

SOLAR WORKGROUP

of Southwest Virginia

PROJECT UPDATE

Solar Roadmap for Southwest Virginia

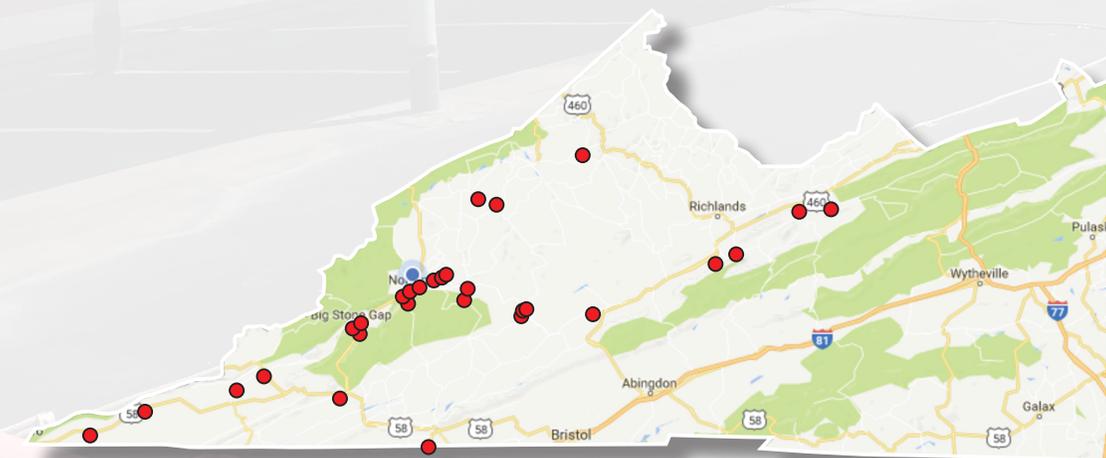
Spring 2017

SWVaSolar.org

The Solar Workgroup of Southwest Virginia was formed as a result of the 2016 SWVA Economic Forum hosted by UVa-Wise. **The mission of the Solar Workgroup is to utilize the development of solar energy as an economic catalyst in the seven-county region of Far Southwest Virginia.** There are **four key goals** of the Solar Workgroup:

1. Identify policy changes that will make a more favorable environment for the development of a solar industry in Southwest Virginia;
2. To the greatest extent possible, utilize existing supply chains and workforce in the region in the development of prioritized projects, and work with area community colleges and other groups to further develop our region's ability to meet future demand;
3. Identify and develop sites in the region that are ideal for solar development, emphasizing projects that can be "ambassadors" of solar energy; and
4. Perform outreach and education to our local and regional leaders and the community at large to communicate the benefits of solar energy development.

The result of this effort will be captured by a "Roadmap for Solar Development in Southwest Virginia", which will list approximately 20 of the best sites across the region that are ready for solar development. The Roadmap will also provide analysis and next steps in regard to the policy, workforce, and supply chain goals listed above.



Dots represent solar possibilities in Southwest Virginia

About the Roadmap:

The Roadmap for Solar Industry Development in Southwest Virginia will include strategies to access capital and financing in order jumpstart the development of a solar industry in the region. The Roadmap will prioritize projects that offer the greatest benefit to local economies or that will be highly visible and serve as “solar industry ambassadors”. In addition, the Roadmap will help maximize the local economic impact of solar projects and encourage “in-sourced” supply chains by specifying emerging local business opportunities associated with solar development and proposing specific workforce development initiatives to train area residents for jobs in the renewable energy sector.

The Roadmap will be published in late Summer 2017 and will include technical specifications, creative financing options, and economic impact projections for about 20 sites across far Southwest Virginia.



Norton Green (above), located in the City of Norton, and Ridgeview High School (right) in Dickenson County are two examples of the types of buildings on which the Solar Workgroup is excited to install solar arrays.



The Workgroup is co-convened by the UVa-Wise Office of Economic Development & Engagement, People Inc. and Appalachian Voices, and is comprised of nonprofit and community action agencies, colleges, state agencies, planning district commissions and other interested citizens and businesses.

In early 2017, the Appalachian Regional Commission awarded a Power Technical Assistance grant to fund the development of the Roadmap, which will be completed in late summer 2017. Funding for the effort has also been received from the U.S. Department of Energy’s Sunshot Challenge. Additional information may be found on the website: www.swvasolar.org.