

**RVA
RISING**

GROW.
THRIVE.
HERE.

A journey of progress for Greater Richmond.

Making our home a place where everyone can thrive.



The Case for Urgency

49th

out of 50

Richmond's national ranking in absolute economic mobility

Opportunity Atlas

4 in 10

households

Cannot afford basic needs — above the federal poverty line but still financially unstable

United for ALICE

–8%

vs. prior generation

Average income for young adults from low-income families, at age 27

Opportunity Atlas

What RVA Rising Is

RVA Rising is

- A regional backbone: shared infrastructure that connects and enables partner work**
- A system-level integrator, not a direct service provider**
- The entity that builds the capabilities cross-sector partners need to work from a common foundation**
- Governed by five cross-sector Alliance organizations with a ten-year commitment**
- Accountable to shared outcomes — not to any single organization's agenda**

RVA Rising is not

- A program or service delivery organization
- A replacement for the pillar and driver work led by partners
- A new layer of bureaucracy above existing organizations
- Complete — we are building it now, together
- Owned by any single organization

Shared understanding of what **drives change**

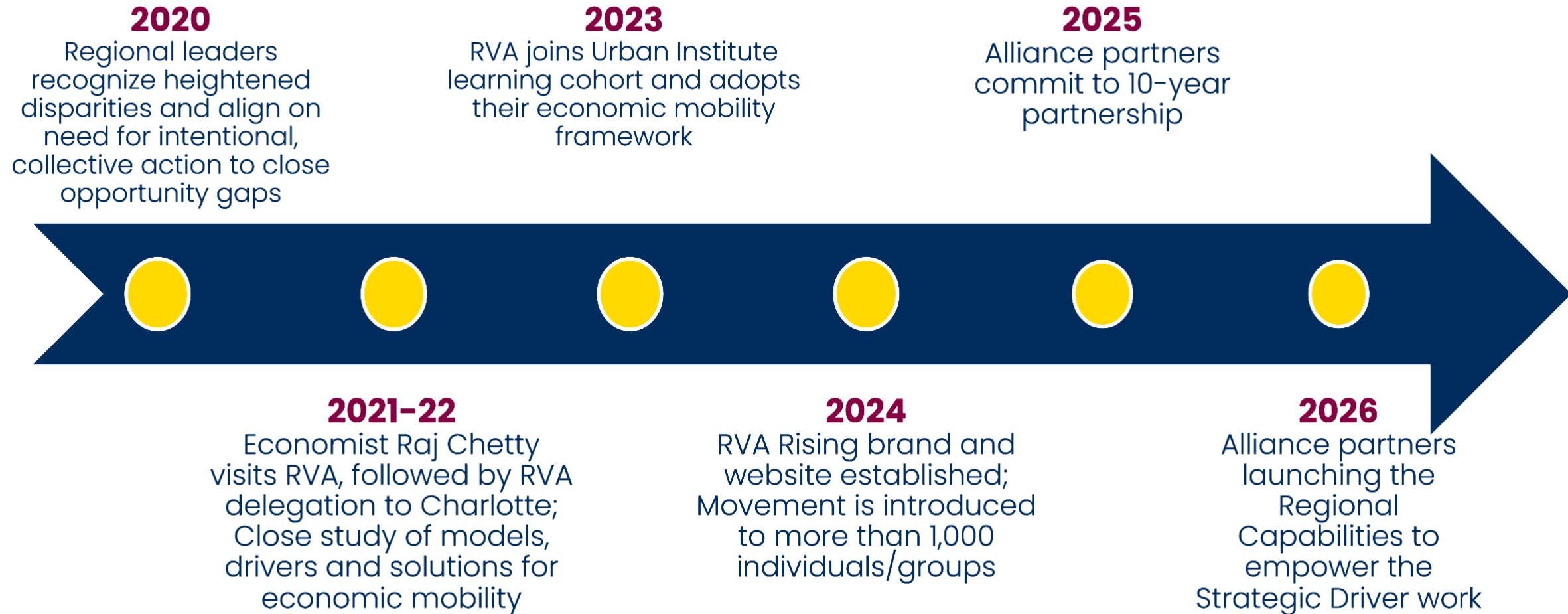


Dimensions of
Economic Mobility



Drivers of Economic Mobility

Our Journey to Date



How does RVA Rising **get things done?**

Making connections & providing resources to enable greater efficiency, alignment, & scaled impact:



Shared Data & Metrics:
aggregating data to align
progress and guide
decision-making.



Narrative & Storytelling:
lifting up voices, progress,
and why economic mobility
matters.



Convening & Engagement:
creating capacity for
learning, connection, and
collective action.



Strategy & Policy:
aligning partners,
surfacing gaps, and
building shared direction.

The problem is not effort. It is **fragmentation**.

The region has named Rewarding Work as a driver. The obstacle is not that too little is being tried. It is that the effort is not organized around a common signal.

106

workforce programs and talent pipelines

Identified across the nine RVA Rising localities by VCU's Center for Public Policy. Participants were largely satisfied with them, and also described the effort as duplicated and uncoordinated.

VCU Center for Public Policy scan, October 2025

| Employer outreach is duplicated

The most cited form of unnecessary duplication in the scan, named by 103 of 200 respondents. Multiple organizations approach the same companies independently.

| Nothing is well aligned

Asked how well workforce programs, education providers, and employers align on regional needs, respondents scored every category between 2.2 and 2.9 out of 5.

This is the gap the Rewarding Work driver has to close before anything else works.

How **Rewarding Work** gets organized

A Next Generation Sector Partnership is a business-led, community-supported partnership of companies from the same industry, working with education, workforce, and economic development partners on shared priorities. Developed by Formation, used in more than 100 regions over roughly 15 years.

LEADS

The inner table

Business leaders and industry champions

C-suite decision makers from competing firms in one industry. They set the agenda, name the priorities, and lead the action teams.

ALIGNS

The outer table

Resource partners

Workforce, education and training, economic development, local government, and community organizations. They listen first, then align behind what industry prioritizes.

FACILITATES

The convener

ChamberRVA

A neutral third party trusted by both business and community partners. Coordinates and facilitates. Does not set the agenda and does not implement.

The partnership follows the natural labor market footprint of the industry, not jurisdictional boundaries.

Four sectors, **one operating rhythm**

Sectors were selected for scale, documented talent demand that current systems are not meeting, and real pathways to family-sustaining wages without a four-year degree. Reynolds, Brightpoint, and CCWA independently named the same four in their six-year workforce plan.

Construction

LAUNCHED OCT 2025

Five employer-led action teams: career awareness, retention, training alignment, target populations, and policy.

Health care

LAUNCHED MAY 2026

Champions from Bon Secours, VCU Health, and HCA Healthcare. Action teams forming around supply alignment, pathways, and advancement.

Information Technology

DISCOVERY

More than 28,000 active IT professionals regionally. The gap is coordination and access to on-ramps, not volume.

Advanced Manufacturing

DISCOVERY

Roughly 55,000 manufacturing workers in the MSA, with major new capacity coming online through 2027.

How the work moves: C-suite leaders set priorities, organize into action teams, and work in 90-day cycles. Formation provides technical assistance across all four sectors.

What the model has produced so far

34 of 36

invited C-suite executives attended the construction launch

295

hours of executive volunteer time, worth about \$64,900 in kind

\$600K+

committed toward a \$2.35M five-year capacity campaign

Above the surface

VISIBLE ACTIVITY

- April 29 hiring event with Virginia Career Works: 6 companies, more than 100 attendees
- Hourigan and Chesterfield CTE launched a seven-week internship
- Building Trades I and II curriculum under joint review
- Entry-level hiring and retention surveys deployed across the sector

Below the surface

WHAT MAKES IT DURABLE

- Employers moved from giving feedback to owning problems and leading action teams
- Virginia Career Works and CCWA invited us into their business advisory settings
- Rewarding Work metrics narrowed from 70+ candidates to 15 regional indicators
- Regional dashboard in technical build for first release

Rewarding Work is one of five RVA Rising drivers. This is that driver in practice.

Where **local government** fits

Localities sit at the outer table, as members of the resource provider group.

The role is to listen to what industry names as priority, then align your resources behind it.

1 Bring assets, not competing agendas

Data, program connections, funding intelligence, facilities, outreach capacity, or policy expertise that advances an action team priority.

2 Show up and respond

Attend the quarterly convenings, answer action team requests, and help prepare resources when industry leaders identify a need.

3 Stay patient while the work matures

Hold to the employer-led agenda while near-term outputs are still emerging. That gives business leaders room to move from discovery into implementation.

4 Champion the model with new partners

Invite us to explain the approach, and bring aligned organizations in your jurisdiction into the work.

Partner resources work best when they reinforce the employer signal rather than fragment it.