2026 Annual Report

MOUNT ROGERS REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP



The MRRP TEAM



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
Ashlyn Shrewsbury



DEPUTY DIRECTOR
Rebecca Fisher



DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & COMMUNICATIONS
Morgan Herbert



OFFICE ADMINISTRATOR
Darla Porter

LETTER *from Leadership*

To our partners, stakeholders, and community,

As Mount Rogers Regional Partnership undertakes a strategic planning process to map out our next five years, we have spent time reflecting on the organization's past five years. Our region is known for its resiliency, and that tenacious spirit has shown itself time and again over the last half decade. Despite setbacks like the COVID-19 pandemic and Hurricane Helene, the Mount Rogers region continues to grow and adapt.

MRRP has grown and adapted over the past five years as well. In 2021, the organization completed a name change and rebrand from its former identity as the Virginia Industrial Advancement Alliance. Since then, the MRRP team has expanded and contracted, changed leadership, updated its website, and taken on new initiatives, but one thing has remained constant—our commitment to serving the businesses and residents of the region.

As we look forward to our next five years, centering the needs of the community will remain our guiding principle. We are energized about the future of the organization and welcome you to share your feedback, concerns, and priorities with us.

Ashlyn Jade Shrewsbury

Ashlyn Shrewsbury
Executive Director
Mount Rogers Regional Partnership

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Meet the Executive Committee

MRRP's Executive Committee is composed of the county or city administrator for each locality



SHAWN UTT
Chair
Smyth County



STEVE BOYER
Vice Chair
Grayson County



STEPHEN BEAR
Treasurer
Wythe County



CAMERON BURTON
Bland County



MIKE WATSON
Carroll County



MIKE BURNETTE
City of Galax

The Executive Director serves on the board of directors as staff liaison

Local IDA/EDA Representatives

LINDA TOWNLEY
Local IDA Representative, Bland County

LARRY EDWARDS
Local EDA Representative, Carroll County

DOUGLAS VAUGHT
Local EDA Representative, City of Galax

ELIZABETH SHEARIN
Local IDA Representative, Grayson County

JULIUS WINEBARGER
Local EDA Representative, Smyth County

MICHAEL COLE
Local IDA Representative, JIDA of Wythe County

Investing Partner Representatives

WHITNEY B. CZELUSNIAK
Director of Econ. Development, Appalachian Power

AMIE HARDEN
Loan Officer, First Bank & Trust

BRAD WATSON
Vice President, National Bank of Blacksburg

TABITHA FONTAINE
Branch Manager, Skyline National Bank

MIKE LAWLESS
Executive Vice President, TRC Companies

Ex Officio Directors

DR. DEAN SPRINKLE
President
Wytheville Community College

DR. ADAM C. HUTCHISON
President
Virginia Highlands Community College

AARON SIZEMORE
Executive Director
Mount Rogers Planning District Commission

DAVID MANLEY
Executive Director
Joint IDA Wythe County

KENDRA HAYDEN
Director of Community & Economic Development
Smyth County

News and

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Governor Glenn Youngkin Visits Pluck'd

MRRP and BRCEDA hosted a ceremonial event celebrating the opening of the 65-acre tomato greenhouse in Wildwood Commerce Park in Carroll County.





RPM Receives Job Creation Grant

Real Performance Machine (RPM), located in Grayson County, received a Virginia Enterprise Zone Job Creation Grant upon completion of an expansion that created 22 new jobs.

New Business

Solis Arx

In December 2025, Wythe County announced that Solis Arx, a digital infrastructure developer, was establishing a campus at Progress Park Lot 35. The project promises high-tech, high-wage opportunities for the region.

JST Power Equipment

In May 2026, the Joint Industrial Development Authority of Wythe County welcomed JST Power Equipment to the Fairview Industrial Park. JST's Wytheville campus is a transformer manufacturing facility that is expected to create 35-50 jobs.

Food City

In July 2025, Smyth County announced that Food City would be opening a new location in the Town of Marion. The project brings $14.2 million in captial investment and will create 51 new jobs.

Southeast Utility Trailer

Southeast Utility Trailer, located in Smyth County, made progress on its new facility in Chilhowie. The project is slated to bring new jobs to meet increased demand in the transportation industry.

Business

ENGAGEMENT

40 Business Visits



JST Power Open House



Smyth Industry Roundtable



Wythe-Bland Manufacturing Roundtable

50 Partner Referrals

GENEDGE

WYTHEVILLE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

locus

SVAM
THE SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA ALLIANCE FOR MANUFACTURING, INC.

VSBFA
Virginia Small Business Financing Authority

VEDP

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND CONSUMER SERVICES

Talent SOLUTIONS

Mount Rogers Connect

Helps bridge the talent pipeline gap by introducing high school students to healthcare and manufacturing careers in their home communities through site visits

Twin County Healthcare Excellence & Manufacturing Excellence

High school programs that lead a cohort through eight weeks of hands-on experience and credentialing

298
students served

38
businesses visited

2
TCME job placements











Career Fairs

Crossroads and Wythe-Bland

- 102 Businesses
- 330 Students
- 122 Job Seekers

Marketing & COMMUNICATIONS

Website Overhaul

MRRP consolidated its three separate brands and two separate websites into one comprehensive, easy-to-navigate platform at mountrogersregion.com







Ads in Action



Expansion Solutions
print & digital
ad campaign





Washington Commanders
Yearbook Ad

Special PROJECTS

FDI Qualified Community



MRRP underwent a process, including assessment, site visits, and cultural training to obtain FDI Qualified Community certification through TBIC and Terralogis. This designation demonstrates the region's readiness to welcome foreign direct investment.

New Investor Model

MRRP revamped its investor model in order to diversify its income and increase private investment. In FY26, our private investors increased from six to 15. The organization will undertake a fundraising feasibility study and formal campaign in FY27 with a goal of expanding organizational capacity.

PRIFA
Pathway Regional Industrial Facility Authority

NORFOLK SOUTHERN

Pathway Park Recognition

Pathway Park in Chilhowie, Virginia received Gold designation through a collaboration between Site Selectors Guild and Norfolk Southern, demonstrating its potential as a rail-served industrial site.

Lead GENERATION

Marketing and Lead Gen Travel



Canadian Greenhouse Conference

Niagara Falls, Canada



FDI Europe with TBIC

Czech Republic
Austria · Germany



Site Selectors Guild

Atlanta, Georgia



SelectUSA Investment Summit

National Harbor, Maryland

44 Company leads from events

10 Site selection consultant connections

11 Leads through RFIs

5 In-person site visits

2 Virtual site visits

Stats from our Local Economic Development Organizations

Smyth County

- 6 RFI Submissions
- 4 Site Visits
- 30 Leads Generated

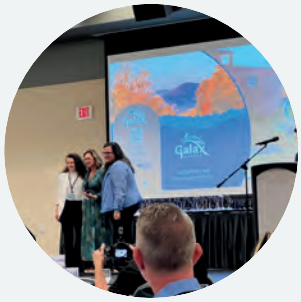
Wythe County

- 10 RFI Submissions
- 2 Site Visits
- 3 Leads Generated

Community & ADVOCACY



SVAM Expo



Celebrate Tourism Summit



Business Success Symposium



Women in Manufacturing

Investor Events



Investor Breakfast: Legislative Updates



Investor Luncheon: Data Infrastructure & Community Impact

Legislative Activities

Pre-Session Legislative Dinner



Local Government Legislative Day in Richmond



Looking Back

2021

690 jobs announced throughout the region

2022

Virginia Industrial Advancement Alliance rebranded

2023

Wilderness expansion creates 55 new jobs; Musser Biomass expands

2024

Pathway Infrastructure Improvement project completed

2025

Pluck'd announced; Duchess Dairy and Hitachi expand

What We've Accomplished · 5-Year Totals FY22-FY26

13 Project Announcements	**733** Jobs Created	**384** Leads & Contacts Generated
1885 K-12 Students Served	**$207M** Capital Investment	**194K** Facebook Views

Looking Forward

Strategic Plan and Fundraising Process

Fiscal year 2027 will be a transitional phase for MRRP as we undertake a strategic planning process to chart our course for the next five years. We will also begin a fundraising feasibility study and campaign to diversify our funding model, helping to ensure that we are ideally positioned to serve the region for years to come.





Public & Private Investors

MRRP is supported by a combination of public and private dollars. We appreciate all our investors! Learn more about our current investors or how to become one at mountrogersregion.com/invest












AMR PEMCO
PROVEN PARTNER IN TECHNOLOGY

APPALACHIAN POWER
An AEP Company

AMRETT LOGISTICS

DAVENPORT 1863
BUILDING WEALTH TOGETHER

First Bank & Trust Company

GigaBeam Networks
a WVVA.net Company

HURT & PROFFITT

MERRICK

MOHAWK INDUSTRIES, INC.

National Bank

Skyline National Bank
ALWAYS OUR BEST

THOMPSON & LITTON

TIMMONS GROUP
ENGINEERING | DESIGN | TECHNOLOGY

TRC

TWIN COUNTY Regional Hospital
A Duke LifePoint Hospital

MOUNT ROGERS REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP

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www.mountrogersregion.com