesses
• Four-lane, divided highways with 50-mile proximity to interstate connectivity • Close proximity to local aviation facilities and other regional airports, Piedmont Triad International Airport, and FedEx Distribution Hub • Strong reliable broadband fiber network • Right to work state • Foreign Trade Zone affiliation • Low cost of doing business; low/competitive taxes; available industrial space/land; competitively priced utility costs (electricity, natural gas, water, sewer, broadband); low cost of living • Geographic proximity to large east coast population centers • Water and natural resources/scenic beauty; clean air/moderate climate • Access to local foods/abundant agricultural assets • High quality of life amenities; music, arts, and cultural resources; abundant recreational and tourism opportunities/Blue Ridge Parkway; access to range of healthcare options • Access to numerous higher educational institutions; public school system program initiatives (STEAM-H, advanced degree, and retainment); technological initiatives and advantages (Fab Lab/Cray Computer) • Unique workforce training programs; available workforce • Attractive to retirees with low cost of living and conducive climate	• Limited roadway infrastructure – no interstate; need for more public transportation • Lack of adequate cell tower service in all areas of the region; need for more last-mile connectivity to broadband in rural areas • Need for natural gas to serve industries in more communities; lack of diverse energy sources • Need for large, shovel-ready industrial properties available • Abundance of obsolete vacant industrial buildings and age of some industrial building stock • Need for diversified economic base • Need for more downtown vibrancy • Lack of HUB Zone designation in some areas and difficulty in qualifying due to federal criteria • High poverty rates and low per capita income • Some low performing schools in K-12 system (SOL/test scores) and challenging literacy rates • Deteriorating housing/age of housing stock in some communities; need for transitional housing • Low-skilled workforce; workforce skills don't match available jobs • Barriers to entry into workforce – lack of amenities such as daycare facilities accessible to industrial parks, lack of transportation, re-entering citizen population
Opportunities	**Threats**
• Federal/state programs (i.e., Economic/Local Development District designations, VA Enterprise Zone areas, Main Street Communities, etc.) • Enhanced regional collaboration including the GO Virginia Initiative • Opportunities for industrial clustering initiatives (existing industries and their suppliers) • Seed and venture funding • Entrepreneurship mentoring; apprenticeships and internships; job shadowing; on-the-job training opportunities; incumbent worker training • K-12 partnerships with business leaders/growing partnerships between workforce, industries, higher education institutions, foundations, and government entities • Increased on-line educational opportunities • Regional tourism/marketing efforts • Invest in intellectual capital and ensure a future talent pipeline • Promote strategic communication and public relations around successful education and workforce initiatives • Promote/facilitate more cross-state collaboration	• Foreign competition for local industries; increased national economic development competition • Increased regulatory environment from federal and state agencies • Construction costs for needed transportation/roadway improvements (i.e., U.S. Hwy 58/I-73) • Increasing out commuting trend • Decline in region's population due to changing employment; ability to attract and retain young professionals and working-age population • School dropout rates; low labor force participation • Prevalence of recreational drug abuse, controlled substance abuse including opioid use and other health issues such as obesity/diabetes • Aging infrastructure (water, sewer, bridges, and roadways) • Shortage of professionals in health care, education, engineering, and related STEM-H fields • Increase in aging workforce, general population and median age

CHAPTER 2

THE DISTRICT AND ITS ECONOMY

The West Piedmont Planning District, one of twenty-one planning districts in the Commonwealth of Virginia, is comprised of the counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania; the cities of Danville and Martinsville; and the Town of Rocky Mount. The region includes approximately 2,600 square miles with a population of 244,922, according to the 2012-2016 American Community Survey from the U.S. Census Bureau. This is a decrease of 4,260 persons or 1.7% decline from the 2010 Census population of 249,182.

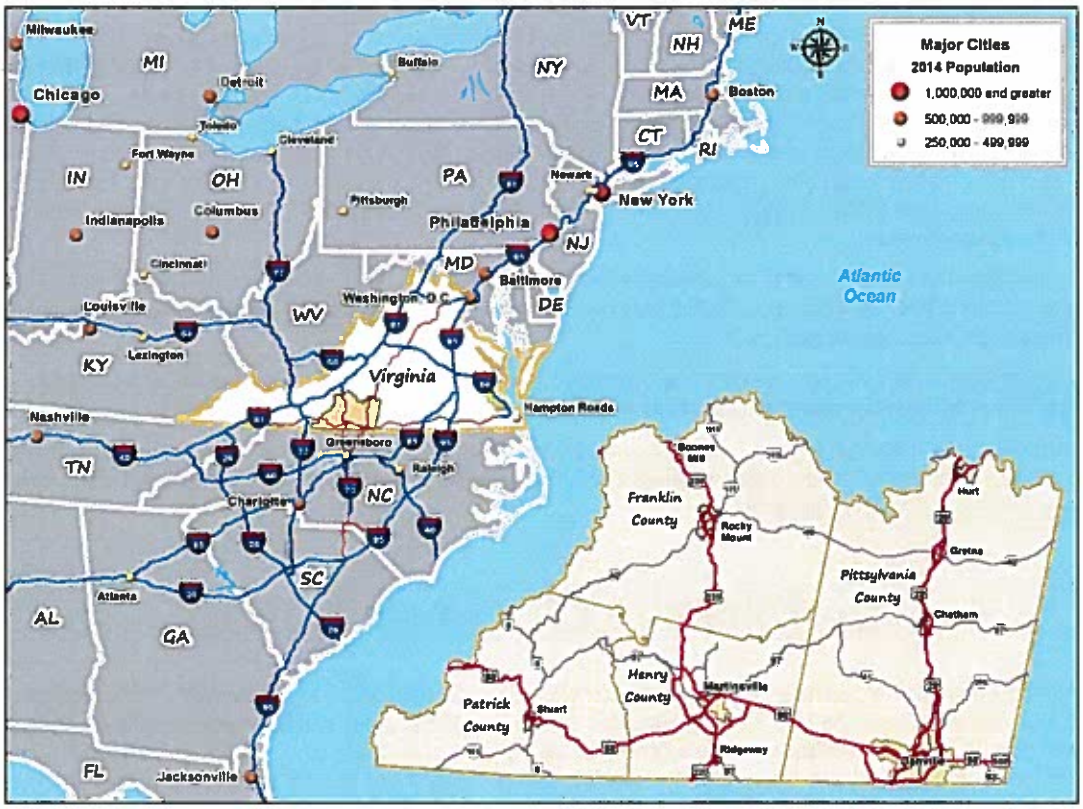
Located in the southwestern Piedmont of Virginia, the Planning District is bordered on the west by the Blue Ridge Mountains and lies some 150 miles southwest of Richmond, the state capital. Less than 200 miles to the east are the extensive port facilities of Norfolk, Newport News, and Portsmouth; a short distance to the south lies the industrial crescent of the North Carolina Piedmont; and about 100 miles to the northwest are the Appalachian coalfields of Virginia and West Virginia.

The Roanoke (Staunton) River forms the northeastern border of the Planning District flowing in a southeastern direction towards the Atlantic Ocean. Portions of the Roanoke River Basin, in which the Planning District lies, are developing into major commercial and industrial concentrations. Recreational development and associated business development within the region also have expanded due to the presence of Smith Mountain and Leesville Lakes, Philpott Lake, Fairy Stone State Park, and the Blue Ridge Parkway.

Five federal highways (U.S. Highways 29, 58, 220, 311, and 360) and twenty state primary routes provide the localities of the Planning District with access to each other and the rest of the nation. In addition, the region is served by Norfolk Southern rail lines, numerous freight lines, and air service from the Danville Regional Airport and Blue Ridge Airport (Henry County).

The following map illustrates the location of the Planning District in relation to both Virginia and the middle and south Atlantic states of the Eastern Seaboard. The map indicates the close proximity of the region to major trade areas, many of which are within a 200-mile radius. The market area defined is in excess of 17.6 million total population.

West Piedmont Planning District
Regional Location



Prepared by West Piedmont PDC, January 2017. D.W. Rakes

The following denotes the individual jurisdictions that together comprise the West Piedmont Planning District. Their geographical locations and governmental makeup are outlined in summary form.

Franklin County--Seventh in size of land area among Virginia counties, Franklin County is bounded on the north by Roanoke and Bedford Counties, on the east by Pittsylvania County, on the south by Henry and Patrick counties, and on the west by Floyd County. The Town of Rocky Mount is the county seat and the County's largest incorporated town. The Town of Boones Mill, the Village of Ferrum, and the Smith Mountain Lake Region including Westlake, are population centers.

In 2003, Franklin County, along with Craig County, was added to the Roanoke Metropolitan Statistical Area. Previously, the Roanoke MSA included Roanoke City, Roanoke County, Salem City, and Botetourt County. Prior to the addition of Franklin and Craig counties, the Roanoke MSA population totaled 235,932. With Franklin's 47,286 and Craig's 5,091 residents, that total increased to 288,309. The most recent decennial population count from the 2010 Census shows a total of 308,707 persons.

Franklin County is divided into seven voting districts with each electing one representative to serve on the Board of Supervisors for a four-year period. There is a County Administrator who is directed in financial and business policies by the Board of Supervisors.

Henry County--Developing into a largely urban county itself, Henry County lies south of Franklin County and is bordered on the east by Pittsylvania County and on the west by Patrick County. The County lies along the Virginia-North Carolina border. Urban areas of the County adjoin the City of Martinsville and include the Town of Ridgeway. Collinsville, located to the northwest of Martinsville, serves as the county seat. Henry County contains six voting districts with a representative of each district serving a four-year term on the Board of Supervisors. This body sets policies to guide the actions of the County Administrator.

Patrick County--Located in one of the more scenic areas of Virginia, Patrick County is bordered on the north by Franklin and Floyd counties and on the south by North Carolina. It lies west of Henry County and east of Carroll County. Its urban population centers around the Town of Stuart. Patrick County's Board of Supervisors is composed of one member from each of the five voting districts. A County Administrator directs the functions of County government with policies set by the Board.

Pittsylvania County—The County, the largest Virginia county in terms of land area, has the Town of Chatham as its county seat and setting for an urban concentration. Other areas of urban populations are the towns of Gretna and Hurt. The County is bordered on the north by Campbell and Bedford Counties and to the south by North Carolina. Halifax County lies to the east with Henry and Franklin counties to the west. Pittsylvania County also has a county administrator form of government with a seven-member Board of Supervisors setting guidelines for administration and policy.

Danville City--The City is located in the south central portion of Pittsylvania County, along the border with North Carolina. Founded in 1793, the City has a background rich in history. After the 1980 Census, the City of Danville and Pittsylvania County were designated as a Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA) by the Census Bureau. This qualified the area to establish a Metropolitan Planning Organization through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). Due to a decreased population count below the 50,000 person threshold in the 2010 decennial Census, the Danville MSA became recognized as an urban cluster as opposed to its previous urban area designation. It is now considered a Micropolitan Statistical Area, but maintained the MPO designation with FHWA. The City Council is composed of nine members elected at large who govern through a city manager form of government.

Martinsville City--The City is located in the geographic center of Henry County. Martinsville forms the base for a large urban population corridor within Henry County. The City Council is composed of five members elected at large who govern through a council-manager form of government.

Rocky Mount Town--The Town is located near the geographic center of Franklin County and serves as the county seat. The Town is governed by a seven-member council with managerial responsibility delegated to a Town Manager.

The West Piedmont Planning District Commission is developing a Regional Data Book to provide more detailed demographics and information for the district and each locality it represents. The data book is available on the PDC's website at www.wppdc.org/documents-publications/,.

Population Demographics

The Planning District had an average 2010 population density of 96.3 persons per square mile. With 1,261.5 persons per square mile, Martinsville was the most densely populated area in the District, while Patrick County was the least densely populated with 38.3 persons per square mile, according to the 2010 Census. There are seven incorporated towns in the Planning District, the largest being Rocky Mount in Franklin County. Other towns include Boones Mill in Franklin County; Ridgeway in Henry County; Stuart in Patrick County; and Chatham, Gretna, and Hurt in Pittsylvania County.

Population Projections

The following graph demonstrates projected population for each locality in the West Piedmont Planning District for Years 2025, 2035, and 2045. These numbers are provided by the Virginia Employment Commission, looking long term.

Population Projections
West Piedmont Planning District by Locality

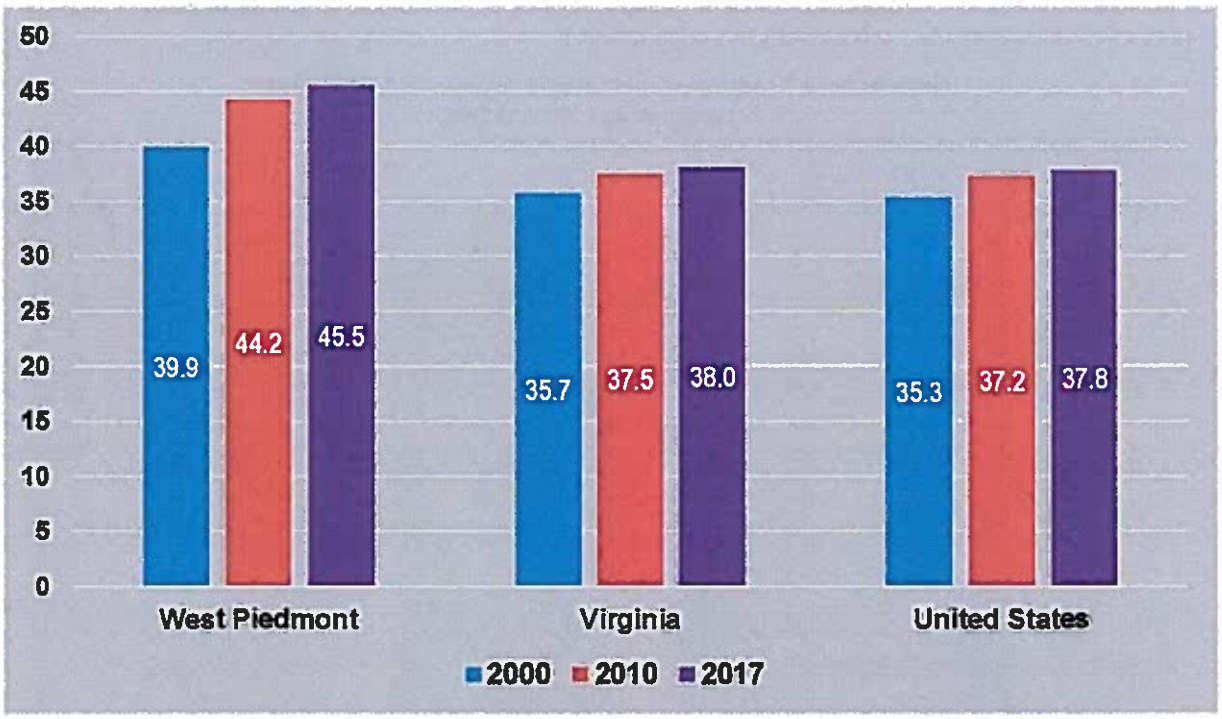
Area	2010 Census	Projected 2025	Percent Change 2010-2025	Projected 2035	Percent Change 2025-2035	Projected 2045	Percent Change 2035-2045
Franklin County	56,159	59,274	5.5	64,410	8.7	69,061	7.2
Henry County	54,151	49,682	-8.3	45,650	-8.1	41,328	-9.5
Patrick County	18,490	17,999	-2.7	17,124	-4.9	16,135	-5.8
Pittsylvania County	63,506	63,193	-0.5	63,311	0.2	62,986	-0.5
Danville City	43,055	39,921	-7.3	35,526	-11.0	30,915	-13.0
Martinsville City	13,821	12,455	-9.9	11,011	-11.6	9,500	-13.7
West Piedmont	*249,182*	*242,524*	*-2.7*	*237,032*	*-2.3*	*229,925*	*-3.0*
Virginia	8,001,024	9,145,616	14.3	9,874,244	8.0	10,528,817	6.6

Source: Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, University of Virginia, 2017; 2010 Decennial Census, U.S. Census Bureau.

Age Characteristics

As the following graph indicates, the West Piedmont Planning District had a higher median age (in years) in 2017 than the state's median of 37.8 years. This data seems to indicate that there is a continuing trend of out-migration of the younger working age persons which is causing the median age to rise at a faster rate in the Planning District. A follow-up consequence to this is that the birth rate in the District is lower and, in turn, the median age is higher. In addition, an increasing number of retired age persons are moving into the District. The rural setting, relatively comfortable summer climate, and close proximity to several major urban areas are attractive to many older persons.

Median Age, 2000 - 2017
West Piedmont Planning District, Virginia, and United States



Sources: 2000, and 2010 U.S. Census of Population; 2013-2017 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.

According to a 2014 Weldon Cooper publication entitled *"Virginia is Getting Older,"* the State as a whole continues to age as baby boomers are living longer and birthrates are lower. With retirement looming, many baby boomers are moving into rural counties, being a larger cohort than previous generations and having a larger impact on these areas. Virginia is unlike other parts of the U.S., in that retirees don't flock to the cities, but rather prefer more rural areas. With low birthrates and a growing number of retirees, these rural areas may face a different situation than they are accustomed to. The elderly are less dependent on commute times to work and can help maintain property values in declining rural areas. They come without children, so school enrollment declines along with property taxes. Other than millennials, later generations just aren't as large. As the report reflects, complicating all of this is the declining birthrate for women in their prime childbearing years. The millennial generation is waiting longer to have children – later in their 30's. Therefore, this tips the age factor. With the advances in medical technology, social, and economic sectors, people are living longer, increasing demands on Social Security, health care services, Medicare and Medicaid, public transportation, housing, and other services. However, the aging population is an asset to families, communities, and society in general, providing care-giving for family members, volunteering in the community, and providing a "living history." As stated in the 2014 Weldon Cooper report, *"Retiring Boomers are Going Rural (but not too Rural),"* retirees can be an economic boon for service jobs in economically distressed areas, but they also are unlikely to start businesses or bring new industries. Some may remain in the workforce for a longer period of time due to extended retirement income needs, higher health care costs, and to stay productive. This continues to hold true in the Planning District today as well.

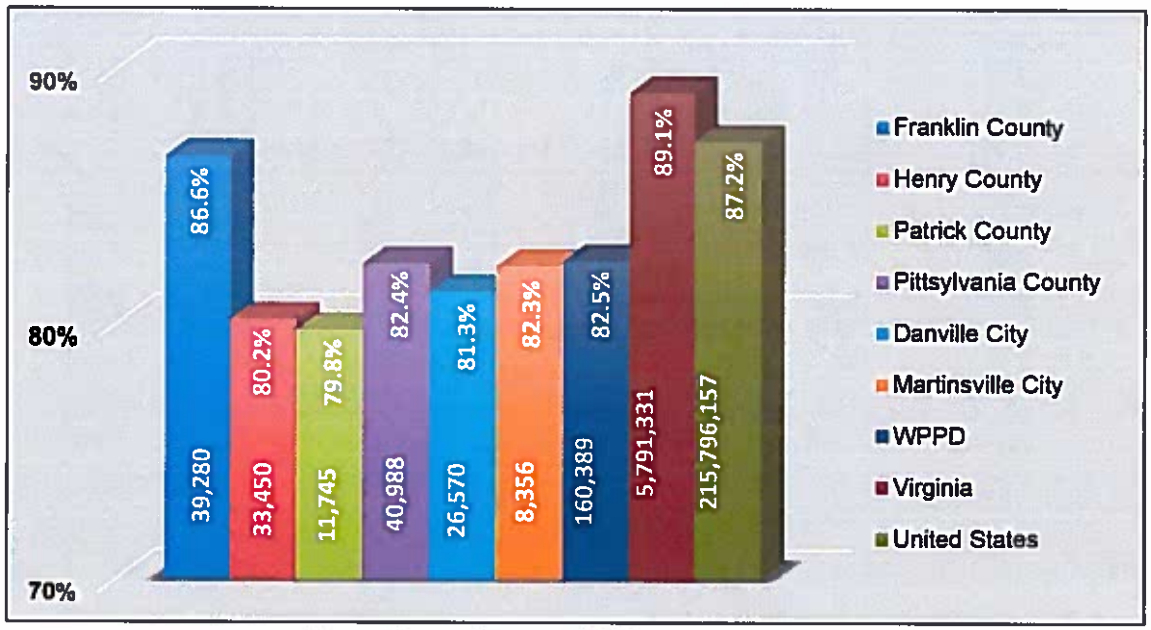
Most places are not prepared for the global retirement wave that is quickly approaching. Many people will have to work well beyond the traditional retirement age and living standards are expected to fall, while poverty rates will increase. While retirees are expected to live longer than ever, this will put a strain on their finances. In Franklin County, an aging study was undertaken to prepare for the coming "Silver Tsunami." The County is planning to meet the increased demands of the aging population by improving access to health care, affordable housing, and transportation. In partnership with the Department of Aging and Ferrum College, a five-year strategic plan was developed to address the needs of senior citizens.

Nearly one out of every eight Virginians was 65 years of age or older in 2010, according to a recent publication by the Virginia Institute of Government, UVA. Again, the figures underline the growing need for long-term care, medical facilities, and other geriatric services.

Educational Attainment

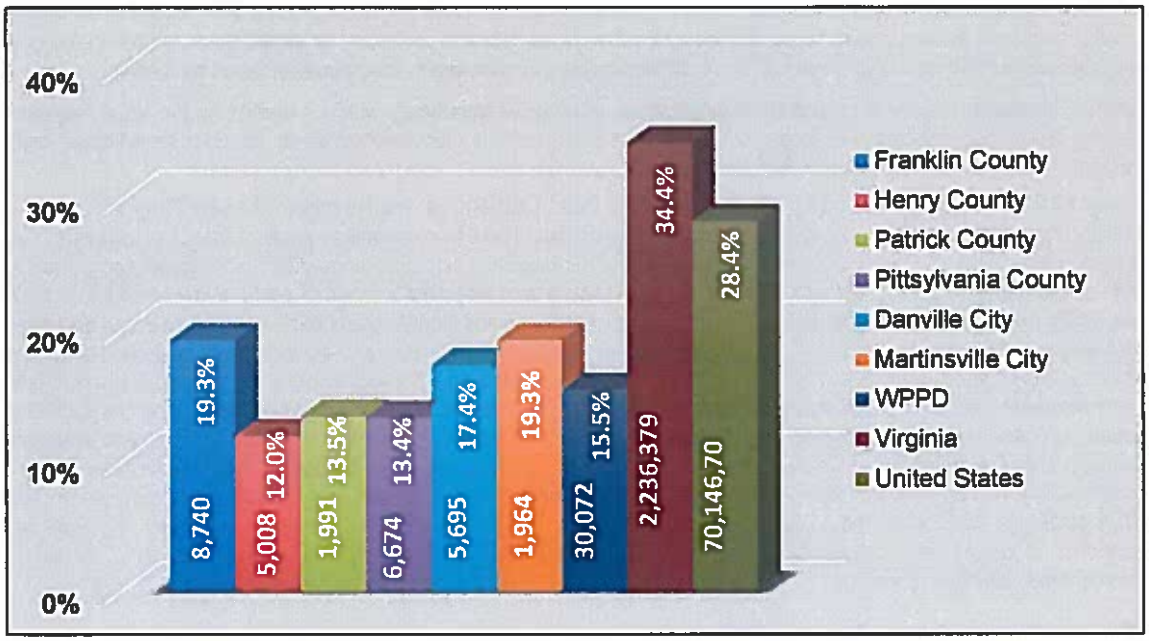
The educational level of the Planning District is an important measure of how prepared the labor force is to participate in local economic development. The following graphs provide an overview of educational attainment for persons ages 18 and older in each locality of the Planning District for 2013-2017. The first graph depicts the number of high school graduates and the second illustrates those who received a bachelor's degree or higher.

High School Graduates (Including Equivalency), 2013-2017
Population Age 18 and Over



Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.

Bachelor's Degree and Higher, 2013-2017
Population Age 18 and Over



Source: 2013-2017 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.

As the state and nation move forward, pursuing only a high school degree becomes less and less of an option for attaining a good position for future jobs. The graphs indicate an appreciation on the part of District citizens for the need to further their education and educational attainment. This is a positive factor in preparing for economic growth. On the negative side, however, the data reveals that the District falls far behind other areas and the state and U.S. in regard to bachelor's degree and higher educational attainment. This indicates a need for continued attention to education generally as well as to examine the District more in regard to motivation, access to educational programs, content of programs, and other possible areas for concentration including more on-line program options and apprenticeship/internship opportunities.

Infrastructure and Services

Investment in transportation infrastructure can be an important influence in economic growth – increased access to land provided by new or upgraded transportation infrastructure can either induce new development or influence existing development patterns. While generating a number of industries and businesses to create a healthy economic base and supplying jobs and providing wages to District citizens are primary concerns, there are other essential needs. Infrastructure in the form of community facilities, utilities, housing, and public services are also important. On one hand, their existence is mandatory to create an atmosphere in which business and industry would care to invest capital, equipment, and labor, thus providing the desired economic development. On the other hand, the infrastructure and services must exist to meet basic needs of citizens. The following sections highlight infrastructure and services improvements in the region.

Transportation

An area's transportation accessibility serves as the framework wherein its communities grow. The adequacy of the transportation system has shaped and will continue to exert significant influence on economic growth within the West Piedmont Planning District. Transportation is a primary economic growth-forming factor because it makes land, labor, and resources both accessible and competitive interregionally and intraregionally. Local transportation modes, for the same reason, impact the growth--or lack of growth--of specific areas within the region by making some areas relatively more accessible than others. The region needs an efficient transportation system because local firms are competing globally with other firms. The consumer, through the retailer, is requiring an approximation of just-in-time delivery.

The highway network is the major element in the Planning District's transportation system. Five federal highways and twenty state primary highways provide the localities of the region with access to each other and the rest of the nation. There are

numerous state secondary roads connecting to these larger highways. Over 471 miles of federal and state primary highways and 3,714 miles of state secondary roads are located within the Planning District; urban system mileage totals 397.5 miles.

For more detailed information regarding primary and secondary highway projects, please refer to the Transportation Project Priorities section of this document. This is utilized by local, regional, and state agencies for potential Smart Scale projects to be submitted via the Virginia Department of Transportation to the Commonwealth Transportation Board for funding.

Danville-Pittsylvania County is served by a Metropolitan Planning Organization, which is staffed by the West Piedmont Planning District Commission. An abstract of the work elements of the Danville-Pittsylvania Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is included as Appendix 3 of this document.

In July 2006, VDOT began an initiative for the Regional Rural Long-Range Transportation Planning Program, aimed at creating regional transportation plans in rural areas to complement those in metropolitan areas of the Commonwealth. By partnering with Virginia's Planning District Commissions and the localities each represents, VDOT worked with each region to evaluate the transportation system in rural areas and to assist in recommending a range of public improvements that could best satisfy existing and future transportation needs. These regional plans identify needs based on the goals and objectives established by each region. Improving the transportation system remains vital to improving the quality of life and continued economic growth and prosperity in Virginia. The list of recommendations from the regional long-range plans is being utilized in the statewide transportation planning process to better quantify the statewide magnitude of needs. The transportation system evaluated was limited to federal functional classified routes of minor collectors and above. The West Piedmont Planning District Commission, in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the region's localities completed and adopted the Plan in May 2011. Working with regional stakeholders to include local government and VDOT staffs, the PDC began the process of updating the Plan in 2018. The PDC will continue to work with the Technical Committee to analyze data, review geometric and bridge deficiencies, and other tasks to update the Plan. The current document may be found at www.wppdc.org/content/wppdc/uploads/PDF/transportation/west_piedmont_2035_rlrp_final.pdf.

Air

There are two airports in the Planning District--Danville Regional Airport and Blue Ridge Airport in Henry County. A number of private air fields exist within the district, too, and provide services to local and visiting businessmen on occasion. Commercial, passenger, and cargo services are conveniently located at Piedmont International Airport in Greensboro, NC, and Roanoke Regional Airport in Roanoke. Virginia airports contribute more than $1 billion in economic activity annually, according to a November 2017 report prepared by InterVISTAS for the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration and the Virginia Department of Aviation. The statistics revealed that in 2016, Danville Regional Airport contributed $5.64 million in economic benefits, providing 54 jobs; Blue Ridge had $9.7 million in economic activity, with 112 jobs.

Danville Regional Airport is a Class IV airport, located in the easterly portion of the City of Danville, with two active paved runways. For more information, go to http://www.flydanville.com/. ***Blue Ridge Airport*** is located in Henry County, approximately 11 miles southwest of the City of Martinsville. This facility is currently classified as a Basic Utility Airport and has been recommended for upgrade to a Basic Transport classification. In 2012, a base for Wake Forest Baptist "AirCare 3" was established at the airport to serve the region. A state-of-the-art helicopter (H130 T2), valued between $4 and $5 million, is one of the few of its kind in the U.S. and increases support for both the business and health climate in the area. More information is available at http://www.flyblueridge.com/.

Rail

Two main rail lines provide freight service to the many industries of the region. Norfolk Southern Railway's Roanoke to Winston-Salem route passes through Franklin and Henry counties and the City of Martinsville, providing freight service to Boones Mill, Rocky Mount, Ferrum, and Henry in Franklin County, and Bassett, Stanleytown, Fieldale, and Ridgeway in Henry County, as well as Martinsville. A main line of the Norfolk Southern Railway runs through Pittsylvania County serving Hurt, Gretna, Chatham, and Danville. This line is also utilized for connection to the ports at Hampton Roads. Rail transportation provides a vital connection between the industries of the Planning District and the rest of the nation.

The AMTRAK Crescent passenger train serves Danville, between New Orleans, LA, and New York, and between Washington, D.C. and Atlanta, GA, with intermediate stops. The boarding point on this train for the West Piedmont Region is located on Craghead Street in the historic Danville Train Station which also houses the Danville Science Center, a branch of the Science Museum of Virginia. AMTRAK extended service from Lynchburg to Roanoke in October 2017.

In 2016, Virginia agreed to study the feasibility of developing an inland port at the Southern Virginia Multimodal Park – the former site of Klopman/Burlington Mills - in the Town of Hurt in Pittsylvania County. The site is in close proximity to the Hurt Switch, which enables rail transport east to the Port of Virginia or west toward the Midwest. Such a facility, which would be

similar to the one in Front Royal, would serve as a compilation point for containerized freight which would then be shipped by railroad east to the Port of Virginia. Inland ports facilitate lower transport costs for companies and reduce the number of trucks on roadways. Local officials believe that an inland port would increase global competitiveness of the region, as its presence would render area companies' goods movements more cost-effective, as rail-based freight movement typically costs less than truck-based shipments. The inland port would directly create jobs and most likely attract distribution centers and other establishments, generating additional jobs.

Transit

Two transit systems currently serve the region - the Danville Transit System (DTS) and PART (Piedmont Area Regional Transit) in Martinsville and Henry County. Bus service is also provided to Ferrum College and the public via Valley Metro of Roanoke, with transportation to the Rocky Mount and Roanoke areas.

DTS, geared toward serving low- and moderate-income neighborhoods, is managed and regularly monitored by Danville City as to service and overall cost-effectiveness. In 2008, Danville's 2,000-SF bus hub opened on Spring Street in Downtown Danville, which serves the City's Transit System. Until April 2016, the hub served the Greyhound Bus Lines, but discontinued service due to low ridership. The City operates two trolley buses to promote access to shopping and other destinations within the River District. More information regarding DTS is available at www.danville-va.gov/508/Mass-Transit.

As a result of a feasibility study spearheaded by the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center (SVHEC) to promote transportation options for individuals pursuing training in precision machining and for potential employees with a limited lack of transportation, the Danville Transit System will initiate new routes in 2019. Three additional buses will be acquired by DTS to expand services east to South Boston and north to Chatham, Gretna, and Hurt.

The Martinsville-Henry County transit system, known as PART (Piedmont Area Regional Transit), employs the services of RADAR of the Roanoke Valley, a non-profit organization that has organized and maintained public and private human service transportation for over 30 years. The PART service offers three bus routes with a deviated fixed route. Further information about PART may be found at www.martinsville-va.gov/PART.html.

The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (VDRPT) developed the West Piedmont Coordinated Human Service Mobility (CHSM) Plan. The report, updated in 2013, was approved as an integral part of the Regional Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan. The CHSM Plan: a) serves as a comprehensive, unified plan that promotes community mobility for seniors, persons with disabilities, and persons of low income; b) established priorities to incrementally improve mobility for the target populations; and c) developed a process to identify interested, willing, and able partners to promote community mobility for the target populations.

In 2013, the Roanoke Valley-Allegheny Regional Commission (RVARC), via its Ride Solutions component, formulated a plan to increase ride sharing as well as advertising the ride sharing initiative in Franklin County and Rocky Mount. In 2014, the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board (WDB) agreed to serve as the local administrator of RIDE Solutions in Henry County and Martinsville, enabling the program to extend more comprehensively into the West Piedmont Planning District. Since 2015, this partnership allows for services in Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania counties, as well as the cities of Martinsville and Danville. In 2018, local administration of this program transferred from the WDB to the West Piedmont Planning District Commission. RIDE Solutions is currently exploring the possibility of establishing van pools throughout its service area.

A major demographic shift in the region will include a ballooning senior citizen population. Greater numbers of seniors will require transportation, particularly medical transports and shopping excursions. A number of organizations in the Region recognize this and are developing strategic plans to address the aging population. Additionally, it is recognized that to assist in transitioning, there is a need for adequate transportation services to help the returning citizen population, i.e. ex-offenders, get to job interviews and steady employment opportunities. In addition, a number of non-profit agencies across the Planning District provide transportation services to handicapped citizens. The Southern Area Agency on Aging provides transportation services to persons ages 60 and older in the District through a number of subcontractors.

As part of a ride-share program, both Lyft and Uber transportation services are available in Danville. Apps are used to request a ride, where passengers can be driven throughout the River District as well as to hotels in other parts of the City.

Bikeways

In 2017, staff of the West Piedmont Planning District Commission updated the West Piedmont Regional Bicycle Plan, originally adopted in 2005. This iteration of the plan, adopted in early 2018, makes connections between cycling, economic development and health; provides an extensive inventory of facilities for conventional and mountain biking in the region; and lays out recommendations to increase and improve bicycling in the region. This project ties in with the Complete Streets Initiative to complement roadways with bicycle and pedestrian facilities and as an impetus to improve the region's health through active transportation alternatives. The plan may be viewed at www.wppdc.org.

Utility Infrastructure--Water and Sewer Utilities

The region continues to make strides in utility infrastructure development. Although great progress has been made, there is significant land in the region which could be used for industrial properties if public water and sewer services were available. Construction of utilities to serve specific areas in the future remains a regional priority. While most of the region is served by public water and sewer, much of the more rural areas such as most of Franklin, Patrick, and portions of Pittsylvania counties still do not have these services. The areas of the region not served by public utilities rely on individual wells and private residential septic systems. Wastewater treatment is provided by many of the towns, cities, and service authorities that provide potable water. It should be noted that, like much of the U.S., many areas within the region have aging utility infrastructure in place that is in critical need of upgrades or replacement.

Public water is available in many of the towns and cities in the planning area, as well as by the Henry County Public Service Authority, the Ferrum Water & Sewer Authority in Franklin County, and the Pittsylvania County Service Authority. The Henry County Public Service Authority (PSA), created in 1964, provides water and sewer services to more than 35,000 people, or over 66 percent of the County's population. With more than 800 miles of utility lines, the PSA is one of the largest water and sewer authorities in Virginia. Both service authorities have expanded services in various areas of their respective counties over the last few years.

Franklin County--In 2009, Franklin County joined the Western Virginia Water Authority (WVWA), an incorporated public body independent of local government that provides water and wastewater services to its customers in the City of Roanoke, Roanoke County, and Franklin County. WVWA purchased several private water systems in the County as well as distribution systems that provide water and sewer services to the Westlake area. Plans for future development include the connection of the Town of Rocky Mount's water system with WVWA in the Wirtz area, eventually. In addition, Franklin County is connected to the Bedford County Public Service Authority to purchase bulk water; the water line was extended across the Halesford Bridge to the Westlake area of Franklin County. In conjunction with the Bedford Regional Water Authority and the WVWA, a new 30,000 square-foot, 3 MGD Smith Mountain Lake Water Treatment Facility and pipeline opened in Moneta in May 2017. Jointly owned and operated by the two water authorities, the system can be expanded as needed and provides safe drinking water and fire protection for current and future customers in two large rural counties (Bedford and Franklin) and the Town of Bedford. Future phases continue to be developed for other service areas in the County. The County also has its first county-owned public water system which serves the Commerce Center Business Park on U.S. 220 South. Franklin County plans to construct a wastewater treatment plant for Commerce Center in the future. The projected cost of the wastewater treatment plant, including engineering costs, is $430,000; a Community Development Block Grant is planned to assist construction, when needed.

The Town of Rocky Mount has both public water and sewer facilities to serve residents and businesses. The Town plans to interconnect with the Western Virginia Water Authority as a secondary water source to be more resilient; the Authority wants another partner to treat wastewater. Franklin County currently is working with the Western Virginia Water Authority to extend public sewer service from Rocky Mount to the new 550-acre Summit View Business Park. At an estimated cost of $740,415, construction is expected to be phased with completion of the first phase by the end of 2019.

Henry County--The Henry County Public Service Authority (PSA) has a three-party agreement in conjunction with the County, the PSA, and the City of Martinsville, providing for the mutual exchange and benefit among all the public water facilities in the area. Currently, the PSA and City of Martinsville have an agreement in place that allows the PSA to send a portion or all of its wastewater to the City's wastewater treatment plant. The decision to implement this project was solely based on the loss of several major wastewater customers to both the City and PSA. This project represented a huge cost savings to the PSA and large revenue source for the City. The PSA is currently considering reactivation of the Lower Smith River Wastewater Treatment Facility in order to prepare for the opening of Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre, Henry County's mega-site industrial park.

Also in Henry County is the Southern Henry County Water Improvement project which will extend a 12" water line from Pleasant Grove along Preston Road to somewhere near Marigold Road. The project will provide the PSA an additional water source to southern Henry County, particularly for the Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre. It will also allow the PSA to connect two existing well systems to distribution. The estimated cost is $2.7 million.

Patrick County--The Town of Stuart operates a municipal water treatment plant and distribution system serving the Town and neighboring areas of the County. Stuart also operates a 600,000 GPD wastewater treatment plant that serves the Town and adjacent County areas. Recently, Stuart began planning for a west end water line and potential funding for wastewater treatment plant upgrades. The $1.4 million project is expected to be funded with a combination of loan (60%) and grant (40%) funds through the USDA's Rural Development program. Also, due to flooding in October 2015, the Town suffered extensive damage to a 15-inch sewer line; construction of a new 18-inch line, approximately 600 feet long is needed at more than $96,000 in costs to the Town.

Pittsylvania County— The Pittsylvania County Service Authority (PCSA) was established in 1973 as an independent entity under the provisions of the Virginia Water and Sewer Authorities Act to provide water and sewer service for all areas of the

County outside the City of Danville and the incorporated towns of Chatham, Gretna, and Hurt. To serve its customers, the PCSA has contracts to purchase bulk water from the City of Danville, Henry County Public Service Authority, the Town of Chatham, and the Town of Hurt. PCSA does not currently own or operate water or sewer treatment facilities. PCSA consists of five community water systems using groundwater and ten community water systems that purchase water from other public water supply systems. PCSA serves approximately 22% of the County's population, located primarily around the County's three towns and the City of Danville. There are seven private water systems which use groundwater to serve approximately 500 people. Based on water demand projections, Pittsylvania County maintains a water supply surplus and is expected to maintain a surplus through 2060.

In 2017, PCSA evaluated potential alignments for interconnections between the Pittsylvania County Service Authority's (PCSA) Route 58 West water system and the Mount Cross, Mount Hermon, and Route 29 North water systems. The proposed interconnections will allow the PCSA to convey water supplied from Henry County to these four water systems. This will allow the PCSA to utilize either water from Henry County or the City of Danville to improve the operation and reliability of its water systems. In 2018, PCSA made application to the Virginia Department of Health for funding of this project and was offered a low interest loan through the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund for the estimated cost of $12 million. Engineering will begin in early 2019.

PCSA provides sewerage collection through a contract for treatment with the City of Danville in several areas just outside of the City limits. The PCSA also provides sewerage collection to many areas of the County, including the Ringgold East and Ringgold West Industrial Parks, the Owens-Illinois glass plant on Wilkerson Road and the Cane Creek Centre; the Mount Hermon community (Highway 41 area); the Blairs Industrial Area at Toy Lane; and the Route 58 West/Brosville area. In the central part of the County, the PCSA has a contract with the Town of Chatham for sewage treatment where the Authority is guaranteed one-third of the Chatham plant's capacity. Sewerage service is provided in the Tightsqueeze community just south of Chatham as well.

In September 2017, Pittsylvania County, the Town of Altavista, and the owner of the Southern Virginia Multimodal Park (SVMP) funded a study to evaluate potential sources of potable water and wastewater treatment for SVMP in Hurt. Potential water sources are the existing water treatment plant on the park property and expansion of the Town of Altavista water system. Potential wastewater service could be supplied by the Town of Altavista or the construction of new treatment system on the SVMP site. The SVMP site is the former Klopman Mills property and has been proposed as an inland port. In 2018, the Staunton River Regional Industrial Facilities Authority was created between Hurt, Altavista, Danville and Pittsylvania County. The formation of the new authority should provide additional resources and funding opportunities for future utility infrastructure.

In January 2015, the Halifax County Service Authority (HCSA) had a study prepared to evaluate the Virginia International Raceway (VIR) water system which they own and operate. The system provides water to approximately 50 residential as well as industrial customers and is experiencing serious problems due to contaminated wells. The study looked at various alternatives for providing VIR with a reliable water system and one of the recommended alternatives was connection to the PCSA water system. It was noted that this connection would support future development along the waterline corridor and provide a long term solution to provide VIR with a more reliable water source as well as the capacity for future expansion. In June of 2017, the HCSA had a preliminary engineering report (PER) prepared that evaluated potential alignments for the proposed connection between VIR and PCSA's system. This report is the first step toward seeking funding opportunities for the connection. The formation of a new industrial authority is under consideration to help provide water service and other infrastructure needs to VIR and the adjacent industrial park.

In 2018, PCSA was awarded a USDA Predevelopment Planning grant in the amount of $30,000 to help fund a preliminary engineering report (PER) to study the County's water and wastewater pump stations. The study and report will access the criticality and reliability of the existing stations, recommend improvements and provide capital cost data for annual budgeting needs.

Danville--In addition to the City of Danville's main water treatment plant, it has an industrial water treatment plant. Danville plans to complete $2 million in upgrades at the water treatment facility during 2019. The City is also moving forward with a $3.5 million side stream storage project to have 20 million-gallon side stream storage available for possible source water contamination events of the Dan River. Danville contracts with Severn Trent Environmental Services Incorporated to operate its wastewater treatment facilities. The City remains the owner of its wastewater treatment facilities which include a wastewater plant, ten pump stations, and an industrial pretreatment program.

The City also has extended its sewer collection system and sewage pump stations to handle industrial and residential/commercial wastewater. New residential/commercial service areas and industrial park/site areas have been added. Other expansions and improvements are underway at this time, with more in the planning stages. Approximately $1.06 million annually is projected for sewer system improvements. Currently, the City has approximately 385 miles of sanitary sewer of various sizes and ten raw sewage-pumping stations. The City of Danville and Pittsylvania County have jointly developed the Cane Creek Centre in the Ringgold area of Pittsylvania County. A sewer system, pump station (Cane Creek Sewage Pump Station), and force main built to serve this park also serve other areas of Pittsylvania County and the Virginia

International Raceway in Halifax County. In addition, the County and City continue to work jointly on development phases of the 3,500-acre park located west of the City of Danville, in Pittsylvania County along Berry Hill Road.

Martinsville–The City of Martinsville's wastewater treatment plant has a permitted capacity of 8.0 MGD and is currently treating approximately 4.5 MGD. Service is provided to the entire City (including four permitted industrial facilities) and some areas outside the City. Through agreements with the Henry County Public Service Authority, the City's plant is receiving and treating all waste from the PSA's Upper Smith River and Lower Smith River systems (including three permitted industrial facilities) where the former treatment plants have been converted to pumping facilities only. Secondary treatment is provided by an extended aeration system, after which the effluent is disinfected and then dechlorinated before being discharged to the Smith River south of Martinsville.

Like so many towns and cities across the U.S. with aging infrastructure, Martinsville's water and sewer lines are in need of upgrades in several areas. Two projects currently underway are the removal of the Summit View water tank and repairs on the Beaver Creek Spillway. The estimated cost of the spillway project is $2 million as some of the concrete and underdrain system needs to be repaired. The City retained the services of Dewberry to assist with the work.

The Smith River Interceptor line is a major artery that runs from the Fieldale area of Henry County to the City's wastewater treatment plant near Forest Park Country Club. It serves most of Martinsville and some of Henry County, including the Patriot Centre Industrial Park. In 2014, the City retained Red Zone Robotics to evaluate the sewer line and discovered one section that had to be repaired immediately. The remainder of the 50+ year old line is in need of repair or replacement as well. The total project cost for upgrades of the entire 6.2-mile sanity sewer line is an estimated $30 million, taking place in three phases. Only the Resurgence Property, formerly Bassett Walker, remains to be repaired and replaced. The City was awarded a $1 million EDA Public Works grant for this work, which will be completed soon.

Required by the Commonwealth of Virginia for all localities, the ***West Piedmont Regional Water Supply Plan*** was developed in conjunction with the cities of Martinsville and Danville; the counties of Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania; and the towns of Ridgeway, Stuart, Chatham, Gretna, and Hurt. The Local and Regional Water Supply Planning Regulation (Chapter 780 - Local and Regional Water Supply Planning) established a planning process and criteria that all local governments used in the development of these water supply plans. The purpose of this regulation is to protect the health, safety, and welfare of citizens by requiring local and regional water supply planning. The West Piedmont Regional Water Supply Plan was completed in November 2011 and included a Drought Contingency Plan as well as a public participation component. The five-year update was completed in 2017. The plans will be reviewed every five years to assess adequacy and significant changes will require an amended plan.

Franklin County, the Town of Rocky Mount, and Boones Mill participated in the ***Roanoke Valley/Allegheny Regional Commission's Regional Water and Sewer Plan***, developed by Draper Aden, the project consultant. This plan examined the area's residential, business, and institutional water needs and determined if the existing and planned resources were adequate to meet demand through the year 2050. The study also examined water supply and recommended distribution alternatives. Other participants include Bedford, Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, and Roanoke counties; the cities of Bedford, Roanoke, and Salem, and the towns of Boones Mill, Buchanan, Fincastle, Rocky Mount, Troutville, and Vinton.

Utility Infrastructure—Telecommunications

The region is served by the Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative's (MBC) fiber optic backbone network established to deploy broadband services such as high-speed Internet in Southside Virginia. MBC is an independent non-profit entity, formed under the laws of the Commonwealth of Virginia. Its main office is located at the Riverstone Technology Park in South Boston, VA, where its Operational team is located. In addition, MBC has an office in downtown Richmond.

The Regional Backbone Project, or Roots of Progress Initiative helps promote economic development opportunities by attracting technology-based business and industry, providing higher wage jobs, and making high-speed Internet access affordable and available in a rural area where such technology did not exist. Programs in education, healthcare, research and development, and economic development depend on the existence of broadband telecommunication services to keep services in rural areas up to speed with those offered in more metropolitan areas.

MBC is an established wholesaler of broadband services, providing the infrastructure necessary to attract businesses to rural Virginia by meeting the high-bandwidth optical transport demands of major telecom carriers and service providers needing access to new data centers in Southside Virginia. Because of their access to the state-of-the-art connectivity and marketing initiative, the Virginia business and technology parks in the MBC network have been designated as "GigaParks." This brings more businesses to the Southside Virginia Region; advanced fiber-optic transport capacity provides businesses with direct connections to key Internet peering points in Northern Virginia and the Southeast. These GigaParks, all located in Virginia, offer lower power and bandwidth costs, lower costs per square foot, and the availability of a skilled workforce. GigaParks share many common benefits such as a high level of network redundancy and a robust power infrastructure. More information on "GigaParks" may be found at www.gigapark-

va.com. Because of the network's presence, more jobs and investments were generated. Additional details about MBC can be found at www.mbc-va.com.

The City of Martinsville has developed a robust fiber optic backbone, known as MINet (Martinsville Informational Network). In partnership with MBC, the City now has a competitive edge with its high-speed, state-of-the-art, and affordable telecommunications infrastructure. The City/MBC partnership presence in local industrial parks is a "plus" for any businesses/industry considering possible relocation to the area. The City is exploring plans to extend services to residential and commercial customers in the near future.

The City of Danville constructed Network Danville ("nDanville" for short), a sophisticated fiber optic broadband network. The open-access system provides high-tech connectivity needed for high-speed Internet, television, and telephone connections. Private service providers purchase access to the network and provide services to customers. The municipal area network is anchored at the Multimedia Service Access Point (MSAP) located at the Galileo Magnet High School in Danville. With an initial $2.5 million investment, the network generates $1.4 million each year for Danville Utilities. Additionally, businesses and industrial parks are served with broadband, as is the medical community.

In the more rural areas of Franklin, Patrick, and Pittsylvania counties, Internet access is very limited and, in some cases, challenging due to land terrain. In 2017, Franklin County partnered with the Center for Innovative Technology (CIT) to identify broadband needs and to develop a plan to improve accessibility and reliability throughout the County. Following a survey conducted by the County, CIT reported that 80 percent of the 6,000+ respondents had Internet access at home, while 20 percent had inadequate access or none at all. Areas of concern in the County are Callaway, Ferrum, Henry, Hardy, Penhook and Snow Creek. The survey results will help develop goals and priorities to expand broadband service. In 2017, Franklin County created a broadband authority. In the fall of 2018, the County procured Design Nine from Blacksburg to assist in developing a Broadband Plan. The County plans to utilize towers and poles as access points in communities for a variety of facilities in order to provide every resident Internet access by some means--either wireless, cable, or satellite

Patrick County partnered with the Center for Innovative Technology (CIT) in July 2018, to conduct a broadband survey for a needs assessment. Once the survey is completed, CIT will make recommendations to the County, which will then make a determination regarding policy changes and identifying goals regarding broadband service and implementation plans. The final comprehensive plan is expected to be completed in about a year. The County is also exploring potential service providers, with Microsoft being one possibility to fund a pilot program using TV whitespace.

Pittsylvania County entered a Rural Internet agreement with AcelaNet, LLC (dba/SCS Broadband) to provide access for wireless Internet service to a significant portion of the rural areas of the County. The project which launched in May 2017, is being implemented in three phases: installation of equipment on current available tower-leased spaces in the first phase; the second phase will be installing signals on water towers in Hurt, Gretna, Hargrave, Tightsqueeze, and Brosville; and the third phase will include installation of community relays to close service gaps. The project is expected to bring reliable and affordable Internet access to approximately 90 percent of the County when all phases are complete. SCS Broadband will bring the wireless service to the County at no cost, but will expend revenue to the County as part of the three-year tower lease agreement. As of November 2018, most of the internet towers have been equipped - White Oak, Mount Airy, Grit, and Callands are ready to provide service. The remaining towers are underway in Brosville, Kentuck, and Mount Zion, and expected to be online by early 2019.

Throughout the region, wireless enhancements have taken place to improve mobile broadband capacity and contribute to economic growth and job creation. A number of providers offer these services in the district.

Currently, 70 percent of urban households are served by broadband, while only 57 percent of rural households and fewer than one-third of rural farms are served. Grant and loan recipients must provide data pertaining to broadband build-out for use in the National Broadband Map to enable the Rural Utility Service (RUS) at the U.S. Department of Agriculture to obtain more specific information for future funding decisions. In the West Piedmont Region, many rural areas are still unserved or underserved for last-mile connectivity to residents, but local governments continue to explore solutions. Broadband is a critical component for economic development and opportunities for business growth, entrepreneurs, education and workforce training, health, and quality of life.

Energy

With the prevalence of agriculture in the region, biomass is viewed as a profitable initiative for local growers. Sugars can be a replacement for "petroleum building blocks" in chemical manufacturing and can be fermented to make ethanol; the waste from the by-products can be burned to generate electricity. A facility which renders sugars into useful products and the agriculture industry would be instrumental in producing biomass in the Dan River Region.

Williams' Transco pipeline announced plans to construct a state-of-the-art 21,800-horsepower natural gas turbine compressor at its station in Chatham, as well as 100 miles of 24-inch diameter pipeline as part of a larger project to supply natural gas to a new 1,300 megawatt power station in Brunswick County. The $300,000 million pipeline project will serve Dominion Virginia Power's $1 billion natural gas-fired plant to replace two coal power stations. In Pittsylvania County, the project includes a new

10.7-mile pipeline and compressor station next to Williams' existing station. The Transco pipeline transports natural gas through a 10,000-mile pipeline system from southern Texas to New York City. It runs through Pittsylvania County with a compressor station in Chatham that has been in existence since 1957. The Virginia Southside Expansion Project is part of $2.2 billion in projects previously announced by Williams Partners. Together, the projects will increase Transco System's capacity by more than 35 percent.

In the Ringgold area of Pittsylvania County, a former soybean farm, now owned by WGL Energy of Tysons Corner, was transformed into a 75-acre solar farm. Danville Utilities entered into a 25-year agreement to purchase all the power generated by the solar project, adding more renewable energy to its portfolio. The farm directly supports the electricity needs of 4,000 customers in the community around the site and Danville Utilities Kentuck substation. Solar energy is expected to be the leading source of new utility-scale electric generating capacity in the U.S.

Education

A vital link in economic development in any community is its educational system. A potential industry looks for an educated labor force and one that is expected to handle ongoing changes and demands. A sound structure for an excellent system is in place within the Planning District and its continued development must be strongly supported. Emphasis should be given to reducing dropout rates, enhancing vocational and college preparatory courses, and ensuring adequate computer and electronic literacy for students and citizens. All available resources must be used in this pursuit, including the public school systems, the community colleges, and job training programs. In partnership with the local community colleges – Danville, Patrick Henry, and Virginia Western – a variety of dual enrollment programs are offered in each of the public school systems. The Governor's School for Global Economics and Technology and the Piedmont Governor's School for Mathematics, Science & Technology are part of this effort as well. Other important, popular programs include the Precision Machining Lab/Program in Danville and Pittsylvania County, and the IDEA Academy in Martinsville and Henry County. There are additional programs supporting K-12 academic preparedness (i.e. Academy of Engineering & Technology, a dual-enrollment program offered in partnership with Virginia State University); future programs may include cyber security, information technology, and robotics, to name a few.

Hargrave Military Academy – Located in Chatham, the academy has offered a program to prepare young men to enter the U.S. Naval Academy since 1979. In 2012, the academy was designated by the United States Military Academy in West Point as a U.S. Military Academy Civil Prep School. In 2016, Hargrave was the only Virginia school (public or private) to be designated as a National School of Character by Character.org. In 2015, it was the only school named a State School of Character. Outstanding faculty, staff, and school environment contribute to Hargrave's award winning designation for integrity, service, and excellence.

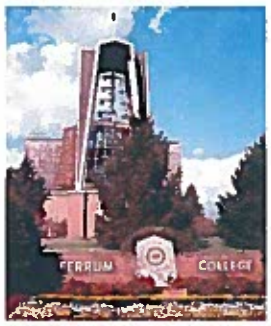
Institutions of Higher Education

Community Colleges – The Planning District is served by two community colleges – ***Danville Community College*** (DCC) in Danville and ***Patrick Henry Community College*** (PHCC) in Henry County. Both comprehensive community colleges offer a variety of college transfer, technical, and workforce programs awarding nationally recognized industry certifications, certificates, diplomas, and associate degrees. In addition, ***Virginia Western Community College*** (VWCC) serves Franklin County. VWCC began construction of a new 72,000+ square-foot STEM facility in the fall of 2017. The $30 million structure is anticipated to be complete by spring 2019. The college also constructed a new $5 million facility on Henry Street in Roanoke to expand the culinary arts program.

In 2017, the Harvest Foundation initiated the SEED Fund program to assist students graduating from Martinsville and Henry County high schools with tuition costs at Patrick Henry Community College. The program provides a $3.1 million three-year grant, beginning with 2018 graduates. A number of requirements must be met to enroll and to maintain eligibility in the program. Once accepted in the program, students must maintain at least a 2.0 GPA, must complete the eight community service hours annually, must enroll in a career studies certificate, certificate, or associate degree program, must take a minimum of 15 credit hours each semester, must attend mandatory meetings with the Harvest SEED coach, and must complete their chosen program of study within 2 ½ years.

The Virginia Foundation for Community College Education (VFCCE) launched the ***Rural Virginia Horseshoe Initiative*** (RVHI) to transform Virginia's rural communities through higher education and 21st century job skills. Drawing a line from Virginia's Eastern shore westward across Southside to Southwest Virginia, and then up the Shenandoah Valley, you trace an arc, or "horseshoe," that represents 75 percent of the Commonwealth's geography, where 500,000 people have less than a high school education. As a result, Virginia ranks 31st nationally in the percentage of residents with a high school equivalency credential. Three programs are part of the initiative and include the Great Expectations program, which encourages foster youth to attend college; the career coach program, which puts career coaches in local public high schools to assist students with college preparations; and a program to provide $1,000 stipends to students who earn a GED within the last five years that may be applied toward tuition at the community college. There are 14 community colleges within the rural horseshoe; 7 colleges, including DCC and PHCC, are part of the initiative's pilot program.

Averett University, a private, independent four-year liberal arts college in Danville, offers bachelor's degrees in approximately 40 majors including programs in education, business administration, business management, and other disciplines. Averett also offers master of education, master of arts in teaching, and master of business administration. Averett serves as host to the doctorate in business administration program offered by Nova Southeastern University. The Averett Adult Curriculum for Excellence (AACE) allows working individuals to earn undergraduate and graduate business administration degrees at more than 20 locations throughout North Carolina and Virginia. The IDEAL (Individually Designed Education for Adult Learners) enables student to earn a bachelor's degree through distance learning in majors including business administration, management science, sociology, criminal justice, physical education, sports management, and computer information systems. Averett University has a second campus - the ***Riverview Campus*** located in Danville's Historic Tobacco Warehouse District. Averett ranked 13th in the category of "Best Regional Liberal Arts Colleges in the South," by U.S. News and World Report. The college also ranked among the "Best Value Schools" and "Best Colleges for Veterans."



Ferrum College, a private, coeducational liberal arts four-year institution founded in 1913 in Franklin County, offers an Associate in Arts and Sciences, a Bachelor's of Art, Bachelor's of Science, and Bachelor's of Social Work. The college offers 33 areas of study ranging from business and environmental science to teacher education and criminal justice.

The ***Institute for Advanced Learning and Research*** (IALR) serves a student population in an area over 4,000 square miles that comprises the counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, Pittsylvania, Halifax, and Mecklenburg, and the cities of Danville and Martinsville. Located in the Cyber Park in Danville, the IALR offers access to educational and experiential learning opportunities in affiliation with multiple educational partners that include Virginia Tech, Averett University, Danville Community College, and New College Institute. IALR conducts applied research that leads to the development of new technologies and products that spur the creation of new businesses, job opportunities, and experiential learning opportunities. In 2017, the Institute unveiled the "Inspiration Lab," a new mobile lab that serves eight localities in the Dan River Region. Designed as a mobile version of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and math) opportunities through IALR, three various types of 3-D printers are provided to expose youth to additive manufacturing. Additive manufacturing is the process of how many foods, auto parts, and other items are envisioned to be engineered in future technology.

New College Institute, a publicly-funded institution of higher education located in Martinsville-Henry County, provides bachelor's degree completion and master's degrees from various partner universities. In 2018, the college determined four study areas of focus: health care, engineering/advanced manufacturing, technology/cyber security, and education/community leadership – all career fields with the most potential for providing well-paying jobs locally. New College Institute's uptown campus includes three separate facilities. The original classroom building is known as King Hall. The Baldwin Building, a 52,000-SF structure, features the latest innovations in classroom and videoconferencing technology, an advanced manufacturing high bay and specialized engineering equipment used for industrial training, and a 10,000-SF conference space. In addition to degree programs, other academic services include certificates and endorsements in partnership with other colleges and universities, academic and industry credentials, experiential learning opportunities, and more.

Old Dominion University's Distance Learning on the campuses of Danville Community College and Patrick Henry Community College enables students to earn bachelor's and master's degrees from a fully-accredited university without leaving their area by completing the first two years through the local community college or other accredited institution and receiving the bachelor's or master's degrees from ODU.

Workforce Initiatives

Although infrastructure is important to economic development, workforce training has become a central objective in the economic development equation. This effort must be complemented by a reinforced workforce development initiative to deliver next generation skills to a transitioning workforce.

Enduring economic conditions brought about by a number of plant closures and the impacts of broader globalization, workforce development is a critical issue which the area continues to face. Invaluable collaboration between the workforce development boards, higher education institutions, chambers of commerce, economic development groups, and employers continues to help build a pipeline of skilled workers that attracts new businesses and industries while expanding existing companies in the region.

Workforce Organizations

Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)

Under the federal ***Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act*** (WIOA), funding is provided to prepare adults, dislocated workers and youth with barriers to employment or education for self-sufficiency by providing job search assistance, occupational skills training, on-the-job training, and other career counseling services. WIOA Boards are responsible for the oversight and monitoring of the allocated WIOA funding and operate One-Stop Workforce Centers. Services offered by Virginia's Workforce Centers include vocational rehabilitation services, job seeker and employer services, Trade Act assistance, veteran services, unemployment insurance, re-employment services, education and training, and GED testing and preparation. Partners include the Virginia Employment Commission, Virginia Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services, Workforce Career Center, Virginia Community College System, Adult Education, and Senior Community Service Employment Program. The region is served by two Workforce Development Boards: West Piedmont Workforce Development Board and Western Virginia Workforce Development Board. For more information, visit http://www.vcwwestpiedmont.com/ (Virginia Career Works - West Piedmont) or https://vcwblueridge.com/ (Virginia Career Works - Blue Ridge Region).

Identified targeted industries in the region include ***healthcare; manufacturing; construction; transportation/logistics/ distribution/warehousing; and information technology.***

The cities of Danville and Martinsville and counties of Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania established the ***West Piedmont Workforce Development Board*** (WPWDB). The West Piedmont Workforce Development Board oversees and monitors ***Virginia Workforce Centers*** in the cities of Danville and Martinsville, as well as satellite locations in Stuart and Chatham. WPWDB developed a strategic plan (http://www.vcwwestpiedmont.com/content/vcwwestpiedmont/uploads/PDF/vcwwpr/wpwdb_local_plan_5_30_17.pdf) to direct its efforts. Rebranded as "***West Piedmont Works***," the Board's job training programs will assist business customers on the demand side with meeting employment needs through the training and development of individuals on the supply side. Resources will be focused on in-demand industry occupations such as advanced manufacturing; health care; information technology; retail and customer service; transportation, logistics, distribution, and warehousing; and construction/building trades. The retail sector jobs will serve as a stepping-stone for upward movement into middle-skill in-demand occupations.

Franklin County joined the Fifth District Training and Educational Consortium and its ***Western Virginia Workforce Development Board***, serving several localities to the north of Franklin County. Western Virginia WDB operates Workforce Centers in Roanoke, Covington, and Rocky Mount. The Western Virginia WDB region's Local Strategic Plan identifies five target industries: health care, manufacturing, construction, transportation and warehousing, and financial services. The Plan also names three emerging target industries as food and beverage manufacturing, life sciences, and information technology. Health care employment is projected to grow by 11% in the next five years, according to the Plan. With an aging/retiring workforce in the manufacturing sector, annual job openings are projected in the double digits in the coming five years. The full plan is available at https://vcwblueridge.com/wp-content/uploads/VBRW-Local-Plan_Final.pdf.

Specific Workforce Programs for Dislocated Workers

- To assist with industry closings and large lay-offs, the ***Trade Adjustment Assistance*** (TAA) is a federal retraining benefit available to aid workers who lose their jobs or whose hours of work and wages are reduced as a result of increased imports and/or displaced by foreign competition. The goal is to help these laid-off workers retrain and return to suitable employment as quickly as possible. Workers may be eligible for training, job search and relocation allowances, income support and other re-employment services. Over the last decade, the region has lost 19,000 jobs to globalization.
- In addition, Virginia's ***Rapid Response*** program, administered by the Virginia Employment Commission, provides a variety of services, such as job search assistance, help with unemployment documents, financial management seminars, and help locating skills training, to workers involved in mass layoffs or plant closings. In some instances, layoffs may be averted through utilization of strategies that help to retain or save jobs. Rapid Response is operated on a local level at no cost to the employer or affected employees. There are four designated Rapid Response regions within the Commonwealth and the West Piedmont district lies within the New River Region. This program also serves in instances of hazards and emergency events such as hurricanes, tornadoes, or flood events that may destroy businesses or industries in an area.

Other Regional Workforce Organizations

In 2008, the ***Dan River Region Collaborative*** (DRRC) was founded to address workforce development in the Dan River Region of Virginia and North Carolina. Since that time, the Danville Regional Foundation, The Harvest Foundation, The Community Foundation of the Dan River Region, and the Virginia Tobacco Commission have joined forces to work with National Funds for Workforce Solutions, a national funding group working to emulate best practices across the nation, and are

leading the charge to craft long-term workforce partnerships to support workforce system improvements across a region covering Patrick, Henry, Pittsylvania, and Halifax counties and the cities of Danville and Martinsville.

- In 2012, the DRRC began an alliance with the Virginia Manufacturers Association's ***"Dream It. Do It. Virginia"*** campaign to target young people, promoting manufacturing as a career.
- The DRRC was selected in 2012 to represent Virginia as a regional pilot in the national ***ACT Certified Work Ready Communities Academy***. To become fully certified, three benchmarks of performance must be achieved: high school graduation rate, number of National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) credentials attained, and the number of employers recognizing NCRC. Each locality in the Dan River Region Collaborative footprint has achieved certification, but now must maintain its status. In 2017, the Certified Work Ready Community initiative expanded eastward into the GO Virginia 3 Region footprint.

Southern Virginia Works Collaborative – Governor Terry McAuliffe announced in October 2014 that more than 50,000 residents in southern Virginia would be positively impacted by a new workforce collaboration, called ***"Southern Virginia Works,"*** among three area community colleges; Danville Community College (DCC), Patrick Henry Community College (PHCC) and Southside Virginia Community College (SVCC). Within the next five years, the three colleges plan to triple the number of postsecondary education and workforce credentials. Most recently, the Collaborative colleges have partnered to offer a Commercial Driver's License (CDL) credentialing program.

The ***Franklin County Workforce Development Consortium***, a partnership offering employment, training, and educational services to employers and citizens of Franklin County manages the ***Franklin Center for Advanced Learning and Enterprise***. The 31,000-SF Center offers technologically advanced training, degreed and non-degreed programs, next generation computer and media classrooms, corporate and distance learning, life science laboratories, and business conference facilities. The Center partners with the Virginia Western Community College, Mary Baldwin College, and institutions offering a variety of programs. Additional information on the Center is available at www.thefranklincenter.org.

Workforce Strategies

Strategies being implemented to address workforce development needs include: reaching out to middle and high school-level children to spark interest in high-tech fields; partnering industry and education to get a better understanding of what is needed to place people into jobs; developing more internship programs and apprenticeships; and developing sector-based career pathway opportunities from secondary education through post-secondary education, including certifications that prepare students for middle-skills jobs.

Workforce development efforts continue as we prepare workers for high-wage, high-demand occupations that do not require a four-year degree. These middle-skill jobs will provide living wages and beyond, while attracting and retaining young workers and growing the regional economy.

Sector-driven Strategies

Advanced Manufacturing/Industrial Technology

A vital part of the state and region's economy, advanced, or technology-intensive, manufacturing requires very different skillsets from conventional manufacturing. The workforce must be knowledgeable in STEM (science, technology, engineering, math) skills. In 2012, the Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission contracted with the Boston Consulting Group (BCG) to develop a study of manufacturing workforce needs within the Tobacco Region. Analysis of the advanced manufacturing demand in the region forecasted 6,840 new jobs in this sector by 2017, and 15,000 jobs by 2032. Only 15 percent or 1,055 jobs would be high-skilled (requiring four-year degrees); 28 percent or 1,895 workers would be medium-skilled (two-year degrees and experience); and 57 percent or 3,890 jobs would be low-skilled (high school degree, technology training, certification, credentialing, and experience).

- The ***Regional Center for Advanced Technology and Training*** **(RCATT)**, operated by Danville Community College, provides specialized and/or customized technology training to meet the demands of existing manufacturing employers and develop a highly-skilled workforce. Studies feature polymers, electronics, and industrial maintenance technology laboratories in three high bays, classrooms, and a computer facility.

- Danville Community College recently completed nearly $7 million in renovations to the ***Charles Hawkins Engineering & Industrial Technology Building and a new welding facility.*** The state-of-the-art facilities house programs including precision machining technology, welding, automotive, and dimensional inspection/metrology or quality control.
- New College Institute, in collaboration with Patrick Henry Community College, was designated an ***Advanced Manufacturing Center of Excellence*** by the Virginia Tobacco Commission in 2014. The Center provides a dynamic network of advanced manufacturing resources that supports multiple industries by developing an exceptionally skilled

workforce. Welding, industrial maintenance, precision machining, and performance film training programs are offered. NCI and PHCC train students in advanced-level, nationally recognized credentials and/or certifications in critical skilled workforce gaps. NCI and James Madison University will launch a bachelor degree program in Fall 2019 equipping learners with the broad application of advanced manufacturing concepts.

- The ***Center for Advanced Film Manufacturing (CAFM)*** is a collaborative effort between Eastman Chemical, Patrick Henry Community College, the Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corporation, and New College Institute to provide a trained workforce for the advanced films industry. Roughly 30 percent of the world's coated and dyed performance films are made in Martinsville and Henry County. Students can earn nationally recognized industry certifications and a career studies certificate from Patrick Henry Community College. Graduates are guaranteed a job interview by Eastman. Hands-on laboratory classes and customized training are held at New College Institute utilizing the academic coater, a $1 million state-of-the-art machine. Although the center is geared toward advanced film manufacturing, 80 percent of skills acquired apply to all industrial advanced manufacturing.

- ***Gene Haas Center for Integrated Machining*** opened in May 2015, at the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR) in Danville as part of the ***Capstone Integrated Machining Technology Program***, which integrates skills such as tool management, advanced testing and measurement, electrical discharge machining, computer numerically controlled grinding, computer numerically controlled milling, computer numerically controlled turning, and business processes. A partnership with IALR and Danville Community College, the center is designed to offer third-year integrated machining technology students the opportunity to use state-of-the-art equipment, better preparing students through a work flow cell training lab in a unique, authentic manufacturing environment.
- PHCC's ***Manufacturing and Engineering Technology (MET) Complex***, includes a newly renovated high-tech workforce training center completed in 2017, which accommodates expansion of the college's programs in mechatronics, industrial electronics, and the Racing College of Virginia. PHCC announced plans in 2018 to renovate the second facility at the Complex which will double the capacity of its welding program and establish a foundational precision machining program. PHCC became an official National Coalition of Certification Centers (NC3) Leader School in the fall of 2018. NC3 develops and authenticates certification courses that meet current and future labor market demands, preparing students for some of the nation's fastest-growing industries. Currently, PHCC is the only community college in Virginia offering the Festo Industry 4.0 Certification Program. Also, in partnership with the Town of Stuart and the Patrick County Educational Foundation, PHCC is expanding the number and types of classes it offers in the County to increase workforce training and credentialing in high demand by local business and industry leaders, including welding and mechatronics.
- ***Commonwealth Centre for Advanced Training (CCAT)*** construction was announced by officials at the Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre in September 2017. The Harvest Foundation provided a $5 million grant toward the 25,000 square-foot advanced manufacturing training facility, with construction scheduled to be completed in spring 2019. When completed, CCAT will be available only to firms that locate at Commonwealth Crossing and will allow for office space where companies can recruit employees and provide training space with a high bay where companies can temporarily install its manufacturing equipment to train new employees.
- The ***GO-TEC*** **(Great Opportunities in Technology and Engineering Careers)** builds upon existing college-level technical programs and is designed to provide more technical hands-on experience for students, beginning in middle school. Areas of focus include precision machining, welding, robotics, mechatronics, information technology and cybersecurity, automation and advanced materials. Participating in the collaborative effort are Danville Community College, Patrick Henry Community College, Southside Virginia Community College, the Institute for Advanced Learning and Research, New College Institute, and the Southern Virginia Higher Education Center, along with each of the local school divisions in Martinsville, Danville, and the counties of Henry, Pittsylvania, Patrick, and Halifax.
- New College Institute (NCI) announced plans to launch the new shipbuilding program - the ***Shipbuilding Mobile Experience Lab*** - in the fall of 2019, in partnership with Old Dominion University and an agreement with Newport News Shipbuilding. According to officials, 14 manufacturing firms in the region will benefit from the pipeline of high-tech workers this program will create. In addition to digital shipbuilding credentials, benefits will include transferable skills and knowledge in a variety of career fields such as engineering, information systems, logistics and supply chain management, project management, design/drafting, production and warehousing.
- The Institute for Advanced Learning and Research announced plans in January 2019 to construct the $25.5 million ***Center for Manufacturing Advancement***. The new 51,250-SF facility will open by 2021 and will be located on the Institute's campus. The state will provide approximately $18.5 million for the structure, with the balance provided by DRF.

Information Technology

Another area of focus is information technology (IT) and other computer-related opportunities in the region. Based on information provided by the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), employment of computer and information technology occupations is projected to grow 12 percent from 2014 to 2024, faster than the average for all occupations. These occupations are expected to add new jobs, in part due to a greater emphasis on cloud computing, the collection and storage of big data, more everyday items becoming connected to the Internet in what is commonly referred to as the "Internet of things," Industry 4.0, continued demand for mobile computing, and an enhanced interest in cyber security to protect information. The median annual wage for computer and information technology occupations was $82,860 in the U.S., $98,540 in Virginia, and ranging from $68,010 to $71,790 in the region in May 2016; this was higher than the median annual wage for all occupations of $37,040. Virginia is one of the top five states in the U.S. for IT employment.

In regard to the information technology sector and the growing concern for cyber security, a number of higher educational institutions in the region provide programs in these related fields:

- Danville Community College (DCC) was designated by the National Security Agency and the U.S. Department of Homeland Security as a ***National Center of Academic Excellence in Cyber Defense*** in 2017. DCC is the first community colleges in Virginia to earn this designation. In 2017, Virginia became the first state to formally adopt the new ***National Initiative for Cyber Security Education*** (NICE) Cybersecurity Workforce Framework and incorporated it into existing cyber security education and hiring efforts.
- Radford University's ***IMPACT Program*** offered through New College Institute prepares today's professional to meet tomorrow's challenges. The Cybersecurity Certification through IMPACT employs research-based practices in cognitive science, analytics, simulation-based learning and gamification in every aspect of its training to ensure its highly effective and engaging.

Health Care

A report published by Georgetown University's Center for Education and Workforce found that by 2020, health care and social-assistance industry jobs in Virginia will increase by 36 percent over the 2010 figure, to 482, 370. The most significant factor driving this demand will be the aging of the baby-boomer population. Therefore, an emphasis is being placed on job training programs in this industry throughout the region.

- Danville Community College opened a 27,000-SF ***Health Sciences Building*** in 2009, enabling the college to expand existing programs in Practical Nursing, Medical Lab Technology, Medical Terminology/Coding, Pharmacy Technician, Phlebotomy, Advanced Phlebotomy, and Dental Hygiene. The facility also houses programs, such as Registered Nursing (RN), Radiology, Surgical Technology, and Basic Dental Assisting, and houses the LPN to RN Bridge program, Clinical Skills lab, on-site Medical Lab Technician program, home health aide, and expanded Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) training.
- The ***Danville Regional School of Health Professions*** Radiologic Technology program, a two-year Danville Regional Medical Center program, began in response to the shortage of radiation technologists in the Dan River and Piedmont regions. Students may earn an associate of applied science degree in radiologic technology from Danville Community College. In 2013, the school received the "Best of the Best" recognition from the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools and a grant of institutional accreditation was renewed through February 2021.
- ***Patrick Henry Community College*** offers allied health programs in Registered Nursing (RN), RN to BSN (Bachelor's degree), Practical Nursing (LPN), LPN to RN, Nurse Aide (CNA), Therapeutic Massage, and Pharmacy Technician. A Physical Therapy Assistant program is being added with funding assistance from a Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission grant. Also, PHCC is the first educational institution in Virginia to offer the Community Dental Health Coordinator program, in collaboration with the American Dental Association, Virginia Dental Association, and the Piedmont Virginia Dental Health Foundation. The following short-term workforce credential grant healthcare programs have been added: Certified Clinical Medical Assistant, Registered Medication Aide, Phlebotomy Technician, and Medical Billing and Coding Specialist.
- The ***New College Institute***, in collaboration with the ***University of Virginia's Karen S. Rheuban for Telehealth*** offers the program which prepares students for careers in telemedicine. The program involves utilization of medical technology to enable health care professionals to remotely monitor patients and provides rural areas access to specialty physician. The Board Certified Telemental Health Provider, in collaboration with the Center for Credentialing and Education, launched a series of online modules designed to provide practical training for mental health professionals using technological means.
- In Danville, a ***Medical Solutions Academy***, which offers training for nurse assistants, pharmacy technicians, medical aides and assistants, medical office assistants, and phlebotomists, opened in 2012.

Entrepreneurship

One area of focus is to promote entrepreneurship and enterprise opportunities in the region. Many services and resources are available to provide assistance and include planning workshops and programs, offering assistance for new start-up

companies, providing information on internships, and other services. Entrepreneurship is discussed in more detail beginning on page 2-33 of this section.

It must be recognized that soft-skills are required in each of these target industries and, in many occupations, on-the-job training and apprenticeships are necessary rather than formal classroom-based education. Also, it should be noted that other barriers to employment and education are childcare, transportation, and health care. These barriers are not regionally unique, but are national issues which require data and further understanding to address. Affordable childcare is a challenge to many families, especially those earning less than "livable" wages. Transportation may be an obstacle, particularly in rural areas with little or no transit service, and health care comes into question for those with disabilities, drug addictions, or those caring for family members.

> Aside from workforce training and education to address skills gaps, the top three barriers to employment are ***childcare, transportation, and health care.***

Special Populations and Programs

- A grant from the Virginia Department of Social Services to Danville and Patrick Henry Community Colleges funds a program called ***TARE*** (training, assessment, retention, and employment) that assists low-income applicants with job assessments, training and educational opportunities to help them obtain a career or steady employment. At Patrick Henry Community College, the TARE program has been expanded into ***HOPE*** (High-demand Occupational Programs for Employment), an award-winning career pathways program which combines work readiness/career intelligence skills training with occupation-specific industry certification training and internship. Typically short-term in length, tracks of HOPE training are offered for the customer service, food service, advanced manufacturing and logistics industries.
- On-going partnerships and support from various state and local agencies, community organizations, and businesses provide a number of services for the returning citizen population, i.e. ex-offenders, to re-enter the workforce, gain skills, and obtain steady employment opportunities. Strategies utilized through the ***Virginia Adult Re-entry Initiative*** employs the TPC (Transition from Prison to Community) Model to assist in the transition process for productive, law-abiding citizens who re-enter the labor market and contribute to the community. In 2016, Danville Community College (DCC) was one of only two colleges in Virginia selected by the U.S. Department of Education for a national pilot program known as ***Second Chance Pell***. DCC has partnered with Green Rock correctional facility in Chatham to offer industry certifications and associate degrees for up to 138 potential students at the facility.
- The ***Pathways to the American Dream*** is a four-year program intended to provide workers with skills needed for jobs in emerging industries critical to growing the region's economy. Funded by the America's Promise Grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, the $6 million will be utilized to increase the number of people qualified to work in high-demand career fields. Workforce Development Boards receive funding to train job seekers for successful career pathways, and the program will create a regional workforce strategy to develop partnerships among healthcare, manufacturing, and information technology sectors and help state lawmakers develop and adopt policies to sustain and innovate sector partnership training programs.
- The ***New Economy Workforce Industry Credentials Grant Program*** assists students with 124 Virginia Community College training programs. The new initiative covers training for noncredit workforce credentials for high-demand, skilled workers such as plumbers, welders, electricians, and other "middle-skill" occupations which do not require two- or four-year degrees. Based on the "pay for performance" formula, students pay one-third of the training program cost; the grant covers one-third if the student successfully completes the program and one-third once the student obtains the required industry certification. Programs offered differ by regions across the state. The maximum amount available for each grant is $3,000. According to a recent report by Burning Glass, more than 175,000 middle-skill jobs were available in Virginia last year, typically paying more than $28 per hour or $58,500 annually.
- ***Early Childhood Development Institute*** was established in partnership with four Virginia Community Colleges – Danville, Patrick Henry, Virginia Western, and New River – to elevate early childhood education. A $1 million fund was gifted by Ben and Betty Davenport of Chatham to create the Institute. The Institute will help create a talented workforce in Southern and Southwestern Virginia to provide unparalleled training and education for individuals working in childcare centers and increase access to quality childcare opportunities for working parents.
- The ***SCALE UP*** (Success Credentialing Assistance Leading to Employment and Upending Poverty) Program, administered by Danville Community College (DCC) in partnership with Danville's Division of Social Services and the Danville Virginia Employment Commission office, boosts community training and employment efforts through a $339,600 state grant awarded to DCC to elevate low-income persons out of poverty, targeting at-risk youth and adults. For at-risk youth, the goal is to improve college readiness and entry-level skills in fields such as information technology, health care, and precision machining. For adults, the program focuses on opportunities in phlebotomy, industrial maintenance, welding, precision machining, automotive, culinary arts, dental assistance, pharmacy technician, network technology and programming, as well as other fields, with 4- and 10-month training options.
- Launched in 2017, the ***Growth4VA Campaign*** centers on Virginia's colleges and universities in collaboration with businesses to establish practical policies and creative ideas focused on strategies to grow Virginia's economy, expand access to education and job opportunities, and regain Virginia's No. 1 ranking for business

- The ***SwiftStart*** program is being offered by the Virginia's Blue Ridge Works WDB for career pathways in health care, manufacturing, and IT occupations. Based on the Department of Labor model which depicts the knowledge, skills, and abilities required in an industry or industry sector, the model utilizes research-based best practices, open source and cost-effective curricula, and blended learning to deliver high-quality, comprehensive training to address participant skill needs aligned with industry needs and wrap-around services to address barriers to success.
- Patrick Henry Community College, in partnership with the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board, is one of five Virginia community colleges selected to launch the ***Young Adult Initiative***, a two-year initiative to attract young adults to high-demand, high-paying 21st century jobs. Beginning in spring 2019, adult education and Fast Forward training programs are available to students 18-24 years old for career exploration and planning, accelerated occupational skills training, supportive services, digital and soft skills training, and job placement assistance. The accelerated training offers opportunities to earn industry-recognized credentials in advanced manufacturing and engineering technology, leading to career pathways.

Another valuable resource to the communities within the Planning District is the occupational-technical training programs offered through the community college system at Danville Community College and Patrick Henry Community College. For more information on the two community colleges, visit their websites at www.danville.edu/ Danville Community College) and www.ph.vccs.edu (Patrick Henry Community College).

Both of the region's community colleges work closely with local businesses and industries to identify educational needs and provide programs to help train the workforce. In-plant courses and programs are offered through relatively new programs at each college. Through these programs, the local community colleges in the Planning District continue to seek more innovative methods of providing services and greater opportunities for training, retraining, and information sharing. More and more as the Community Colleges work with other higher education institutions, employers, and economic developers in the region, they demonstrate collaboration, commitment, and fortitude between education/workforce training, advanced manufacturing, and industries in the region. Invaluable collaboration between the workforce development boards, higher education institutions, chambers of commerce, economic development groups, and employers continue to help build a pipeline of skilled workers that attracts new businesses and industries while expanding existing companies in the region.

Medical Services

Health services and facilities are important aspects of a community which industrial and business prospects consider in their evaluations. Recent growth in this area will help to enhance the quality of life in the Planning District.

Currently, three private hospitals serve the Planning District, each of which has undergone several renovation and expansion programs. These are: Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital, Rocky Mount; SOVAH (formerly Memorial Hospital of Martinsville and Henry County and Danville Regional Medical Center) which serves both Martinsville/Henry County and Danville/Pittsylvania County. Pioneer Community Hospital in Stuart, which served Patrick County and the Town, closed in September 2017. Consequently, the hospital was purchased by Virginia Community Capital (the lender) for $5.7 million. Options to reopen the medical facility continue to be explored by the County.

The region is a medically underserved area and the shortage is particularly severe in primary care areas. Recognizing the need for additional physicians to provide this care, several medical centers for doctors' offices have been constructed in the Planning District. Community medical centers, in general, are said to be a draw for economic development projects.

As many hospitals in rural areas across Virginia continue to shutter, telemedicine provides opportunities to fill the gap in medical services and is essential to residents who do not have access to medical care. Telehealth services at community health centers provide access to specialty care. These services are greatly needed in rural areas. Virginia is a national leader in the field of telehealth services which has proven to improve care and patient satisfaction while reducing hospitalizations.

In 2012, Carilion Clinic established a medevac helicopter base at its Westlake facility to reduce medical response times to communities located south of Roanoke. In 2013, the "Lifeguard 10" medical helicopter service began, enhancing response times to Franklin, Bedford, Pittsylvania, and Henry counties, and the cities of Danville and Martinsville. Additionally, Wake Forest Baptist Health established a helicopter base at Blue Ridge Airport in western Henry County; the helicopter reduces medical response times to Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania counties, the cities of Martinsville and Danville, and other locations in Virginia and North Carolina. The air medical helicopter increases support for both the business and health climate in the area.

The new medical facilities established in the region will enable residents to become healthier and help address an expected physician shortage in the future. Recent health rankings by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute found the region ranked relatively low in terms of citizens' health. Possible reasons for the low numbers include low income levels, poverty, low labor force participation, and the absence of motivation to exercise. With regard to mental health, additional outpatient counseling and related services are greatly needed in the region.

The West Piedmont Region, which was significantly impacted by the loss of jobs due to plant closures and downsizings particularly in the textile, apparel, and furniture sectors, continues efforts to transform the region's economy while working to

further educate the workforce and retain/expand existing businesses and attract new ones. The region has continuously dealt with the effects of globalization and implements strategies to become more diversified and competitive in the global market, with new opportunities for entrepreneurs, workforce training, and collaborations between institutions of higher education, government, and industry. The region's localities continue to invest in infrastructure and programs aimed at strengthening the economy and improving the quality of life for its citizens. The West Piedmont Planning District localities lost approximately 13,000 manufacturing jobs from 1991 through 2000. Since that time, the region lost more than 19,000 jobs in manufacturing. While unemployment has seen a recent decline, underemployment remains a growing concern. The region continues to struggle with personal income due to low or stationary wages. Also, the large gap between earnings in the region and statewide persists.

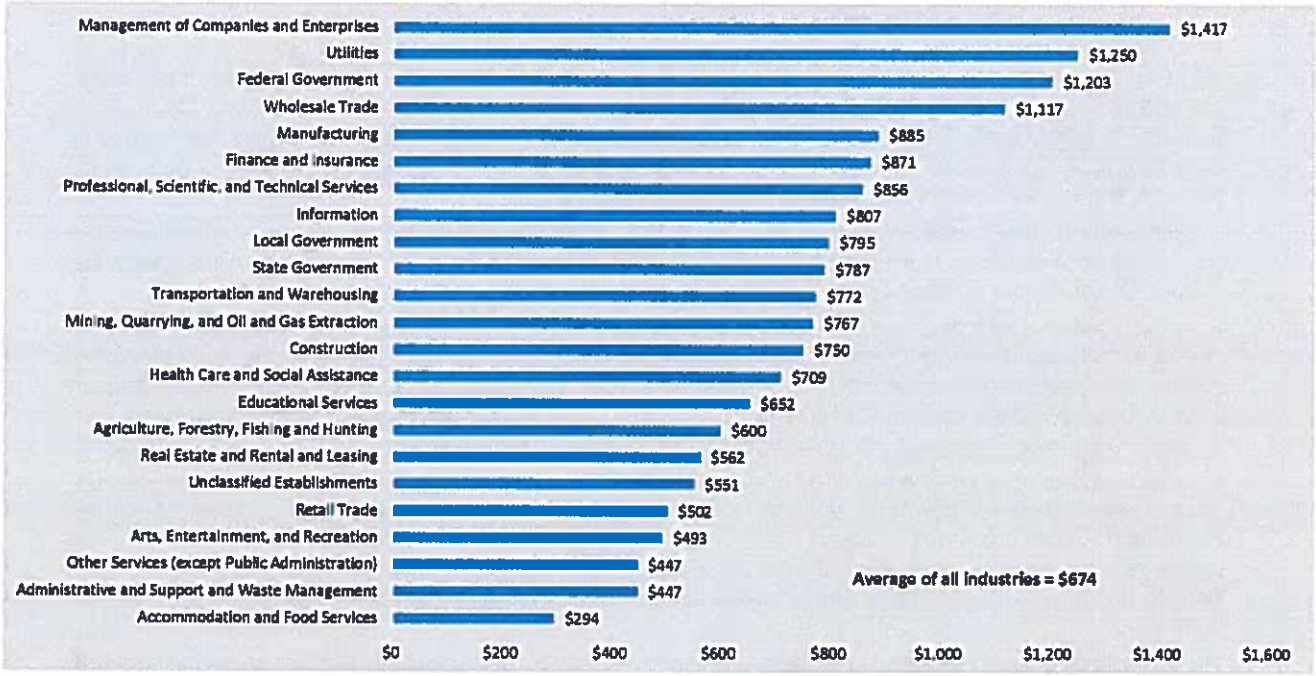
The District's Economy

Income

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, "*a household includes all persons who occupy a housing unit.*" Income figures are indicative of the decreased wages experienced across the region. Per capita income is the total personal income divided by that area's population. This measure is often preferred when comparing localities since it adjusts for population size. Personal income is the income received from all sources (e.g., wages and salary, rental income, dividends and interest, and transfer payments) minus personal contributions for social insurance (e.g., employee social security taxes, government retirement insurance, and other social insurance programs). Detailed income figures are available in Appendix 1: Community Profiles.

Wages remain significantly lower in the region when compared to state and national levels. The average weekly wage for Virginia was $1,082 and the national average was $1,045, both well above the district average of $674. Wages, as a whole, have declined considerably over the last few years. While the cost of living continues to rise, wages have been stagnant or decreasing for many.

West Piedmont Planning District
Average Weekly Wage by Industry, 3rd Quarter 2018



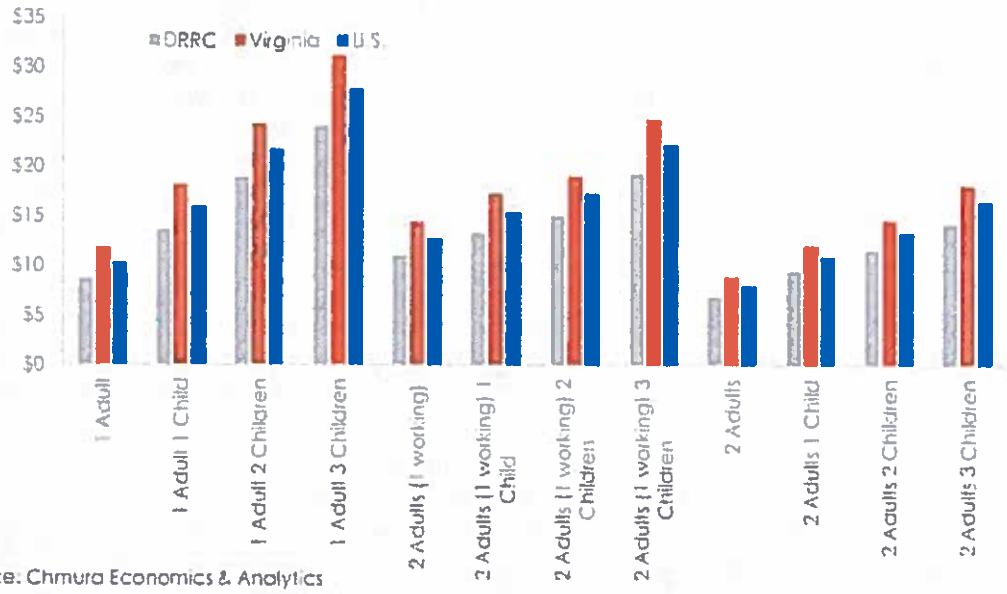
Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 3rd Quarter (July, August, September) 2018.

In 2017, the Dan River Region Collaborative retained Chmura Economics & Analytics to develop a study regarding "living wages" in the region. A living wage is defined as the employment income needed to meet basic household expenses. In this study that included 2016 costs for food, child care, health care, housing, transportation, taxes, and 10% allowed for other necessities. It should be noted this did not allow for cell phone or Internet services,

entertainment, or any other luxury expenditures. Basic annual living expenses were analyzed by 12 family types, from variations of 1 adult to 2 adults (one or both working) with 3 children.

The study also examined the availability of jobs that pay a living wage in the Dan River Region, consisting of Halifax, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania counties and the cities of Danville and Martinsville. Based on survey information and other data, Chmura estimated the average living wage for the region is $10.70 per hour, $3.45 higher than minimum wage. As of January 2017 and using the $10.70 hourly rate, Chmura found that more than half of the job openings in the region paid more than the regional living wage. When examining households by family type, those families with children had a more difficult challenge meeting their basic needs. As the number of children increases, so do the wages necessary to support these family members. The tables that follow depict Chmura's findings from the report. The complete report is available at http://www.wppdc.org/content/wppdc/uploads/PDF/docs_publications/economic_dev/drrc_livingwage_20170328_final.pdf.

Figure 4.3: Comparision with Virginia and National Living Wages



Source: Chmura Economics & Analytics

Table 4.9: Estimated Hourly Living Wages -2016

Family Type	Danville	Halifax	Henry	Martinsville	Patrick	Pittsylvania	Average
1 Adult	$8.05	$8.67	$8.70	$8.03	$9.16	$9.12	$8.69
1 Adult 1 Child	$12.95	$13.74	$13.45	$12.66	$14.30	$14.23	$13.64
1 Adult 2 Children	$18.17	$19.16	$18.54	$17.64	$19.81	$19.58	$18.90
1 Adult 3 Children	$23.21	$23.90	$23.66	$22.50	$25.44	$25.08	$24.08
2 Adults (1 working)	$11.84	$12.77	$12.73	$11.89	$13.49	$13.08	$12.68
2 Adults (1 working) 1 Child	$14.17	$14.96	$14.82	$13.90	$15.64	$15.58	$14.94
2 Adults (1 working) 2 Children	$15.78	$16.60	$16.48	$15.48	$17.34	$17.29	$16.60
2 Adults (1 working) 3 Children	$19.75	$20.25	$20.64	$19.35	$21.88	$21.76	$20.75
2 Adults	$6.41	$6.95	$6.93	$6.41	$7.40	$7.14	$6.90
2 Adults 1 Child	$9.01	$9.56	$9.34	$8.76	$9.99	$9.86	$9.48
2 Adults 2 Children	$11.12	$11.76	$11.41	$10.78	$12.24	$12.04	$11.62
2 Adults 3 Children	$13.66	$14.16	$13.99	$13.22	$15.09	$14.81	$14.23

Source: Chmura Economics and Analytics

CHMURA Economics & Analytics

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Poverty

Another income-related statistic that is an indicator of an area's overall prosperity is the number of persons below the poverty level. The poverty level is determined by a complex formula which has its basis in the amount of money needed to sustain a nutritiously adequate diet in addition to costs for housing, utilities, clothing, other basic needs and family size. In 2018, the poverty threshold for a family of four was $25,100. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's 2013-2017 American Community Survey, the poverty rate for individuals in the region was 17.8%, compared to 11.2% for Virginia and 14.6% for the U.S. Investment in education, job training, and economic growth continue to be potential solutions to the current poverty conditions.

Labor Force

While the unemployment rate is commonly used to gauge the economy and the labor force, the labor force participation rate provides a more comprehensive evaluation. This measure accounts for the number of people available for work as a percentage of the total population, including those actively seeking employment. After reaching its historical peak at 67.1 percent in 2000, the U.S. labor force participation rate for all workers (age 16 and over) is projected to decline to 61.0 percent in 2026, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics. The Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta reported the decline is largely the result of the aging population, with the continued shift of workers into age groups that tend to have lower participation rates and/or retire. As baby boomers reach retirement age, they leave the labor force and don't need to work. Others stay home to care for ailing parents or spouses or claim disability themselves. Since this is such a large percentage of the population, this has a major impact on the labor force participation rate. It is the primary reason why the labor force participation rate will never regain its past levels, no matter how strong the job market may be. Another factor is the opioid epidemic which continues to critically impact the prime working age group, those 25-54 years old.

The overall labor force participation rate has been declining since 2000, dropping sharply following the 2007–09 recession and reaching 62.8 percent in 2017. This will have long lasting impacts on the labor force and the overall labor force participation rate. This holds true in the West Piedmont Region as well. As depicted in the following table, "*Labor Force Participation Rates, West Piedmont Planning District*," the labor force of the Planning District continues to decline, for the most part.

Labor Force Participation
West Piedmont Planning District

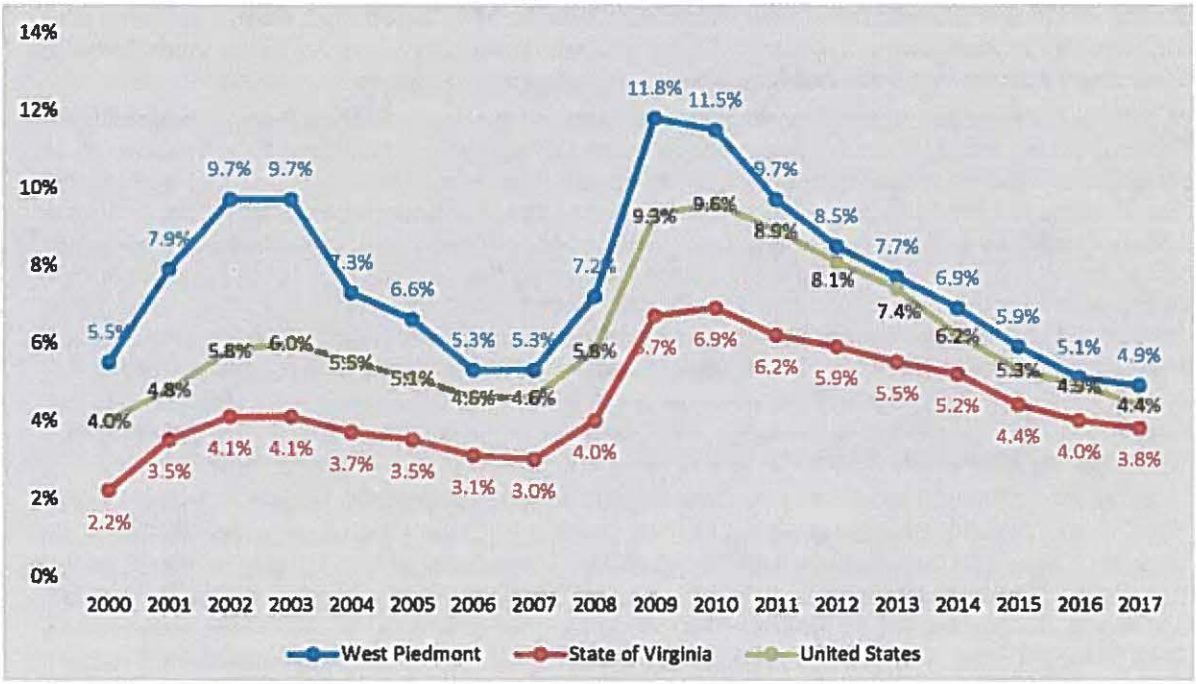
Locality	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Franklin County	62.9%	61.6%	60.9%	60.6%	58.5%	58.5%	57.9%
Henry County	51.9%	52.4%	54.2%	53.7%	52.7%	52.2%	53.3%
Patrick County	52.9%	52.5%	51.7%	51.2%	50.1%	53.3%	49.5%
Pittsylvania County	61.8%	60.4%	60.0%	60.1%	59.5%	59.0%	58.8%
Danville City	60.1%	59.4%	59.7%	60.0%	58.7%	58.7%	59.0%
Martinsville City	54.3%	52.3%	53.5%	52.6%	50.8%	49.4%	50.1%
Virginia	65.1%	64.3%	63.6%	63.1%	62.0%	61.7%	62.2%
U.S.	64.1%	63.7%	63.2%	62.9%	62.7%	62.8%	62.8%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, U.S. Department of Labor.

The District's workforce figures fluctuated over the past two decades. With the high concentration in textile, furniture and wood-related products, and a lack of diversification in the past, the area's economy has been very volatile. When a decline in manufacturing occurred, all of the District's economy suffered due to the dependence on this sector by related industries and the supporting service sector. From 1999 through the 2000's, the region lost a significant number of jobs due to the impacts of the economic downturn and the effects of globalization.

Perhaps the most widely known and used labor force statistic is the unemployment rate. The unemployment rate measures to what extent available labor resources are being underutilized and represents the ratio of the number who are unemployed and actively seeking work to the total number of persons in the civilian labor force. The following graph, "*2000-2017 Unemployment Rates*," illustrates that the Planning District's unemployment rate has been consistently higher than the state and national rates, peaking at 11.8% in 2009. As the U.S. economy improves overall, unemployment continues to decline, being the lowest in 50 years, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

2000-2017 Unemployment Rates
West Piedmont Planning District, Virginia, and United States



Source: Virginia Employment Commission; U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

The underemployed is another vital representation of employment, although these individuals are not officially counted as unemployed by the Bureau of Labor Statistics. According to the Virginia Economic Development Partnership, there are five different types of underemployment: 1) Discouraged workers who are not actively seeking employment, 2) Marginally attached workers not actively looking for work because they lack transportation or affordable child care, 3) Part-time workers for economic reasons (i.e., favorable business conditions, inability to find full-time employment, seasonal demands), 4) Multiple job holders who work more than one job (multiple part-time employment), and 5) Underutilized workers who are in jobs that do not sufficiently utilize their skills or are underpaid according to their output. Within the West Piedmont Region, there were a total 8,569 underemployed persons for the 3rd Quarter of 2018.

Economic Development Initiatives

The ***Virginia Economic Development Partnership (VEDP)*** was created in 1995 to foster growth of the Commonwealth's economy by serving those seeking a prime business location and increased trade opportunities. As a state authority, VEDP leads Virginia's economic development efforts, advancing the state in the global marketplace with alignment of resources, experienced staff, and marketing efforts. VEDP assists local and regional economic development organizations and provides a number of services. One service includes the Virginia Leaders in Export Trade (VALET) program, a two-year program to assist Virginia businesses with export markets. The Virginia Economic Development Partnership has offices around the world to serve the needs of businesses, cultivating new business investment, fostering international trade growth, and encouraging the expansion of existing Virginia businesses. For more information, go to www.vedp.org/.

Targeted industry sectors in the region include food and beverage processing, data centers, plastics/polymer product manufacturing, computer parts, wood and paper product manufacturing, fabricated metal product manufacturing, and other advanced manufacturing.

In 2011, the ***Southern Virginia Regional Alliance*** (SVRA) was established as a regional economic development organization whose primary purpose is to accelerate job growth and increase the tax base for the counties of Halifax, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania and the cities of Danville and Martinsville. However, in 2016, both Martinsville and Henry County decided to suspend their membership to the agency. SVRA is responsible for marketing the region globally, with a focus on recruitment of new industries to the region. SVRA does not replace the existing economic development agencies across the region, but works with them to create a regional marketing plan and promote the

region as a unified presence to industrial prospects. The Alliance markets a number of industrial buildings, office buildings or spaces, and other sites. Economic development agencies in the West Piedmont Planning District include the Danville Office of Economic Development, Pittsylvania County Economic Development, Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corporation, Patrick County Economic Development, and the Rocky Mount Economic Development Authority. More information is available at: www.gosouthernvirginia.com.

In 2015, ***GO (Growth and Opportunity) Virginia*** was initiated by the Virginia Business Higher Education Council (VBHEC) and the Council on Virginia's Future to foster private-sector growth and job creation through state incentives for regional collaboration by business, education, and government. Recognizing the harsh effect of deep federal budget cuts on a Virginia economy that is overly dependent on public-sector jobs, business leaders formed the GO Virginia campaign to work for regional cooperation on *private-sector growth, job creation, and career readiness.* The coalition favors state incentives to encourage effective collaboration among business, education, and government in each region, providing a framework for implementation of private sector-focused strategies. There are five policy priorities within the GO Virginia platform: Innovation - state grants to leverage local, private, and other investment in key regional initiatives and industry sectors; Investment - incentives for localities to cooperate rather than complete with one another on economic development; Improvement - cost-saving collaboration by local governments, school divisions, and colleges; Invention - investment in research to bring about new business endeavors; and Infrastructure - capital projects with regional economic impact. This initiative will serve to grow the statewide economy, region by region.

There are nine GO Virginia regions across the Commonwealth. As part of the designated Region 3 – Southern Virginia GO Virginia or ***SoVaGO***, the region comprises the West Piedmont PDC, with the exception of Franklin County, the Southside PDC, and the Commonwealth Regional Council (from Patrick County to Amelia County). As the largest land area, Region 3 has the smallest population with just under 380,000 people. Franklin County is integrated to the north with ***Region 2***, encompassing the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission, New River Valley Regional Commission, and Region 2000 Local Government Council in Lynchburg. Recently, Growth & Diversification Plans were developed by the Regional Councils and submitted to the statewide GO Virginia Council for approval. The Region 2 Plan may be found at: https://econdev.vt.edu/content/dam/econdev_vt_edu/govirginia_documentation/GOVA_region2_gandd.pdf. The Region 3 plan may be accessed at: http://www.southsidepdc.org/index.php/downloads/go-virginia/47-go-virginia-region-3-growth-diversification-plan-1/file.

Within the Region 2 Growth and Diversification Plan, four priority industry clusters are identified: 1) manufacturing, 2) life sciences and health care, 3) food and beverage processing, and 4) emerging technology and IT. The Plan notes that more than 100,000 jobs, or almost one third of the total jobs in the region, are provided by these industries which are expected to grow at a higher rate than the rest of the economy. Further, the report indicates that across the four clusters the median hourly wage is $22 and generate nearly $10 billion in economic activity. In addition, the Plan identifies these core strategies in four focus areas:

1) Talent or workforce development, attraction, and retention, which includes strengthening the pipeline from all levels of education to careers in the region, increasing the completion of relevant degrees, increasing the knowledge and access to complementary workforce and training services, and increasing employer engagement across the system.
2) Collaborative development of sites and buildings, which includes improving information about the supply of real estate and market demand, incentivizing collaboration among localities at all stages of development, and building partnerships to leverage the development potential of special assets like research facilities.
3) Entrepreneurship and business development, which includes growing the presence of and access to capital investors, expanding and better coordinating programs for mentorship and business training, and improving awareness of existing capital, mentorship and training resources.
4) Technology development, which includes increasing investments for innovative technologies, expanding rates of research commercialized in the private sector, supporting talent attraction efforts focused on individuals with technological skills, and growing the number of individuals entering training and education programs that develop technological skills.

According to the Region 3 Growth and Diversification Plan, the Region's greatest opportunity is to align workforce talent development with economic development in areas where there is already substantial activity and competitive advantage, transforming our existing success stories into region-wide advancement. The Region 3 Council advised the greatest gap is an aging and shrinking population. We must retain, train, and grow a sustainably sized, well qualified workforce that meets the needs of existing and future businesses, enabling the region to thrive. The Plan delves into an analysis of three critical opportunities:

1) Workforce talent development and recruitment, including opportunities for sector partnerships, career pathways, work-based learning, talent recruitment, and broadband infrastructure development;
2) Sectoral development in four target sectors including business services and IT data centers, advanced manufacturing and materials, high-value natural resource products, and health care; and

3) Cyber infrastructure, including novel approaches to regional collaboration in infrastructure development and opportunities to provide incentives for "middle mile" and "last mile" network completion.

The Plan also includes opportunities for rejuvenated regional cohesion in:

- Entrepreneurial and small business development initiatives,
- Quality of life and regional branding enhancement,
- Pooling of resources for region-wide infrastructure improvement, and
- More systematic focus on target employment sectors and career pathways.

Grant awards in 2018 included $300,000 for the ***Talent Collaborative*** project in Region 2 to address skills and interest gaps in middle- and high-skilled occupations in the targeted sectors of manufacturing, healthcare, and information technology through an awareness campaign and the establishment of a training program. Also awarded in Region 2 is the ***Stopping the Brain Drain: Talent Attraction and Retention Action Plan Development and Implementation***, focused on developing a strong, proactive talent program and strategy to stop the trend of top-tier talent leaving the area. The project will be conducted in tandem with talent attraction and recruitment efforts of the Roanoke Regional Partnership, Onward NRV, and the Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance to retain students educated in the region to increase the number of high-skill job opportunities.

In Region 3, the ***GO-TEC*** (Great Opportunities in Technology and Engineering Careers) initiative was awarded $648,000 to expand existing curriculum offered by six higher education partners in the Region to build a regional training system for careers in IT and focused areas of advanced manufacturing. GO-TEC will help develop a pipeline beginning in middle school to increase the number of students entering the targeted five training areas of need (Precision Machining; Welding; IT/Cyber Security; Robotics, Automation & Mechatronics; and Advanced Materials).

The following table outlines job creation announcements in the West Piedmont Planning District during 2018. The area was impacted by significant job losses during this period as reflected in the Job Losses table and information that follow.

West Piedmont Planning District/Economic Development District
New Jobs – 2018

Company Name	Location	Business Description	Month Announced	New/ Expansion	New Jobs	Investment ($)[1]
McAirlaid's Vliesstoffe GmbH & Co KG*	Franklin County	U.S HQ; Air-laid nonwoven fabrics manufacturing	Dec 2018	Expansion	25	$7.8
Empire Bakery Commissary, LLC	Franklin County	Manufactures ready-made cookies and desserts for grocery retailers	Oct 2018	Expansion	75	$10.4
Stik-Pak Solutions	Franklin County	Contract packaging manufacturer	May 2018	Expansion	50	$14.3
Valley Star Credit Union	Franklin County	Financial/banking services	Feb 2018	Expansion	10	$5.25
Chaos Mountain Brewing	Franklin County	Craft brewery	Jan 2018	Expansion	5	$0.25
Monogram Snacks, LLC	Henry County	Meat snacks	Sept 2018	Expansion	300	$30.0
Press Glass*	Henry County	Industrial flat glass manufacturing	July 2018	New	212	$43.55
GS Industries of Bassett	Henry County	Plastic injection molded parts	June 2018	Expansion	3	$0.4517
Harlow Fastech*	Pittsylvania County	Provider of precision engineered, fabricated, machined, and 3D printed additive components	Nov 2018	New	49	$8.0
Micro Blenders, Inc.	Pittsylvania County	Provides specialized pre-mix services for animal nutrition	Sept 2018	New	15	$3.5
Panaceutics	Pittsylvania County	Provides personalized medicine and nutrition solutions	March 2018	Expansion	70	$5.817
Eastern Panel Mfg	Pittsylvania County	Specializes in office, residential, and contract furniture manufacturing	Feb 2018	Expansion	15	$1.0
Arnthor International	Pittsylvania County	Customized metal tanker truck fabrication and manufacturer	Jan 2018	Expansion	70	$2.5
PRA Group, Inc.	Danville	Call center for debt recovery	Dec 2018	Expansion	500	$15.1
Essel Propack*	Danville	Manufactures seamless tubes	Dec 2018	Expansion	45	$31.1974
BGF Industries, Inc.*	Danville	Manufacturer of high-performance fabrics & materials for aerospace, marine, filtration, insulation, automotive, electrical, protection & construction ind.	Oct 2018	New	65	$7.0

*Company has headquarters in another country. [1] Investments shown in millions of dollars.
Sources: Virginia Economic Development Partnership; WPPD Local Economic Development Offices.

West Piedmont Planning District/Economic Development District
Job Losses – 2018

Company Name	Location	Business Description	Month Announced	Layoff/ Closure	Jobs
Ten Oaks	Patrick County	Wood flooring manufacturer	Dec 2018	Layoff	34
IKEA Industry*	Danville	Manufactures wooden furniture	Dec 2018	Layoff	90
Telvista*	Danville	Call center	Jan 2018	Closing	300

*Company has headquarters in another country.

Sources: Virginia Economic Development Partnership, WPPD Local Economic Development Offices, news articles.

In January 2018, Ten Oaks acquired the former Shaw Flooring plant in Stuart. However, due to slowed market conditions, the Ten Oaks Dobyns facility announced layoffs of an estimated 34 employees in December. According to the company, Ten Oaks will increase production at this plant as the market improves. As referenced above, the affected Patrick County and Danville workers are eligible for services provided by the Workforce Development Board and partners. In Danville and part of a nationwide trend, a number of big-box retail establishments shuttered their doors in 2018. This included K-Mart in January, Toys R Us in July, Sears in August, and Petco announcing a January 2019 closure in December. Dick's Sporting Goods also closed in late December/early January.

There are several federal and state workforce programs available to assist dislocated workers. The Trade Adjustment Assistance Program is one of many federal programs designed to support dislocated workers as they search for new jobs. The Rapid Response team assists employees on site to discuss benefits and services available to them. Rapid Response Funds cover services for dislocated workers and are available to local workforce development areas impacted by plant closing and major dislocations. A variety of services are available through workforce centers that include applying for unemployment benefits, resume writing assistance, workshops on various topics, skill assessments, career planning software, labor market and wage information, access to training resources, assistance in finding new employment, assistance to fill any gaps in skills or training, and other services.

According to a number of studies, targeted industry clusters in the region include food and beverage processing, data centers, plastics/polymer product manufacturing, computer parts, wood and paper product manufacturing, fabricated metal product manufacturing, and other advanced manufacturing, as identified by the Southern Virginia Regional Alliance, the Launch Place, and others. Efforts continue to determine the necessary skills, certifications, credentials, and educational requirements to fit these identified industries, while building a greater, high-skilled workforce.

Industry Cluster Analysis

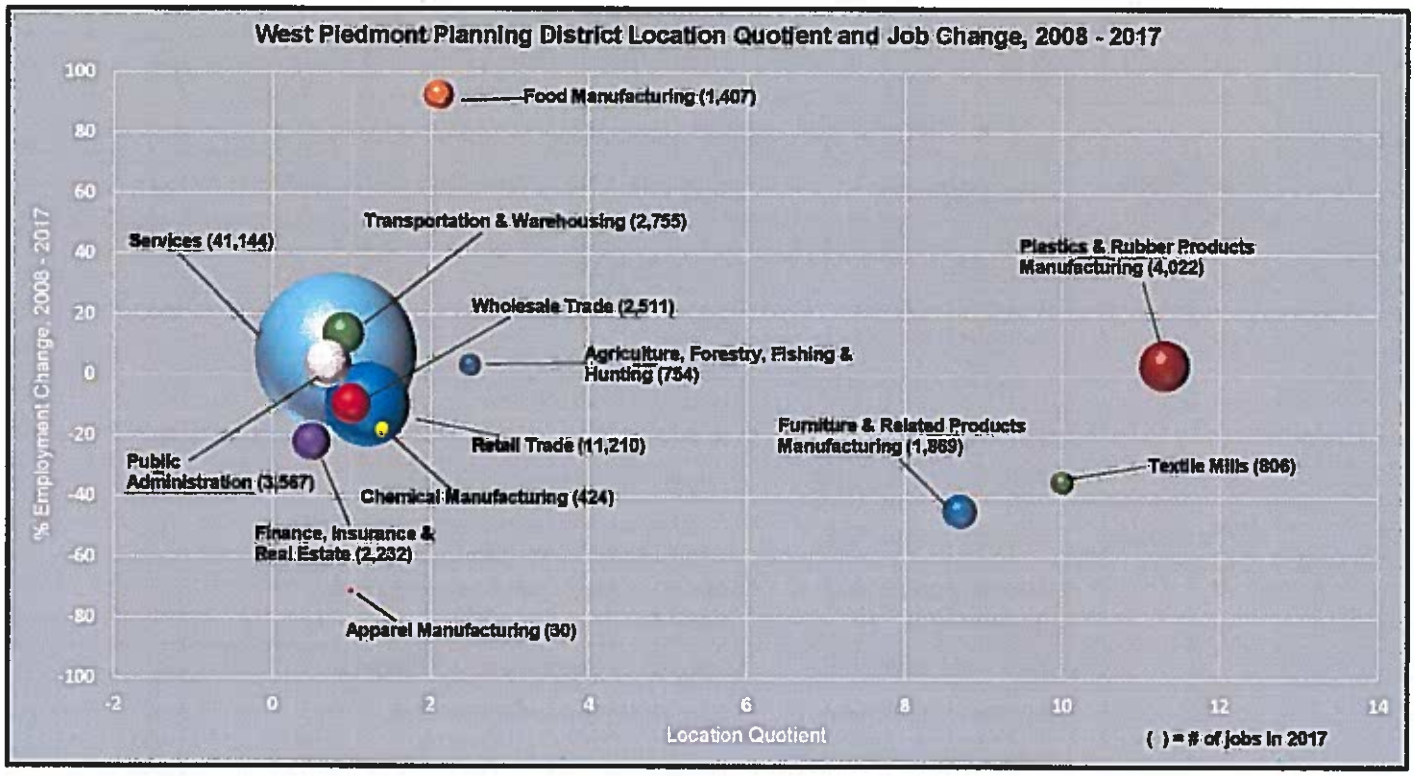
The Location Quotient (LQ) graph serves as a means to compare the share of a region or locality's concentration of particular industry sectors with that of a larger entity, such as a state. The first step in the process involves the selection of a larger geographic entity with which to compare employment in the West Piedmont Planning District, and for this the Commonwealth of Virginia was selected. The second step involves compiling a number of industries known to have a significant presence in the District to compare with the same industries at the state level.

Utilizing Virginia Employment Commission (VEC) data, the total number of jobs in each of the selected industries was compiled for both 2008 and 2017 for the West Piedmont Planning District. The difference in the number of jobs in each of these industries was obtained and calculated in terms of percentage gain or loss over the time period. In the LQ graph, the percentage change of jobs in each of the analyzed sectors is illustrated by referencing the "bubbles" on the graph as they relate to the Y, or vertical, axis labeled "% Employment Change, 2008 - 2017." For instance, the Food Manufacturing industry experienced a 92.5 percent increase in employment over the ten year period, as illustrated in the graph. The total number of jobs was also compiled in 2017 for the same industries at the state level for the purposes of comparison.

The actual LQ was derived by dividing the employment share of an industry in the region by that of the state in 2017. The example below demonstrates how the Plastics and Rubber Products Manufacturing industry in the region compares to that industry at the state level.

Regional Jobs in Industry / Total Regional Jobs / State Jobs in Industry / Total Jobs in State
4,022 / 83,764 / 16,316 / 3,836,960
0.04802 / 0.00425 = 11.3

The LQ of 11.3 indicates that employment concentration within this industry within the West Piedmont Planning District is 11.3 times the share of employment in that industry for the Commonwealth of Virginia. The LQ is referenced via the X, or horizontal, axis on the graph labeled "Location Quotient." The size of each "bubble" corresponds to the number of jobs in a particular industry in 2017. For instance, the Services sector represents the greatest number of jobs in the region, at 41,144.



Note: Industry clusters in the region are compared with those at the state level, based on 2008 and 2017 employment sectors.
Source: Virginia Employment Commission

Publicly-owned Industrial Sites/Business Parks

A number of industrial sites and business parks have been developed within the West Piedmont Region. Each has been designated as GigaPark sites by Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative. In addition, many are located within designated Enterprise Zones which will be discussed later in this section. All localities within the region have joined the New River Valley Economic Development Alliance for inclusion in the Alliance's service area of the U.S. Foreign Trade Zone. This designation substantially improves recruitment potential in the global market and provides additional benefits. The following provides information regarding publicly-owned sites by locality or region. A map is provided as well.

County/City	Name	Location	Total Acreage
Danville/Pittsylvania	Airside Industrial Park	Just off U.S. Route 58 on the eastern side of the City near the Regional Airport	206
	Brosville Industrial Park	Just off U.S. Route 58 in the Brosville area	120
	Cane Creek Centre	On U.S. 58 three miles east of U.S. 29 Bypass (future I-785) in the County	900
	Chatham South Industrial Park	Just off U.S. Route 29 in Pittsylvania County, south of Chatham	150
	Coleman (Fearn) Site*	Near Gypsum Road and Celotex Drive in Danville	77
	Cyber Park (Technology Park)	Fronting U.S. Route 58 and future Interstate 785 in Danville near the airport; extension of Riverview	330
	Gretna Industrial Park	South of Gretna along South Main Street	150

County/City	Name	Location	Total Acreage
	Ringgold East Industrial Park	Along Route 734 in Ringgold area, a mile and a half from Route 58 in the County	117
	Ringgold West Industrial Park	Along Route 729, north of Eagle Springs Road	120
	Riverview Industrial Park	U.S. Route 58 and future Interstate 785 in Danville near the airport and Cyber Park	95
	Southern Virginia Mega Site at Berry Hill*	West of Danville between U.S. Route 58 and Berry Hill Road in the County	3,528
	Southern Virginia Multimodal Park*	At the former Burlington Industries site in Hurt	800
Franklin County/ Rocky Mount	Commerce Center	Three miles south of Rocky Mount off U.S. Route 220	165
	Franklin County/Rocky Mount Industrial Park	Just off U.S. Route 220 and VA Route 40 in central Rocky Mount	157
	Rocky Mount Office and Technology Park	Northwestern section of Rocky Mount	67
	Summit View Business Park*	Along Brick Church Road, just off U.S. Route 220 in northern Franklin County	550
	West Franklin Business Park	Near Route 40, just west of Ferrum	80
Boones Mill	Village Park at Boones Mill*	Former North American Home Complex	73
Martinsville/Henry	Clearview Business Park	On Clearview Drive approximately one-half mile east of Liberty Street (Route 174)	73
	Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre*	Just off U.S. Route 220 south near the North Carolina line in Henry County	726
	Martinsville Industrial Park	Just south of Martinsville off U.S. Route 220	261
	North Bowles Industrial Park	Along Hollie Drive, just off Route 174	229
	Patriot Centre at Beaver Creek Industrial Park	Off Route 174 in Henry County	2,000+
	Rives Road Industrial Park	Along Rives Road in Martinsville	47-50
Patrick County	Rich Creek Corporate Park	Approximately 1.5 miles east of the Town of Stuart, fronting on U.S. Route 58, joining Route 727 on its southeast corner and Route 694 on the northwest	60.6

*Site is under development

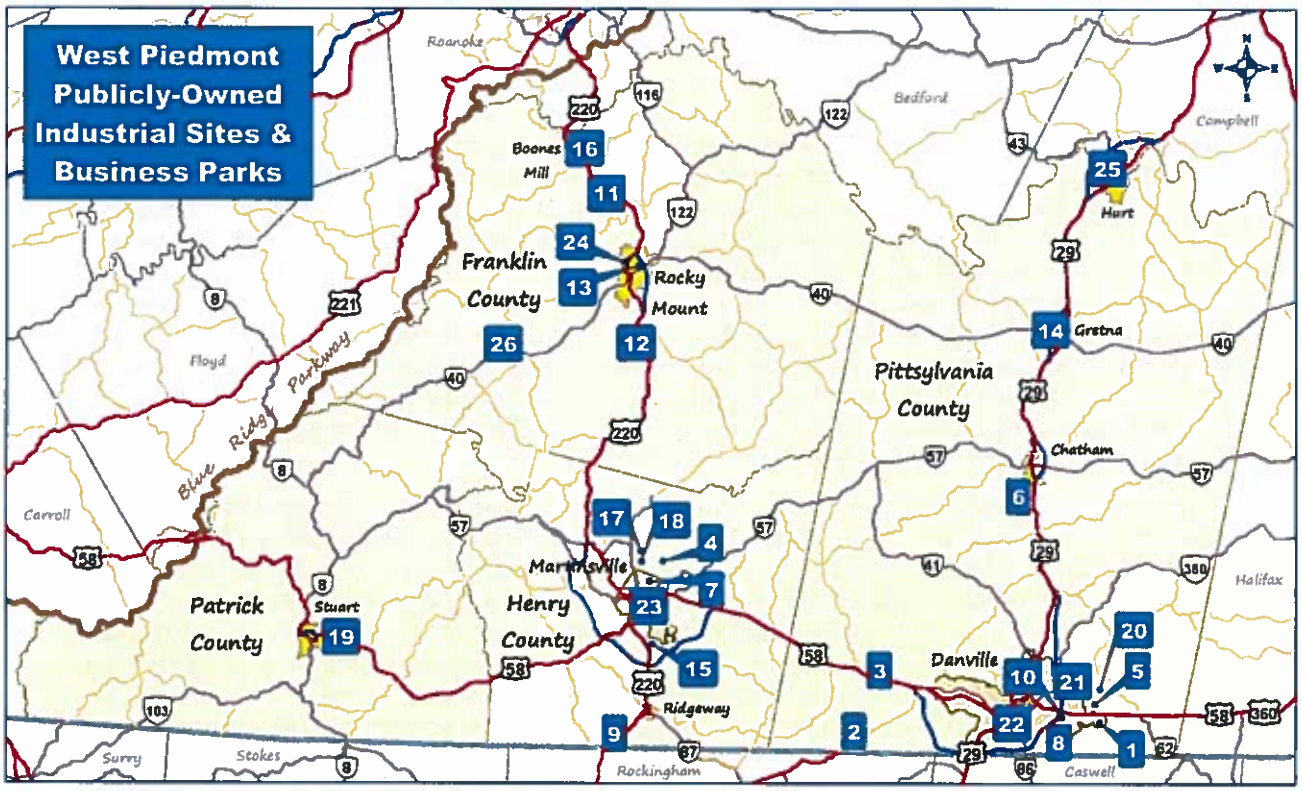
Sites Under Development

In Danville, the Coleman (Fearn) site was under development by the City. There are three graded pad sites available, totaling about 77 acres. However, due to activities underway in both Cane Creek Centre and Southern Virginia Mega Site at Berry Hill, the City decided to delay further development at this site for now.

In Pittsylvania County, lies the 3,528-acre Berry Hill Industrial Park on the southern border of the County and Southern Virginia Multimodal Park in the northern area at Hurt. Now known as the ***Southern Virginia Mega Site at Berry Hill***, the regional mega park and largest in Virginia is located west of Danville between U.S. Route 58 and Berry Hill Road. The mostly undeveloped land is bisected by Berry Hill and Oak Hill Roads, with the Norfolk Southern Railroad crossing part of the site, and lots ranging from 98 acres to nearly 1,300 acres. The site includes 1,800 acres of buildable land and 12 developable lots. The Transco natural gas line traverses the property. The site is 15 miles from Danville Regional Airport, 52 miles from Piedmont Triad International Airport, 70 miles from the Raleigh-Durham Airport, and 200 miles from the Virginia Port Authority. The park could provide employment for a labor pool in a 60-mile radius around the Danville-Pittsylvania County area. Targeted industries include advanced manufacturing, computer parts, wood and paper product manufacturing, plastics and rubber product manufacturing, and fabricated metal product manufacturing. The park could attract spinoff industries that would generate six to eight jobs outside the site for every job within the park. The mega site was designated with a Tier 4 certification, declaring it "infrastructure ready," in August 2018. This means all infrastructure (water, wastewater, gas, electricity, and fiber) is in place or will be within 12

months, and all permit issues have been identified and quantified. Tier 5, the top designation, will come as soon as all permits are in place, as required tiers established via the Virginia Business Ready Sites Program are met. The County and City continue to work together to bring improvements to the site.

In 2015, Danville City Council agreed to adjust the service boundaries of the Danville Utilities to allow Appalachian Power to provide electric service at Berry Hill. The Berry Hill Energy Connection project will include approximately 5 miles of transmission lines and a new substation to serve park tenants. Water and sewer are being brought to the site as well. In 2016, the Danville-Pittsylvania Regional Industrial Facility Authority (RIFA) approved a TIGER (Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery) grant co-application to support rail infrastructure and port improvement at the site. In early 2017, grading for 133 acres got underway to develop four sites (one large 109-acre pad with three smaller pads). The $3.77 million project work includes site grading, erosion and sediment control, site stabilization, clearing and grubbing, and storm water management. In June 2017, Enviva Development Holdings, LLC signed an agreement to purchase Lot 8, a 168-acre tract at Berry Hill. It is anticipated that the firm will invest about $120 million and create direct and indirect jobs with above average wages. Enviva produces wood pellets at six plants in the U.S. to provide electric utilities with a sustainable, renewable fuel alternative to coal, reducing their carbon footprint. A second project interest was announced in September 2018, with RIFA entering an option with Indevprop, a Virginia limited liability company representing a credit-worthy client, for an estimated 149 acres in the northern section of the site involving a $200 million project under consideration.



Prepared by West Piedmont PDC, November 2017. D.W. Rakes

1. Airside Industrial Park
2. Berry Hill Industrial Park
3. Brosville Industrial Park
4. Bryant Property
5. Cane Creek Centre
6. Chatham South
7. Clearview Business Park
8. Coleman Site
9. Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre
10. Cyber Park
11. Summit View Business Park
12. Franklin County Commerce Center
13. Franklin County/Rocky Mount Industrial Park
14. Gretna
15. Martinsville Industrial Park
16. Village Park at Boones Mill
17. North Bowles
18. Patriot Centre at Beaver Creek
19. Rich Creek Corporate Park
20. Ringgold East
21. Ringgold West
22. Riverview
23. Rives Road Industrial Park
24. Rocky Mount Office & Technology Park
25. Southern Virginia MultiModal Park
26. West Franklin Business Park

In December 2018, Pittsylvania County announced the purchase of approximately 53 acres in the ***Ringgold East Industrial Park*** by South Carolina-based RealityLink, a private real estate investment firm, for $1 million. The firm plans to construct a 350,000-SF shell building, one of the largest in the state. Once constructed, the County will be

home to one of only four marketable buildings greater than 300,000 SF, and could result in more than $15 million in new capital investment.

In the northern part of Pittsylvania County at Hurt, the County conducted a feasibility study for a potential inland port to be located in the 800-acre ***Southern Virginia Multimodal Park***, formerly the Klopman Mills/Burlington Mills site. If this is realized, this would be the second inland port in Virginia, with the first being located in Front Royal. Freight in large containers is collected in great quantities and transported by rail to other destinations such as coastal ports in Hampton Roads or to the Midwest for distribution. Shipping and delivering freight by rail generally cost less than by truck; therefore, inland ports help reduce companies' costs and reduce the number of trucks on highways. The presence of an inland port would help attract manufacturers and distributors, bringing new jobs to the region. In recognition of the importance of the inland port project and development of the industrial site, four municipalities and an industrial park development company initiated the creation of the ***Staunton River Regional Industrial Facility Authority (RIFA)*** in early 2017. The partnership includes Pittsylvania County, the City of Danville, the towns of Hurt and Altavista, and the Southern Virginia Multimodal Park, LLC. Also during 2017, studies got underway to determine the cost to bring industry-level water and sewer services to the park. Discussions are still underway, with final plans to be determined by the RIFA in the coming months. The Authority plans to attract small to mid-size distribution companies to the park.

In 2007, Henry County purchased two large tracts for future development as regional, revenue-sharing industrial park projects in conjunction with the City of Martinsville. A 726-acre site, known as the ***Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre***, is located near the North Carolina line; the other is the 1,206-acre Bryant property near Barrows Mill Road in close proximity to both Clearview Business Park in the City and the Patriot Centre.

Located south of Martinsville at a site convenient to both Route 220 and the Norfolk Southern Railroad, a master plan has been developed for the Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre which will offer large lots. The property is approximately 30 miles from Piedmont Triad International Airport and population centers of the Piedmont Triad area of North Carolina, approximately 40 miles from a FedEx hub, and offers rail access. The site also offers four-lane access to the interstate. The industrial park is considered a megasite; megasites create at least 400 jobs and are characterized by at least $250 million in capital investment. Grading on two sites has been completed. Lot 1 is a 120-acre pad and Lot 4 is a 50-acre pad. Water and sewer utilities are in place, along with the extension of Mid-Atlantic Broadband Cooperative's high capacity, open-access fiber optic backbone structure. The County is working with Appalachian Power to construct a 30-megawatt expandable sub-station to provide electricity and Southwestern Virginia Gas to provide natural gas. Recognized as the highest rank for industrial parks under development, the Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre is now classified as a Tier 5 project, meaning all necessary permits have been obtained and the park is ready for new business. The site is being marketed for suppliers and other companies involved with the growing aerospace industry, food and plastics, and other industries.

In September 2017, officials broke ground on the 26,000 square-foot Commonwealth Centre for Advanced Training (CCAT) at the Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre location. The Harvest Foundation provided a $5 million grant toward the advanced manufacturing training facility, with construction starting in early 2018 and being completed in spring 2019. When completed, CCAT will be available only to firms that locate at Commonwealth Crossing and will allow for office space where companies can recruit employees and provide training space with a high bay where companies can temporarily install its manufacturing equipment to train new employees. Once training is complete, the business will remove its equipment and enable other companies to utilize the space. In July 2018, Press Glass, the largest independent flat glass processing operation in Europe, announced an investment of $43.55 million to construct a 280,000-SF manufacturing facility in Commonwealth Crossing. As the first company to locate in the industrial park, Press Glass has started construction with the goal of being operational in 2019. The firm will create 212 21st century jobs in Henry County, with starting pay at more than $15 per hour.

In 2015, Franklin County announced plans to develop the 550-acre ***Summit View Business Park*** adjacent to U.S. Route 220, between Rocky Mount and Boones Mill. In addition to small- and medium-sized lots to be created, the site would allow for larger developable tracts. Plans include the grading and development of a 100-acre parcel and potential construction of a shell building. The property lies in close proximity to infrastructure, an interstate highway, and a regional airport. The new business park will be developed in a campus-style manner to provide needed infrastructure, while also providing recreation areas, trails, and greenspaces on the park's southern side and featuring five main components: greenways, a multi-purpose building, athletic fields, a splash pad, and a bike park. The event area is to be located on the northern side of the park and will include a permanent home for the Foothills Produce Auction, fair and festival grounds, a multi-use pavilion, a consolidated cannery, a solid waste collection site, a fire station with a community room, the park and ride lot, a concession building and other amenities for public use. In

October 2016, the County approved a master plan, which calls for eight facilities ranging in size from 120,000 to 300,000 SF, one 1 million-SF facility, and two smaller buildings. The project has been promoted as a "next generation" business park, which calls for green spaces and public amenities that may include an amphitheater, athletic fields, a farmers' market, a visitor center, and multi-use trails throughout the park. In addition, a 150-space park and ride lot is proposed at the new Regional Business Park.

The first phase undertaken for the regional enterprise park includes road and grading work, beginning with two pad sites – one 10-acre and one 25-acre site. The County received a $250,000 Virginia Business Ready Sites Program grant to bring utilities to the designated 144-acre Dogwood Site, which could accommodate a one million square-foot building. Officials anticipate the park will feature between 10 and 14 graded pads suitable for various sizes of business and industry, offering parcels to accommodate buildings between 25,000 and 100,000 square feet and parcels allowing for buildings between 250,000 and 500,000 square feet.

In 2017, the County approved a $10 million contract to begin construction of the access road, expand water and sewer infrastructure, and add industrial lots. This work has been completed. As of December, the County had invested approximately $20 million in the park and expects to spend about $25 million more over the next five years. Phase II park development has been estimated to cost approximately $16 million. In November 2018, Franklin County agreed to sell a 2.9-acre parcel at the park to the Roanoke Gas Company for construction of a $2.2 million gate station that would tap off the Mountain Valley Pipeline and serve the park. Roanoke Gas plans to allow access along the U.S. Route 220 corridor and into Rocky Mount. Construction should begin in spring 2019. The County plans to attract advanced manufacturing, technology and logistics businesses to the park – businesses that pay higher than average wages. It is anticipated to take six to eight years to fully develop the park. According to a report by Chmura Economics, the park is estimated to bring an annual impact of $100.5 million after five years, generate $320.4 million in investments and support about 2,200 jobs when fully occupied.

In 2018, Valley Star Credit Union was named the first business to locate in Summit View Business Park. The firm will invest $5.25 million to construct a new administrative campus on 7 acres, bringing a total of 32 employees, with 10 jobs newly created. Construction of the new 15,000 square-foot facility is expected to begin this summer and will open in 2019. In May 2018, Stik-Pak Solutions announced plans to invest $14.3 million to relocate and expand its Franklin County operations into a new 100,000-SF facility in Summit View Business Park. The packaging company currently operates a 25,000-SF building in the Franklin County Commerce Center, employing 35 people. Within six years, the new operation will create 50-60 new production jobs with an annual average salary of $45,760. According to County officials, both Stik-Pak and Valley Star will offer wages above $20 an hour.

In 2013, Franklin County joined the ***Western Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority***, a regional authority that includes Franklin, Botetourt, and Roanoke counties; the cities of Roanoke and Salem; and the Town of Vinton. The authority allows for the collaboration of the local governments on the development of economic projects, such as creating new or improving existing industrial sites. Each of the participating localities may opt to share the costs and benefits of increasing or improving the region's site inventory to attract new or expanding businesses.

Many of the localities have designated ***Enterprise Zones.*** There are joint zones in Danville-Pittsylvania County, Martinsville-Henry County, and Patrick County-Town of Stuart. In addition, there are single zones in the City of Danville and sub-zones in some areas. Established in 1982 by the Virginia General Assembly, the Virginia Enterprise Zone (VEZ) Program is a partnership between state and local government to promote economic development and revitalization by stimulating job creation and property investment. Designated by the state and managed by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development, the VEZ Program in conjunction with other local, state, and federal programs, provides incentives to spur private-sector investments which aid in the improvement of economic conditions within the designated zones. The zones encompass commercial and industrial lands as well as available vacant, developable tracts. Most industrial parks are located in these designated zones. For statewide designated Enterprise Zones, visit the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development website at: http://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/images/VEZ/VEZ-MAP.pdf.

Opportunity Zones are designed to spur economic development and job creation in economically-distressed communities by providing tax benefits to investors, if they meet certain qualifications. Localities qualify as Opportunity Zones if they have been nominated for designation by the state and certified by the Secretary of the U.S. Treasury. Within the West Piedmont Region, there are 15 low-income census tracts that were designated in 2018. For more information, visit http://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/index.php/opp-zones.html.

Genedge Alliance is part of a nationwide network of **Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) centers** that are cooperatively affiliated with the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST-MEP) and the U.S. Department of Commerce. Located in Martinsville, Genedge provides a number of services for Virginia companies, helping these industries compete, succeed, and grow. Formerly Virginia's A.L. Philpott Manufacturing Extension Partnership, Genedge Alliance operates as a state-affiliated, not-for-profit economic development organization. Services include innovation and growth, continuous process improvement, sustainability, supply chain optimization, technology acceleration, and workforce engagement through on-the-job training. Affiliates include the Manufacturing Technology Center in Wytheville and Old Dominion University Business Gateway in Norfolk. For more information, visit https://www.genedge.org/.

Retail/Commercial

Shopping trends and patterns of the Planning District provide yet another facet of the area's economy. While it is generally accepted that people in the District shop for the necessities in local stores within their community, many of the residents depend upon stores in neighboring areas for the bulk of their major purchases. There are two primary reasons for this fact. First, these larger communities such as Roanoke, Lynchburg, and Greensboro offer a wider range of shopping opportunities and the increased competition set up by these larger markets along with the fact that the ability to buy at bulk wholesale prices creates more competitive pricing among stores offering similar merchandise. Secondly, since a number of residents of the Planning District work outside the District in and around these larger market areas, it takes little extra effort to do their major shopping near their work sites. Retail establishments have expanded significantly during the past decade, offering a greater variety of goods and services to local consumers. It is important that additional commercial establishments continue to be lured to the area to increase competition and attract area shoppers. In recent years, Danville has offered a broader range of shopping facilities in the region. However, during the past year, several large retailers in Danville closed. This includes K-Mart, Toys R Us, Sears, Petco, and Dick's Sporting Goods.

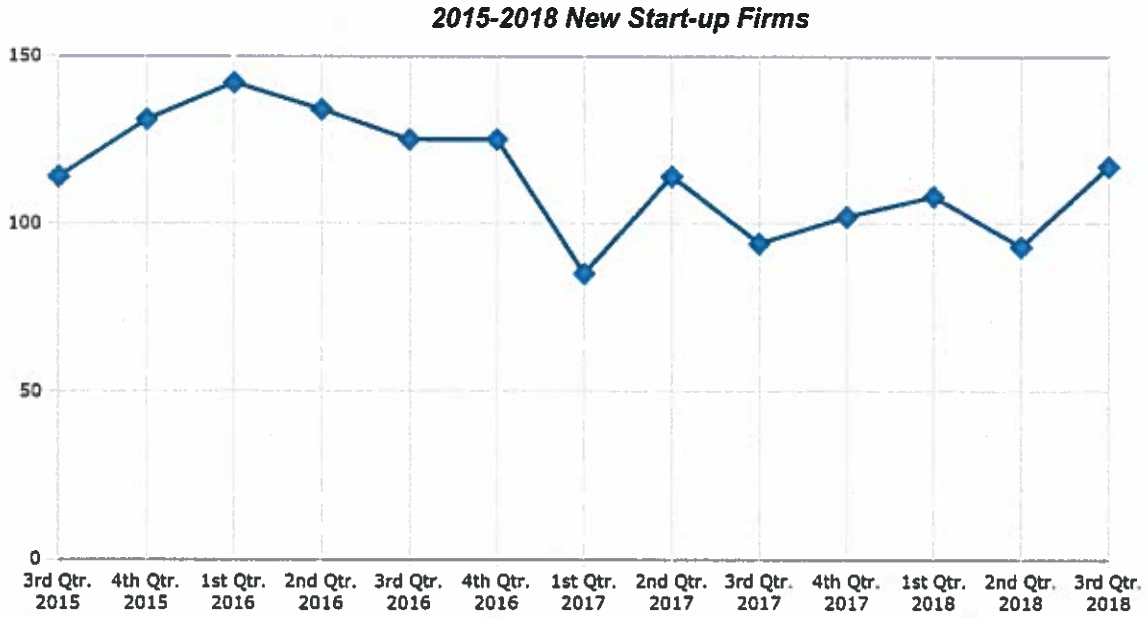
Major malls or shopping complexes in the district are the ***Danville Mall*** along Piedmont Drive in Danville and ***The Village of Martinsville*** located on Commonwealth Boulevard in Martinsville. A number of major retailers occupy both facilities. In Danville's River District, many restaurants and small businesses flourish. More information regarding the River District follows in the "Revitalization Efforts" section. In Martinsville, the Uptown Central Business District, a Virginia Main Street Community, remains a viable commercial center. A number of retail establishments, restaurants, and specialty shops opened in Uptown Martinsville along Church Street in the Central Business District. Additional commercial areas and shopping centers are found along major highways throughout the region. Neighborhood-oriented shops and stores as well as offices are found along principal streets and arterials.

Small Business/Entrepreneurship and Resources

It is said that small business is the backbone of America, providing an estimated eighty percent of jobs in recent years. This holds true in the West Piedmont Region as well. As an economy in transition, many start-up companies and entrepreneur opportunities continue to grow in the area, providing jobs and boosting local taxes. In a more diverse environment, local businesses benefit the community in many ways. The region continues to promote entrepreneurship with various programs and resources to assist. Information regarding some of these available resources follows.

Innovation and entrepreneurship are important factors for long-term economic competitiveness, accounting for the majority of productivity and per-capita income growth in the nation, in the state, and regionally.

Innovation and entrepreneurship are important factors for long-term economic competitiveness and account for the majority of productivity and per-capita income growth in the nation, in the state, and regionally. Innovations can be large or small but still have a big impact. It is better to have many smaller companies employing fewer workers than to have one large company with many employees. Should the larger company choose to close or downsize, the economic impact is much greater to an area than the closure of one or two smaller companies. For these reasons, new start-up companies are an important aspect of the overall economic picture, particularly in showing growth. The following graph depicts new start-ups from 3rd Quarter 2015 to 3rd Quarter 2018.



	PDC 12	Virginia
3rd Qtr. 2015	114	3,396
4th Qtr. 2015	131	3,000
1st Qtr. 2016	142	3,802
2nd Qtr. 2016	134	4,283
3rd Qtr. 2016	125	3,398
4th Qtr. 2016	125	3,426
1st Qtr. 2017	85	3,838
2nd Qtr. 2017	114	3,961
3rd Qtr. 2017	94	2,736
4th Qtr. 2017	102	3,058
1st Qtr. 2018	108	3,973
2nd Qtr. 2018	93	3,982
3rd Qtr. 2018	117	4,238

Note: The following criteria was used to define new startup firms:
1.) Setup and liability date both occurred during 3rd Quarter (July, August, September) 2018
2.) Establishment had no predecessor UI Account Number
3.) Private Ownership
4.) Average employment is less than 250
5.) For multi-unit establishments, the parent company must also meet the above criteria.

Source: Virginia Employment Commission, Economic Information & Analytics,
Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW), 3rd Quarter (July, August, September) 2018.

Provided by the Virginia Employment Commission, West Piedmont Community Profile, January 2019.

The ***Dan River Business Development Center*** (DRBDC), one of two small business incubators in the West Piedmont Region, is located at the Ringgold East Industrial Park in Pittsylvania County. It is housed in a 30,000-SF facility comprised of 6 industrial/research bays and 34 offices. In 2017, the DRBDC created Southside CoShare, a new option that offers space and support services to individuals and smaller local businesses as they grow. The new program offers a 'café' menu' of various, tailored support services including shared equipment and/or support personnel (receptionists, administrative, etc.). Other businesses utilizing the Center tend to be larger, more long-term tenants. Since opening in 2001, DRBDC has helped create over 2,300 local jobs, most in small business start-up companies.

Located on Church Street in Uptown Martinsville, the ***West Piedmont Business Development Center*** (WPBDC) is the other small business incubator facility in the region serving the City of Martinsville and Franklin, Henry, and Patrick

counties. The Center can house 10 to 20 new businesses in the 23,500-SF building. Provided are office and light manufacturing space at competitive rates including shared meeting/training rooms, office equipment, networking opportunities, mentoring services, and fiber optics connectivity. In 2013, the City assumed operations of the incubator and the Martinsville Henry County Chamber of Commerce manages the complex. As of 2018, the incubator had 19 tenants, 30 graduates, created 300 new jobs, and served 750+ in counseling services and workshops.

During 2015, the City of Martinsville and C-PEG (the Chamber's Partnership for Economic Growth) formed a partnership to attract and support more small businesses and retail shops in the City. The group developed a plan and will be charged with recruiting and retaining small businesses to boost economic growth and tax revenue in the City.

The ***Franklin Center for Advanced Learning and Enterprise*** opened in the center of the Town of Rocky Mount's Business District along Claiborne Avenue and Randolph Street in 2007 and serves as one of two satellite locations for the West Piedmont Business Development Center. The Center offers services in education, employment, and economic development. The second satellite location is located at the Patrick County Community Center (the Stuart campus of Patrick Henry Community College) in Stuart.

The ***Institute for Advanced Learning and Research (IALR)*** campus in Danville's Cyber Park provides opportunities for new businesses to co-locate and take advantage of the state-of-the-art laboratories, professional office space, and workforce development initiatives at the Hawkins Research Building and the Sustainable Energy Technology Center.

Danville Community College (DCC) has created a paradigm to merge job growth with education, with the dedication of its ***Barkhouser Free Enterprise Center***. The Center promotes entrepreneurship and enterprise opportunities for college students and for the region. In addition, the Danville office of the Longwood Small Business Development Center relocated to Danville Community College campus in 2011, utilizing office space in the recently dedicated Barkhouser Free Enterprise Center.

The ***Fab Lab*** in Uptown Martinsville is a collaborative effort of Patrick Henry Community College, New College Institute, and the Martinsville Henry County Economic Development Corporation. The digital fabrication laboratory comprises computers that operate design software, production machinery with laser-powered cutters and etchers, and a printer that produces 3-dimensional plastic parts, among other functions. The lab enables entrepreneurs and others to develop product prototypes. In 2016, the ***Thomas P. Dalton IDEA Center*** opened, serving as an entrepreneurial hub, with the expanded Fab Lab serving as the anchor. The three-story, 20,520-SF facility is located on Fayette Street in Martinsville. The IDEA (Innovate, Design, Engineer, Accelerate) Center promotes entrepreneurship, technology, and innovation-based economic development opportunities. A Selective Laser Sinter (SLS) machine which plays an important role in the Polymers Processing Initiative is part of the Fab Lab. SLS applications are virtually unlimited.

Startup America, a nationwide program through public-private partnerships, is helping PHCC promote entrepreneurism. The program provides valuable resources and connections to help new companies grow and boost the local economy. Mentoring, access to funding sources, and marketing assistance are a few of the services provided. Patrick Henry Community College is a member of the National Association for Community College Entrepreneurship, which advocates entrepreneurism by assisting the colleges to link related programs to workforce development programs. In 2014, PHCC became the first community college in the U.S. to offer an entrepreneurial-related program entitled Innovation Engineering, which trains students to transform innovation from a risky, random process into one that is more reliable. Four main courses, entitled "Create," "Communicate," "Commercialize," and "Systems," comprise the program.

In 2017 and in conjunction with the City of Martinsville and Henry County, the Martinsville-Henry County Chamber of Commerce's Partnership for Economic Growth (C-PEG) launched ***Start-Up Martinsville-Henry County.*** The program is an intensive eight-week entrepreneur boot-camp, culminating into a business competition where participants vie for grant funds, additional prizes, and loan opportunities to start or expand their businesses. Patrick Henry Community College provides accommodations for the budding entrepreneurs. Managed by C-PEG, the George W. Lester II Microloan Program was established for small businesses in the area, with up to $20,000 available for loans. In 2018, the Chamber revealed that the program would be divided into two to better serve participants by customizing assistance for particular needs. The new program, "***Grow Martinsville-Henry County, Virginia***," is designed to assist existing businesses with expanding product lines, acquiring and installing new equipment, and other business ventures.

The Launch Place, formerly the Southside Business Technology Center, assists start-up businesses with business development, job creation and retention, and other business consulting services. In 2012 and with funding assistance from the Danville Regional Foundation, The Launch Place initiated the "Seed Fund" program, which allows for

investment opportunities, providing capital for start-ups and entrepreneurial efforts. During 2018, The Launch Place made several investments: a seed investment of $200,000 was awarded to mesur.io, an internet of things (IoT) company that provides agricultural-based businesses with automated data tracking and analytics; a pre-seed investment of $75,000 to medtech company VitalFlo to assist in development of their lung health analytics platform and mobile spirometer; and a $75,000 pre-seed investment for biotech company CytoRecovery to market its microfluidic microchip technology. In December 2018, The Launch Place was awarded a $300,000 grant through EDA's Regional Innovation Strategies program to support the organization's Seed Fund Program for budding entrepreneurs. Additional information may be found at: www.TheLaunchPlace.org.

Danville's River District Association was awarded a $45,000 Community Business Launch grant through the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development in August 2018. The funding will provide training for aspiring entrepreneurs along with a business plan competition. The Danville Office of Economic Development contributed an additional $50,000 to assist start-up businesses and lure entrepreneurs to the City. Classes began in January.

SCORE, a source of free and confidential business advice for entrepreneurs and small businesses, is a nonprofit association dedicated to entrepreneur education and the formation, growth, and success of small business nationwide. Volunteers provide face-to-face business mentoring and workshops for aspiring entrepreneurs and small business owners, offering advice to secure financing for operations, management, and/or business expansions. SCORE volunteers are working and retired business owners, executives and professionals donating their time and expertise in any number of disciplines as business counselors and mentors. There is a Martinsville office; more information is available at www.score.org.

The ***Longwood Small Business Development Center*** also serves the region as part of the 19-county, six-city area. In November 2017, the Center announced a new regional approach using independent consultants in South Central Virginia. Three sub-regions have been created in support of small business owners, with offices in Danville, Martinsville, and Farmville.

The region's Chambers of Commerce partner with public school systems to offer entrepreneurial programming for students. ***Junior Achievement*** programs help young people prepare for the real world by offering them experiences, teaching them how to generate wealth and to effectively manage it, how to create jobs, and how to apply entrepreneurial thinking in the workplace. Students experience hands-on lessons and learn the value of contributing to their communities. Junior Achievement educates students about workforce readiness, entrepreneurship, and financial literacy. The program reaches students in Martinsville and counties of Franklin, Henry, and Patrick. In Danville and Pittsylvania County, the ***Young Entrepreneurs Academy (YEA!)*** was launched in fall 2013 by the Danville Pittsylvania County Chamber of Commerce. The innovative program guides students through the process of starting a real business and is open to students between 11 and 18 years of age.

State and federal agencies available to assist in support of small businesses include the ***Virginia Small Business Development Center*** (SBCD) in Richmond (www.virginiasbdc.org/) and the ***U.S. Small Business Administration*** (SBA), respectively, (www.sba.gov). The SBA has a Richmond District Office as well; see www.sba.gov/offices/district/va/richmond for more information.

Revitalization Efforts

> The economic impact of revitalization can be astounding with development of small business and entrepreneurial enterprise, the backbone of our economy.

Revitalization projects help to boost economic initiatives with the elimination of blight, creating attractive aesthetics in these areas to entice new businesses, industries, and residents. The economic impact can be astounding with development of small business and entrepreneurial enterprise, said to be the backbone of our economy. The clustering of similar businesses tends to attract other related companies to locate in that particular area. The retail/commercial businesses bring shoppers, recreational activities attract visitors and tourists, and lofts/condominiums/apartments attract residents to live in these areas – all boosting the local economy by bringing tax revenues and tourist dollars to the area. This environment, along with a solid industry base, constitutes the building blocks of a strong, diversified economy. Much has been accomplished in the region to promote revitalized areas as places to shop, visit, live, and do business. The following information outlines a number of these efforts.

While globalization initially had a detrimental impact on Danville's economy, it is now fueling its revitalization. To attract business investment, the City has been working to eliminate blight, enhance the attractiveness of downtown, develop

industrial parks, and generally make Danville a place where people would like to "live, work, and play." Cooperation with Pittsylvania County has resulted in successes. More than 50 businesses including technology companies, new restaurants, and other retail establishments are located in the River District.

In 2011, the City of Danville initiated a comprehensive planning program which established the River District, representing the heart of downtown, and includes a portion of two historic districts – the Tobacco Warehouse Historic District and Downtown Danville Historic District. The River District Revitalization project is a combination of planned City improvements and an incentive package structured to stimulate re-use of historic buildings in the district, to create new businesses, and to promote other economic enhancements. Public space enhancements located at the core of the River District include a new riverfront park, activity center, and gateway to the river.

As part of the revitalization initiative, the City declared a war on blight in the area, and collaborated with the Danville Industrial Development Authority to purchase several buildings in the downtown area for renovation, demolition, or for some other purpose. Planned building renovations created space for other uses such as a new city park or parking option; establishment of mixed-use spaces, including apartments; and removal of other blight in the area to encourage more economic development initiatives by improving aesthetics. As of December 2018, developments that have taken place in Danville have resulted in the River District attracting nearly $150 million in private investments that more than tripled the public sector investments of $35 million. As a result of the revitalization efforts, several companies have located to the historic warehouse district. This grouping of businesses has created a high-tech industry cluster at the core of the River District which could attract similar firms.

In March 2017, Danville announced plans to purchase the White Mill property along the Dan River for $3 million. With 8 parcels totaling slightly more than 20 acres, the acquisition also includes the 650,000-SF White Mill building that was once part of Dan River, Inc. In early 2019, the Danville Industrial Development Authority approved an agreement with The Alexander Company for an option to purchase the White Mill building for $3 million. The company will have nine months to conduct due diligence and evaluate the property for purchase and redevelopment as a limited service, boutique-style hotel. City officials believe the planned Riverfront Park will help attract businesses and industry to the White Mill property. The park will be developed between the White Mill and the King Memorial Bridge in the River District and an extension of the Riverwalk Trail is planned. A water feature in the canal in front of the White Mill is also planned.

In January 2019, the Danville IDA approved a $3 million loan for a $6.2 million hotel project in the former Knights of Pythias building and the old Danville Register & Bee building along Union Street. The hotel, called "The Honey Bee," would include 42 limited-service suites, highlighting the region's history through its room decor.

In Martinsville, revitalization efforts along the Fayette Street corridor from Moss Street to Roundabout Road are a focal point of the City. One initiative calls for enhancement of the business district along Fayette Street between Moss Street and Memorial Boulevard, with building facades, landscaping, and repurposing some blighted structures. Martinsville is exploring funding opportunities and other assistance to undertake projects in this area of the City, particularly the Paradise Inn and surrounding properties. This part of the City is considered a "food desert" with no accessibility to fresh, healthy foods in the immediate area; additional health initiatives could be an element of this project. Other ideas include utilizing the building for a vocational or after-school education center, a food bank or kitchen facility and community garden space.

In 2017, Martinsville was awarded the Local Foods, Local Places (LFLP), a unique opportunity which helps communities leverage local food enterprises to diversify their economy and renew their downtowns. This program offered through the Rural Advantage initiative, the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) in partnership with EPA and other federal agencies, allows for a suite of planning assistance services to help rural communities grow their economies and revitalize downtown neighborhoods. The project team envisions the creation of a healthy food hub at the former Paradise Inn, with a farm-to-table café, community garden with innovative growing techniques such as hydroponics, opportunities for entrepreneurs, education center, and possible community kitchen, among other amenities. To date, an Action Plan has been created as a result of the LFLP initiative. The effort is ongoing with a feasibility study being conducted to include the building integrity of the Paradise Inn for potential renovations. A second feasibility study for the adjacent city-owned parking lot is also part of the project to eliminate the food desert and further create economic development opportunities.

In Henry County, the Smith River Small Towns Collaborative was formed in conjunction with the Harvest Foundation. The group represents the small factory towns of Bassett, Fieldale, Stanleytown, and Koehler. As part of the revitalization initiative, Henry County and the stakeholders received a $700,000 CDBG grant in 2015 to further advance the project. Efforts are underway to include streetscape and façade improvements, cultural amenities, creation and enhancement of public spaces, wayfinding signage, and construction of a trail along the Smith River that connects each area. Private investments for the initiative have been provided by Bassett Furniture and Eastman Chemical Foundation. As part of the revitalization project, the County received a $500,000 construction grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission in 2016 for restoration of the Bassett Historic Train Depot. The 1920's depot restoration will play a major role in revitalizing Bassett's central business district, serving as an events space and allowing year-round use. The Small Town Collaborative project's Phase I improvements are an estimated $3.2 million. Currently underway, the project will support economic development, tourism, and quality of life.

As a tourism gateway to the County and the Blue Ridge Parkway, Patrick County initiated the Meadows of Dan Revitalization project in June 2016, with a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) planning grant award from the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development. In the planning phase, the County has worked with an engineering firm along with the public and local businesses to create a master plan, formulating a conceptual plan to grow tourism and boost the economy. Some key elements to be incorporated include recreational trails, water and sewer, façade improvements, an indoor performance venue, signage and kiosks.

As an area rich in natural resources and scenic beauty, tourism is a vibrant economic driver and an intricate part of the region's economy, particularly in picturesque Patrick County.

Designation in the ***Virginia Main Street Program*** helps smaller communities revitalize stagnant downtown areas and attracts investment. Managed by the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), this program provides a variety of consulting services, grants, training and other assistance focused on revitalizing smaller, historic communities. There are currently 29 existing Main Street Communities in Virginia. In the region, Danville and Martinsville have attained this designation to build vibrancy in the cities.

Tourism

Tourism provides another potential source of income and economic stimulus for the Planning District. There are a number of tourist attractions and other alluring amenities in the District which may be given further consideration in the future, in addition to those included in the *"Natural Resources/Recreational Opportunities"* that follow in this section. Not only do these areas improve the quality of life of the region's citizens, but they also generate a profitable influx of visitors from outside the immediate area. Outdoor-related activities linked to mountains, scenic drives, national and state parks, and hiking rank among the most popular activities for tourists in Virginia, according to the Virginia Tourism Corporation.

Among the major attractions in the region are Smith Mountain, Leesville, and Philpott Lakes; Fairy Stone State Park; the Blue Ridge Parkway; the Crooked Road Music Trail; FloydFest; Rooster Walk; the Virginia Museum of Natural History; the Science Museum of Virginia at the Danville Train Station; the Carrington Pavilion; the Danville Museum of Fine Arts; the Martinsville-Henry County Heritage Center and Museum; the Fayette Area Historical Initiative (FAHI) African-American Cultural Center and Museum; Booker T. Washington National Monument; the Blue Ridge Institute at Ferrum College; the Harvester Performance Center; the R.J. Reynolds Homestead; the Jeb Stuart Birthplace; Piedmont Arts Association; TheatreWorks; Rives Theatre; the Martinsville Speedway; the Wood Brothers Racing Museum; and the Virginia Motorsports Museum and Hall of Fame. Danville Welcome Center, located near U.S. 29 across from the Dan Daniel Memorial Park entrance in Danville, serves as an office for tourism. In Martinsville, the Martinsville Henry County Economic Development Corporation's Tourism Division and the Visitor Center are housed in the New College Institute facility in the uptown area. The Visitor Center serves as a state-designated tourism site.

Photo by Richard Boyd

Area chambers of commerce and local tourism offices worked with the Martinsville and South Boston Speedways, at the time, to promote ***Virginia's Racing Region***. Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania counties, the Town of Stuart, and the cities of Danville and Martinsville are among a number of localities situated in the southern region of the Commonwealth regarded as Virginia's Racing Region which serves to increase tourism via promotion of auto racing. A visitor's guide provides information for visitors on places to see and other tourist-related information. The 1997 Virginia General Assembly approved a resolution designating the area as "Virginia's Racing Region" to demonstrate the Commonwealth's support of the movement to entice more racing fans to spend more time in the region. The ***Martinsville Speedway,*** a major tourist destination located in Henry County, has been in the NASCAR circuit since the organization's inception in 1949 – longer than any other track used by NASCAR. Capable of accommodating more than 63,000 fans, the venue hosts four major races per year on its .526-mile oval, is the shortest and oldest track on the NASCAR circuit. Other notable racing facilities nearby include ***Virginia International Raceway*** (VIR) in Alton and South Boston Speedway in neighboring Halifax County. Additionally, the Wood Brothers Racing Museum in Stuart pays tribute to Wood Brothers Racing, the longest continuously-operating NASCAR Cup Series.

According to a recent economic impact study conducted by the Travel Industry Association for the Virginia Tourism Corporation, the following 2017 Travel Impacts demonstrate the importance of tourism within the Planning District.

2017 Travel Impacts

	Total Travel Expenditures	Travel Generated Payroll	Travel Generated Employment	State Tax Receipts	Local Tax Receipts
Franklin County	$108,909,282	$24,703,742	1,280	$4,321,675	$3,203,829
Henry County	$49,821,113	$10,883,177	547	$2,131,339	$983,860
Patrick County	$27,909,207	$6,260,935	278	$1,544,099	$814,320
Pittsylvania County	$76,434,999	$14,678,036	665	$4,105,808	$2,193,438
Danville City	$86,900,385	$17,393,250	859	$3,716,848	$2,080,108
Martinsville City	$21,000,857	$4,357,731	216	$975,973	$539,028
West Piedmont	$370,975,843	$78,276,871	3,845	$16,795,742	$9,814,583
Virginia	$24,750,207,684	$5,887,960,865	232,223	$1,046,281,360	$681,393,732

Source: Virginia Tourism Corporation, Richmond, VA, 2018.

To promote the traditional music, history, and culture within the region, the concept for ***"The Crooked Road: Virginia's Music Heritage Trail"*** began in 2003. The 333-mile route generates tourism and economic development in the Appalachian region of Southwestern Virginia by focusing on the region's unique musical heritage. As a result, "The Crooked Road" now includes nineteen counties (including Franklin and Patrick), four cities, fifty-four towns (including Rocky Mount and Stuart), five regional planning districts, four state agencies, two tourism organizations, and a large number of music venues. Although the trail focuses on the region's unique heritage music, it also includes outdoor recreational activities, museums, crafts, and other historic/cultural programs. Highway signage identifies the 333-mile route as it winds through the scenic terrain of the region. The economic impact of The Crooked Road: Virginia's Heritage Music Trail, has contributed generously to the region's prosperity, bringing in approximately $9.2 million annually and creating 131 jobs in Southwest Virginia, as of 2016. Additional information is available at www.myswva.org/tcr.

As part of the ***'Round the Mountain: Southwest Virginia's Artisan Network***, a sister project of The Crooked Road Music Trail, Franklin and Patrick counties were included in brochures to promote the artisan trail. Like The Crooked Road, Franklin County and Rocky Mount serve as the eastern gateway for the 'Round the Mountain trail which basically follows the path of The Crooked Road. The brochures include listings for participating artisans, venues, farms, lodges, and restaurants along the trail and help to promote heritage tourism while contributing to Southwest Virginia's economic development efforts. As artisan trails spread throughout the state, the Artisans Center of Virginia assisted in development of the ***Smith River Artisan Trail***

Network in Martinsville and Henry County; the trail was fully implemented in 2015. The Artisans Center of Virginia assists in marketing the area to increase tourism, promote the region's cultural assets, improve quality of life, and enhance the region's identity. The ***Danville Art Trail*** is an 18-month exhibit of outdoor sculptures in public places, combined with murals, Victorian architecture, and many other points of interest. A recent study found the artisan industry created about $572.2 million in economic impact throughout Virginia, in support of some 12,000 full-time jobs generating more than $250 million. The average spending was an estimated $260 per person.

Opening in 2011, ***Heartwood: Southwest Virginia's Artisan Gateway*** is located on the west side of Abingdon. The 28,000-SF building serves as a focal point and portal to the heritage tourism efforts that connect tourists to regional artisan studios, music venues, craft trails, outdoor recreation, and more sites throughout the Southwest Virginia region. The facility draws thousands of visitors and produces significant revenue annually from the sale of crafts, food, and beverages. The facility recently underwent renovations, reopening in March 2019.

Heritage tourism is very popular, with a reported $7.7 billion economic impact across Virginia, including $3.5 billion in employment payrolls that supports 105,000 jobs for all affected industries – not just tourism. According to the 2017 report, of the estimated 50 million annual visitors in Virginia, more than 42 million return annually to visit heritage sites. In our region, The Crooked Road generously contributes to heritage tourism, among many other sites. Heritage trails are being created throughout the region.

Another popular attraction in Virginia and the region is agritourism. Farmers are offering on-farm festivals, pick-your-own harvests, hayrides, corn mazes, pumpkin patches, tours, and other activities. There are increased numbers of apple, peach, and strawberry festivals, and other events across the region as well. Many wineries, breweries, and distilleries in the region offer tours and tasting events.

Natural Resources/Recreational Opportunities

With its scenic mountains, large manmade lakes, and historical heritage, the Planning District has naturally developed many outdoor recreational areas over the years. Not only do these areas improve the quality of life for the region's citizens but they also generate a profitable influx of visitors from outside the immediate area. This section provides information on a number of natural resources that offer recreational opportunities within the region. Additional information may be found in the Virginia Outdoors Plan, developed by the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, which provides an over-view of recreational opportunities in the region: http://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational_planning/documents/voppd12.pdf.

The four major outdoor recreational attractions in the region are Smith Mountain and Leesville Lakes, Philpott Lake, Fairy Stone State Park, and the Blue Ridge Parkway. Smith Mountain Lake (20,000 acres in size with 500-mile shoreline) and Leesville Lake (3,400 acres in size with 100-mile shoreline) form Appalachian Power Company's combination pumped storage and hydroelectric development project along the Roanoke River. Philpott Lake (2,880 acres in size with 100-mile shoreline) is a flood control and hydroelectric project of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers on the Smith River. Surrounding the lake are 6,500 acres of federally-owned land. Recreational access is gained at a number of public areas around the shore which feature boat launching ramps, swimming beaches, picnic areas, and campgrounds.

Fairy Stone State Park (4,850 acres in size), just southwest of Philpott Lake, is centered on a 168-acre lake that is stocked with game fish and also provides a large swimming beach with a modern bathhouse. Other park facilities include a nature center, amphitheater, picnic areas, campgrounds, vacation cabins, bridle paths, and hiking trails. Fairy Stone, built in the 1930's, is one of the six original Virginia State Parks.

The fourth major outdoor recreational attraction within the region is the ***Blue Ridge Parkway***. About 60 miles of the parkway weave along the northwestern boundaries of Franklin and Patrick Counties including visitor-use areas at Smart View, Rocky Knob, and Mabry's Mill. As a unit of the National Park System, the Blue Ridge Parkway extends along the southern Appalachians past vistas of natural beauty and rural landscapes lightly shaped by the activities of man. The Parkway attracts millions of visitors each year to view the scenic beauty. A 2017 report found the Parkway held the highest visitor spending rate in all the nation's park system during 2016. The report also determined that 15,649 jobs were supported by the popular 450-mile historic roadway, with a cumulative economic impact of about $1.3

billion. In 2006, the 217 miles of the Blue Ridge Parkway in Virginia was designated as an All-American Road, the highest honor bestowed by the Federal Highway Administration to acknowledge roadways that possess extraordinary scenic, historic, recreational, and other intrinsic qualities.

The region is home to several wildlife management areas and natural area preserves. Wildlife Management Areas include the aforementioned Fairystone Farms (5,781 acres) in Patrick and Henry counties, Turkeycock Mountain (20,000+ acres) bordering Franklin and Henry counties, and White Oak Mountain (2,748 acres) and Smith Mountain (~5,000 acres) in Pittsylvania County. Natural Area Preserve Systems include the 1,392-acre Grassy Hill and the newly designated 78.57-acre Bald Knob in Rocky Mount and Franklin County, and the 81-acre Gravely Nature Preserve in Henry County.

Agriculture/Forestry

A recent study released in 2017 indicates agriculture and forestry contributed $91 billion annually to Virginia's economy, increasing from $70 billion in 2013. Combined, these industries supported 442,200 Virginia jobs, an increase of 7% from 2013. Agriculture accounts for $70 billion and forestry generates the remaining $21 billion. Agriculture continues to play an important but decreasing role in the Planning District's economy. With the current economic situation, farmers across the region are caught in a money squeeze with the cost of fertilizer, chemicals, hay, and transportation services. The last several Censuses of Agriculture indicate that agricultural land in the Commonwealth has declined drastically from a high of 8,753,625 acres in 1992 to a low of 8,103,925 in 2007; that figure rebounded slightly to 8,302,444 in 2012.

The region, which has been a leading producer of flue-cured tobacco and dairy products in the Commonwealth of Virginia, also has experienced changes in the agricultural component of its economic base due to changes in regulations and the elimination of tobacco quotas in 2004. It also should be noted that the Tobacco Transition Payment Program (TTPP) has expired. With regard to tobacco, four Virginia counties accounted for over half (67.4%) of the state's tobacco production based on 2012 data. Among the four, Pittsylvania County in the West Piedmont Region accounted for 25.8% and was the top producer in the Commonwealth and the thirteenth largest in the United States. As Virginia adjusts to a smaller tobacco industry, the key factor will be alternative uses available for land, labor, and capital that were used in tobacco production. The tobacco grown in the region is of higher quality than in most places around the world.

Dairying, combined with cattle and calf sales that often take place on dairy farms, now represents a greater share of the District's agricultural economy. Franklin County ranked second out of 68 milk-producing counties in Virginia. However, the number of dairy farms in the County has declined from 77 to 72, according to the 2012 Census of Agriculture. Changes in regulations and milk prices have brought about these problems. Data shows the dairy industry generates $4.3 billion annually in Virginia and supports 16,000 jobs.

While traditional industries in the Dan River Region including textiles and tobacco have waned, other sectors which have filled the void include wineries; nurseries; prawn production; value-added sectors such as beekeeping; and outdoor- and recreation-based activities such as bird-watching, hunting, fishing, and agritourism. The craft beer industry has been growing in Virginia, as well as in the region, in recent years. A recent study by Earth Policy Institute found that nationwide, aquaculture production is set to surpass beef production; this trend is taking place in Virginia. Aquaculture was described as being among the fastest-growing sectors of agriculture in Virginia. Blue Ridge Aquaculture in Martinsville is the world's largest, sustainable producer of aquaculture-raised tilapia, producing 4 million pounds a year.

Virginia farmers continue to explore new crops such as hops to supply the ever-growing craft beer industry and a new cash crop tested on farms in Franklin, Henry, Halifax, and Pittsylvania counties, with expanded growth in 2018 - the purple sweet potato, more commonly found in Okinawa and Hawaii. In addition, farmers are planting more cotton, peanuts, and soybeans.

Another new crop on the horizon for Virginia's farmers is industrial hemp as a potential replacement for tobacco. As of July 1, 2018, Virginia relaxed legislation to open the licensing process for anyone to grow industrial hemp, a variety of the cannabis sativa family. However, many restrictions remain on exactly what can be grown and to whom it may be sold. Following the federal farm bill signed into law in December which effectively legalized the plant, Virginia lawmakers are exploring changes to state laws and regulations that may make it easier for farmers to pursue the new cash crop. The plant is used for a variety of products, from food, to creams and nutritional supplements, and items such as rope, paper, clothing, and construction materials. The plant has potential as a biofuel and livestock feed, but for now, requires additional research.

With the decline of traditional agricultural products such as tobacco, more farmers are turning to wine production. The Commonwealth is an ideal location for the production of European varieties of wines including chardonnay, merlot, and sauvignon. Wineries have increased across the state in recent years. Virginia's wine industry is creating an economic impact, according to a study released by the Governor's office which announced that wine sales reached an all-time high. The wine industry contributes more than $1.37 billion annually to Virginia's economy. Virginia now ranks 5th in the U.S. for grape growing, wine production, and export sales, but the lack of new vineyard plantings is beginning to restrict the Commonwealth's growth in the wine industry.

Growing in popularity, a number of craft brewers operate in the region. Craft beer contributes $1 billion in economic impact and employs nearly 9,000 across the state. Also, several distilleries have opened throughout the area. Virginia distilleries

brought in more than $7.2 million in 2017, according to the Virginia ABC. Meaderies may also be found in the region producing the alcoholic drink made from honey and similar to wine.

Despite the drop in tobacco production, significant operations still exist such as a stemming and redrying facility operated by Japan Tobacco International. Strengths in the Dan River Region which favor agriculture include a low cost of living and low taxes, a good quality of life, abundant water and land, and an effective transportation infrastructure. Weaknesses include lack of an available workforce, a hesitation to enter the agricultural industry, ineffective timber management, a high rate of land fragmentation, high startup costs, few facilities in the area engaged in slaughtering and processing, and residential area encroachment.

Although agriculture continues to play an important role in the Planning District's economy, it must be recognized that since the early 1950's the role of agriculture has gradually eroded. The emergence of manufacturing and industry in the early 1950's signaled a major turning point in the direction of the District's economy. Because of better paying full- and part-time jobs as well as the guarantee of year-round income, manufacturing surpassed agriculture in both employment and total income.

In addition, there has been a growth in the number of farmers' markets across the state and country to meet the increasing demand for fresh foods. With the abundance of the area's rich, robust farmland, the West Piedmont Region is poised to capitalize on this growing trend that would boost the local economy and preserve precious landscapes, while providing enormous health benefits to residents of the region. The Planning District Commission updated the *West Piedmont Local Foods Guide* in 2018 to promote the region's farmers and create a network for farmers, businesses, and consumers. The local foods initiative also provides stewardship of our agricultural lands and promotes health benefits in the region. The guide is available at: www.wppdc.org/content/wppdc/uploads/PDF/docs_publications/env_nat_resources/wp_lfg_2018.pdf.

Other local foods initiatives include land stewardship, incorporating best management practices, community supported agriculture (CSA) where individuals contribute funds to a farmer in exchange for a share of the farm products grown, and innovative energy production with biomass facilities. Biomass is being viewed as a profitable market for local growers. The agriculture industry would be instrumental in producing biomass and much interest has been expressed by a number of companies to work with farmers in the region. Some companies have been developing agricultural products into fuel and conducting research to generate petroleum products from tobacco and other resources.

Another popular interest in Virginia and the region is agritourism. Farmers are offering on-farm festivals, pick-your-own harvests, hayrides, corn mazes, pumpkin patches, tours, and other activities. There is an increased number of apple, peach, and strawberry festivals and other events across the region as well. The 2012 Census of Agriculture revealed that agritourism is among the fastest-growing sectors of agriculture.

Forest Resources

The West Piedmont Planning District has a large percentage of its base employment dependent on forest industry employment. Base employment is the portion of the locality's total employment devoted to producing products for outside markets. This brings money into the area from outside and provides the driving force of the local economy. Therefore, the forest industry is very important to the economy of the West Piedmont Planning District.

Forest production includes logging, sawmills, wood preservation, veneer and plywood manufacturing, furniture manufacturing, cabinetry and other millwork, paper products, and nurseries to mention a few. Forests provide for recreational activities as well as wildlife habitats, natural reserves, and preservation of water quality.

Outdoor-related activities linked to mountains, scenic drives, national and state parks, and hiking rank among the most popular activities for tourists in Virginia, according to the Virginia Tourism Corporation (VTC). There is a direct correlation between forestry-related recreational activities and travel and spending impacts in Virginia and the region. Forestry tourism and recreation provides economic impacts with activities such as freshwater fishing, hunting, hiking and camping, wildlife watching, and others. The forested landscape brings important environmental services and other social economic benefits with improved water quality and flood control, air quality, conservation, and preservation of scenic beauty.

CHAPTER 3
RESILIENCY

All communities should be able to identify their vulnerabilities and to plan mitigation strategies to minimize the impacts or support long-term recovery efforts, as necessary. Resiliency can affect every aspect of a community – from natural and manmade disasters to economic vitality through business, agriculture, technology, infrastructure, and all the intricate elements that support a community. One vital element of consideration for an area's economy is its economic resiliency to withstand not only job losses through downsizing industries and business closures, but also its resiliency to major disasters such as floods, tornadoes, additional natural events, and other potential economic impacts. The region's economic prosperity is closely tied to its ability to prevent, sustain, and rapidly recover from major disruptions. Basically, there are three ways an area's economy may be impacted: 1) Downturns or other significant events in the national or global economy that may affect demand for locally produced commodities, 2) Downturns in a particular industry that comprise a critical sector of the local economy, and 3) Other external factors such as a natural or manmade disaster, closure of a major employer, and other unforeseen events. Engaging in planning efforts and encouraging community engagement is imperative to prevent, define implementation activities, and alleviate impacts from such events and help mitigate disruptions to the economic base. Therefore, pre-disaster recovery planning is essential to economic resiliency and sustainability. This may include hazard mitigation plans, comprehensive plans, economic development strategies, and other local and regional plans. Establishing information and communication networks for various stakeholders and leaders in the region is also critical.

PLANNING FOR AND IMPLEMENTING RESILIENCE

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) has outlined the following to help establish a general framework and to identify specific activities or projects in a given area to mitigate the effects of an economic occurrence:

- *Identify persistent economic challenges or deficiencies*: What are the region's economic vulnerabilities? Is there a specific asset deficiency (e.g., poorly educated workforce, excessive dependency on a single employer or industry, lack of transportation access/options, low levels of broadband availability and/or adoption, impediments hindering a firm's ability to gain access to the financial resources required to advance its business, major employers located in vulnerable areas)?
- *Prepare for disruptions by identifying "early-warning" tools*: Does the region have an "anticipatory focus" that will help it react quickly when confronted with potential disruptions and challenges? Do community leaders employ mechanisms (e.g., scorecards, state of the region reports, economic dashboards) that offer a regularly updated assessment of the regional economy?
- *Build mechanisms that create flexibility*: Do the local governments have detailed and tested disaster response and recovery plans? Do the local governments and major employers have access to "surge" capital/credit resources? Does the region have a good handle on its assets to help identify emerging economic sectors that may lead to a diversified economic base? Has the region established mechanisms to realign and retrain its workforce post-disruption?
- *Promote a positive vision for the region*: Is the messaging about the region's assets and opportunities positive (to encourage investments in both times of tranquility and disruption)? Do stakeholders understand that actions that build resilience are good for the regional economy whether or not an economic shock occurs, and have they reached consensus on a set of actions they can take proactively? Are economic shocks used as an opportunity to reassess the region's economy?

Further, the EDA describes steady-state initiatives which tend to be long-term efforts to bolster the community or region's ability to withstand or avoid a shock. Responsive initiatives can include establishing capabilities for the economic development organization to be responsive to the region's recovery needs following an incident. This information and more are available on EDA's website at: https://www.eda.gov/ceds/content/economic-resilience.htm.

Some examples of *steady-state* economic resilience initiatives provided by EDA include:

- Comprehensive planning efforts to define and implement resilience and may be integrated or aligned with other planning efforts (i.e., hazard mitigation plans);
- Diversifying the industrial base and target emerging clusters/industries that build on the region's unique assets and strengths, and provide stability during downturns that may impact any single cluster or industry;
- Adapting business retention and expansion programs to assist firms with economic recovery post-disruption;
- Building a resilient workforce that can better shift between jobs or industries when their core employment is threatened through job-driven skills strategies and support organizations;
- Maintaining geographic information systems (GIS) that link with municipal business licenses, tax information, and other business establishment data bases to track local and regional sites.
- Ensuring redundancy in telecommunications and broadband networks to protect commerce and public safety in the event of natural or manmade disasters;
- Promoting business continuity and preparedness (i.e., ensuring businesses understand their vulnerabilities—including supply chains—in the face of disruptions and are prepared to take actions to resume operations after an event); and
- Employ safe development practices in business districts and surrounding communities. Strategies may include locating structures outside of floodplains, preserving natural lands that act as buffers from storms, and protecting downtowns and other existing development from the impacts of extreme weather.

Some examples of *responsive* economic resilience initiatives from EDA include:

- Conducting pre-disaster recovery planning to define key stakeholders, roles, responsibilities, and key actions;
- Establishing a process for regular communication, monitoring, and updating of business community needs and issues;
- Being able to rapidly contact key local, regional, state, and federal officials to communicate business sector needs and coordinate impact assessment efforts; and
- Implementing coordination mechanisms and leadership succession plans for short, intermediate, and long-term recovery needs.

In order to create safer, stronger communities, careful consideration of a business or community's ability to sustain a disaster should include preparation, planning, response, and recovery to help minimize significant impacts from emergency events. This includes public health, safety, environment, food availability, natural resources, wildlife, and financial strength. To help further community sustainability in the wake of natural and environmental disasters, the Insurance Institute for Business and Home Safety provides information and assistance to small businesses for business continuity planning. Although this cannot completely prevent impact from an event, a plan makes for a smoother, faster recovery and helps the area's economy by minimizing the overall effect of business loss. The toolkit includes eight modules for consideration in the OFB-EZ (Open for Business) planning process: Know risks, both internal and external; know operations; know employees; know key customers, contacts, suppliers, and vendors; know information technology capabilities; know insurance coverage and finances; know where to go for help; and know when to update and test the plan. If possible, a business should identify an alternate location and assemble emergency supplies in advance. This toolkit may be accessed at: www.disastersafety.org/open-for-business. For tips and more information to identify known risks in a given zip code, visit: https://www.disastersafety.org/.

Leaders from the government, private sector, academia, and Virginia Sustainable Building Network (VSBN) came together in 2014 to form *Resilient Virginia* to accelerate resiliency planning in Virginia communities. According to the Resilient Virginia organization, "*Resiliency* is defined as the capacity to maintain or regain functionality and vitality in the face of natural, climate-induced, or man-made stressors and disturbances. In the short term, resiliency strategies can provide communities with tools for bouncing back more quickly from extreme weather or other high-impact events. For the long term, resiliency planning provides communities with the ability to adapt and thrive despite changing environmental, social, and economic conditions." A Community Resiliency Initiative was launched in Virginia to provide residents, businesses and governments with the capability to survive and recover from these events. Resiliency brings together many areas of community which often operate independently. These may include: the built environment, ecosystem services and the natural environment, energy production, food and water security, emergency preparedness, economic risk management, health services, transportation, communication, and education.

Resilient Virginia serves the critical function of bringing together national, state, and local resiliency expertise and resources, and acting as a dissemination point from which these resources can be distributed statewide. Resilient Virginia utilizes its expert staff and partner resources to reach out to normally disaggregated groups within a community and engage them in

mutually beneficial educational initiatives focused on resiliency plan development. By educating diverse elements of communities about resiliency components and building collaborative relationships, community structure will be strengthened. These communities can then be more successful in continuing to function as centers of economic production and sources of essential services and resources despite the challenges they may encounter. As depicted by Resilient Virginia, communities may face a variety of issues with man-made threats, health emergencies and pandemics; globalization of businesses, national recessions and shifting state economics that result in societal stresses; and infrastructure failures that may impact water/sewer systems, loss of power, and deficient bridges that may affect business operations, transportation, schools, and communities. A basic agreement considers the need for awareness and community engagement to strengthen and sustain resilience, building knowledge and talent base for resilience, facilitating community-based resilience assessment by developing an all-hazards methodology and toolkit, and enabling community-based resilient infrastructure initiatives to address these needs. More information is available at: https://resilientvirginia.org/.

In February 2019, the Appalachian Regional Commission released the "*Strengthening Economic Resilience in Appalachia*" report, providing best practices and strategies to address economic resilience in the region. Within the report many economic models and solutions were examined. Based on literature reviews and case studies, surveys and interviews, and the work of an advisory team, eight best practices were determined along with strategies for each:

1) Invest in education, technology, infrastructure, and broadband.
    a) Develop broadband accessibility throughout the region.
    b) Invest in infrastructure including public water, sewer, energy accessibility, and multimodal transportation.
    c) Foster education opportunities from preschool to post-secondary for a wide range of community members.
    d) Develop "learn and earn" models of workforce training where workforce training and academic classes are offered around a specific topic, such as local food or renewable energy.
    e) Grow opportunities around technology in multiple sectors.
2) Engage the community over the long term.
    a) Engage under-engaged community members – those affected by decisions need to be part of the solution.
    b) Create ongoing, neutral spaces for the community to gather across sectors and for all community members to feel valued, welcomed, and heard.
    c) Consistently share ideas, challenges, and successes with the broader community.
    d) Cultivate leadership and trust for long-term efforts and success. Create the space where leadership can come forward and flourish to create change together as a community.
    e) Develop a consistent forum for community engagement around a specific focus with a long-term facilitator or convener.
3) Create communities where people want to live.
    a) Grow community health and wellness. Focus on creating a high quality of life with strong community health and wellness, which attracts new businesses and residents.
    b) Cultivate a strong sense of place and pride in place through storytelling, arts, and cultural heritage opportunities, and value them as building blocks for a new economy.
    c) Welcome new and diverse people into communities. Encourage new residents, including telecommuters, young families, and immigrants.
    d) Strengthen anchor institutions and businesses that strengthen thriving communities (i.e., colleges, universities, hospitals, elder/youth co-care opportunities).
4) Grow youth engagement and next-generation leadership.
    a) Identify, mentor, and support young leaders for the next generation.
    b) Keep bright, young people in communities, and bring smart, young people from outside of communities in and welcome them.
    c) Engage youth in arts, culture, and community-building opportunities
    d) Welcome new ideas, bold visions, and unlikely partnerships.
    e) Develop programs by youth, for youth.
    f) Build the capacity of local leaders to build the economy, and grow and engage local, diverse leadership across a community.
5) Identify and grow the assets in the community and region.
    a) Tell the stories of the community, especially positive stories, to change the narrative.
    b) Foster interconnection between rural and urban areas, in broader regions around resources, as well as food, recreation, and energy supply connections.
    c) Identify and promote assets within the region and community through partnerships.

d) Share resources across the region such as marketing resources or research into regional trends.
e) Link multiple destinations and activities to create more local business opportunities and encourage longer visits.
f) Build local philanthropic opportunities, such as creating a community foundation, so that regions can capture and invest in economic development locally.

6) Build networks and foster collaboration.
   a) Use a systems approach to develop a long-term vision and explore community opportunities and needs to grow sectors, develop assets, and foster regional collaboration.
   b) Cultivate grassroots efforts, community leadership, and effective communication using different tools.
   c) Develop networks of communities, both local and regional, working towards a shared understanding of the opportunities, gaps, strengths, and unique elements of each community.
   d) Identify and grow a dedicated long-term entity or anchor organization(s).
   e) Work across silos and sectors; encourage entrepreneurial spirit and mindsets for project growth and development.
   f) Develop long-term staffing capacity to move ideas forward and foster economic transformation.
7) Move multiple sectors forward for economic development and grow value chains.
   a) Connect multiple opportunities to grow a value chain around what is being created locally.
   b) Build grassroots support for economic diversification, and collaborate with public and private sectors.
   c) Promising sectors include: advanced manufacturing, health care, renewable energy, outdoor recreation, local food systems and agriculture, technology and others.
   d) Connect to regional markets for sales of products and services.
   e) Develop a coordinated strategy for economic growth.
   f) Learn how other communities and regions build economic growth and share ideas.
8) Cultivate entrepreneurs and develop resources for business start-ups.
   a) Create entrepreneurial ecosystems with locally centered markets.
   b) Develop entrepreneur resources, business plan competitions, and opportunities to grow local businesses and access capital.
   c) Connect with schools, colleges, and universities for training, mentoring, and research opportunities.
   d) Advance possibilities for workforce training in specific sectors and industries, including for regional opportunities and displaced workers.
   e) Use social enterprise resources and tools to develop community-based businesses.
   f) Develop opportunities for remote work and telecommuting.

The analyses utilized for this report explored demographic/mobility variables, economic/industry variables, and community/health variables. A second statistical analysis examined a spatial econometric model, allowing for spillovers of economic processes across county lines. In addition, ten case study areas – seven in Appalachia and three in other areas across the country – were selected for further insight as to how communities are evolving their approach to economic development. The accompanying practitioner guidebook is provided with detailed best practices and strategies. The full report is available at www.arc.gov/resilience.

Historically in the West Piedmont Economic Development District, there has been a long dependence on manufacturing employment. The region remains at 18.3% employment in the manufacturing sector, nearly three times higher than the state rate of 6.4%. With the economic diversification throughout the district, the service sector has become the largest employment area at 51.8% in 2017.The third highest employment sector is retail trade at 13.4%. However, these jobs are typically low-wage, require low skills, and often have much higher turnover rates. The region has become somewhat more resilient with the variety and abundance of workforce training opportunities for higher wage, higher skilled jobs, leading to career pathways. The district also fosters entrepreneurship and innovation with the growth and development of small businesses, as well as the support and availability of significant resources to encourage this growth.

Within the region, the *West Piedmont Multijurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan* provides strategic planning and mitigation strategies for natural disaster events. Initially developed in 2006 in conjunction with the Virginia Department of Emergency Management and the Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA), the Plan was last updated in 2016. Required by the Disaster Mitigation Act of 2000 (DMA2K), hazard mitigation plans help local governments determine their risks and vulnerabilities and identify mitigation projects that will reduce these risks. The most important part of the plan is the Hazard Identification and Risk Assessment (HIRA) which provides a detailed assessment of hazards that could affect the region and its localities as well as their potential impacts. The mitigation strategy section of the plan outlines actions needed to reduce the impacts outlined in the HIRA. Of the natural disasters examined, the Plan determined the

region was most vulnerable to flooding and winter storm impacts. Therefore, these were listed as high priority events. Based on past events, wind storms were classified as a medium-high priority. Implementation of the projects listed in the plan is crucial to the success of mitigation efforts in the region. The Multijurisdictional Hazard Mitigation Plan is available at: wppdc.org/content/wppdc/uploads/PDF/docs_publications/community_planning/2016_wpied_hmp_update_final.pdf.

During 2018, many records were set in the region for high temperatures, flooding and rainfall, and snow accumulations. Various storms resulted in record rainfall and significant snowfall. Nearly 62 inches of rain fell in Danville, 70.8 inches fell in Patrick County, and a record of nearly 73 inches fell in Martinsville/Henry County during the year. All localities in the region became eligible for federal funding assistance following approval of the disaster declarations for Hurricane Florence, which occurred in September, and Tropical Storm Michael which severely impacted the region in October. The City of Danville sustained approximately $8.7 million in damages as a result of the tropical storm; Pittsylvania County had more than $7.5 million in damages. The Small Business Administration (SBA) provided an opportunity for low-interest loans to some of these residents, business owners, and nonprofits with property damage caused by the October storm and flooding. Over the course of the year, each locality of West Piedmont had major impacts including high winds, downed trees, power outages, flooding, and landslides, as well as the tragic loss of life, property damages and economic impacts incurred.

One major threat to society and our workforce is the growing Opioid crisis. Martinsville and Henry County were ranked second highest in the Commonwealth for overdoses in February 2019. This widespread epidemic threatens lives with addiction, overdoses, and deaths. It has strongly affected the working age population (those 24 to 65), shrinking this age group, and shortening the life span of Americans. Early education is one preventative measure. Experimental treatments and interventions are also being utilized to help curb this dangerous addiction. Across the U.S. and within the region, efforts continue to fight the battle against such powerful, addictive drugs and their long-term effects.

Some organizational activities have occurred in the region to help combat this significant impact to communities throughout the West Piedmont District. Through an ARC grant, Patrick Henry Community College in partnership with Mountain Empire Community College in Big Stone Gap, VA, is leading an effort to identify economic approaches to address and ameliorate the opioid crisis. In addition, the West Piedmont Health District in collaboration with Virginia Tech is conducting a broad-based community effort to research the opioid crisis in the region. Through Piedmont Community Services, education and outreach programs are being introduced and extended to students in Martinsville and Henry County schools. Funding for the 10-session course being offered is provided by grants from the Virginia Foundation for Healthy Youth and the Rotary Foundation.

There are several federal and state programs in place to help offset the impact of job losses due to industry and business closures. To assist with industry closings and large lay-offs, there are multiple state and federal programs available to affected workers. The *Trade Adjustment Assistance* (TAA), a federal retraining benefit that pays community college and trade school tuition, applies to employees who have been displaced by foreign competition. Many programs are available through the Workforce Development Boards and partnering agencies that serve the region.

In addition, Virginia's *Rapid Response* program, administered by the Virginia Employment Commission, provides a variety of services to workers involved in mass layoffs or plant closings. Services include job search assistance, help with unemployment documents, financial management seminars, and help locating skills training. Rapid Response is administered on a state level, but operated on a local level. Services are tailored, based on the needs of affected employees, and at no cost to the employer or affected employees. More details regarding these programs are discussed in Chapter 2.

Several federal agencies, as well as state agencies, collaborate to provide support and enhance the capacity of multiple partners for disaster recovery. Some federal partners include the EDA, FEMA, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. They provide long-term recovery support strategies and implementation guidelines. A recent study showed that, for every dollar spent in pre-disaster planning, a savings of $6 was realized in recovery efforts. These statistics are important to keep in mind and support the significance of preparedness, quick responsiveness, and rapid recovery in critical times of need to sustain economic resiliency.

CHAPTER 4

IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

Regional Vision

As a region, we envision a diverse, business-friendly environment to encourage new and expanding businesses; to promote an entrepreneurial ecosystem; to ensure a well-educated, highly skilled workforce; and to provide an all-encompassing infrastructure to facilitate development including transportation, water and sewer services, utilities, and state-of-the-art telecommunications. We advocate regional collaboration to create significant partnerships building upon regional strengths and opportunities. We treasure our natural resources and cultural heritage and welcome a robust tourism market to share these precious assets. We support vibrant communities and an enhanced quality of life. We serve to highlight the positive attributes of the region, defining our image as an extraordinary place to live, learn, work, play, invest, and do business.

Program Implementation

The West Piedmont Planning District Commission (PDC) is the region's facilitator, promoting regional collaboration since its inception in March 1970. As a regional organization, we advocate cooperation and strong partnerships to create a network of stakeholders to address the weaknesses and challenges, as we seek strengths and opportunities to resolve relevant issues.

The PDC will continue to focus on our region's challenges, such as unemployment, lower income levels, poverty, an aging population, an aging infrastructure, and workforce development. We will continue to assist with the pursuit of grant opportunities and other funding resources to help implement actions to alleviate the challenges. Additionally, the PDC/EDD will partner with the network of regional stakeholders to promote economic development and much needed workforce training, advance transportation initiatives, foster entrepreneurship, support the agricultural community, and enhance tourism opportunities, among many other efforts.

Each and every goal is important to the region as we move forward to innovate and diversify the economy. However, the primary focus will be workforce development as we strive to build a highly skilled, motivated workforce to meet the needs of the new economy. Many activities link with the GO (Growth and Opportunity) Virginia initiative, as noted in the following.

There are nine GO Virginia regions across the Commonwealth. As part of the designated Region 3 – Southern Virginia GO Virginia or *SoVaGO*, the region comprises the West Piedmont PDC - with the exception of Franklin County, the Southside PDC, and the Commonwealth Regional Council (from Patrick County to Amelia County). Franklin County is integrated to the north with *Region 2*, encompassing the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission, New River Valley Regional Commission, and Region 2000 Local Government Council in Lynchburg. Recently, Growth & Diversification Plans were developed by the Regional Councils and submitted to the statewide GO Virginia Council for approval. The Region 2 Plan may be found at: https://econdev.vt.edu/content/dam/econdev_vt_edu/govirginia_documentation/GOVA_region2_gandd.pdf. The Region 3 plan may be accessed at: http://www.southsidepdc.org/index.php/downloads/go-virginia/47-go-virginia-region-3-growth-diversification-plan-1/file.

Within the Region 2 Growth and Diversification Plan, four priority industry clusters are identified: 1) manufacturing, 2) life sciences and health care, 3) food and beverage processing, and 4) emerging technology and IT. The Plan notes that more than 100,000 jobs, or almost one third of the total jobs in the region, are provided by these industries which are expected to grow at a higher rate

than the rest of the economy. Further, the report indicates that across the four clusters the median hourly wage is $22 and generate nearly $10 billion in economic activity. In addition, the Plan identifies these core strategies in four focus areas:

1) Talent or workforce development, attraction, and retention, which includes strengthening the pipeline from all levels of education to careers in the region, increasing the completion of relevant degrees, increasing the knowledge and access to complementary workforce and training services, and increasing employer engagement across the system.
2) Collaborative development of sites and buildings, which includes improving information about the supply of real estate and market demand, incentivizing collaboration among localities at all stages of development, and building partnerships to leverage the development potential of special assets like research facilities.
3) Entrepreneurship and business development, which includes growing the presence of and access to capital investors, expanding and better coordinating programs for mentorship and business training, and improving awareness of existing capital, mentorship and training resources.
4) Technology development, which includes increasing investments for innovative technologies, expanding rates of research commercialized in the private sector, supporting talent attraction efforts focused on individuals with technological skills, and growing the number of individuals entering training and education programs that develop technological skills.

The Region 3 Council reported that our greatest opportunity is to align our workforce talent development with our economic development in areas where we already have substantial activity and competitive advantage, transforming our existing success stories into region-wide advancement. The Council also advised that our greatest gap is an aging and shrinking population. We must retain, train, and grow a sustainably sized, well qualified workforce that meets the needs of our existing and future businesses, enabling our region to thrive. The plan delves into an analysis of three critical opportunities:

1) Workforce talent development and recruitment, including opportunities for sector partnerships, career pathways, work based learning, talent recruitment, and broadband infrastructure development;
2) Sectoral development in four target sectors, including business services and IT data centers, advanced manufacturing and materials, high-value natural resource products, and health care; and
3) Cyber infrastructure, including novel approaches to regional collaboration in infrastructure development and opportunities to provide incentives for “middle mile” and “last mile” network completion.

The plan also includes opportunities for rejuvenated regional cohesion in:

- Entrepreneurial and small business development initiatives,
- Quality of life and regional branding enhancement,
- Pooling of resources for region-wide infrastructure improvement, and
- More systematic focus on target employment sectors and career pathways.

The commitment of the local governments of the Planning District is evidenced by the formation and support of economic development organizations—both local and regional, past efforts to complete the requirements of the Virginia Community Certification Program formerly administered by the Virginia Department of Economic Development, past receipt of designation as Redevelopment Areas by the Economic Development Administration, the purchase and development of industrial parks, the construction of shell buildings, and the expenditure of millions of dollars to develop utility infrastructures to support industrial users.

This commitment is further evidenced by the local support for the Planning District's Economic Development District designation. With the unanimous support of its member jurisdictions, the West Piedmont Planning District was designated an Economic Development District in July 1992 under the provisions of Title IV of the Public Works and Economic Development Act of 1965, as amended.

In 1998, the localities of the West Piedmont Planning District agreed upon joint participation in the Commonwealth of Virginia’s Regional Competitiveness Program. Through this Program, the localities established a regional partnership, known as the West Piedmont Regional Alliance, for the purpose of effecting positive change with regard to the economic competitiveness of the region. The Alliance, through a collaborative public-private process, developed its first regional strategic economic development plan, which focused attention on critical key issues of regional economic competitiveness and identified and prioritized actions which should be taken. A plan of action for a five-year period was identified, along with a list of projects to be implemented. The Regional Competitiveness Program is no longer operational. However, the plan of action was matched with the CEDS document and this work effort has been carried forth through the Economic Development District planning effort.

The resources identified in the "*SWOT Analysis*," will be devoted to the pursuit of economic development in order to benefit all citizens of the region, especially the unemployed and underemployed. As in the past, local governments will pursue other possible resources to help fund projects designed to meet development goals, such as grants from the Economic Development Administration (EDA), the Virginia Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD), the Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC), the USDA--Rural Development, and other funding agencies.

The changes in the region's economy, the progress toward solving the existing problems and minimizing weaknesses and threats, and a review of the strengths and opportunities for economic development have been analyzed annually as part of the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS). As part of the planning process, the projects within the Priority Projects List have been identified to help meet the economic development goals. In identifying and ranking the projects, consideration was given to the number of jobs the projects would create or save, overall impact on the region, cost effectiveness, and the likelihood of funds being available to finance the projects. Input was provided by each member government in the West Piedmont Planning District. The CEDS Priority Projects List represents projects or programs identified during the planning process in order of priority in which they were ranked as well as pertinent information such as possible funding sources, estimated costs, etc.

There are three project categories. "*Priority 1*" projects are those construction or implementation projects which are in the advanced stages of planning and/or development. "*Priority 2*" projects are construction/implementation projects still in formative stages of planning and which are not otherwise proceeding towards immediate implementation. "*Priority 3*" projects are non-construction, non-implementation projects of a special economic development purpose and may include special issues studies, surveys, basic data collection and analysis, feasibility studies, and technical assistance.

Within the CEDS Annual Report, "*Project Types"* have been incorporated as part of the project information to provide more project priority details to EDA. Project Types are designated as follows: *Type I* – shovel-ready projects; *Type II* – the project is in the final planning stage; *Type III* – the project is in early planning stage; *Type IV* – other types of projects that utilize grant monies from other sources such as USDA Rural Development, DHCD, ARC, VDOT, etc.; and *Type V* – the project involves technical assistance or studies only.

All projects included in the prioritized list were reviewed at a regularly scheduled monthly meeting of the West Piedmont Planning District Board of Commissioners, which formerly served as the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Committee for the West Piedmont Economic Development District. A copy of the Annual Report is distributed to the Board of Commissioners prior to its consideration for approval in order to provide sufficient time for reviewing not only the list of prioritized projects but also the regional goals, the District's development strategy, and other report components. In conjunction with the review of the Annual Report, the WPPD Regional Economic Development Planner reviews the changes in the District economy with the Board members.

All grant applications submitted to the Economic Development Administration by localities in the West Piedmont Economic Development District are prepared by the District's planning staff in conjunction with local government administrators and their staffs. The EDD staff includes, as a part of each application, the CEDS Committee's statements on (1) how the project, or planning investment, is consistent with the Regional CEDS; (2) the eligibility of the area to receive EDA funds, (3) how the applicant is an active participant in the District's economic development program. These EDA planning investments also must satisfy one or more of EDA's Investment Criteria identified in 13 CFR Section 301.8 which include projects that: ensure collaborative regional innovation, leverage public-private partnerships, advance national strategic priorities, enhance global competitiveness, encourage environmentally sustainable development, and support economic distressed and underserved communities. Each application is reviewed by the Planning District Commission in its capacity as Regional Clearinghouse for Intergovernmental Review in conjunction with Executive Order 12372.

In addition to presenting a prioritized listing of economic development projects, a Program Evaluation for the period from April 1, 2018 through March 31, 2019, has been developed and will be submitted to EDA with the CEDS document. The District's program objectives are provided in a tabular presentation, followed by specific tasks required to achieve these objectives and accomplishments for the year in carrying out these objectives. Many of these objectives have been completed; however, due to the nature of many, they are underway and will be carried forth into the Implementation Plan for the period from April 1, 2019 through March 31, 2020—at which time the District will evaluate its progress in achieving the stated objectives. Some of these objectives include:

- Develop the annual CEDS document update with input from local governments; the CEDS Committee; the CEDS Working Committee, a subset of the full CEDS Committee; business partners; economic development organizations; institutions of higher education; and other pertinent organizations to maintain the EDD status and eligibility of the region
- Provide guidance to local governments in developing a list of prioritized projects for inclusion in the Regional CEDS document
- Continue to evolve in the CEDS process, providing input on document elements and federal regulations pertaining to CEDS requirements
- Continue to receive input from a wide variety of sources including a public review component, published notices, and other public outreach for review and comment
- Continue to update and analyze pertinent demographics, employment, and economic development activities to include business announcements and job losses
- Continue to provide a Regional Geographic Information System (GIS) program for linking data with geographic areas, corridors, and sites to support localities and their economic development organizations, including tourism, agritourism, arts and culture, outdoor recreation, heritage tourism and marketing resources as well as asset-based development
- Continue to provide support and assistance for grant opportunities, developing proposals, preapplications, and applications
- Continue to provide economic development assistance, including administration of the EDA Economic Development District Program, the Appalachian Regional Commission Program, Enterprise Zone Programs, and other strategic regional initiatives

The U.S. Department of Commerce, Economic Development Administration (EDA), guidelines require that each Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) document includes an evaluation tool for the implementation/action plan. These objectives and other benchmarks will be used as a means to evaluate tasks and activities.

COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY PRIORITY PROJECTS

April 1, 2019 - March 31, 2020

PROJECT	PRIORITY /TYPE	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Summit View Business Park Near Rocky Mount--Franklin County	1/I	Development of new business park near Rocky Mount, including utilities, site grading, and other amenities	VTC USDA-RD DHCD EDA VDOT Local	$5,000,000 $1,800,000 $700,000 $3,000,000 $5,000,000 $12,000,000	$27,500,000
Franklin County/Rocky Mount Industrial Park--Franklin County/ Town of Rocky Mount	1/I	Extension of industrial access, water and sewer, site improvements, completion of loop access road, and rail spur to serve development of heavy industrial site	EDA Local Rail Acc Funds VTC	$1,000,000 $1,282,156 $300,000 $812,500	$3,394,656
Smith Farm Regional Park Site Development--Franklin County	1/I	Develop recreation area at Smith Farm Regional Park facility	Local DCR DGIF AEP	$260,000 $80,000 $80,000 $80,000	$500,000
Ferrum Downtown Improvements--Franklin County	1/I	Develop sidewalks, railroad pedestrian bridge, "Main Street" scale improvements	DHCD VDOT Local	$1,387,000 $708,000 $284,000	$2,379,000
Park System Improvements--Franklin County	1/II	Improvements to public park units in Franklin County per the existing Capital Improvements Program	DCR Local VDOT	$150,000 $3,000,000 $400,000	$3,550,000
Last-Mile Broadband Expansion--Franklin County	1/I	Study and implement a last-mile solution to provide County businesses and consumers fast, accessible, and affordable telecommunications service	EDA Local State Private	$500,000 $100,000 $200,000 $1,000,000	$1,800,000
Franklin County Commerce Park Waterline/Sewer--Franklin County	1/I	Extension or construction of public water and sewer service to Franklin County Commerce Park	Local EDA DHCD USDA-RD	$2,000,000 $2,000,000 $700,000 $3,300,000	$8,000,000
Public Water System Development-Phase III--Franklin County	1/II	Continuing phased development of county water system infrastructure	USDA-RD Local	$24,085,590 $400,000	$24,485,590
Philpott Lake Recreation Area Development--Franklin County	1/I	Complete development of improvements/enhancements of recreational areas at Philpott Lake	USACE Local VTC	$200,000 $200,000 $100,000	$500,000
Shell Building--Franklin County/Rocky Mount	1/I	Construct shell building of 70,000+ SF to attract industry	EDA VTC Local	$1,000,000 $1,000,000 $1,500,000	$3,500,000
Natural Gas Service Extension--Franklin County	1/I	Complete service extension of Roanoke Gas to Franklin County/Rocky Mount	VTC USDA-RD Local Private	$3,000,000 $3,000,000 $3,000,000 $3,500,000	$12,500,000

PROJECT	PRIORITY /TYPE	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Tourism Enhancement Program--Franklin County	1/I	Produce a research and marketing initiative to promote Franklin County as a tourist destination in conjunction with the Crooked Road, VTC, and Southside Tourism Initiative	EDA Local	$25,000 $20,000	$45,000
Franklin County/Rocky Mount Industrial Park--Franklin County/ Town of Rocky Mount	1/I	Development of industrial sites, water and sewer, site improvements, and rail spur to serve expansion of existing heavy industrial site (This project is ready to bid.)	Local EDA VTC	$1,200,000 $600,000 $600,000	$2,400,000
Natural Gas Service Extension--Franklin County/Town of Rocky Mount	1/III	Complete 12-mile service extension of Roanoke Gas to Franklin County/Rocky Mount Industrial Park to promote industrial development	VTC USDA-RD Local Private	$3,000,000 $3,000,000 $3,000,000 $3,500,000	$12,500,000
Pigg River Heritage Trail--Town of Rocky Mount and Franklin County	1/I	Development of Heritage Trail for tourism, recreation, and quality of life enhancement in support of economic development	VDOT DCR Local	$275,000 $125,000 $75,000	$475,000
Economic Restructuring Via Heritage Tourism Development--Town of Rocky Mount	1/II	Create supporting structures and events to complement the growing culture and economy surrounding the Harvester Performance Center and Crooked Road Heritage Music Trail	Local EDA VTC	$800,000 $600,000 $600,000	$2,000,000
Interconnection with Western VA Regional Water Authority--Town of Rocky Mount	1/II	Connect the Town of Rocky Mount's water system with the Western VA Regional Water Authority lines via a 1.4-mile extension of the Town's water system	Local EDA	$500,000 $1,000,000	$1,500,000
Commonwealth Crossing Business Centre Phase II--Henry County/City of Martinsville	1/I	Additional expansion of regional industrial park including environmental measures, grading, utility installation, AEP substation, natural gas extended to site, stormwater management, and road construction	VTC Local Other	$15,000,000 $4,500,000 $6,500,000	$26,000,000
Lower Smith River Treatment Facility Renovations--Henry County	1/II	Renovation of the Lower Smith River Treatment Facility to provide service to industries, businesses, and residents	Local Other	$24,000,000	$24,000,000
Virginia Avenue Transportation Enhancement Project--Henry County	1/I	Multi-phased streetscape enhancement project designed to improve the Virginia Avenue (US Route 220) corridor	TEA-21 Other	$701,000 $175,250	$876,250
County River Access Points/ Trails Project--Henry County	1/I	Various river access and trails projects including extension of the Dick and Willie Trail to SRSC	TEA-21 State Other	$750,000 $250,000 $500,000	$1,500,000
Patriot Centre at Beaver Creek Phase III Expansion--Henry County	1/I	Grading and infrastructure improvements Lot 11 - 18	EDA State VDOT Other	$1,000,000 $1,250,000 $750,000 $2,000,000	$5,000,000
Patriot Centre Expansion to Bryant Property Phase 1--Henry County	1/I	Grading, access road, and utility ext.	EDA State VDOT Other	$1,000,000 $2,250,000 $750,000 $4,000,000	$8,000,000
Shell Airport Hangar Project--Henry County	1/III	Development of a speculative hangar for aviation-related business at Blue Ridge Regional Airport	Local State EDA	$800,000 $150,000 $250,000	$1,200,000
Extension of Public Water Service on Route 58 West--Henry County	1/II	Extension of water service along Route 58 West corridor to Mayo River and adjacent residential areas and to Blue Ridge Airport	USDA RD	$7,900,000	$7,900,000

PROJECT	PRIORITY /TYPE	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Community Development Project, Small Towns Collaborative--Henry County	1/II	Develop trails, recreational activities, cultural opportunities, and curb appeal along Smith River corridor in Bassett/ Fieldale	CDBG DCR USDA Other	$700,000 $75,000 $200,000 $2,025,000	$3,000,000
Community Development Project, TBD--Henry County	1/I	Housing rehabilitation	CDBG Local	$1,000,000 $500,000	$1,500,000
Interstate 73 Phase 1--Henry County	1/III	Construction of first phase of I-73, including design, construction of an approx. 10 mile section b/w State line and US-58/US-220 Bypass	TBD	$500,000,000	$500,000,000
Revitalization of Uptown Business District--City of Martinsville	1/III	Incentivize small businesses (interior makeover/elevator)	EDA	$900,000	$900,000
Revitalization of Uptown Business District--City of Martinsville	1/II	Construct/ retrofit condos in Uptown	EDA DHCD VHDA City	$1,000,000 $300,000 $500,000 $200,000	$2,000,000
Neighborhood Revitalization Project West End/Pine Hall Rd Neighborhood--Martinsville	1/IV	Housing rehab; creation of community space	CDBG Local	$1,000,000 $250,000	$1,250,000
Community Development Project - CDBG - Martinsville Area & Central Business District--City of Martinsville	1/II	Purchase blighted properties on Starling Avenue and adaptively reuse	HUD/NSP HTC	$700,000 $300,000	$1,000,000
Southside Community Park Upgrading--City of Martinsville	1/III	Upgrade existing four (4) fields to accommodate youth and collegiate softball and baseball tournaments. This would include new lighting where necessary, upgrade concession stand and new sports surfaces.	DCR EDA ARC VTC Other	$200,000 $600,000 $150,000 $750,000 $1,300,000	$3,000,000
Community Development Project - CDBG - Martinsville Area & Central Business District--City of Martinsville	1/IV	Purchase blighted properties, prepare site for development (Draper - West Church Street) - City of Martinsville	Brownfield EDA City	$400,000 $325,000 $100,000	$825,000
Community Development Project - CDBG - Martinsville Area & Central Business District--City of Martinsville	1/III	Rives Road Site Development- full site development including A & E, site grading	EDA	$1,400,000	$1,400,000
Community Development Projects--City of Martinsville	1/III	Further develop lots- at Clearview Business Park to prepare for companies- Parcels 2 & 5	EDA	$750,000	$750,000
Community Development Project - CDBG - Martinsville Area & Central Business District--City of Martinsville	1/I	Adaptive reuse of historic building on Fayette Street- Paradise Inn and lots surrounding it	VHDA EDA CDBG Grants	$800,000 $1,000,000 $1,000,000 $1,000,000	$3,800,000
Community Development Develop-ment Projects--City of Martinsville	1/V	Recruit manufacturers of Clean Energy Components to Martinsville Area and Enterprise Zone	EDA	$100,000	$100,000

PROJECT	PRIORITY /TYPE	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Community Development Project - CDBG - Martinsville Area & Central Business District--City of Martinsville	1/III	Upgrade, widen, and landscape Beaver Street from Fayette Street to Memorial Blvd - City of Martinsville	MAP-21 VHDA	$800,000 $50,000	$850,000
Community Development Project - CDBG - Martinsville Area & Central Business District--City of Martinsville	1/I	Prepare City-owned site at corner of Fayette & Beaver Sts for residential, educational or commercial development - Martinsville Area and Central Business District	EDA Local CDBG Grants	$300,000 $200,000 $1,000,000 $2,000,000	$3,500,000
Community Development Project - CDBG - Martinsville Area & Central Business District--City of Martinsville	1/II	Write arts & cultural plan for Arts & Cultural District	NEA City ARC	$25,000 $25,000 $32,000	$82,000
Community Development Project - CDBG - Martinsville Area & Central Business District--City of Martinsville	1/II	Enhance Fayette Area Business District facades/greenscape/ economic revitalization - Fayette Street from Moss Street to Memorial Blvd. Planning stipend for Citizens Design - CIRD	CDBG Local CIRD Match - Ink	$1,000,000 $1,000,000 $35,000 $10,000	$2,045,000
Community Development Project - CDBG - Martinsville Area & Central Business District--City of Martinsville	1/IV	Purchase blighted properties - prepare site for redevelop-ment (202 Cleveland Avenue) - City of Martinsville	Brownfield EDA City	$900,000 $500,000 $500,000	$1,900,000
Community Development Project - CDBG - Martinsville Area & Central Business District--City of Martinsville	1/III	Work with partners to develop an amphitheater on Depot Street	NEA ARC	$50,000 $50,000	$100,000
Community Development Project - CDBG - Martinsville Area & Central Business District--City of Martinsville	1/III	Acquire and redevelop properties along commercial corridor for reuse	ARC CDBG EDA	$250,000 $2,000,000 $1,000,000	$3,250,000
Community Development Project - CDBG - Martinsville Area & Central Business District--City of Martinsville	1/IV	Rives Theatre renovations	IRF ARC HTC	$600,000 $200,000 $300,000	$1,100,000
Community Development Project - CDBG - Martinsville Area & Central Business District--City of Martinsville	1/III	Commonwealth Corridor Enhancement & Pedestrian linkages to Uptown & Fayette Street	VDOT CDBG	$1,000,000 $500,000	$1,500,000
Community Development Project - CDBG - Martinsville Area & Central Business District--City of Martinsville	1/III	Purchase of West Church Street property, complete feasibility study, adaptive reuse	IRF CDBG	$500,000 $500,000	$1,000,000
Community Development Project - CDBG - Martinsville Area & Central Business District--City of Martinsville	1/III	Purchase of Main Street property, complete feasibility study, adaptive reuse	IRF CDBG	$500,000 $500,000	$1,000,000

PROJECT	PRIORITY /TYPE	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	TOTAL
MINet Fiber Optic Expansion-- City of Martinsville	1/III	Citywide expansion of MINet Martinsville fiber optic system to reach businesses and homes	EDA Other Local	$2,000,000 $11,000,000 $7,500,000	$20,500,000
Community Development Project - Hooker Field Upgrades-- City of Martinsville	1/III	Upgrades to the concession, seating, and restroom areas at Hooker Field - covered seating, ADA compliant restrooms expanded press box/concession/office space	ARC DRC OTHER	$200,000 $500,000 $1,000,000	$1,700,000
Virginia Museum of Natural History-- City of Martinsville	1/II	Construct Outdoor Education Pavilion in rear of VMNH, to include exhibits interpreting eastern North American forest ecology	EDA DCR Local	$50,000 $50,000 $50,000	$150,000
Wilson Park Upgrading-- City of Martinsville	1/IV	Connection of outdoor education pavilion in rear of VMNH with a bridge, crossing over Oakdale Avenue, along with a 1,000 foot canopy loop into the grand old trees in the park.	EDA ARC Other	$600,000 $800,000 $600,000	$2,000,000
Community Parks Upgrading-- City of Martinsville	1/IV	Upgrade nine (9) existing parks (Baldwin, Beaver Creek, Jackson Street, West End, J. Russel Mason, Chatham Heights, Cole & Carol St, Victor A. Lester, Spruce St.) to improve accessibility and safety. This would include new lighting where necessary, concession stands, age-appropriate playground equipment and new playing surfaces.	DCR ARC EDA Local	$200,000 $200,000 $300,000 $800,000	$1,500,000
US 58 Expansion--Patrick County	1/I	Upgrade US 58 to four lanes from Stuart to I-77	State	$556,000,000	$556,000,000
Sidewalks/Multiuse Trail Phase I MOD--Patrick County	1/II	Construct sidewalks along Business US 58 from School to Business District/Trail from Community Center to Business District	Local/ VDOT DHCD	$3,000,000	$3,000,000
Mayo River Rail Trail Phase III-- Patrick County	1/II	Extension of existing Mayo River Rail Trail	Local/ VDOT/DCR	$2,000,000	$2,000,000
Southern Virginia Multimodal Park Intermodal Facility and Infrastructure-- Town of Hurt/Pittsylvania County	1/II	Engineering and construction of infrastructure development for 800 acre industrial park. Infrastructure development includes water/sewer systems, internal roads, and regional intermodal facility	USDA-RD EDA VTC Local	$2,000,000 $5,000,000 $10,000,000 $10,000,000	$27,000,000
Regional Industrial Mega Park Infrastructure Development--City of Danville & Pittsylvania County	1/I	Engineering, master planning, mega park certification, and infrastructure development for 3,500 acre mega park to serve Danville, Pittsylvania County, Southside VA & North Central NC. Infrastructure development includes regional and interstate water and sewer systems. Future infrastructure improvements will include land, rail, and road.	USDA-RD EPA/STAG EDA VTC Local	$2,000,000 $5,000,000 $5,000,000 $5,000,000 $7,218,000	$24,218,000
Regional Industrial Mega Park Economic Adjustment Strategy-- City of Danville & Pittsylvania County	1/II	Economic Adjustment Strategy - study to develop target industry and marketing strategy for sustainable manufac-turing to replace traditional manufacturing employment lost in the Regional Mega Park area of Southern VA and Northern NC	EDC VTC	$50,000 $50,000	$100,000
Site Improvements at Cane Creek Industrial Park--City of Danville and Pittsylvania County (Lots 6, 7b, 7c, 10)	1/II	Site improvements to include grading and sanitary sewer for Tracts 6, 7b, 7c, and Lot 10	EDA VTC Local	$3,000,000 $1,500,000 $400,000	$4,900,000

PROJECT	PRIORITY /TYPE	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Gretna Area Water Supply System--Town of Gretna/ Pittsylvania County	1/I	Engineering and construction of a new public water supply source and distribution system	EDA/EPA VTC Local	$1,340,000 $1,300,000 $135,000	$2,775,000
Olde Dominion Agricultural Complex--Pittsylvania County	1/I	Regional, multi-purpose agricultural complex including office space, conference facilities, educational space, livestock facilities and ag. related commercial sites	USDA-RD VTC Local	$100,000 $2,000,000 $3,100,000	$5,200,000
Gretna Industrial Park--Town of Gretna/Pittsylvania County	1/I	Construct industrial park road and lots with on-site and off-site utility improvements	EDA VTC Local	$400,000 $1,500,000 $150,000	$2,050,000
Graded Industrial Park Pad Sites--Pittsylvania County	1/I	Create graded pad sites at existing Industrial Park sites. Gretna, Hurt	EDA VTC Local	$700,000 $2,000,000 $300,000	$3,000,000
Energy Efficiency Improvements Public Buildings--Pittsylvania County	1/I	Retrofit existing County buildings to make them more energy efficient	State DOE Local	$450,000 $450,000 $100,000	$1,000,000
Regional Industrial Mega Park--Danville & Pittsylvania County	1/II	Extension of electric service to the Mega Park through AEP. Relocation of an existing 69kV line on Lot 4 and grade pad. Conduct a routing analysis, acquire permit and ROW for new electric service to the park.	EDA Local VTC MEI City County	$1,462,800 $186,400 $1,279,800 $371,000 $500,000 $500,000	$4,300,000
Regional Industrial Mega Park--Danville & Pittsylvania County	1/II	Natural gas engineering and infrastructure development	EDA Local VTC	$3,000,000 $2,000,000 $1,000,000	$6,000,000
Regional Industrial Mega Park Industrial Access Improvements--City of Danville and Pittsylvania County	1/II	Construct an industrial access road, make interchange modifications, and existing road improvements to improve traffic flow to regional industrial Mega Park	FHWA VDOT EDA Local VTC	$10,000,000 $10,000,000 $1,000,000 $13,000,000 $1,000,000	$35,000,000
Commerce Center/Industrial Park, Park Development--Pittsylvania County	1/II	Route 58 West Industrial Park development add 120 acres to existing Brosville Park	EDA Local VTC	$1,500,000 $500,000 $1,000,000	$3,000,000
Extend Water Service for Brosville to Dry Fork--Pittsylvania County	1/II	863 to Dry Fork Commercial/Industrial area and to serve Tunstall Middle School and Tunstall High School	EDA Local VTC	$1,000,000 $500,000 $600,000	$2,100,000
Key Industrial Park - Hurt--Pittsylvania County	1/II	Purchase additional land and infrastructure to 157-acre industrial park	EDA VTC Local	$1,000,000 $1,500,000 $500,000	$3,000,000
Hurt Industrial Park - Hurt--Pittsylvania County	1/II	Develop 600-acre site of former Klopman Mills. Master Plan for property, site and access improvements	EDA USDA-RD VTC	$1,000,000 $1,500,000 $500,000	$3,000,000

PROJECT	PRIORITY /TYPE	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Richmond Danville Trail Connector--City of Danville & Pittsylvania County	1/II	Construction of 12-ft wide natural surface multi-purpose trail to connect 6-mile Richmond-Danville Rail Trail in Pittsylvania County with Dan River Trail System (Danville's Riverwalk) to create 25-mile destination trail	EDA FHWA-DCR Local	$700,000 $150,000 $100,000	$950,000
Revolving Loan Fund--Pittsylvania County	1/II	Establish revolving loan fund to help create and recruit new economic development projects	EDA VTC USDA IDA	$500,000 $250,000 $200,000 $50,000	$1,000,000
Industrial Site Assessments--Pittsylvania County	1/III	Engineering site assessments for new local and regional industrial park projects	EDA Local	$50,000 $50,000	$100,000
Gretna Area Water System Improvement (Leesville Lake)--Pittsylvania County	1/III	Nine mile pipeline raw water intake from Leesville Lake to Gretna Reservoir	EDA VTC Local	$1,000,000 $1,500,000 $500,000	$3,000,000
Water and Sewer System Improvements - Chatham--Pittsylvania County	1/III	1M gallon storage tank Cherrystone Park 12" water line Upgrade water and wastewater plant - gravity sewer	Local EDA VTC Local	$3,900,000 $2,000,000 $2,000,000 $1,000,000	$8,900,000
Commerce Center Industrial Park - Blairs--Pittsylvania County	1/III	Purchase land off U.S. Route 29 & infrastructure development	Local EDA VTC Local	$500,000 $1,000,000 $1,000,000 $1,000,000	$3,500,000
Riverview Industrial Park--City of Danville	1/I	Grade a 25+/- acre pad on Lot FF in Riverview Industrial Park for industrial project recruitment	Local EDA	$250,000 $250,000	$500,000
Center for Manufacturing Advancement--City of Danville	1/I	Construct a new 51,000 sf building within the Cyber Park, which will include space for Industry 4.0 integration and training, a quality lab, space for manufacturing optimization, three rapid launch high launch high bays for new industry, and capital equipment dedicated for training and manufacturing optimization use.	EDA State Local Fdtn	$2,500,000 $18,500,000 $4,500,000	$25,500,000
Industrial Shell Building--City of Danville & Pittsylvania County	1/II	Construct a new jointly funded City / County 30,000 SF industrial shell building to assist with marketing to industry desiring an expedited location decision and to modify the current inventory of buildings suited for modern manufacturing.	EDA Local VTC	$1,000,000 $1,000,000 $1,000,000	$3,000,000
Schoolfield Infrastructure Improvements--City of Danville	1/I	Demolition of tunnels, open foundations, and finishing plant	EDA Local	$2,500,000 $2,500,000	$5,000,000
White Mill Redevelopment--City of Danville	1/I	Electric transmission lines and substation to accommodate redevelopment of the White Mill, formerly served by Dan River and AEP	EDA Local	$2,500,000 $3,500,000	$6,000,000
River Front Park, White Water Course, and Covered Pedestrian Bridge--City of Danville	1/I	Development of a park area adjacent to the Martin Luther King, Jr. bridge in accordance with the River District development program. Complete the engineering of a world-class white water course using an existing canal located in the River District and also connecting it into the Dan River. Complete the design and construction to convert former textile pedestrian bridge into a public amenity, which will connect the White Mill and riverfront park to the north banks of the river. The north banks are well-suited for new development.	Local EDA Local Fdtn State	$3,000,000 $3,950,000 $4,900,000 $500,000	$12,350,000

PROJECT	PRIORITY /TYPE	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	TOTAL
River District Parking Facility--City of Danville	1/I	Construct a new parking facility with retail and office space to accommodate parking demand in the River District	EDA Local	$9,900,000 $9,900,000	$19,800,000
Wilson Street Streetscape--City of Danville	1/I	Streetscape improvements from Bridge Street to Lynn Street	VDOT Local EDA	$500,000 $250,000 $250,000	$1,000,000
Berry Hill Regional Industrial Park--Industrial Connector Road--City of Danville & Pittsylvania County	1/I	Construct an industrial access road to improve traffic flow to Berry Hill Regional Industrial Park	FHWA VDOT EDA Local VTC	$6,000,000 $6,000,000 $2,500,000 $13,500,000 $2,000,000	$30,000,000
Site Improvements at the Coleman Industrial Site--City of Danville	1/II	Site improvements to include grading and sanitary sewer, electrical service and misc. infrastructure development	EDA Local	$4,700,000 $6,495,182	$11,195,182
Site Improvements at Cane Creek Centre Industrial Park--City of Danville & Pittsylvania County - Lot 10	1/II	Site improvements to include access road, grading, and sanitary sewer for Lot 10	EDA VTC Local	$3,000,000 $1,500,000 $400,000	$4,900,000
Berry Hill Regional Industrial Park--City of Danville & Pittsylvania County	1/II	Extension of electric service to Berry Hill Regional Industrial Park through AEP. Relocation of an existing 69kV line on Lot 4 in order to grade the first pad in the park. To conduct a routing analysis, acquire permits, and ROW acquisition for a new electric service to the park	EDA Local VTC City County	$1,720,200 $250,000 $1,279,800 $525,000 $525,000	$4,300,000
Berry Hill Regional Industrial Park--City of Danville & Pittsylvania County	1/II	Natural gas engineering and infrastructure development	EDA Local VTC	$3,000,000 $2,000,000 $1,000,000	$6,000,000
Riverside Drive and Audubon Road Improvements--City of Danville	1/II	Intersection, sidewalk, and drainage improvements	VDOT Local EDA	$216,000 $108,000 $108,000	$432,000
South Ramp Improvements at Danville Regional Airport--City of Danville	1/II	Reconstruction of the south apron and taxiway repairs	EDA Local	$1,365,000 $1,365,000	$2,730,000
Berry Hill Regional Industrial Park on and off-site Rail Construction--City of Danville & Pittsylvania County	1/III	New on-site rail construction and off-site improvements for Berry Hill Regional Industrial Park	VA-DRPT Norfolk-Southern VTC EDA Local	$3,125,000 $3,125,000 $625,000 $625,000 $5,000,000	$12,500,000
County Trail System--Franklin County	2/II	Development of trail system per adopted County Trail Plan (Phase 1)	DCR VTC VDOT Local	$300,000 $200,000 $800,000 $800,000	$2,100,000

PROJECT	PRIORITY /TYPE	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Pigg River Heritage Trail--Town of Rocky Mount - Franklin County	2/III	Development of Heritage Trail for tourism, recreation, and quality of life enhancement in support of economic development	TEA-21 DCR Local	$275,000 $100,000 $75,000	$450,000
Village Development--Franklin County	2/II	Development of streetscape and pedestrian improvements for village centers	EDA Local DHCD	$50,000 $50,000 $100,000	$200,000
North Main Street Development--Town of Rocky Mount	2/III	Provide public infrastructure in roads, signals, and public utilities to development sites	VDOT Local CDBG	$500,000 $500,000 $500,000	$1,500,000
Shell Building--Franklin County/Rocky Mount	2/III	Shell building of 100,000+ SF to attract industry	EDA CDBG Local	$1,000,000 $700,000 $300,000	$2,000,000
North Main Park Development--Town of Rocky Mount	2/III	Development of a youth/teen oriented park in the North Main corridor	Local VDCR	$100,000 $300,000	$400,000
Energy Efficiency Public Buildings--Henry County	2/I	Continue to retrofit County buildings to make them more efficient in utility usage	Local State	$100,000 $1,000,000	$1,100,000
Philpott Lake Marina--Henry County	2/II	Expansion of marina facility, including additional slips, construction of trail access bridge, sewer pump station, fountains, and rental program	Local VDH Other	$600,000 $75,000 $525,000	$1,200,000
Regional Recreational Facility - Henry County	2/III	Design, Grading, and Construction of a multiple-field Outdoor recreational facility	State Local Private	$1,000,000 $1,000,000 $8,000,000	$10,000,000
Site Development--Patrick County	2/III	Develop EDA owned property for site ready status	ARC/VTC	$500,000	$500,000
Construction of Shell Building in Rich Creek Corporate Park--Patrick County	2/IV	Construct a shell building to provide space for expansion for existing business or to attract new business	Local ARC DHCD	$2,000,000	$2,000,000
Tourism Enhancement Program--Patrick County	2/IV	Programs and projects to increase tourism revenue and jobs	Federal/State/ VDOT	$100,000	$100,000
Expand/Enhance Community Center MOD--Patrick County	2/III	Expand and Enhance Community Center/Restrooms for Multiuse Trail in MOD	Local/ DHCD	$800,000	$800,000
Expand/Enhance Community Center Willis Gap--Patrick County	2/IV	Enhance Community Center at Willis Gap	Local/ DHCD	$800,000	$800,000
Community Assessment Study--Patrick County	2/IV	Conduct study concerning community needs. Ie. Amenities, business gaps/complement existing businesses, etc.	DHCD	$70,000	$70,000
Construct Dog Park--Patrick County	2/IV	Construct Dog Park for Tourism and Community Enhancement	DHCD	$1,000,000	$1,000,000
Virginia Community Development Block Grant--Patrick County	2/IV	Planning Grant for Revitalization/development of the County and identify priorities for development to create a master plan for the County	Local/ DHCD	$50,000	$50,000

PROJECT	PRIORITY /TYPE	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Mayo River Rail Trail Phase IV--Patrick County	2/IV	Extension to existing trail	Local/ VDOT/DCR	$3,000,000	$3,000,000
Organize Business Incubator/ New Business Competition--Patrick County	2/IV	Organize Business Incubator/Organize New Business Competition	Local/ DHCD	$800,000	$800,000
Workforce Development Certification Program--Patrick County	2/III	Comprehensive worker retraining and education	WIA Board Local	$400,000 $1,000,000	$1,400,000
Telecommunications Infrastructure Upgrades--Patrick County	2/III	Wireless Broadband Initiative/Broadband upgrades	DHCD/VTC Local USDA	$500,000 $100,000 $500,000	$1,100,000
Southern Virginia Regional Alliance--Patrick County	2/III	Grant fund to attract high-tech businesses to the five county/city region (Patrick, Henry, Martinsville, Pittsylvania, Danville)	VTC VEDP 5 localities	$200,000 $200,000 $200,000	$600,000
Existing Business Assistance Fund--Patrick County	2/V	Grant fund to assist existing businesses with expansion	EDA USDA Local VTC	$1,000,000	$1,000,000
Renovate Existing Hosptal Facility--Patrick County	2/IV	Renovate Existing Hospital - infrastructure	Local/ VTC/EDA	$2,000,000	$2,000,000
Purchase Existing Health Care Construct Addition--Patrick County	2/IV	Purchase exisitng Medical Buillding/Addition to convert to Health	Local/USDA VTC/EDA	$2,000,000	$2,000,000
Cloverdale Regional Industrial Park--Pittsylvania County, Halifax County, Danville	2/III	Infrastructure and access to develop a regional technology park adjacent to VIR on U.S. Route 58. Infrastructure develop-ment to include water system interconnection with VIR.	EDA VTC VDOT Local	$4,000,000 $2,000,000 $3,500,000 $3,400,000	$12,900,000
Leesville Lake Treatment Facility--Pittsylvania County	2/III	Water treatment plant of 6.0 MGD	USDA-RD EDA Local	$1,000,000 $1,000,000 $1,000,000	$3,000,000
Water System Integration - Hurt-Chatham-Gretna--Pittsylvania County	2/III	Integrate regional water system between the towns of Hurt, Chatham, and Gretna to provide water sources along U.S. Route 29 corridor	USDA-RD VTC Local	$1,000,000 $1,000,000 $1,000,000	$3,000,000
Agricultural Development Plan--Pittsylvania County	2/III	Develop a comprehensive agricultural development and marketing plan with implementation strategy	VADACS USDA Local	$100,000 $50,000 $50,000	$200,000
Economic Development Plan--Pittsylvania County	2/III	Develop a comprehensive economic plan with marketing and implementation strategy	EDA VTC Local	$50,000 $130,000 $20,000	$200,000
Career Development Center Workforce Training--Pittsylvania County	2/III	Create a center to promote and facilitate career development, including higher education and workforce skills training	EDA VTC USDA-RD Local	$1,000,000 $1,600,000 $100,000 $300,000	$3,000,000

PROJECT	PRIORITY /TYPE	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Regional Industrial Mega Park, New On and Off-Site Rail Construction--Danville and Pittsylvania County	2/III	New on-site rail construction and off-site improvements for Regional Industrial Mega Park	VA-RPT Norfolk-Southern VTC EDA Local	$5,000,000 $5,000,000 $1,000,000 $1,000,000 $8,000,000	$20,000,000
Revolving Loan Fund--City of Danville	2/I	Augment existing program given increased demand	EDA IDA	$150,000 $99,000	$249,000
Water & Gas System Improvements--City of Danville	2/I	Elevated water storage tank and pumping station and water and gas mains for South Danville Corridor, an unserved area	EDA Local	$4,500,000 $4,500,000	$9,000,000
City Auditorium Renovations City of Danville	2/II	Complete renovation of the City Auditorium that was built in 1932, housing a 1,000 seat auditorium in the heart of the River District.	EDA Local	$6,650,000 $6,650,000	$13,300,000
Water Treatment Plant Phase II Improvements--City of Danville	2/II	Construct Phase II Improvements to the City's Water Treatment Plant. Improvements will include sludge removal equipment in the sedimentation basins, new turbine flocculators, particle counters, new filter consoles, etc. Preliminary Engineering report has been completed for this project. In addition, there will be concrete repair, pump replacement, chemical feeder replacement, etc.	EDA Local	$2,750,000 $2,750,000	$5,500,000
Multi-modal Transportation System Improvements--Franklin County	3/III	Complete market evaluation and study on the feasibility of mass transit options, opportunities, and transportation system improvements outside of the VDOT Six-Year Capital Improvements Plan	Local EDA VDOT	$20,000 $100,000 $100,000	$220,000
Philpott Reservoir Water Intake Site--Franklin County	3/III	Evaluate options for future public water withdrawal at Philpott Reservoir for connection with County water systems	WVWA Local USDA-RD	$50,000 $50,000 $100,000	$200,000
South County Water Treatment System--Franklin County	3/III	Evaluate options for delivery of public sewer services to South US 220 business corridor	Local USDA-RD	$50,000 $50,000	$100,000
Ferrum Water System Extension--Franklin County	3/II	Extend water system five miles north up VA Route 40 business corridor	Local USDA-RD	$500,000 $1,500,000	$2,000,000
Route 40 Bypass in Rocky Mount--Town of Rocky Mount	3/III	Feasibility study for the establishment of a Route 40 bypass in the Town of Rocky Mount	Local VDOT	$10,000 $90,000	$100,000
Realignment of Franklin and Pell--Town of Rocky Mount	3/III	Feasibility study and preliminary engineering to realign Franklin and Pell in Rocky Mount	Local VDOT	$10,000 $90,000	$100,000
Housing Stock Survey and Redevelopment--Rocky Mount	3/III	Inventory housing stock in Rocky Mount to determine new areas for funded housing programs and initiate programs	Local DHCD	$300,000 $700,000	$1,000,000
Rich Creek Corporate Park Technology Center--Patrick County	3/V	Construct facility for location of multiple technology businesses	USACAIP ARC VTC	$1,000,000	$1,000,000
Implementation of Complete Streets Policy--Patrick County	3/V	Regional initiative to provide safer routes for pedestrians and cyclists	VDOT	$1,700,000	$1,700,000

PROJECT	PRIORITY /TYPE	DESCRIPTION	FUNDING SOURCE	AMOUNT	TOTAL
Phase I & II Virginia Community Development Block Grant--Patrick County	3/V	Grant fund for revitalization of the Meadows of Dan area, including water/sewer solution, sidewalks, street lights, park, trail, amphitheatre, beautification	DHCD/TEA ARC	$4,000,000	$4,000,000
Retail Recruitment Study--Patrick County	3/V	Study concerning targeting of Retail Businesses for County	State Local	$60,000	$60,000
Hotel--Patrick County	3/V	Offer assistance to any group interested in constructing a Hotel in the County	Local VTC/DHCD VCC	$3,500,000	$3,500,000
Main Street Program Policy--Patrick County	3/V	Revitalization of Stuart and Meadows of Dan	DHCD	$10,000,000	$10,000,000
Sidewalks/Multiuse Trail Phase II MOD--Patrick County	3/V	Complete sidewalks along Business US 58 from School to Business District and Trail from Community Center to Business District/Mabry Mill	Local/ VDOT	$3,000,000	$3,000,000
Increased Outdoor Recreation Areas--Patrick County	3/V	Increase outdoor recreation/playground, splash park, gardens, improved picnic areas	DCR/DHCD USDA/Local	$2,000,000	$2,000,000
Construct New Health Care Facility-Patrick County	3/V	Construct New Health Care Facility	VTC USDA/Local	$3,000,000	$3,000,000

ABBREVIATIONS:

ARC = Appalachian Regional Commission
CDBG = Community Development Block Grant
CIT = Center for Innovative Technology
DCR = Dept of Conservation & Recreation
DGIF = Virginia Dept of Game & Inland Fisheries
DHCD = VA Dept of Housing & Community Development
DOE = U.S. Department of Energy
EDA = Economic Development Administration
EPA STAG = Environmental Protection Agency, State & Tribal Assistance Grant
FAA = Federal Aviation Administration
FHWA = Federal Highway Administration
GO Bonds = General Obligation Bonds
HTC = Historic Tax Credits
RBEG = Rural Business Enterprise Grant
USDA-RD = U.S. Dept. of Agriculture-Rural Development
USCAIP = US Community Adjustment & Investment Program
IDA = Danville/Pittsylvania County Industrial Development Authority
IRF = Industrial Revitalization Fund (through DHCD)
MEI = Major Employment Investment (VEDP/VTC)
NEA = National Endowment for the Arts
NSF = National Science Foundation
PRVT = Private Investment
SBA = U.S. Small Business Administration
TBD = to be determined
TEA-21 = VDOT Transportation Enhancement Act Program (Replaced with MAP-21 Transportation Alternatives Program)
VDBA = VA Department of Business Assistance
VTC = Virginia Tobacco Region Revitalization Commission (Formerly Tobacco Indemnification & Community Revitalization Comm.)
SERCAP = Southeast Rural Community Assistance Project, Inc.
USACE = US Army Corps of Engineers
HRSA = US Dept of Health & Human Services/Health Resources & Svcs. Admin.
LWCF = Land & Water Conservation Fund
SWCB = State Water Control Board
WVWA = Western VA Water Authority
HUD/NSP = Housing and Urban Development/Neighborhood Stabilization Program
Local Fdtn = Local Foundations such as Danville Regional Foundation
USDA-RD = U.S. Dept of Agriculture, Rural Development
VDA = Virginia Department of Aviation
VASBI = Virginia Shell Building Initiative
VA-DOA = Virginia Dept of Aviation
VDOT = VA Department of Transportation
VDH = VA Department of Health
VHDA = Virginia Housing Development Authority
VHPF = Virginia Housing Partnership Fund
VRA = Virginia Resources Authority
VATC = Virginia Tourism Corporation
VWP = Virginia Water Projects
WQIF = Water Quality Improvement Funds (VA)
WIA = Workforce Investment Act
VA-DRPT = Virginia Dept. of Rail & Public Transportation
VCC = Virginia Community Capital
VADACS = Virginia Dept. of Agriculture and Consumer Services
AEP = Appalachian Electric Power/Appalachian Power
CIRD = Citizens' Institute on Rural Design (NEA Program)

PROJECT TYPES:

Type I - Shovel Ready
Type II - Final Planning Stage
Type III - Early Planning Stage
Type IV - Other Projects (USDA, CDBG, VDOT, etc.)
Type V - Technical Assistance/Studies

Transportation Project Priorities

TRANSPORTATION PROJECT PRIORITIES

An area's transportation accessibility serves as the framework wherein its communities grow. The adequacy of the transportation system has shaped and will continue to exert significant influence on economic growth within the West Piedmont Planning District. Transportation is a primary economic growth-forming factor because it makes land, labor, and resources both accessible and competitive interregionally and intraregionally. Local transportation modes, for the same reason, impact the growth--or lack of growth--of specific areas within the region by making some areas relatively more accessible than others. The region needs an efficient transportation system because local firms are competing globally with other firms. The consumer, through the retailer, is requiring an approximation of just-in-time delivery.

The highway network is the major element in the Planning District's transportation system. Five federal highways and twenty state primary highways provide the localities of the region with access to each other and the rest of the nation. There are numerous state secondary roads connecting to these larger highways. Over 471 miles of federal and state primary highways and 3,714 miles of state secondary roads are located within the Planning District; urban system mileage totals 397.5 miles.

VTrans 2040, Virginia's multi-modal transportation guidance and planning document, serves as an update to the Year 2035 State Highway Plan. This document provides guidance as to which transportation projects across the Commonwealth should be funded based on identified needs. It serves as a basis for new state transportation legislation, Smart Scale, formerly House Bill 2, which is designed to be a ranking mechanism to further identify projects for funding at a time when many projects are competing for fewer monetary resources.

Top regional priorities for infrastructure improvements for regional access are based on completion of construction of the I-73, I-785, U.S. Route 58, and U.S. Route 29 corridors. The projects are essential and the timeframe for their construction is critical to the recovery of the regional economy and directly and indirectly affect the potential success of all other projects identified in the strategy. These transportation projects will have a significant economic impact on the region. Additional information on these and other projects follow.

Regional Priorities

1. Interstate 73 - Interstate 73 is proposed to extend from Michigan to South Carolina. In the West Piedmont Planning District, it would enter from North Carolina and traverse Henry and Franklin counties northward to Roanoke County. The alignment would pass along the periphery of Martinsville and just east of Rocky Mount, providing interstate access to those communities, to major employment centers such as Patriot Centre Industrial Park, and to the communities surrounding Smith Mountain Lake. The estimated cost of the project in Virginia is $4 billion. A recent assessment has revealed that the Interstate could be responsible for creating more than 53,000 permanent jobs, in addition to generating greater local revenue for the region's municipalities.
2. U.S. Route 58 Corridor Improvement Program - The U.S. Route 58 Corridor Improvement Program was initiated by the Virginia General Assembly in 1989 to enhance the nearly 680-mile long, mostly two-lane winding and hilly roadway which serves as the major transportation conduit across southern Virginia, extending from Virginia Beach in the eastern part of the state to the Cumberland Gap in eastern Tennessee, just west of the Virginia State Line. As of 2018, all but 10.8 miles of this roadway had been widened to at least four lanes, leaving the section between Meadows of Dan and the Town of Stuart as the last remaining segment. This project is currently listed in Virginia Department of Transportation's Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP), and construction is scheduled to begin in Fiscal Year 2021.
3. U.S. Route 220 Upgrades - U.S. Route 220 is the primary conduit between the Piedmont Triad in North Carolina and Roanoke, VA, serving between 11,000 and 20,000 vehicles per day in Henry County and up to 27,000 vehicles per day in northern Franklin County; this figure is anticipated to increase. Until Interstate 73 is constructed, U.S. Route 220 is the main conduit between Greensboro and Roanoke, so resources will be allocated to improve this roadway in the interim to preserve capacity and enhance safety. A total of $8.5 million was repurposed from an I-73 "orphaned" earmark to be used for safety improvements to U.S. Route 220. In 2017, VDOT initiated the Martinsville Southern Connector Environmental Impact Study for the segment of U.S. Route 220 from the Virginia/North Carolina border to the existing U.S. Route 58/220 Bypass just south of Martinsville. This project is ongoing, with a Record of Decision expected to be issued by FHWA in February 2021.
4. U.S. Route 29 Upgrades - U.S. Route 29 is a major transportation corridor connecting Virginia to the Mid-Atlantic and Southeast regions. Upgrades to this roadway in Danville and Pittsylvania County would have a positive impact on the area. In 1996, a group of government and business leaders in Danville and Greensboro, NC formed the Interstate Connection

Committee, a coalition to re-designate U.S. Route 29 as an interstate highway. In 1998, the future designation for U.S. Route 29 as I-785 was included in a $204 billion federal transportation bill passed by Congress. The I-785 initiative fits with an overall effort to eventually see U.S. Route 29 become a 65 mph, limited access highway from Danville north to Washington, D.C. Until that time, spot improvements including access management, the addition of turn lanes and bays, opening and closing of median crossovers to promote the safe and efficient movement of traffic, and new and reconstructed interchanges should be pursued to improve safety and preserve roadway capacity. Because of a number of serious and fatal injury crashes at the intersection of Route 642 (Shula Drive) and U.S. Route 29 in recent years and following input from VDOT, Pittsylvania County decided to close the existing western access point of this intersection and re-open it further south along U.S. Route 29, thereby creating an offset T-intersection. The County submitted a Smart Scale application in 2018 to request funding for this project.

Other Regional Projects

- Route 863 (Moorefield Bridge Road) from Westover Drive to Mount Cross Road (City of Danville/Pittsylvania County): Spot improvements in three (3) locations, as noted in the Moorefield Bridge Road Planning Level Study, June 28, 2013
- Route 729 (Kentuck Road) between U.S. 58 and Little Creek Road (City of Danville/Pittsylvania County): Spot improvements in three (3) locations, as described in the Kentuck Road Planning Level Study, June 28, 2013. In 2018, Pittsylvania County submitted a Smart Scale application to request funding to implement intersection and access improvements in the vicinity of the Ringgold West Industrial Park to address increasing traffic volumes resulting from an expanded distribution center. However, funding was not approved.

Franklin County Priorities

- Intersection of Franklin Street and Floyd Avenue in Rocky Mount - The Town of Rocky Mount is exploring the possibility of implementing traffic flow improvements at the intersection of Franklin Street and Floyd Avenue at the southern end of the downtown area. Traffic generated by the new Harvester Performance Center, located nearby, is a major impetus for this potential initiative.
- VA Route 122 Improvements – Route 122 from Route 40 east of Rocky Mount to the Hales Ford Bridge at Smith Mountain Lake is a major conduit between Rocky Mount and the rapidly-growing Westlake community surrounding Smith Mountain Lake. As Franklin County's population grows, higher levels of congestion and additional safety issues will be of concern. In 2016, Franklin County was awarded Smart Scale funding for improvements to Routes 122 and 636 (Hardy Road), which will include a turn lane on Route 122, improvements to an existing turn lane, and access management implementation at the intersection. The total project cost is $2.7 million. Flashing lights to alert drivers to the intersection will also be added to further enhance safety. Work at this intersection is anticipated to begin during FY 2021 and wrap up during the summer of the following year. Upgrades at the intersection of Route 122 and Route 616 (Scruggs Road) are underway and included signal upgrades and the addition of a right-turn lane on Scruggs Road to more efficiently channel traffic onto Route 122.

Other Franklin County Projects

- U.S. 220 and Route 605 (Henry Road): Address need for intersection, safety and geometric improvements
- U.S. 220 and Pleasant Hill Road/Sontag Road (Route 619): Intersection improvements for safety deficiencies. In 2018, Franklin County submitted a Smart Scale application for a Restricted Crossing U-Turn (R-CUT) innovative intersection design at this intersection. Funding for this project was recommended.
- U.S. 220 and Grassy Hill (Route 919): Intersection improvements for safety deficiencies. In 2018, Franklin County submitted a Smart Scale application to request funding for a non-signalized Continuous Green-T innovative intersection design at this intersection. This project has been recommended for funding.
- U.S. 220 and Naff Road (Route 613): Intersection improvements to meet safety needs. In 2018, Franklin County submitted a Smart Scale application to request funding for a non-signalized Continuous Green-T innovative intersection design at this intersection. This project was not selected for funding.
- U.S. 220 and Wirtz Road (Route 697): Intersection improvements for safety
- U.S. 220 safety and throughput improvements: Route 220 Designated Growth Area/Urban Development Area (UDA) in Franklin County (Wirtz Road/Route 697 and Summit View Business Park area)
- U.S. 220 safety and throughput improvements: U.S. 220 near Henry Road (Route 605)
- U.S. 220 in the Town of Boones Mill: Intersection improvements, access management, and traffic calming features to meet safety needs
- VA 40 in Franklin County: Safety and geometric improvements to correct deficiencies (i.e., intersections at Old Ferrum Road/ Route 864, Ferrum Mountain Road/Route 602, and Fieldcrest Road/Route 805 in western Franklin County)
- VA 40 and Six Mile Post Road (Route 640): Intersection improvements for safety deficiencies
- VA 40 Business in Rocky Mount: Access management and safety improvements from Perdue Lane to U.S. 220 Business

- Lost Mountain Road (Route 636) and VA 122 in Franklin County: In 2018, the County submitted a Smart Scale application to fund improvements at this intersection to include right and left turn lanes with median separation as well as at its intersection with the Booker T. Washington National Monument, access management, and a multi-use trail. Funding for this project was recommended.
- Dillons Mill Road (Route 643) and Bethlehem Road (Route 739) in Franklin County: Intersection improvements to address safety issues
- VA 122 and Wirtz Road (Route 697) in Franklin County: Intersection improvements for safety needs
- Scruggs Road (Route 616) and Bluewater Drive (Route 942) in Franklin County: Intersection improvements for safety
- Scruggs Road (Route 616) and Brooks Mill Road (Route 834) in Franklin County: Intersection improvements for safety

Henry County Priorities

- Henry County safety project – Greensboro Rd at Lee Ford Camp Rd: Improvements to the intersection to include a potential traffic signal and other safety-related enhancements.
- U.S. 220 in Henry County - Address safety, alignment and geometric deficiencies for curves on U.S. 220 northbound lane approximately one mile north of Route 817 (Tower Road) to approximately 1.4 miles south of Route 657 (Rockwood Park Road). In 2018, Henry County submitted a Smart Scale application for funding to realign this segment of U.S. Route 220 for safety improvements at a location where numerous truck crashes have occurred.
- U.S. 220 and Route 993 (Reed Creek Drive/Melrose Drive) - Address need for intersection improvements
- VA 174 (Kings Mountain Road) and Route 609 (Daniels Creek Road) - Address safety and intersection improvements. In 2018, Henry County submitted a Smart Scale application to request funding for various improvements at this intersection including turn lanes at this and a nearby intersection, an additional eastbound travel lane on VA 174, curb-and-gutter, new sidewalk space, and a retaining wall.
- VA 108 (Figsboro Road) - Widening, safety, and geometric improvements to address deficiencies

Patrick County Priorities

- U.S. 58 Business at U.S. 58 Bypass (Jeb Stuart Bypass - Short-term: Relocate stop control on southbound approach of the Connector road from U.S. 58 Bypass to U.S. 58 Business (Jeb Stuart Highway); Long-term: Reconstruct intersection to improve connectivity.
- VA 8 from U.S. 58 North to VA 40 - Reconstruct road to address geometric deficiencies (including full-width lanes and shoulders).
- U.S. 58 from Stuart East Town Limit to U.S. 58 - Widen to four lanes with median.
- U.S. 58 Connector Extension from U.S. 58 Connector to VA 8 at South Town Limits (Town of Stuart) - Extend U.S. 58 connector to include new bridge.
- VA 40 in Patrick County - Widening and safety improvements from Route 708 to Franklin County
- Squirrel Spur Road (Route 614) south of Route 638 - In 2018, Patrick County submitted a Smart Scale application for geometric improvements along an approximate 0.58-mile segment of Squirrel Spur Road (Route 614) south of Route 638, as part of the next phase of an earlier reconstruction project on this roadway.
- Intersection of Claudville Highway (Route 103) and Archie's Creek Road (Route 645 - In 2018, Patrick County submitted a Smart Scale application for upgrades to this intersection of Claudville Highway (Route 103) and Archie's Creek Road (Route 645) which would include lowering the grade of Claudville Highway and grading the embankment to improve sight distance.

Pittsylvania County Priorities

- Proposed U.S. Route 29/58 Bypass Interchange and Enhancements to U.S. Route 311 (Berry Hill Road) and U.S. Route 58 - Pittsylvania County, with the help of a Strategically Targeted Affordable Roadway Solutions (STARS) II study, conducted by VDOT at a cost of nearly $1.8 million, evaluated a potential interchange to be constructed at the intersection of U.S. Route 311 (Berry Hill Road) and U.S. Route 29/58 (Danville Expressway) as a means to establish more direct access from the expressway to the Berry Hill Industrial Park. An alternative proposal, the Berry Hill Connector Road – Oak Ridge Farms Interchange (with U.S. 58 Bypass) to Berry Hill Road will help promote development of the Berry Hill Industrial Park. Improvements to more than five miles of U.S. Route 311 are planned to take place once funding is secured. In 2017, the Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), staffed by the West Piedmont Planning District Commission, retained the services of Dewberry consultants to update a study that firm conducted in 2010 to evaluate the feasibility of the Berry Hill Connector Road as a more cost-effective alternative to an interchange at the intersection of Berry Hill Road and the Danville Expressway. The updated study was completed in 2018 and served as the basis for the submission of a Smart Scale application

for the Connector Road, which is proposed to extend from Berry Hill Road east to the Danville Expressway. The MPO assisted with this study by providing mapping and conducting a crash analysis. This project was recommended for funding.

Other Pittsylvania County Projects

- U.S. 58 from Route 855 to Route 708 East: Safety and geometric improvements to address deficiencies
- In 2018, Pittsylvania County submitted a Smart Scale application to fund various improvements at the intersection of Route 40 and McBride Lane in the Town of Gretna because of recent and anticipated non-residential development which includes the opening several years ago of the Centra Gretna Medical Center along McBride Lane. This project was not approved for funding.
- VA 41 (from Route 844 to Route 703 West): Improvements to address safety and geometric deficiencies
- U.S. 29 in Pittsylvania County: Improvements for safety and geometric deficiencies.

City of Danville Priorities

- Riverside Drive (U.S. 58 Business) Corridor Improvement Study - In 2018, VDOT, EPR consultants, the Danville MPO, and the City of Danville collaboratively kicked off the Riverside Drive (U.S. 58 Business) Corridor Improvement Study to evaluate needs and formulate recommendations along a three-mile segment of Riverside Drive in the City of Danville between Piedmont Drive and Main Street. A VTrans 2040 safety needs analysis determined that numerous intersections and segments within this study area exhibited higher than predicted crash rates for their respected roadway geometry types. Therefore, Strategically Targeted Affordable Roadway Solutions (STARS) funding has been allocated for the study team to evaluate this corridor and formulate recommendations to improve safety and efficiency within the study area. The study is anticipated to be completed in June 2019, with the expectation of a future Smart Scale submission to implement suggested improvements.
- U.S. 58 West Access Management Study – An update of the previous 2012 study, just west of Piedmont Drive in Danville to Long Circle, which will include spot improvements and safety measures.

Other City of Danville Projects

- U.S. 58 (South Boston Road) West Bound Third Lane Extension: Extension of the recently completed third west bound lane on South Boston Road from Airport Drive to 600 feet east of Kentuck Road. In 2018, the City of Danville submitted a Smart Scale application to request funding for this project.
- In 2018, the City of Danville submitted a Smart Scale application to fund pedestrian circulation and safety improvements in the vicinity of the Danville Mall to include the implementation of sidewalks, crosswalks, and pedestrian signalization.
- Mount Cross Road Improvements Phase II: Continuation of Mount Cross Road Improvements Phase I with added highway capacity and improved alignment from Dimon Drive north to the Danville City limits; preliminary estimated cost of $15 million.
- Additionally, a roundabout is proposed at the intersection of Mount Cross Road and the Averett University's North Campus entrance. Preliminary estimated cost is $3.3 million, which will greatly improve intersection safety and efficiency. The City of Danville submitted a Smart Scale application in 2018 to request funding for this project; however, funding was not approved.

City of Martinsville Priorities

- Memorial Boulevard/Fayette Street Improvements - The City received an Urban Development Area (UDA) Planning Assistance grant, to help study the five-way intersection geometry at Memorial Boulevard (U.S. Route 220 Business), Fayette, and Church streets. Currently, this intersection is a barrier to pedestrians and bicyclists who wish to traverse both sides of Fayette Street or venture into the uptown area along Church Street. The outcome of this project will be the "Fayette Complete Streets, Complete Community" plan for recommended improvements to Fayette Street between North Street (west) and Market Street (east), a key gateway to one of the City's two UDAs. In 2018, Martinsville applied for funding via Smart Scale for pedestrian and bicycle improvements along two segments of the Fayette Street corridor east and west of Memorial Boulevard to generally include widened travel lanes to simultaneously accommodate vehicles and bicycles, reconstruction of sidewalks, installation of crosswalks and sidewalk bulb-outs, and stormwater infrastructure improvements. However, this project was not recommended for funding.

Other City of Martinsville Projects

- Commonwealth Boulevard: Access management, pedestrian crossing, and safety improvements
- Northside Drive: Intersection improvements to address safety and geometric deficiencies

APPENDIX 1

West Piedmont Planning District
Regional Profile

FRANKLIN ◆ HENRY ◆ PATRICK ◆ PITTSYLVANIA
DANVILLE ◆ MARTINSVILLE ◆ ROCKY MOUNT

The West Piedmont Planning District

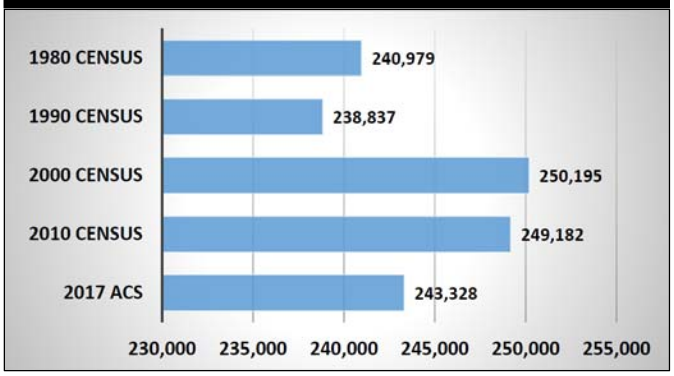
District Profile 2019

GEOGRAPHIC DESCRIPTION

The West Piedmont Planning District is located in the historic and scenic mountains and foothills of southwestern Virginia. The District covers approximately 2,587 square miles of land and is home to some 249,182 persons. The District is comprised of four counties (Franklin, Henry, Patrick and Pittsylvania) and two independent cities (Danville and Martinsville). The Region also has 7 incorporated towns within its borders.

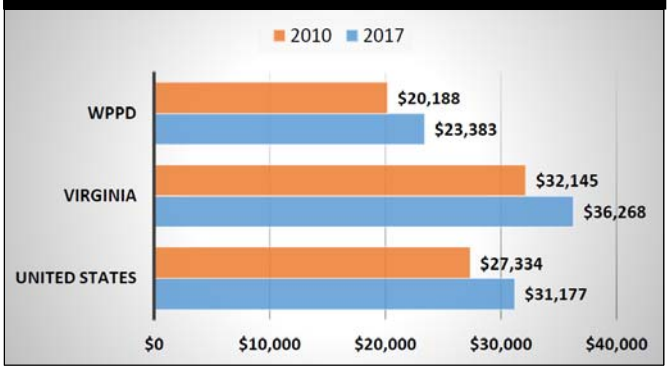
The West Piedmont Planning District is bounded on the west by the elevations of the Blue Ridge Mountains and on the east by the foothills of the Piedmont. Of the District's 1.6 million acres of land, approximately 10,712 acres are publicly held and protected by three Wildlife Management Areas. The headwaters of the Banister, Blackwater, Dan, Mayo, Pigg, and Smith rivers are located in the District. Divided by U.S. Highways 58, 220, 29, 311, and 360, the Region is located just south of Roanoke, approximately 50 miles north of Greensboro N.C., 140 miles southwest of Richmond, and 200 miles west of the Port of Hampton Roads.

POPULATION 1980 - 2017



Source: Decennial Census and 2013 - 2017 American Community Survey (ACS), U.S. Census Bureau

PER CAPITA INCOME 2010 & 2017



Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

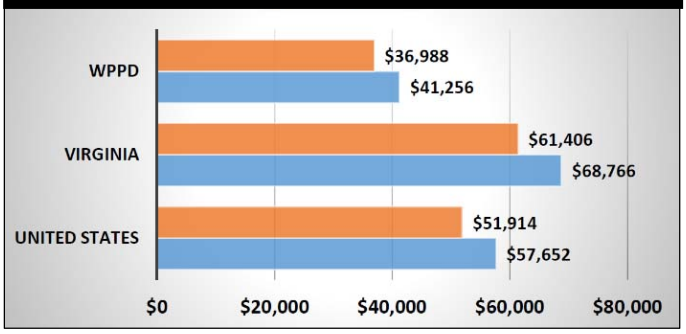
INFRASTRUCTURE

Government
Counties – Board of Supervisors
Cities - City Councils
Incorporated Towns – Town Councils

Communications
Fiber optics, DSL, and ISDN

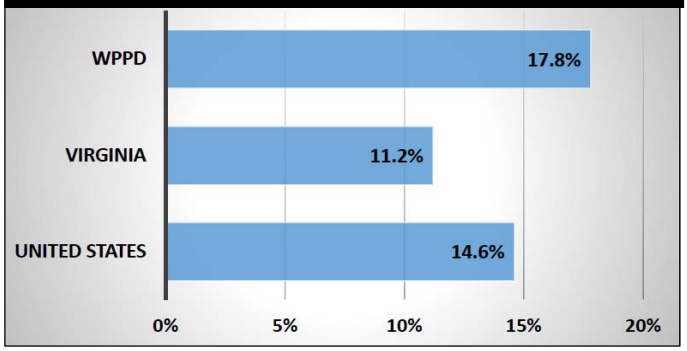
Transportation
Rail - Amtrak, Norfolk Southern, and Norfolk Western
Road – U.S. Highways 58, 220, 29, 311, and 360
Future Interstates 73 and 785 (U.S. 29)
Air – Blue Ridge Airport and Danville Regional Airport
Port – Hampton Roads (200 miles east)
Transit - Danville Transit & Piedmont Area Regional Transit (PART)

MEDIAN HOUSEHOLD INCOME 2010 & 2017



Source: American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

2017 INDIVIDUAL POVERTY STATUS



Source: 2013–2017 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

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POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS

Population	2010	2017	2010-2017 Change	Percent Change
Total Population	249,182	243,328	-5,854	-2.3%
Male	120,033	117,047	-2,986	-2.5%
Female	129,149	126,281	-2,868	-2.2%
White	181,385	176,135	-5,250	-2.9%
Nonwhite	67,797	67,193	-604	-0.9%
AGE				
Under 5 years	13,856	12,296	-1,560	-11.3%
5-9	14,060	14,387	327	2.3%
10-14	14,762	13,440	-1,322	-9.0%
15-19	15,510	13,944	-1,566	-10.1%
20-24	13,425	13,847	422	3.1%
25-29	12,451	13,139	688	5.5%
30-34	12,343	12,220	-123	-1.0%
35-39	14,469	13,005	-1,464	-10.1%
40-44	16,439	13,541	-2,898	-17.6%
45-49	19,221	15,878	-3,343	-17.4%
50-54	20,009	18,710	-1,299	-6.5%
55-59	18,624	18,914	290	1.6%
60-64	17,726	18,403	677	3.8%
65-69	14,706	16,681	1,975	13.4%
70-74	11,144	12,944	1,800	16.2%
75-79	8,414	9,805	1,391	16.5%
80-84	6,420	6,853	433	6.7%
85 and over	5,603	5,321	-282	-5.0%
Median Age	44.2	45.1		
Under 20	58,188	54,067	-4,121	-7.1%
Percent of total	23.4%	22.2%		
20 to 64	144,707	137,657	-7,050	-4.9%
Percent of total	58.1%	56.6%		
65 and over	46,287	51,604	5,317	11.5%
Percent of total	18.6%	21.2%		

Source: Census 2010 & 2013-2017 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau.

AGRICULTURE 2007 - 2012

	2007	2012	Change
Number of Farms	3,352	3,233	-3.6%
Land in Farms (acres)	571,687	573,903	0.4%
Average Size (acres)	171	165	-3.5%
Market Value of Products Sold ($1000)	$143,482	$168,869	17.7%

Source: Census of Agriculture, USDA, NASS

2015 COMMUTING PATTERNS

People who live & work in District	61,652
Total Out-commuters	36,623
Total In-Commuters	22,492
Net In-commuters (In – Out)	-14,131

Source: OnTheMap, U.S. Census Bureau

HOUSING CHARACTERISTICS

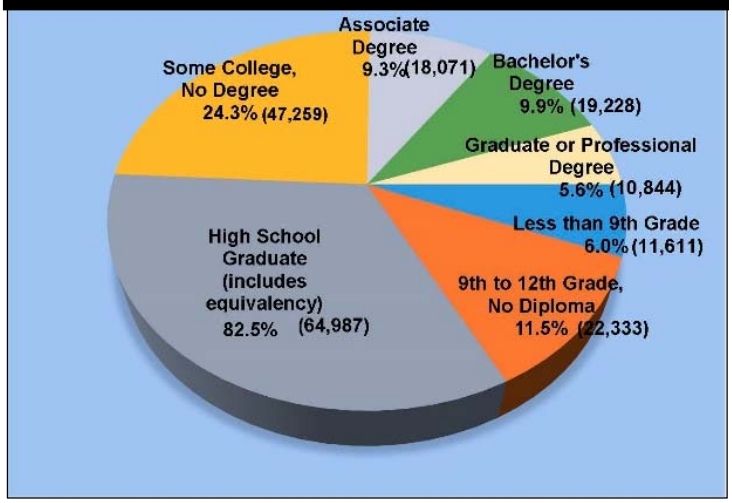
Household Type	2010	2017	2010-2017 Change	Percent Change
Total	105,110	104,021	-1,089	-1.0%
Married Couple	49,860	49,652	-208	-0.4%
Male Householder	4,971	4,110	-861	-17.3%
Female Householder	15,151	14,903	-248	-1.6%
Non-Family	35,128	35,356	228	0.6%
Persons per:				
Household	2.32	2.29		
Family	2.87	2.88		
Housing Occupancy & Tenure				
Total Units	126,616	127,119	503	2.9%
Occupied Units	105,110	104,021	-1,089	-1.0%
Vacant Units	21,506	23,098	1,592	7.4%
Owner Occupied	75,005	73,632	-1,373	-1.8%
Percent	71.4%	70.8%		
Renter Occupied	30,105	30,389	284	0.9%
Percent	28.6%	29.2%		

Units in Structure	2010	2017	2010-2017 Change	Percent Change
Single Family	90,389	92,984	2,595	2.9%
Multi-Family	13,336	13,737	401	3.0%
Mobile Homes and Other	21,977	20,398	-1,579	-7.2%
Total	125,702	127,119	1,417	1.1%

2010-2016 Financial Characteristics	WPPD	Virginia
Median Gross Rent	$677	$1,166
Median Value (Owner-Occupied Units)	$118,971	$255,800

Source: Census 2010 and 2013-2017 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT POPULATION AGE 18 AND OVER



Total population 18 Years and Over = 194,333. () = Total Persons
Source: 2013 - 2017 American Community Survey, U.S. Census Bureau

2013-2017 ANNUAL AVERAGE EMPLOYMENT BY INDUSTRY

	2013	% of Total	2014	% of Total	2015	% of Total	2016	% of Total	2017	% of Total
Agriculture	707	0.9%	782	0.9%	749	0.9%	766	0.9%	754	0.9%
Mining	33	0.0^%	29	0.0%	39	0.0%	48	0.1%	42	0.0%
Utilities	329	0.4%	332	0.4%	328	0.4%	335	0.4%	335	0.4%
Construction	3,379	4.1%	3,409	4.1%	3,492	4.2%	3,689	4.4%	3,707	4.4%
Manufacturing	15,047	18.3%	14,977	18.2%	14,969	18.0%	15,301	18.2%	15,323	18.3%
Transportation/Warehousing	2,731	3.3%	2,757	3.3%	2,832	3.4%	2,755	3.3%	2,755	3.3%
Wholesale Trade	2,552	3.1%	2,614	3.2%	2,496	3.0%	2,498	3.0%	2,511	3.0%
Retail Trade	10,894	13.3%	10,964	13.3%	11,160	13.4%	11,360	13.5%	11,210	13.4%
Finance, Insurance, and Real Estate	2,232	2.7%	2,163	2.6%	2,217	2.7%	2,222	2.6%	2,232	2.7%
Services	39,941	48.6%	40,797	49.5%	41,217	49.6%	41,194	49.1%	41,144	49.1%
State Government	991	1.2%	976	1.2%	966	1.2%	972	1.2%	994	1.2%
Local Government	2,466	3.0%	2,507	3.0%	2,509	3.0%	2,508	3.0%	2,509	3.0%
Federal Government	77	0.1%	74	0.1%	75	0.1%	71	0.1%	64	0.1%
Nonclassifiable	D	N/A	0	0.0%	57	0.1%	139	0.2%	184	0.2%
Total Employment	82,134	100%	82,378	100%	83,094	100%	83,857	100%	83,764	100%

"D" indicates disclosure suppression; data is only included in the total. Figures may not always total correctly due to rounding.
Source: Virginia Employment Commission.

Components of Labor Force

	2010	2017	Change
Civilian Labor Force	117,097	110,083	-6.0%
Employed	102,948	104,740	1.7%
Unemployed	14,149	5,343	-62.2%
Percent Unemployed	12.1%	4.9%	-7.2%

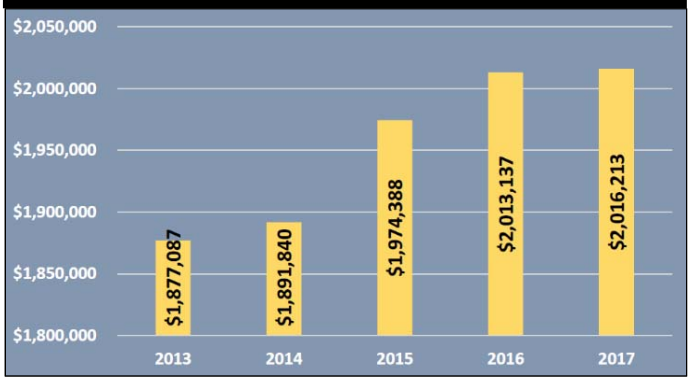
Source: Virginia Employment Commission

Average Weekly Wage, 3rd Quarter 2018

WPPD	Virginia
$674	$1,082

Source: Virginia Employment Commission

TAXABLE SALES ($1,000) 2013 - 2017



Source: Virginia Department of Taxation

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Contacts: Danville Office of Economic Development, (434) 793-1753; Franklin County Economic Development, (540) 483-6606; Martinsville-Henry County Economic Development Corp., (276) 403-5940; Patrick County Economic Development, (276) 694-8367; Pittsylvania County Economic Development, (434) 432-1669; Town of Rocky Mount, (540) 483-7660; Southern Virginia Regional Alliance, (434) 766-6707.

Building/Site information also available at: https://www.vedp.org/site-selection

COMMUNITY

Recreation/Attractions: Blue Ridge Parkway, Fairy Stone State Park, Fairystone Farms Wildlife Management Area, Turkeycock Wildlife Management Area, White Oak Wildlife Management Area, Smith Mountain Wildlife Management Area, Reynolds Homestead, The Crooked Road Music Trail; Philpott Lake, Marina, & Recreation Areas, Martinsville Speedway, Virginia Museum of Natural History, Piedmont Arts Association, Booker T. Washington National Monument, Smith Mountain Lake, Leesville Lake, Elkhorn Lake and Campground, Dick & Willie Trail, and Danville Riverwalk Trail.

Education/Job Training: Area schools include City and County Public Schools; Piedmont Governor's School for Mathematics, Science, and Technology; The Galileo School Partnership with NASA; Southside Virginia Regional Governor's School for Global Economics and Technology; Institute for Advanced Learning & Research (IALR); Danville Community College (DCC), Averett University; Old Dominion University Satellite Program at DCC and PHCC; Patrick Henry Community College (PHCC); New College Institute; and Ferrum College. Virginia Tech and Radford University are nearby. Other job training: A.L. Philpott Technical Center at PHCC; Genedge Alliance; Workforce Services at DCC; Continued Education and Workforce Development at PHCC; The Franklin Center for Advanced Learning & Enterprise; Regional Center for Advanced Technology & Training (RCATT); and the West Piedmont Workforce Development Board.

Healthcare: Carilion Franklin Memorial Hospital; SOVAH, formerly Danville Regional Medical Center and Memorial Hospital of Martinsville & Henry County.

FOR MORE INFORMATION...

West Piedmont Planning District Commission, 1100 Madison Street, P.O. Box 5268, Martinsville, Virginia 24115-5268
VOICE (276) 638-3987 - FAX (276) 638-8137 – Email: staff@wppdc.org

APPENDIX 2

Letters of Support
from
WPPD Governing Bodies

Franklin County
A Natural Setting for Opportunity

December 19, 2018

Ms. Linda Cruz-Carnall, Regional Director
U.S. Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration
Philadelphia Regional Office
Robert N.C. Nix Federal Building
900 Market Street, Room 602
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Ms. Cruz-Carnall:

Whereas the local governing body of Franklin County, Virginia supports the West Piedmont Economic Development District Designation, this is to advise that we have elected to be covered by the Year 2019 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the West Piedmont Planning District in its capacity as an EDA Economic Development District. The projects included in the document's prioritized project list have been endorsed by the local governing body at its meeting on December 18, 2018 for assistance in improving the economy of our area.

On behalf of my community, thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Economic Development Administration's Economic Development District Program.

Sincerely yours,

W. Brent Robertson

W. Brent Robertson

cc: Leah Manning, WPPDC

W. Brent Robertson
County Administrator
1255 Franklin Street, Suite 112
Rocky Mount, Virginia 24151
(540) 483-3030
brent.robertson@franklincountyva.gov
www.franklincountyva.gov

County of Henry

P.O. BOX 7
KINGS MOUNTAIN ROAD
COLLINSVILLE, VIRGINIA 24078-0007
www.henrycountyva.gov

Board of Supervisors

JIM ADAMS
CHAIRMAN
Blackberry District

RYAN ZEHR
Ridgeway District

T.J. "TOMMY" SLAUGHTER
Reed Creek District

Telephone (276) 634-4601

TIM HALL
County Administrator

DALE WAGONER
Deputy County Administrator

Board of Supervisors

DEBRA PARSONS BUCHANAN
VICE-CHAIRMAN
Horsepasture District

JOSEPH A. BRYANT
Collinsville District

J. DAVID MARTIN
Iriswood District

Fax (276) 634-4781

November 27, 2018

Ms. Linda Cruz-Carnall, Regional Director
U.S. Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration
Philadelphia Regional Office
The Curtis Center, Suite 140 South
Independence Square West
Philadelphia, PA 19106-3323

Dear Ms. Cruz-Carnall:

Whereas the local governing body of Henry County, VA supports the West Piedmont Economic Development District Designation, this is to advise that we have elected to be covered by the Year 2019 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the West Piedmont Planning District in its capacity as an EDA Economic Development District. The projects included in the document's prioritized project list have been endorsed by the local governing body at its meeting on November 27, 2018 for assistance in improving the economy of our area.

On behalf of Henry County and the Board of Supervisors, thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Economic Development Administration's Economic Development District Program.

Most respectfully,

Tim Hall
County Administrator

COUNTY OF PATRICK

Board of Supervisors

October 17, 2018

Ms. Linda Cruz-Carnall, Regional Director
U.S. Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration
Philadelphia Regional Office
Robert N.C. Nix Federal Building
900 Market Street, Room 602
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Ms. Cruz-Carnall:

Whereas the local governing body of Patrick County supports the West Piedmont Economic Development District Designation, this is to advise that we have elected to be covered by the Year 2019 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the West Piedmont Planning District in its capacity as an EDA Economic Development District. The projects included in the document's prioritized project list have been endorsed by the local governing body at its meeting on Monday, October 15, 2018 for assistance in improving the economy of our area.

On behalf of my community, thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Economic Development Administration's Economic Development District Program.

Sincerely,

Tom Rose
County Administrator

cc: Leah Manning, WPPDC

The County of Patrick will not discriminate on the basis of race, religion, color, sex, national origin, age, marital or veteran status, medical condition or handicap, or any other status protected by law. We are an Equal Opportunity Employer.

P. O. Box 466 • 106 Rucker Street • Stuart, Virginia 24171
Telephone: (276) 694-6094 • Fax: (276) 694-2160
http://www.co.patrick.va.us

PITTSYLVANIA
COUNTY, VIRGINIA

COUNTY ADMINISTRATION
P.O. Box 426 • 1 Center Street
Chatham, Virginia 24531
Phone (434) 432-7710

February 21, 2019

Ms. Linda Cruz-Carnall, Regional Director
U.S. Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration
Philadelphia Regional Office
Robert N.C. Nix Federal Building
900 Market Street, Room 602
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Ms. Cruz-Carnall:

Whereas the local governing body of Pittsylvania County supports the West Piedmont Economic Development District Designation, this is to advise that we have elected to be covered by the Year 2019 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the West Piedmont Planning District in its capacity as an EDA Economic Development District. The projects included in the document's prioritized project list have been endorsed by the local governing body at its meeting on February 19, 2019 for assistance in improving the economy of our area.

On behalf of my community, thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Economic Development Administration's Economic Development District Program.

Sincerely,

David M. Smitherman
County Administrator

cc: Leah Manning, WPPDC

City of Danville
City Manager's Office

December 19, 2018

Ms. Linda Cruz-Carnall, Regional Director
U.S. Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration
Philadelphia Regional Office
The Curtis Center
601 Walnut Street, Suite 140 South
Philadelphia, PA 19106-3323

Dear Ms. Cruz-Carnall:

Whereas the local governing body of City of Danville, Virginia supports the West Piedmont Economic Development District Designation, this is to advise that we have elected to be covered by the Year 2019 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the West Piedmont Planning District in its capacity as an EDA Economic Development District. The projects included in the document's prioritized project list have been endorsed by the local governing body at its meeting on December 18, 2018 for assistance in improving the economy of our area.

On behalf of my community, thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Economic Development Administration's Economic Development District Program.

Sincerely yours,

Ken Larking
City Manager

cc: Leah Manning, WPPDC

427 Patton St. P.O. Box 3300 | Danville, Virginia 24543 | 434.799.5100 | www.danvilleva.gov

Martinsville
A CITY WITHOUT LIMITS

December 13, 2018

Ms. Linda Cruz – Carnell, Regional Director

U.S. Department of Commerce

Economic Development Administration

Philadelphia, Regional Office

The Curtis Center

601 Walnut Street, Suite 140 South

Philadelphia, PA, 19106 – 3323

Dear Ms. Cruz - Carnell:

Whereas, the local governing body of the City of Martinsville, Va. Supports the West Piedmont Economic Development District Designation; this is to advise you that we have elected to be covered by the Year 2019 Comprehensive Economic Development District, in its capacity as an EDA Economic Development District. The projects included in the document's prioritized project list have been endorsed by the local governing body at its meeting on December 11, 2018 for assistance in improving the economy of our area.

On behalf of my community, thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Economic Development Administration's Economic Development District program.

Sincerely,
Wayne D. P. Knox
Wayne D. P. Knox

Assistant City Manager/ Director of Community Development

Cc: Leah Manning

55 West Church Street P.O. Box 1112 Martinsville, VA 24114-1112

Town of Rocky Mount
345 Donald Avenue
Rocky Mount, Virginia 24151

PHONE : 540.483.7660
FAX : 540.483.8830

E-mail: jervin@rockymountva.org
www.rockymountva.org

TOWN COUNCIL
Steven C. Angle, *Mayor*
Billie W. Stockton, *Vice Mayor*

Bobby M. Cundiff Mark H. Newbill
Jon W. Snead Bobby L. Moyer
Gregory B. Walker

C. James Ervin, *Town Manager*
Rebecca H. Dillon, Executive Administrative Assistant

December 11, 2018

Ms. Linda Cruz-Carnall, Regional Director
U.S. Department of Commerce
Economic Development Administration
Philadelphia Regional Office
Robert N. C. Nix Federal Building
900 Market Street, Room 602
Philadelphia, PA 19107

Dear Ms. Cruz-Carnall:

Whereas the local governing body of The Town of Rocky Mount supports the West Piedmont Economic Development District Designation, this is to advise that we have elected to be covered by the Year 2019 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy for the West Piedmont Planning District in its capacity as an EDA Economic Development District. The projects included in the document's prioritized project list have been endorsed by the local governing body at its meeting on December 10, 2018 for assistance in improving the economy of our area.

On behalf of my community, thank you for the opportunity to participate in the Economic Development Administration's Economic Development District Program.

Sincerely yours,

C. James Ervin

C. James Ervin
Town Manager

CJE:rhd

cc: Leah Manning, WPPDC

APPENDIX 3

Danville-Pittsylvania
Metropolitan Planning Organization
Transportation Improvement Program

For information on the TIP,
visit the
West Piedmont Planning District Commission's
Website:
www.wppdc.org

APPENDIX 4

West Piedmont
2019 Regional Scorecard

West Piedmont 2019 Regional Scorecard at a Glance

Economy

Taxable Sales	🟢
Business Startups	🔴
Employment Growth	🟢
Personal Income	🟢
Poverty	🟢
Unemployment	🟢
Workforce Preparedness	🟢
Tourism	🟢
Homeownership Rate	🔴
Labor Force Participation	🔴

Education

School Readiness (PALS-K)	🟢
3rd Grade Reading	🟢
8th Grade Reading/ Math	🟢
High School Graduate	🔴
High School Dropout	🔴
College Graduate	🟢
Educational Attainment	🟢

Environment

Air Quality	🟢
Land Preservation	🟢
Historic Resources	🔵

Quality of Life

Adult Obesity	🔴
Teen Births	🟢
Diabetes	🔵
Uninsured	🟢
Access to Recreational Facilities	🟢
Overdose Deaths	🟢

Legend	
🟢	Conditions are improving
🔵	Conditions are unchanging
🔴	Conditions are worsening

Note: Statistics are compared with data for most recent five-year period.

Sources: Taxable Sales, Business Startups, Labor Force Participation, Employment Growth, and Unemployment obtained from Virginia Employment Commission (VEC); Workforce Preparedness obtained from VCCS, State Council of Higher Education for Virginia, and ACT Work Ready Communities; Personal Income, Homeownership Rate, College Graduate, and Educational Attainment obtained from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2009-2013 and 2013-2017 American Community Survey (ACS); School Readiness obtained from Kids Count data center; 3rd Grade Reading, 8th Grade Reading/Math, High School Graduate, and High School Dropout obtained from Virginia Department of Education (VDOE); Adult Obesity, Teen Births, Diabetes, Air Quality, and Uninsured obtained from Robert Wood Johnson County Health Rankings and Roadmaps; Overdose Deaths include heroin, fentanyl and prescription opioids, Virginia Department of Health (2013 & 2017). Land preservation obtained from the Virginia Outdoors Foundation (VOF).

West Piedmont Planning District
2019 Regional Scorecard at a Glance
Documentation for Data and Methodology

The West Piedmont *Regional Scorecard at a Glance* is meant to provide an overall snapshot of various indicators within the region. These indicators include socio-economic data, quality of life (health), and environmental assessments. Statistics were examined over a five-year period, utilizing the most recent data available for each category.

ECONOMY

Taxable Sales was obtained from the Weldon Cooper Center for Public Service, UVA, and provided by the Virginia Department of Taxation for the period from 2013 to 2017. Each locality within the West Piedmont Planning District saw an increase in taxable sales during the time period analyzed. For more information, go to: https://ceps.coopercenter.org/taxable-sales.

Business Startups, *employment*, and *unemployment* were all collected from the Virginia Employment Commission (VEC). New business startups cover the period from 3rd Quarter 2014 to 3rd Quarter 2018, the most recent data available. Employment growth and unemployment figures are tracked in the Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS) Report by the VEC and cover the period from 2013 to 2017. This information is available at: https://data.virginialmi.com/vosnet/Default.aspx.

The source for *personal Income*, *poverty*, *homeownership rates*, *educational attainment*, *high school* and *college graduates* is the American Community Survey available through the U.S. Census Bureau. These figures are derived from the five-year estimate periods for 2009-2013 and 2013-2017. Information may be found at: https://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml.

Workforce preparedness is based on regional indicators that include the number of graduates from various workforce development training programs through community colleges in the area and participants in the Certified Work-Ready Communities Program through the Dan River Region Collaborative and partners.

Tourism is based on data from the Virginia Tourism Corporation for the period from 2013 to 2017. Additional data is available at https://www.vatc.org/research/economicimpact/.

EDUCATION

School readiness Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening-Kindergarten (*PALS-K*) was obtained through Kids County Data Center (http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data#VA/5/8/9,10,11,12,13,15,14/char/0) Third-grade reading, eighth grade assessment, and high school dropout rates are provided by the Virginia Department of Education (DOE). This information is available at: http://www.doe.virginia.gov/statistics_reports/index.shtml. As previously described, educational attainment figures are derived from the American Community Survey (U.S. Census Bureau.) Educational attainment data is based on population 25 years and older.

ENVIRONMENT

A number of environmental indicators are provided by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR). None of the region is considered a non-attainment area by DEQ and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). This means that all areas of the region are considered to have air quality as good as or better than the national ambient air quality standards as defined in the Clean Air Act. If the concentration of one or more criteria pollutants in a geographic area is found to exceed the regulated or 'threshold' level for one or more of the NAAQS, the area may be classified as a nonattainment area. Data from Virginia Performs also shows that air quality has improved in all regions of Virginia over the past five years. Perhaps with stricter EPA regulations for vehicles and other anti-pollution requirements, there is less emittance of pollutants and better air quality. *Land preservation and conservation* are derived from DCR, the Virginia Outdoors Foundation, and their respective programs; and *historic resources* are recorded and tracked by the Virginia Department of Historic Resources. Initiatives have taken place to preserve land and historic places in the region.

QUALITY OF LIFE

The source for *quality of life* indicators is the County Health Rankings Report provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/), with the exception of *diabetes* information which comes from the Centers for Disease Control.