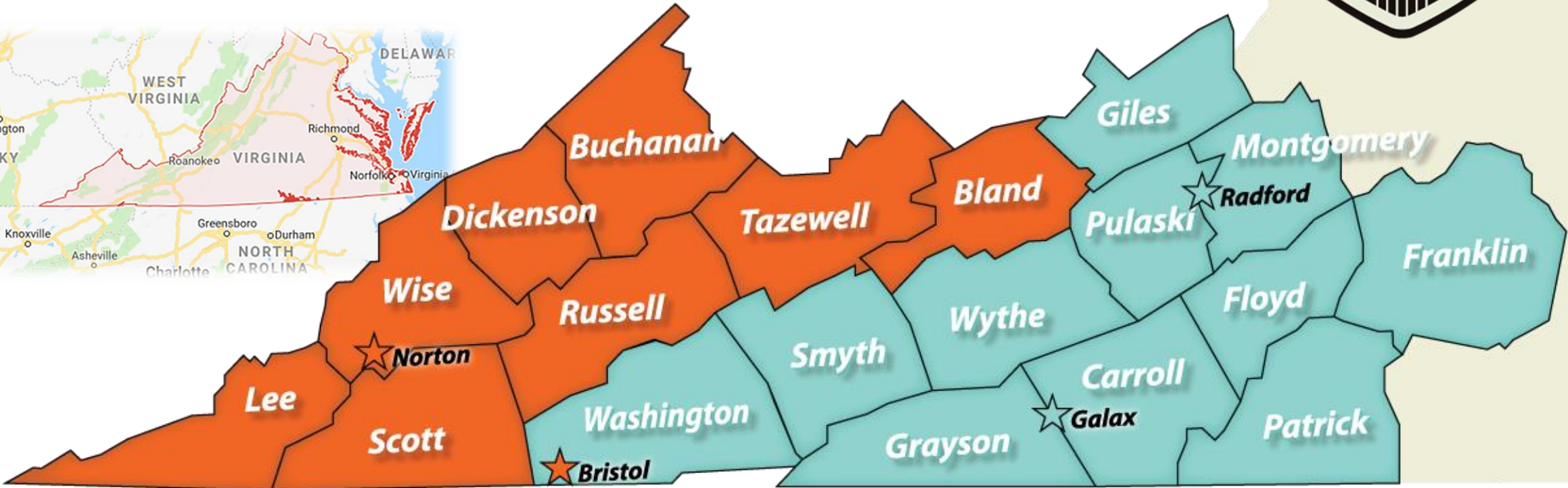


Regional Paths to Community Progress:

Friends of Southwest Virginia, Outdoor Adventure
Centers, Southwest Regional Recreation Authority,
Clinch River Valley Initiative, & Opportunity SWVA

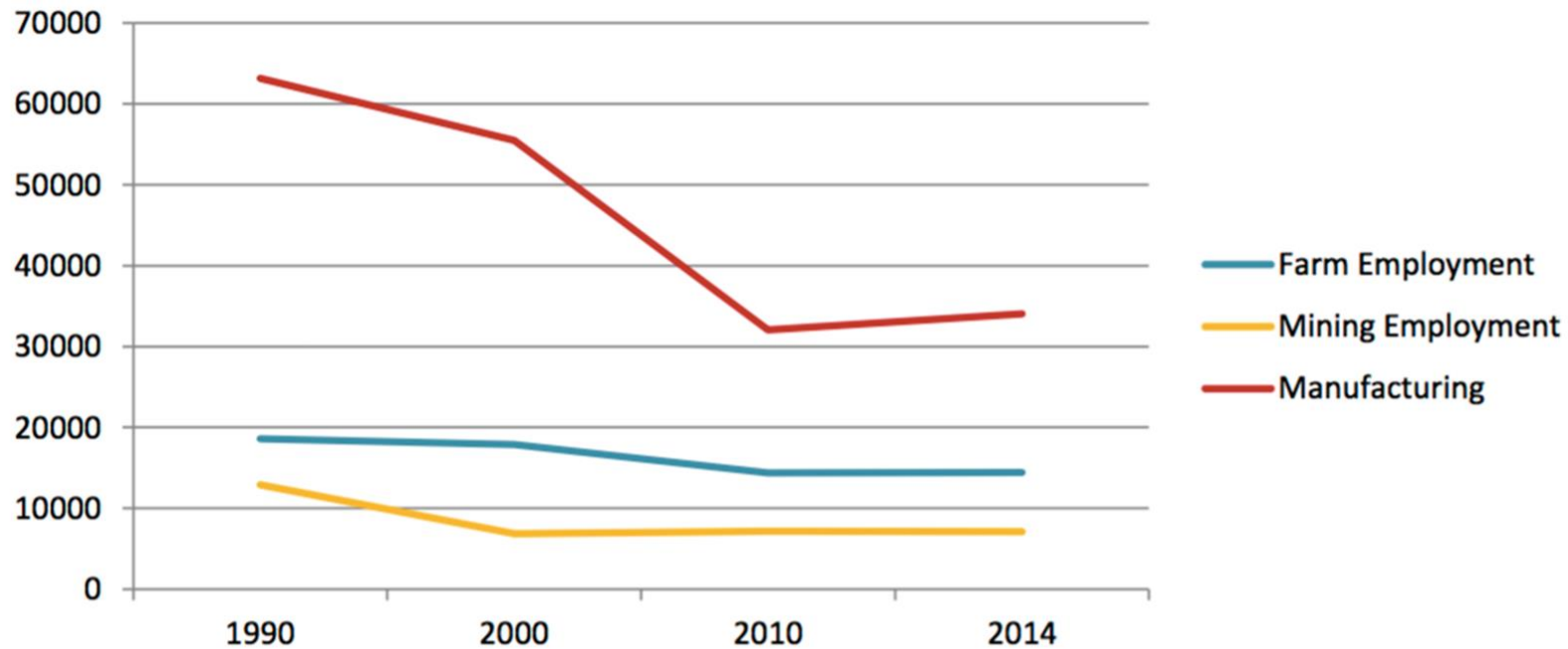


Snapshot:

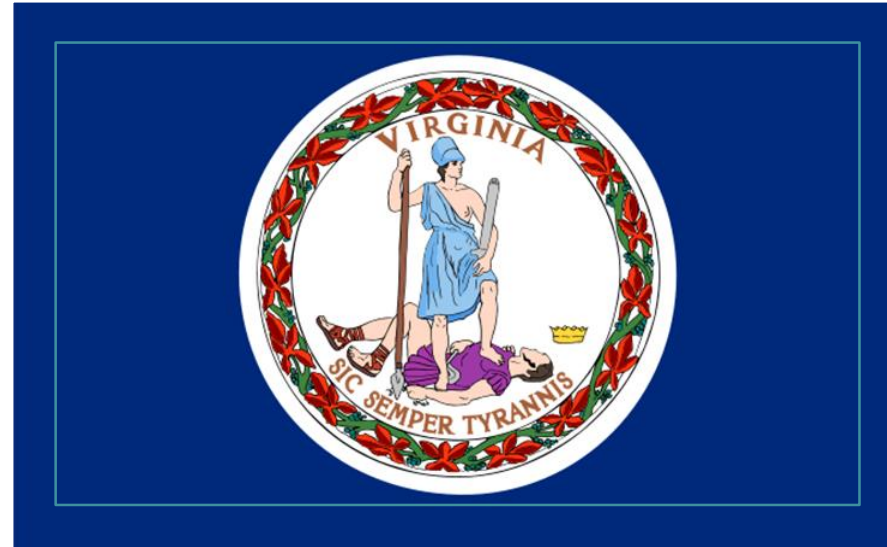


Southwest Virginia Employment

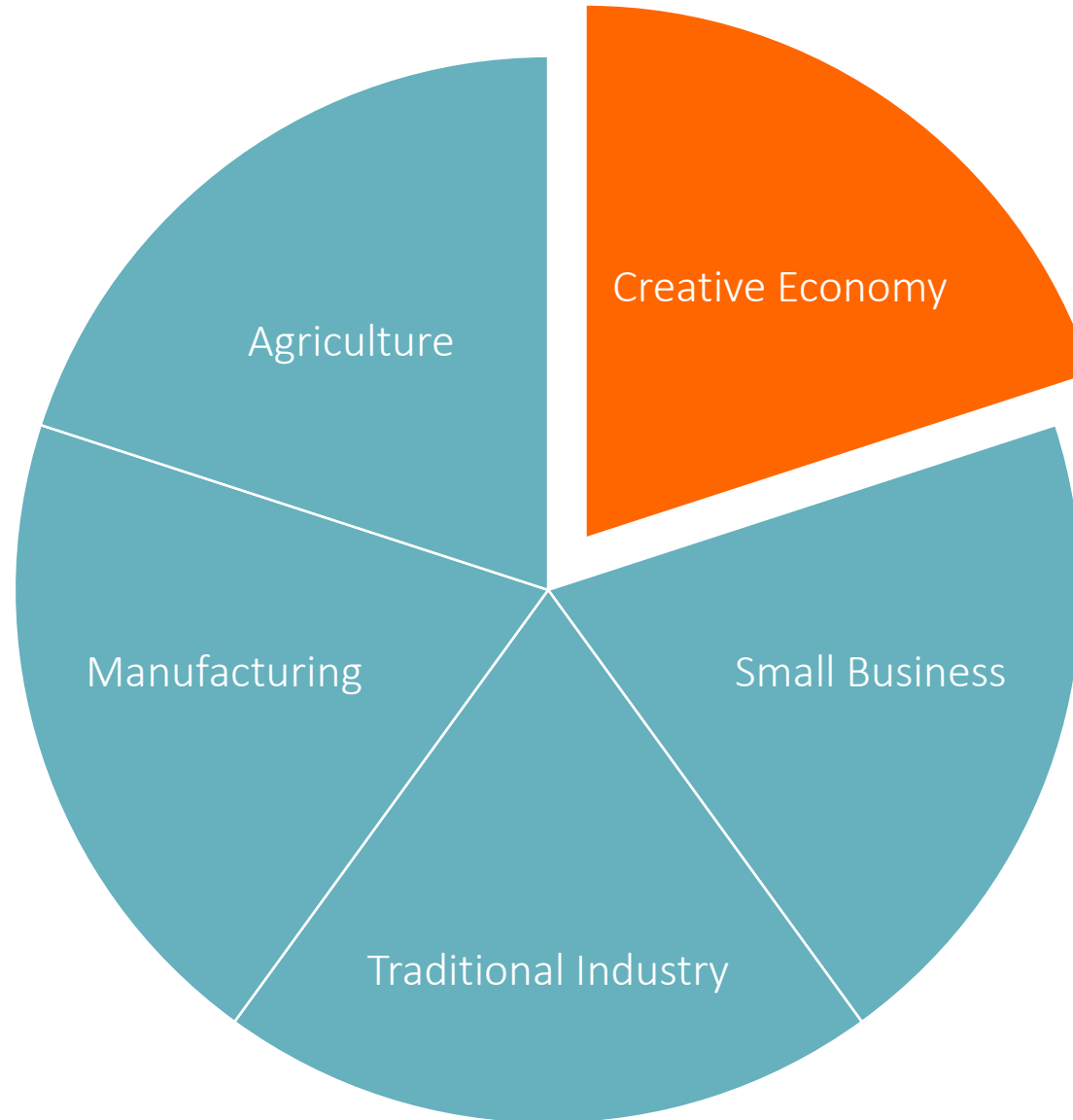
**SWVA Employment in Mining, Manufacturing, and Farming
1990-2014**



Trail Projects Funders:



Goal: Balanced Communities







Friends of
SOUTHWEST
VIRGINIA



OUTDOOR ADVENTURE CENTERS



GET OUT AND EXPLORE.

**VIRGINIA
IS FOR
LOVERS**



**SOUTHWEST
VIRGINIA**
Cultural Center
& MARKETPLACE





Asset Based Community, Tourism, & Economic Development:

Comprehensive Community & Economic Development:



Develop and Promote place-based and unique experiences:

Community Development

- Connect assets to community cores
- Facilitation of community capacity building

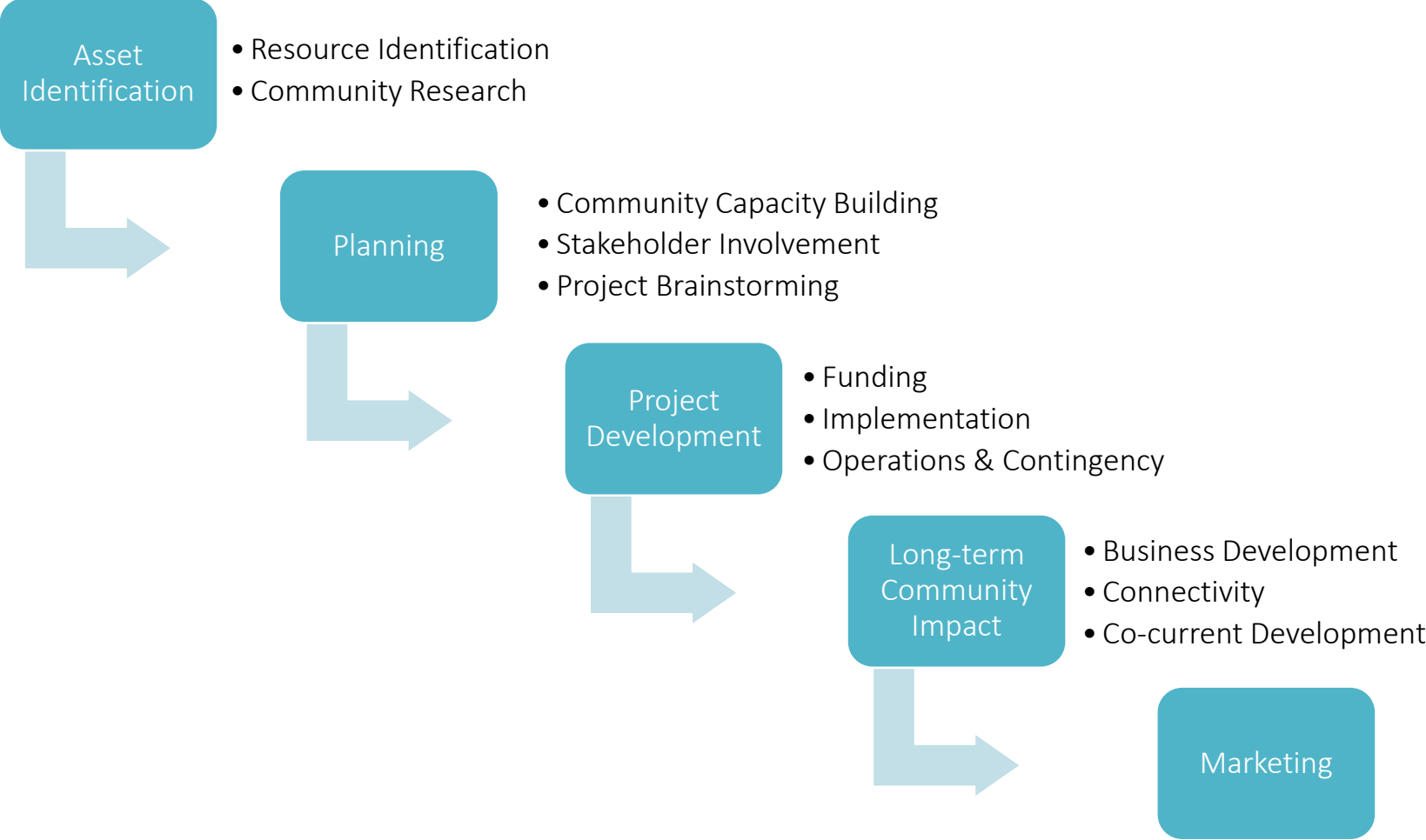
Economic Development

- New business development

Tourism Development

- Market and promote SWVA

Comprehensive Community & Economic Development



Approach:

- Partnerships and Stakeholder Identification
- Community Engagement and Community Driven Projects
- Connecting the Core of a Community to the Asset
- Aligning outdoor recreation with broader community goals
- Creating an opportunity for a business climate around the assets

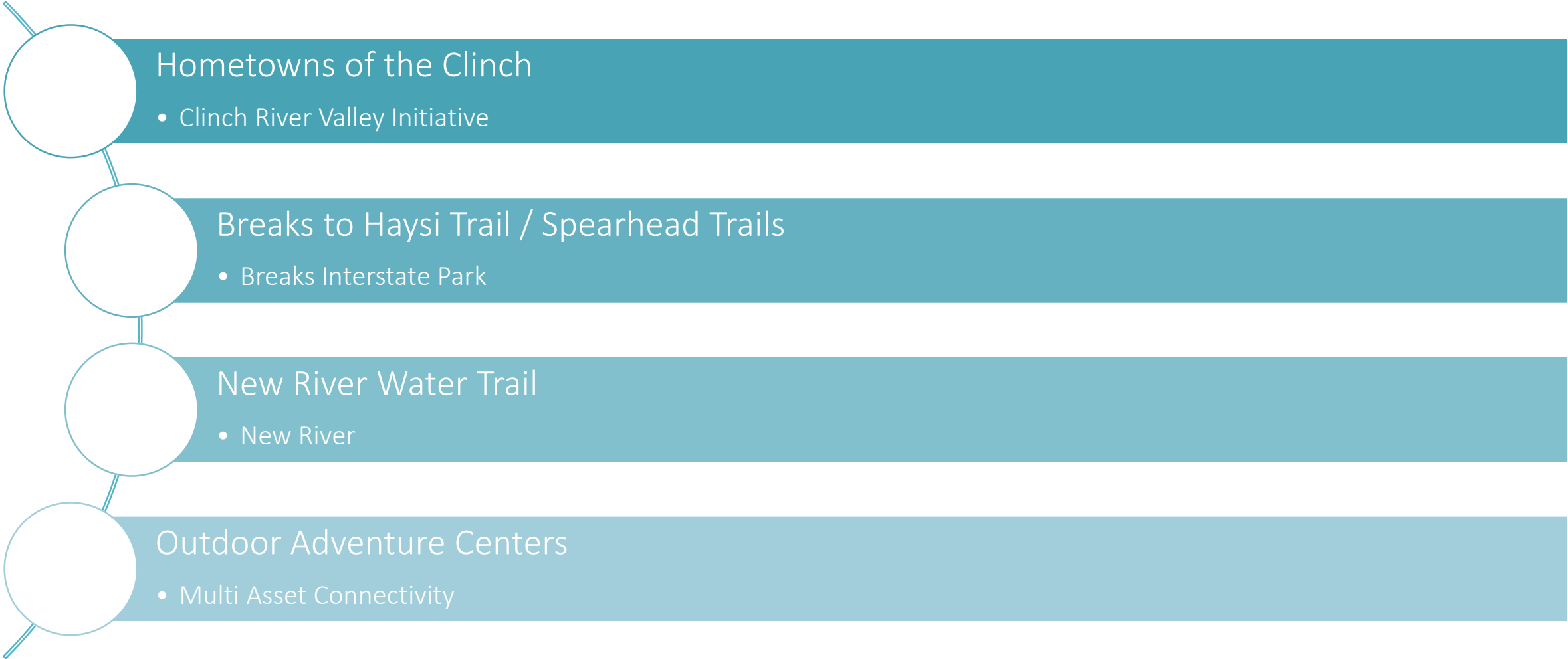
The Adventurous side of Virginia

Eight anchor destinations. Countless adventures.



SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA
OUTDOORS

Creating Connectivity:



Connecting to Downtown:



Abandoned Infrastructure.. New Opportunity?

- Southwest Virginia's abandoned railways are creating opportunity for a new economic engine ... Rail Bikes
- A study by Southwest Regional Recreation Authority (SRRA) and Mercer County WV dove into the potential impact rail bikes could make.
- Projected impact – non local day users: \$135.38 compared to ATV \$72.67

Abandoned Infrastructure.. New Opportunity?

- New Market for recreation gear
- Has the highest job creation and economic impacts of any use other than Excursion Trains
- It has the lowest cost for development as long as rail is present and holds its gauge
- A less saturated market in the US with none within a 500 mile radius.
- It would compliment our rail towns, and be a great cross between regular bicyclist to rail bikes.
- Maybe able to forgo the regular acquisition process and other requirements making the time for a project completion to be done in less than half the time of a hike/bike conversion.
- Linking more than one project could create a multiple day
- Rail Explorers could become a bird in hand with a project with an instant business created that uses local to run it through a Public Private Partnership.
- ADA Compliant and usable by most people

Long Term Community Impact:

Capacity Building Strategies



Entrepreneurship & Capacity Building:



**Business Plan Workshops
& Competitions**



**Entrepreneurial
Community Support**



**ART BUILDS BUSINESS
BUILDS ART**

Rally
SOUTHWEST
VIRGINIA

REAL ACTION LEADERSHIP LEARNING



At a Glance

- Coaching: Community teams to better work together by strengthening leadership skills
- Accomplishing: real community projects
 - tied to vision
 - short term
 - supports entrepreneurship
- Community: \$3,000-\$5,000 mini grants for each community



Funding:

- Virginia Tourism Corporation
- Appalachian Regional Commission Grant
- Virginia Department of Housing & Community Development (BCC Grant)



Opportunity :

Communities that have the energy of a local plan, backed by potential regional and public investment

- Following CDBG planning process, Community Readiness, or Hometowns of the Clinch designation
- Regional strategy



Process: Real Action Leadership

- Community rallies team
- Project development and implementation
- Leadership skill development

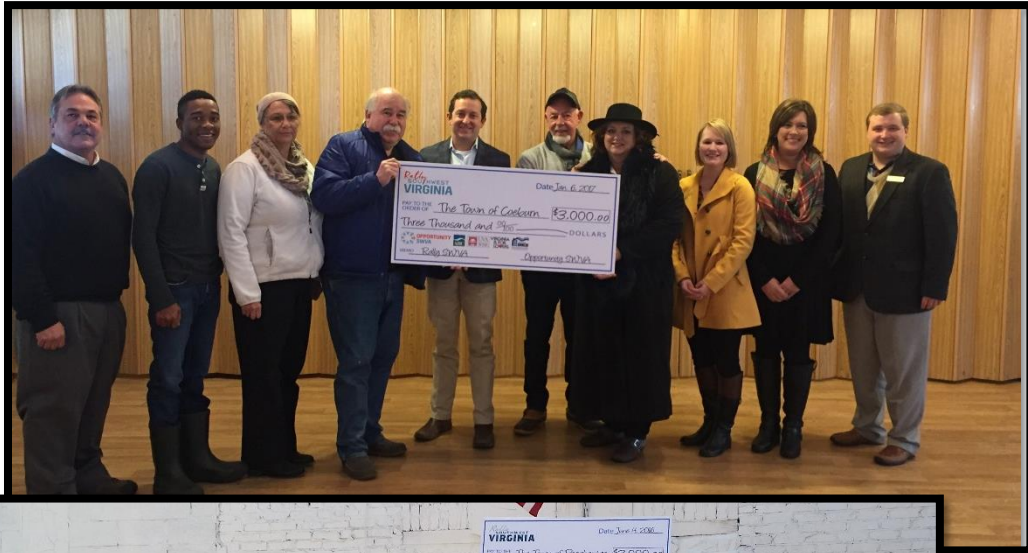


Rally Tour: Learning

- Community Visits
- Idea Sharing
- Regional Collaboration



Celebrate Community Success



Rally SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA



12

Rally
communities



135

participants



36K

invested in
communities



Long Term Community Impact:

Continued Marketing





State

- Virginia Tourism Corporation
- #LOVEVA



Regional

- Southwest Virginia
- Heart of Appalachia
- Spearhead Trails
- Blue Ridge Travel Association
- #SWVA



Local

- Counties/ Communities
- Destination Marketing Organizations/ CVBs
- Private Business



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SW VA SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA



A Different Side of Virginia



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#SWVA

Recap:

1. *Create an ecosystem for Collaboration (Anchor Areas)*
2. *Connect trails to the center of the place*
3. *Use the opportunity to help a community see themselves with fresh eyes: vision, possibility*
4. *Put the community in the community's hands: implementation, innovation*
5. *Engage, support and grow the business community that supports the vision*
6. *Continued support through Marketing*

Questions?

