

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission

STRATEGIC PLAN

2007 UPDATE



MISSION STATEMENT

The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission serves its member governments, citizens, and businesses by actively promoting inter-jurisdictional communication, coordination, and cooperation on issues affecting the district and by providing local technical assistance.

Adopted: January 25, 2007

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission Strategic Plan (2007-2012)

Areas of Focus*

1. Pursue Designation as a District Organization (under EDA guidelines)
2. Identify and Coordinate the Protection of Natural Resources in the Region
 - Air Quality Protection
 - Natural Environment Protection
 - Water Quality Protection
 - Protection of the Upper Roanoke River
3. Regional Stormwater Management
4. NRV and Higher Education Linkages
5. Regional Water Supply
6. Establish a "Virtual One-Stop Portal"
7. Develop a Regional Education Program for Elected Officials

*Note: The numbers above reflect the priority ranking of each area of focus as determined by a survey administered to all Commission members (including liaison members).

Statement on the Strategic Plan: *This document is meant to determine strategic priorities for the region that are not transportation-related. The staff of the Regional Commission is also responsible for developing and maintaining a 20-Year Long-Range Transportation Plan, as well as the Transportation Improvement Program. Priorities for transportation-related projects are determined by the Roanoke Valley Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and are presented in the MPO's Unified Planning Work Program each year. Furthermore, the MPO is currently assessing future directions for that organization (i.e., identifying priority issues for the future) and key issues arising from this assessment will be included in future work programs.*

Additionally, the Strategic Planning Committee recognizes that in the future other areas of interest/focus may arise that would necessitate amending the Plan. For this reason, the Plan will be reviewed/reassessed on an annual basis by the Commission.

1. Pursue Designation as an Economic Development District

Desired Outcome: A region-wide economic strategy will be developed to enable qualified local governments to be eligible for funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA) for various economic development projects. EDA can fund up to \$1 million for special projects that will have significant impact on the region.

Time Frame: 3 years

- **Year 1** - Establish the Regional Commission board as the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) Committee, and establish working group of economic development groups to assist in the development of the CEDS
- **Year 2** - Prepare a CEDS for the region to make local governments eligible for funding from the U.S. Economic Development Administration and obtain approval by all local governments. The CEDS is the first step in the process of becoming designated as an Economic Development District (EDD).
- **Year 3** – Submit CEDS to U.S. EDA and obtain designation as an EDD

Personnel Responsible: Executive Director, working with Economic Resources Planner and Senior Planner

Personnel and Financial Resources Required: This project will require substantial staff resources in years 1 and 2. The cost will be approximately \$55,000.

2. Identify & Coordinate the Protection of Natural Resources in the Region

A. Air Quality Protection

Desired Outcome: Keep the region in attainment with EPA's National Ozone 8-hour standard and keep the region from violating the national Fine Particulate (PM 2.5) standard.

Time Frame: 4 years

- **Ozone implementation is ongoing.** Federal EPA will re-evaluate our status after the 2007 Ozone Season. We will receive the evaluation between October and December 2007. Maintenance and continued maintenance reporting after 2007.
- **Fine Particulate Matter:**
 - **Year 1** - Formation of a stakeholder committee
 - **Year 2** - Development of a regional particulate matter compact
 - **Year 3** - Develop Particulate Matter Plan (similar to the Early Action Ozone Plan)
 - **Year 4** - Full implementation of plan

Personnel Responsible: Senior Planner and other staff members

Personnel and Financial Resources Required: The Ozone portion is accounted for in MPO Work Programs and will be paid for with transportation planning funds. The particulate matter portion will need to be funded with other grants, donations or in-kind support from new sources of funding in the amount of \$30,000.

B. Natural Environment Protection

Desired Outcome: Provide local government leaders and staff with technical support and tools to help protect slopes, view sheds, tree cover, and critical open space, as well as promote continued development of a regional Greenway system. Both regulatory and voluntary methods can be promoted to encourage protection of these lands.

Time Frame: 1 Year

- **Year 1** - Work with localities to identify specific projects that can be incorporated into the work program, and coordinate with the Western Virginia Land Trust to host a workshop for local government officials.

Personnel Responsible: Director of Information Services and Senior Planner

Personnel and Financial Resources Required: Staff time in the amount of \$10,000.

C. Water Quality Protection

Desired Outcome: Work with the VDEQ in their TMDL program to protect the public health and the health of impaired aquatic ecosystems by ensuring attainment of water quality standards. The TMDL program is a requirement of the 1972 Clean Water Act. TMDLs are required for water bodies that are determined to be impaired. The VDEQ determines whether a water body is impaired or not. The Virginia TMDL program is governed by a federal court order Consent Decree that lays out a schedule for TMDL development through 2010. Required activities include: water sampling, periodic assessments, listing of impaired waters, TMDL development, and implementation plans. The role of the RVARC in this process is to serve as: a facilitator of public input, a liaison to local governments, and fiscal agent for the process.

Time Frame: 6 Years

- **Year 1** - Roanoke Bacteria TMDL complete
Roanoke Benthic TMDL complete
Roanoke PCB TMDL underway
Jackson Benthic TMDL complete
Jackson dissolved oxygen TMDL complete
Looney Creek Implementation Plan development underway
- **Year 2** - Roanoke PCB TMDL complete
Looney Creek Implementation Plan complete
- **Year 3** - Roanoke Bacteria Implementation Plan development underway
Roanoke Benthic Implementation Plan development underway
Looney Creek Implementation Plan activities begin
- **Year 4** - Jackson Benthic Implementation Plan development underway
Jackson Dissolved Oxygen Implementation Plan development underway
Roanoke Bacteria Implementation Plan complete
Roanoke Benthic Implementation Plan complete
- **Year 5** - Jackson Benthic Implementation Plan complete
Jackson Dissolved Oxygen Implementation Plan complete
Roanoke Bacteria Implementation Plan activities begin
Roanoke Benthic Implementation Plan activities begin

- **Year 6** - Jackson Benthic Implementation Plan activities begin
Jackson Dissolved Oxygen Implementation Plan activities begin

Personnel Responsible: Regional Planner

Personnel and Financial Resources Required: There are four TMDL studies remaining at a cost of \$8,000 each, and seven Implementation Plans remaining at \$10,000 each, totaling approximately \$102,000. The Department of Environmental Quality would provide most of the funding for this work.

D. Protection of the Upper Roanoke River

Desired Outcome: Work with the counties of Bedford, Franklin, Montgomery and Roanoke and the cities of Roanoke and Salem, the Upper Roanoke River Roundtable, Va. Department of Environmental Quality, the Va. Department of Conservation and Recreation, U.S. Corps of Engineers, environmental groups and the business community to update the 1990 Roanoke River Corridor Study. The goal of the study is to document existing conditions in the Roanoke River Corridor, with an emphasis on recommending ways in which identified problems, opportunities, and protection needs can be addressed.

Time Frame: 2 Years

- **Year 1** - Establish a stakeholders group and obtain a commitment from PDCs and local governments in the Upper Roanoke River to participate in the study update. Begin search for possible funding sources for this study. Develop RFP for consulting services
- **Year 2** – Hire consulting firm. Complete update of the Roanoke River Study and present findings to local governments and pertinent state agencies.

Personnel Responsible: Regional Planner

Personnel and Financial Resources Required: Project will require 1 full time staff member (for a 2-year period) at a cost of \$100,000, a Consultant for \$120,000 and technical assistance from staff at the New River Valley PDC, Region 2000 PDC and West Piedmont PDC.

3. Regional Stormwater Management

A. Roanoke Valley Stormwater Management

Desired Outcome: Update of the 1997 Roanoke Valley Regional Stormwater Management Plan and adoption of the updated plan by the participating local governments. The goal is to have participating local governments examine and approve a funding mechanism for implementing a regional approach to stormwater management. Additionally, the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation is working on new guidelines for stormwater management for counties, cities and towns. Once the new stormwater regulations are established, Commission staff will work with communities in the Roanoke Valley to ensure compliance with these new regulations.

Time Frame: 3 Years

- **Year 1** – Gain local government commitment for the project; develop a scope of work and review possible funding sources. Once funding sources are identified, application will be made to appropriate grant programs and local governments will be requested to provide any match for grants.
- **Year 2** – Develop an RFP for consulting services to assist with the update process and plan and proceed with preparation of the plan.
- **Year 3** - Adoption by local governments of the plan as well as a funding mechanism to implement the plan.

Personnel Responsible: Regional Planner and additional members of the staff.

Funding and Financial Resources Required: It is anticipated that the costs will be approximately \$350,000, including Commission staff time and consulting fees. In 1993-1994, the local governments spent \$720,000 on a plan which estimated the cost to implement at \$60-\$100 million. It will cost approximately \$350,000 to update the plan, and it should be anticipated that implementation costs will be higher. It is suggested that before spending money on a plan update, there should be an agreement in principle that localities will move forward with implementation.

B. Alleghany Highlands Stormwater Management

Desired Outcome: The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation is developing new guidelines for stormwater management for counties, cities and towns. Once the new stormwater regulations are established, the Commission staff will work with the localities in the Alleghany Highlands to ensure the communities are in compliance with the new regulations.

Time Frame: 3 Years

- **Year 1** – Review new regulations and determine the impact of the regulations on current stormwater guidelines for communities in the Highlands. Meet with local government representatives to determine if a regional approach to stormwater management is appropriate. If a regional approach appears appropriate, develop a scope of work for a regional stormwater management plan and review possible funding sources. Once funding sources are identified, application will be made to appropriate grant programs and local governments will be requested to provide any match for grants.
- **Year 2** – Develop an RFP for consulting services to assist with the update process and plan and proceed with preparation of the plan.
- **Year 3** - Adoption by local governments of the plan as well as a funding mechanism to implement the plan.

Personnel Responsible: Regional Planner and additional members of the staff.

Funding and Financial Resources Required: It is anticipated that the costs will be approximately \$150,000, including Commission staff time and consulting fees.

4. **NRV and Higher Education Linkages**

Desired Outcome: Stronger relationships between the Planning Districts in the New River and Roanoke Valley-Alleghany regions, which will also help strengthen relationships among local governments.

Time Frame: 3 years

- **Year 1** - Hold a meeting between the Chairmen and Executive Directors of the PDCS to discuss how to pursue stronger relationships between PDCs. The staff will also pursue meetings with representatives with higher education institutions in the NRV and to try to include these institutions in projects undertaken by the staff of the RVARC.
- **Years 2 & 3** – Establish an annual joint PDC meeting between the NRVPDC and the RVARC and hold joint meeting of all elected officials in both regions (similar to the regional summits that were held a few years ago)
- **Ongoing** – try to encourage the NRVPDC and the RVARC to include membership from the PDC in committees where an issue transcends both regions.

Personnel Responsible: Chairman of the Regional Commission, the Executive Director and staff of both PDCs

Personnel and Financial Resources Required: The resources required to accommodate this project include extensive staff time for contacts with NRV groups and the planning and implementation of meetings. The cost will be approximately \$20,000

5. **Regional Water Supply**

A. Greater Roanoke Valley Water Supply Plan

Desired Outcome: Adoption of Regional Water Supply Plans that fulfils the requirements outlined in VDEQ's Local and Regional Water Supply Planning Regulation. As required by the regulation, the water supply plan should be adopted by all of the thirteen (13) participating localities.

Time Frame: 2 Years

- **Year 1** - Phase I of this project is currently underway and will be completed by June 30, 2007.
- **Year 2** – Phase II will result in the completion of the regional water supply plan and adoption by local governments (anticipated by December 2008).

Personnel Responsible: Regional Planner

Personnel and Financial Resources Required: Phase I of the project is funded by a \$30,000 Water Supply Planning Grant from VDEQ, in-kind contributions from local governments, and Regional Commission staff time. Phase II of the Plan will additional funding, the Regional Commission intends to apply for an additional \$30,000 in grant funding from VDEQ in FY 2008. It is anticipated that local governments will continue to provide in-kind contributions as well as additional monetary support.

A budget (cost estimates) for Phase II of the regional water supply plan will be developed as a part of Phase I. This information is projected to be available by the end of January 2007 to ensure consideration in the budget processes for the participating local governments.

B. Alleghany Highlands Regional Water Supply Plan

Time Frame: 3 Years

- **Year 1** – Meet with local government officials to determine the desire to pursue a regional approach to water supply planning in the Highlands. Also, determine the level of interest in including the counties of Bath, Highland and Rockbridge in the regional water supply planning process. If a regional approach is desired, develop a scope of work for Phase I of the project and make application for planning funds from VDEQ
- **Year 2** - Complete Phase I of the Alleghany Highlands Water Supply Plan. Prepare an application to VDEQ to obtain funding for Phase II of the water supply planning process.
- **Year 3** – Complete Phase II of the regional water supply plan and obtain adoption by local governments.

Personnel Responsible: Regional Planner

Personnel and Financial Resources Required: Phase I of the project will require approximately \$50,000 and can be partially funded by a Water Supply Planning Grant from VDEQ, in-kind contributions from local governments, and Regional Commission staff time. For Phase II of the project, the Regional Commission will apply for an additional \$50,000 in grant funding from VDEQ. It is anticipated that local governments in the Highlands will provide in-kind contributions as well as monetary support, if required, to complete the planning process.

C. Craig County/Town of New Castle Regional Water Supply Plan

Time Frame: 2 Years

- **Year 1** – Meet with local government officials for Craig County and New Castle to determine the desire to pursue a regional approach to water supply planning. If the County and Town desire to pursue a regional approach, the Commission staff will develop a scope of work for the Water Supply Plan and make application for planning funds from VDEQ
- **Year 2** - Complete the Water Supply Plan for the County and Town. Obtain adoption of the Plan by local governments.

Personnel Responsible: Regional Planner

Personnel and Financial Resources Required: The Water Supply will require approximately \$30,000-\$40,000 and can be partially funded by a Water Supply Planning Grant from VDEQ, in-kind contributions from local governments, and Regional Commission staff time.

6. Establish a "Virtual One-Stop Portal"

Desired Outcome: Establish a "Virtual One-Stop Economic Development Portal" in the form of a website that links all related economic development resources for the region. The Portal would not recreate any information, but direct web visitors to the relevant resources.

Time Frame: 2 years

- **Year 1:** The first step in creating a portal would be to develop support from local governments and key organizations. Identify funding sources for the portal website, including ongoing maintenance costs. Identify an available web URL and develop an implementation plan.
- **Year 2:** Work with stakeholders to develop content. Hire a web design firm to translate the content model into a functional website. Develop a marketing plan and obtain funding to "advertise" the new One-Stop Portal.

Personnel Responsible: Director of Information Services and Economic Resources Planner

Personnel and Financial Resources Required: The cost of staff time is \$15,000. An additional \$15,000 would be required to hire a web design firm to establish a functional website and to "market" the web site.

7. Develop a Regional Education Program for Elected Officials and Business/Civic Leaders

Desired Outcome: To educate newly elected officials and others serving in leadership in public, private and non-profit sectors about various aspects related to the function and operations of local government, as well as expose them to the many organizations which exist to support their economic development and community development efforts.

Time Frame: 2 Years

- **Year 1** – Offer a seminar that discusses the roles and activities of significant regional organizations (i.e. RVARC, RVEDP, CVB, Western VA Workforce Development Board and Chambers of Commerce). This would be offered to government officials, the business community and to non-profits organizations.
- **Year 2** – Establish a curriculum and offer an education program for elected officials with assistance from VACO, VML, and the Weldon Cooper Center at UVA.

Personnel Responsible: Executive Director

Personnel and Financial Resources Required: Funds will be needed to purchase supplies, and pay staff for coordination of program at a cost of \$6,000 per year.