



Partnership for a **LIVABLE ROANOKE VALLEY** Newsletter



SEPTEMBER 2015

The Partnership's plan established 4 main goals that guide regional strategies and actions

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT	WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT	HEALTHY ROANOKE VALLEY	NATURAL ASSETS
Create jobs, increase incomes and grow businesses to improve the quality of life for all residents of the Roanoke Region.	Provide access to job training and educational advancement by fostering a culture of lifelong learning for people of all ages and abilities.	Mobilize community resources to improve access to care, coordination of services, and promote a culture of wellness.	Work collaboratively to preserve the historic, cultural, and natural assets of the region.



Lisa Garst

LIVABLE ROANOKE VALLEY PARTNERS,

We owe you an update on the busy year we've been having. Since our launch of the Livable Roanoke Valley Plan, we've worked with our

partners to move forward on some of our region's highest priority initiatives. This is the inaugural edition of the Livable quarterly newsletter. We want to make sure you are aware of the progress that we are making across our goal areas including quality education, access to healthcare, work and career opportunities, stewardship of the environment, and greater regional collaboration.

Since the launch of the plan, we and our partners have made progress in some of the following ways:

- Presented the plan to over twenty local and statewide governmental, civic and student organizations.

- Obtained official endorsement of the plan from multiple local governments and nonprofit partners.
- Expanded the Livable Roanoke Valley Steering Committee to include representatives from the Alleghany Highlands.
- Distributed over 400 copies of the plan and 600 brochures to partnering organizations, citizens, businesses, elected officials, and potential funders.

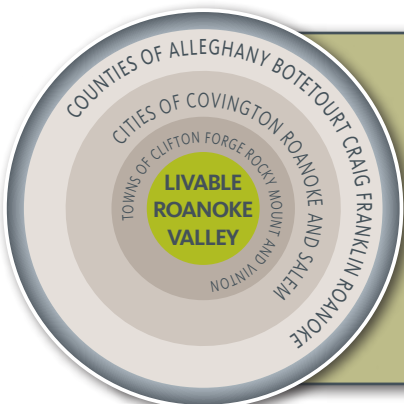
As you read through the newsletter, you will learn more about some recent successes. We look forward to even greater things in the coming year and will continue to provide you with more good news in the coming months.

A special thank you goes out to our partners in the field who are making progress happen and to the Regional Commission for the support and guidance of the Livable Roanoke Valley Plan.

Lisa

PARTNERSHIPS GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Protect the beauty and ecology of the Roanoke Valley.
- Provide a healthy and equitable quality of life for all of our citizens.
- Celebrate the diversity of our region and its contribution to our culture.
- Embrace both our traditions and new innovations to create economic vitality.
- Anticipate and adapt to change with responsible leadership.
- Build on the assets of our local communities to strengthen our regional collaboration.
- Invest in regional infrastructure improvements that meet the communities' needs of the 21st century.
- Promote excellence in education, job training, and a culture of lifelong learning.



WHAT'S INSIDE

- *Western Virginia Workforce Development Board Works To Improve Services And Better Align Its Programs With Industry Partners And Regional Investments*
- *Study Shows Profitable Intermodal Facility Will Plug Western Virginia into Global Supply Chain*
- *Xperience Event Brings Alumni and Talent Together with Regional Opportunities*
- *Solarize Roanoke Provides Incentives For Renewable Energy*

WESTERN VIRGINIA WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT BOARD WORKS TO IMPROVE SERVICES AND BETTER ALIGN ITS PROGRAMS WITH INDUSTRY PARTNERS AND REGIONAL INVESTMENTS

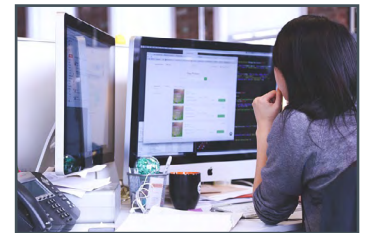
Goal: WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

Provide access to job training and educational advancement by fostering a culture of lifelong learning for people of all ages and abilities.



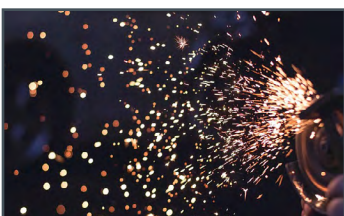
Actions Highlighted: D.1, D.3, D.4, E.1

The Western Virginia Workforce Development Board (WVWDB), with the support of the Regional Commission, has moved ahead in several workforce priorities identified in PLRV. Most importantly, we are working to more closely align workforce programs with the needs of industry and our region's economic development investments. Below are some of the areas in which we are making progress:



ACTION D.4 Create relevant career pathways

The WVWDB is a key partner in the Governor McAuliffe's New Economy Initiative and will help in delivering 50,000 industry recognized credentials by the end of 2017. The WVWDB is also working to expend a greater percentage of workforce funds on training for in-demand career pathways.



ACTION D.1 Realignment of WVWDB Board of Directors

The Board of Directors is increasingly composed of members that represent leading local employers, in key industry sectors. New members to the Board include senior representatives of Medical Facilities of America, Integrity Windows, and Salem Tool, Inc. The Board is now focused on understanding the needs of key local employers and providing training to jobseekers to meet those needs.

ACTION D.3: Business Services

The WVWDB will soon convene a series of Skills Panels made up of key industries in order to further understand the skills needed for today's workforce. The Panels will work to identify skill gaps, skill standards, create new certificate programs, and strengthen career pathways. The WVWDB will soon have a new Executive Director dedicated to providing training resources directly to employers to help improve their existing workforce. The person will also work to support a regional Business Services Team that coordinates the outreach of several workforce agencies with local employers.

ACTION E.1 Engage industry and employers

The WVWDB recently awarded a new Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) Services contract to ResCare Workforce Services. The WVWDB believes that ResCare brings a strong understanding of employer needs and the experience needed to engage with them and other partners in the region.



Learn more at westernvaworkforce.com

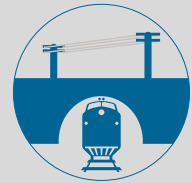
STUDY SHOWS PROFITABLE INTERMODAL FACILITY WILL PLUG WESTERN VIRGINIA INTO GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAIN

Goal: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Create jobs, increase incomes and grow business to improve the quality of life for all residents in the Roanoke Region

Action Highlighted: A.4 INVEST IN REGIONAL INFRASTRUCTURE

Improve transportation mobility by reducing interstate highway congestion, expanding public transportation and the greenway network, providing intermodal freight rail facilities, intermodal passenger facilities, and making air service more reliable and affordable.



A key to the economic future of Western Virginia exists in stronger connections to global trade and information networks. The study

was submitted to the Roanoke Valley TPO using funds from Virginia's Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment. It evaluated the business

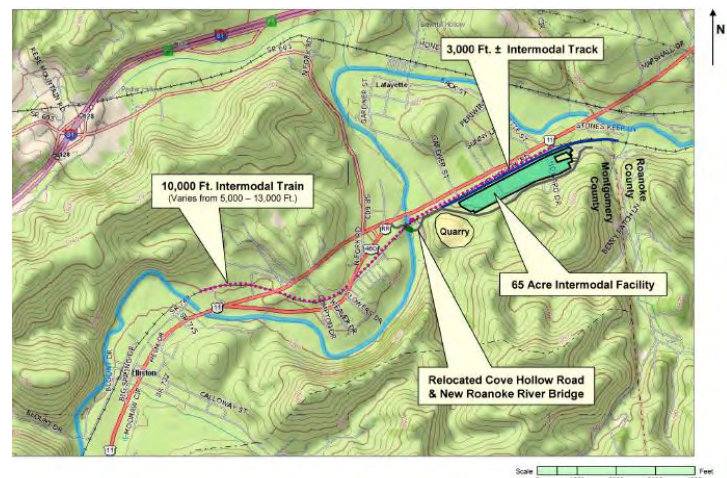
and revenue models for a Western Virginia intermodal facility and determined that the facility can operate profitably under certain conditions.

The intermodal facility was evaluated under four different market scenarios, each containing different costs, routes served, users, and freight volumes. The four scenarios ranged from a high demand and high growth scenario (Scenario 1) to a low volume and low growth scenario (Scenario 4) with two scenarios at points in between. The variables were quantified in terms of the markets served, volume and growth. Through stakeholder interviews, workshops, and its professional assessment, the consulting firm, AECOM, made the following key findings:

- **PROFITABLE** - It is projected to have an operating profit under a variety of market scenarios.
- **PUBLIC BENEFITS** - It will provide greater public benefits than cost to the region, under some scenarios.
- **CREATE & ATTRACT THOUSANDS OF NEW JOBS** - It will create 887 jobs during its construction, 636 permanent jobs over the first three years in operation, and attract as much as 4,300 permanent jobs. One large/local manufacturer that was interviewed stated that they could double their production if the intermodal facility was operational.
- **HIGH CONSTRUCTION COST** - At the scale originally proposed, it will cost over \$70 million to construct.
- **PUBLIC FUNDING NEEDED TO OFFSET HIGH CONSTRUCTION COSTS** - If constructed using mostly private funding, it will be difficult for the owner-operator to payback the construction cost. Construction costs are a significant barrier to moving ahead with the facility.

It is very important to note that the core analysis of this study took the design and operating assumptions of all the previous studies, notably the assumption that a 65 acre site with a target of 15,000 container lifts per year. However, the study found that these assumptions were choices and conventions and not necessarily dictated by physical or economic conditions. The study explored some important considerations that could make the facility even more viable and less costly.

- **Exceeding the 15,000 lifts per year assumption** – The study found that the market conditions represented by both scenarios 1 and 2 would produce more than 15,000 annual lifts over the study horizon, boosting operating profitability.
- **Smaller facility** – The choice of 65 acres appears to be a design choice that was established early on and carried over into the core analysis of every other study, including this one. The study found, based on other intermodal facilities, it is possible to handle significantly more than 15,000 lifts using less land.
- **Phased approach** – Due to the discovery that neither 15,000 annual lifts, nor 65 acres are dictated by market or physical conditions, it is conceivable that a smaller Phase I of a facility could be viable reducing the initial capital costs.
- **Cost of Doing Nothing** - Just as there can be benefits to making investments, there can be costs to doing nothing to capitalize on opportunities. In the broader economic sense, not constructing an intermodal facility in Western Virginia could shut out the region from an important avenue in the global trade supply chain.



XPERIENCE EVENT CONNECTS YOUNG PROFESSIONALS AND REGIONAL TALENT WITH EMPLOYERS AND COMMUNITY LEADERS

Goal: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Create jobs, increase incomes and grow businesses to improve the quality of life for all residents in the region.

Action: B.2

Bring Alumni Back to the Region

XPERIENCE

The inaugural Xperience event (March 27-28) attracted an estimated 150 young professionals to the event. Local businesses and organizations provided \$15,000 in sponsorships.

The event was created to connect and empower young professionals to strengthen our community.



Young professionals are not only a sign of a strong business community. They play an important role in



the future of our region. They are enthusiastic, dynamic and innovative members of our community. As we help them along their career pathway, we should also encourage them to play a more prominent role in the civic fabric of our community. Regions with strong reserves of human and social capital are better positioned to compete in the 21st century global economy.

Planning is already underway for next year's Xperience conference. This event can easily double in size in 2016 by focusing more on both existing college students and those outside our market with ties to the region.

Learn more at xperience2015.wix.com/roanokeblacksburg

SOLARIZE ROANOKE LAUNCHES, HELPING CONSUMERS DESIGN, ESTIMATE, AND INSTALL SOLAR PV SYSTEMS FOR THEIR HOMES

Goal: NATURAL ASSETS

Work collaboratively to preserve the historic, cultural, and natural assets of the region.

Action: J.1

Provide energy efficiency and renewable energy incentives



Solarize Roanoke is an innovative renewable energy initiative launched by Community Housing Partners in partnership with the City of Roanoke. The program is making solar energy easier and more affordable to implement for the residents of Roanoke by using the power of bulk purchasing.

HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS

A free evaluation is made to determine if your home is a good solar energy candidate. After signing up on the Solarize Roanoke website, a local, qualified solar contractor will schedule a home visit to size up your roof, explain the details of solar installation, and answer any questions about going solar.

Special financing and discounts are available through Freedom First Credit Union. You will also be able to see your Solarize discount and federal tax incentives in your final cost of the system.

Contractors will make a site visit to gather all the information necessary, obtain necessary permits, order materials and equipment, and schedule your installation. Installation usually takes a few days.

Once your system is up and running, you can use electricity as it is generated or sell back any surplus electricity to the utility. Through "net energy metering," you get a one-to-one, kilowatt hour-for-kilowatt hour credit on your bill for every unit of electricity produced and put back on the electric grid.

Buying a solar Photovoltaic (PV) system is an investment in the future. Although it may require an upfront payment, a solar PV system can deliver significant energy cost savings for years to come. By combining utility net metering credits for the power you generate, federal tax incentives and low-interest financing, you could realize long-term cost savings over the life of your solar PV system.

Learn more at saveaton.org