

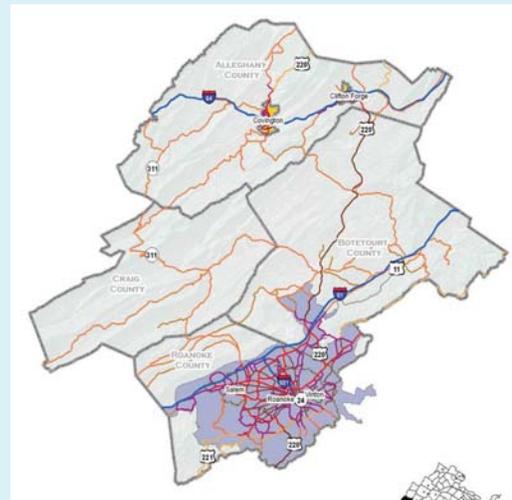
# RURAL PLANNING PROCESS 16

The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Rural 2035 Transportation Plan is being developed as a joint effort between the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission. The purpose of this plan is to evaluate the existing transportation system and future demand in the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany region and to recommend transportation improvements to best meet existing and future transportation infrastructure needs. The study area for the 2035 Plan is the non-metropolitan area (rural) within the boundary line of the planning district.

Improved transportation systems are vital to Virginia's and the local area's economic growth and development. Providing for the effective, safe, and efficient movement of people and goods is a basic goal of all transportation programs in the Commonwealth of Virginia. This guiding principle, together with consideration of environmental issues and local mobility needs, was the basis for the development of this transportation plan. Local benefits of the rural transportation plan include:

- Identification of transportation deficiencies and recommendations of remedies,
- Assistance with comprehensive plan updates,
- Traffic impact studies-Ch.527,
- Programming of transportation improvements, and
- Identifying effects of land use and development. Once completed, the regional transportation plans will be incorporated into Virginia's 2035 State Highway Plan.

VDOT will use this plan when evaluating requests from local governments for specific transportation projects and/or implementing projects that VDOT initiates. This list of recommendations will also be used in the statewide transportation planning process so that the magnitude of transportation needs statewide can be more accurately quantified.



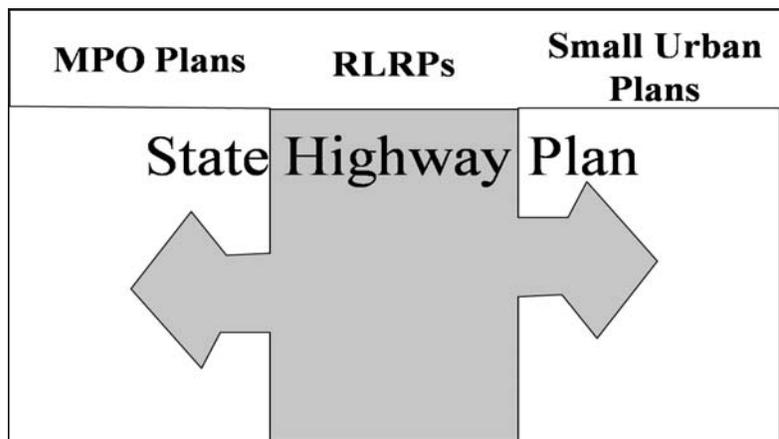
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## INTRODUCTION

The Transportation and Mobility Planning Division (TMPD) of the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is working with other modal agencies to develop VTrans 2035, the Commonwealth's multi-modal long range plan and a more detailed subset report known as the 2035 Surface Transportation Plan. The highway element of the 2035 Surface Transportation Plan will include proposed improvements on Virginia's federal functionally classified roadways. This Rural Long Range Transportation Plan is one piece of the 2035 Plan. VDOT, Virginia's Planning District Commissions (PDCs), and the local governments they represent are partners in the development of this new initiative to create regional transportation plans in rural and small urban areas that complement those in Virginia's metropolitan areas.

The transportation system within the rural areas for each region was evaluated, and a range of transportation improvements - roadway, rail, transit, air, bicycle, and pedestrian - are recommended that can best satisfy existing and future needs. Some of the PDCs contain urbanized areas whose transportation needs are coordinated by a metropolitan planning organization (MPO). In the case of the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC), there is an urbanized area whose transportation needs are coordinated by an MPO. The Roanoke Valley Area Metropolitan Planning Organization (RVAMPO) conducts the transportation planning for the Cities of Roanoke and Salem, the Town of Vinton, and the urbanized areas of Bedford, Botetourt, and Roanoke Counties. The transportation needs of this area are analyzed in its 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan, which is a separate component of the 2035 Surface Transportation Plan. .



## RURAL LONG-RANGE PLAN GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

Needs for each regional plan were developed based on regional and statewide goals and objectives. Similar concepts within the goals of the PDCs were found and used to shape common regional long range plan goals (at right) to address rural transportation planning across the Commonwealth. A basic goal for all transportation programs in Virginia is the provision for the effective, safe, and efficient movement of people and goods. The plan for the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany region was developed with this primary goal in mind, along with other goals including consideration for environmental issues and local travel desires. Each PDC developed transportation goals and objectives that were used to guide the development of the Rural Long Range Transportation Plan for their area. Rural transportation planning in the RVARC is guided by the Rural Transportation Technical Committee. This

committee reviewed the needs of the region and formulated the following goals.

- Reduce congestion and impact of incidents on I-81 and I-64.
  - Improve alignment and capacity on specified sections of the interstates.
  - Redesign key interstate interchanges.
- Strengthen transportation linkages between the Roanoke Valley and the surrounding regions (Alleghany Highlands, New River Valley, West Piedmont, and Region 2000).
  - Improve the alignment and capacity of US 220 from Eagle Rock to I-64.
  - Improve the alignment and safety of Route 311 from I-81 to New Castle.
  - Improve operations and safety of US 220 from Roanoke to Martinsville.
  - Construct I-73 from Roanoke to the NC state line.
  - Extend the Roanoke River Greenway System and other bicycle facilities.
- Preserve and maintain the existing transportation system and encourage efficient system management and operations.
  - Maintain all existing transportation infrastructure in good condition.
  - Promote access and transportation demand management policies.
  - Expand operations management and intelligent transportation systems.
  - Reduce reliance on single-occupant-vehicles.
- Promote recreational travel and tourism within the region.
  - Develop the Alleghany Highlands Tourism Trail in Alleghany and Craig Counties.
  - Designate additional Scenic Byways on rural scenic corridors.
- Expand public transit and passenger rail service.
- Provide a safe and secure transportation system.
- Consider freight needs in transportation facility re/design.
  - Upgrade interstate exit and entrance ramps and add truck climbing lanes.
  - Improve roadway and intersection geometry on key trucking corridors.
  - Improve access to intermodal facilities.
- Provide on-road and off-road bicycle and pedestrian accommodations.
  - Implement recommendations of the RVARC Rural Bikeway Plan.

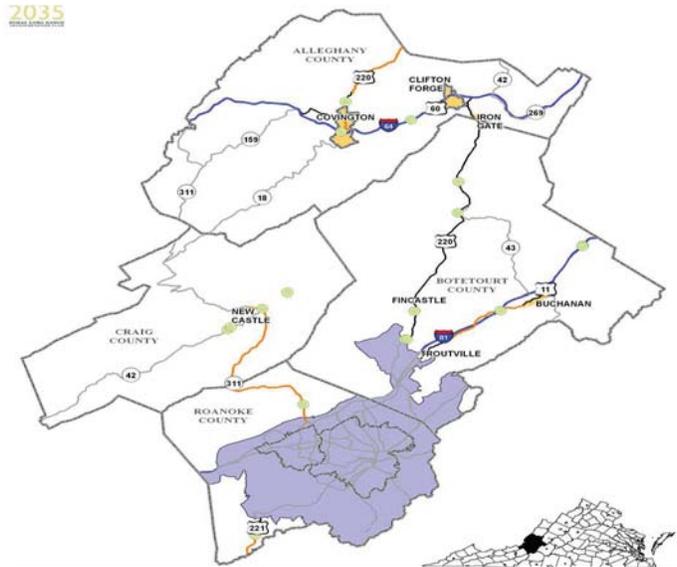


Downtown Clifton Forge in the Alleghany Highlands.

## RURAL LONG-RANGE PLAN RECOMMENDATIONS

Roadway analysis focused on safety, geometry and structure, and congestion. Through the review of available data, input at public meetings, and information provided by local and regional officials, the RVARC, in conjunction with the local jurisdictions, prepared a list of priority locations. The priority study location list is based on roadway performance measures, safety considerations, or a combination of the two. Some priority locations had current improvement recommendations from recent studies and required no further analysis. Other priority locations required a new or updated analysis. Within the RVARC, 21 priority locations were analyzed and recommended actions were developed for each. Eight of these locations were identified for assessment of safety and congestion concerns, while the remaining 13 were analyzed only for safety. The safety assessment locations were identified using safety and crash database information, along with input from local officials and the public.

The Rural Long-Range Plan will likely be adopted in the Summer of 2010. The Regional Commission and the MPO are considering updating the Urban Constrained Long-Range Transportation and the Rural Plan cooperatively during the next update in 2015.



RADAR bus that provided deviated route transit service in the Roanoke Valley and Allegheny Highlands.