



# TOWN GOVERNMENT COLLABORATION

## **GOAL**

Partner with federal, state, and local governments, businesses, institutions, and other area stakeholders to plan and develop as a unified region.

## **Sustainability Goal**

Work in partnership to sustainably support the New River Valley region economically, environmentally, and socially.

## **Community Engagement**

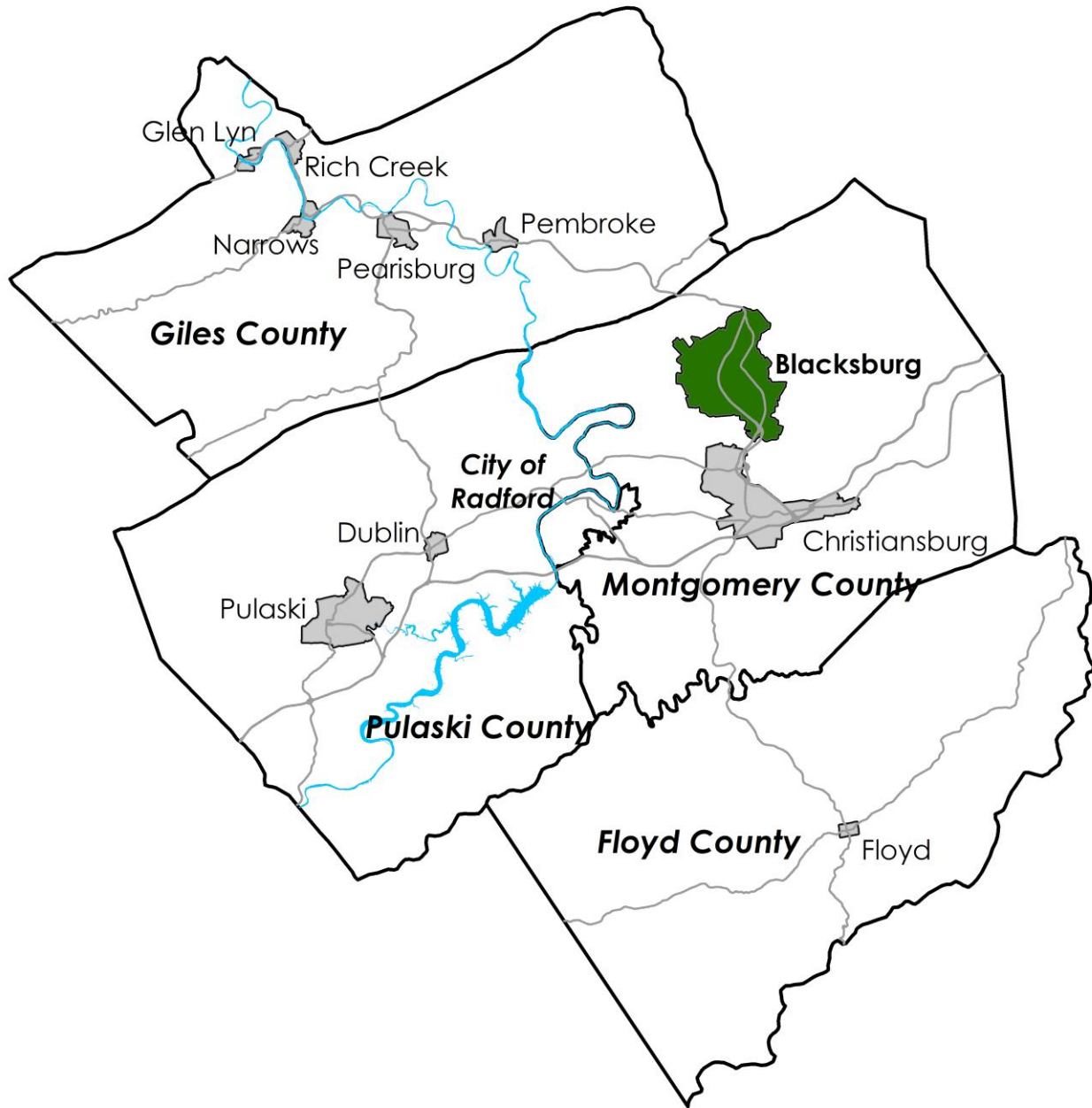
Meaningful community engagement is key to the Town's ethic of governance. To foster an inclusive planning process, the Town should ensure that all community members feel welcome and empowered to participate. This can be achieved by providing a wide range of convenient opportunities, providing transparent and responsive communication, and applying innovative engagement methods. In addition, there are a number of standing committees and working groups that advise staff and Town Council on government relations which are listed later in this chapter. Community members are also encouraged to attend and share their priorities and concerns at Planning Commission and Town Council meetings when intergovernmental collaboration is being discussed.

## **OVERVIEW**

What happens in Blacksburg affects neighboring jurisdictions, just as the actions of state agencies and neighboring jurisdictions, such as the Virginia Department of Transportation and Virginia Tech, affect what happens within the Town limits. There are many existing committees, topical initiatives, and ongoing programs that build strong working relationships among the local governments, economic development agencies, planning related organizations, and universities in our area.

The New River Valley, as illustrated in the map on the following page, is a natural geographic boundary for creating and promoting a regional identity. The Town partners with many different organizations and surrounding jurisdictions to promote the Town, Montgomery County, and the New River Valley. While lines on a map identify boundaries between individual jurisdictions, these boundaries are artificial and do not exist for the economy, transportation, housing, and the natural environment. Local governments and state agencies share in the design and construction of roads and regional transportation facilities, such as the Virginia Tech/Montgomery County Executive Airport, Blacksburg Transit, and the Smart Way Bus. The Town shares mutual aid agreements with many surrounding jurisdictions in the areas of public health and safety. Virginia Tech and other higher education facilities offer the region economic opportunities through their research, teaching, and service opportunities to students, staff, faculty, alumni, visitors, and the community. The Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center and Blacksburg's Industrial Park provide attractive international and national business addresses, while simultaneously retaining local business in the region.

# New River Valley



- Major Roads
- New River
- Blacksburg
- Town Limits
- County/City Limits

Town of Blacksburg  
Engineering & GIS  
April 27, 2021  
Map Not to Scale

## **PARTNERSHIPS AND COOPERATIVE EFFORTS**

There are many committees with Town representation collectively at work in the New River Valley. The Town also closely coordinates with Virginia Tech on a wide range of topics. Regional coordination and collaboration are increasingly important in solving long-term regional issues. The New River Valley Livability Initiative is one example of a regional assessment approach for topics of interest to all living within the New River Valley. The Town also recognizes the importance of increasing partnerships with localities and organizations in the larger surrounding regions, such as the Roanoke Valley and in Southwest Virginia. The following list includes organizations, standing committees, topical initiatives, and ongoing programs and events where partnerships and cooperative efforts are vital to success.

### **Economy & Employment (including the Arts)**

- Access to Community College Education (ACCE)
- Art at the Market
- Blacksburg Community Band
- Blacksburg Community Strings
- Blacksburg Master Chorale
- Blacksburg Museum and Cultural Foundation
- Blacksburg Partnership
- Business Relations Committee
- Blacksburg Square Dance
- Downtown Blacksburg, Inc.
  - Steppin' Out Street Festival
  - Summer Solstice Fest
- Downtown Revitalization Committee
- Go Virginia
- Main Street Connect
- Montgomery-Blacksburg-Christiansburg Development Corporation
- Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce
- Montgomery County Department of Economic Development
- Montgomery County VA Regional Tourism Office
- Montgomery Regional Economic Development Commission
- New River Valley Competitiveness Center
- New River Valley Development Corporation
- Onward NRV
- Roanoke Regional Small Business Development Center
- Smithfield Plantation
- The Lyric Theatre
- Virginia Tech Arts Initiative
- Virginia Tech Summer Arts Festival
- Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center

## **Environment**

- Agricultural & Forestal District Advisory Committee
- Blacksburg community gardens
- Friends of the Blacksburg Farmers Market
- New River Land Trust
- New River Valley Hazard Mitigation Planning
- Seek Education, Explore, DiScover (SEEDS)

## **Equity & Community Wellbeing**

- ADA Committee
- Blacksburg Refugee Partnership
- Brain Injury Services of SouthWest Va
- Christiansburg Institute
- Community Health Center of the New River Valley
- Council on Human Relations
- Literacy Volunteers
- Montgomery County Dialogue on Race
- New River Valley Agency on Aging
- New River Valley Community Services Board
- New River Valley Crisis Center
- New River Valley Public Health Task Force
- New River Valley TimeBank
- Women’s Center at Virginia Tech
- Women’s Resource Center of the New River Valley
- Wonder Universe

## **Housing**

- Community Housing Partners
- Habitat for Humanity
- Housing and Community Development Advisory Board
- New River Valley HOME Consortium
- New River Valley Housing Partnership
- Off-Campus Housing Fair
- Rental Housing Inspection Program
- Student Orientation
- The Big Event

## **Land Use**

- Blacksburg Planning Commission
  - Zoning Ordinance Review Committee
  - Long Range Planning Committee
- Board of Building Code Appeals
- Board of Zoning Appeals

- Community Foundation of the New River Valley
- Livability Initiative Implementation
  - Aging in Place Leadership Team
- Historic or Design Review Board

## **Parks & Recreation**

- Holiday parades
- Recreation Advisory Board

## **Public Safety & Community Facilities**

- Adopt-a-Cop
- Emergency Locator System
- Major event security
- Montgomery County/Blacksburg Local Emergency Planning Committee
- Montgomery Floyd Regional Library
- Mutual aid agreements for Fire, Police, and Rescue Services
- New River Valley Alcohol Safety Awareness Program
- New River Valley Emergency Communications Regional Authority
- Police Advisory Board
- Safety Seat Check Points/Educational Program
- Underage alcohol enforcement

## **Sustainability**

- Climate Action & Community Sustainability Working Group
- Energy Alliance of Southwest Initiative
- Mayor’s Task Force on Climate Protection & Sustainability
- Sustainable Blacksburg
- YMCA at Virginia Tech

## **Town Government Collaboration**

- Blacksburg Town Council
- Blacksburg-Virginia Tech Liaison Committee
- Greater Montgomery Liaison Committee
- New River Valley Regional Commission
- Town Gown Community Relations Committee
- Virginia Municipal League

## **Transportation**

- Blacksburg Transit
- Friends of the Huckleberry
- Corridor Committee
- New River Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization
- New River Valley Rail 2020

- Roam NRV Bike Share
- Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport
- SmartWay Bus
- Towing Advisory Board
- Traffic Committee
- Virginia Tech Montgomery Executive Airport Authority

## **Utilities**

- Blacksburg-VPI Sanitation Authority
- Montgomery County Public Schools Technology Steering Committee
- Montgomery Regional Solid Waste Authority
- NRV Network Wireless Authority
- NRV Regional Water Authority
- Roanoke Blacksburg Technology Council
- Stormwater Stakeholder Advisory Group
- Virginia Tech Salt Storage Joint Facility Agreement

## **TOWN GOVERNMENT COLLABORATION**

### **Objectives and Policies**

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- TGC.1. Improve existing relationships and establish new relationships between governing bodies of the New River Valley and the Roanoke Valley to improve understanding and support regional development. Improve existing relationships and establish new relationships with local organizations to improve understanding of and support the needs of the whole community.
- TGC.2. Work with the Community Foundation of the New River Valley to successfully implement the NRV Livability Initiative.
- TGC.3. Continue coordination with the Town of Christiansburg and Montgomery County at the comprehensive planning level.
- TGC.4. Identify opportunities for short, medium, and long-term joint infrastructure, recreational, or environmental protection projects between partnering agencies and governments that achieve efficient uses of resources and cost savings.
- TGC.5. Continue to work with existing partners and collaborate with new partners that address equity issues and seek to eliminate inequities within the community.
- TGC.6. Support regional efforts by local government jurisdictions and non-profit organizations providing for the needs of the aging population.
- TGC.7. Work with other entities in the region to explore expansion of Blacksburg Transit and other transportation mode options to increase mobility between localities in the region and reduce single-occupancy vehicle commuting.
- TGC.8. Work with Montgomery County to encourage developments outside of Town limits that are of a scale and design to complement developments within the Town, minimize impacts on traffic congestion, and provide open space and greenway connections, while protecting viewsheds and ridgelines.
- TGC.9. Develop initiatives with Montgomery County to protect and promote historic districts located in the Town and County. Provide financial incentives for investing and renovating historic properties.
- TGC.10. Continue to coordinate with Virginia Tech on Town/Gown relations, transportation, implementation of the University Master Plan and the Town's Comprehensive Plan, Virginia Tech Foundation projects, and protection of commercially zoned properties Downtown.
- TGC.11. Support local governments and other regional organizations to implement economic strategies and incentives to promote the Town of Blacksburg and the New River Valley.

- TGC.12. Continue to participate in the Regional Airport Authority with Virginia Tech, Montgomery County, and the Town of Christiansburg to support airport operations and marketing the airport to help grow the region's economy.
- TGC.13. Promote a unified regional development pattern and address the regional impacts of development when commenting on development proposals in adjacent jurisdictions. Please refer to the Land Use chapter for additional detail.