Project Overview

The Livable Roanoke Valley Partnership is embarking on a process to develop the valley’s first coordinated regional plan. This effort will be guided and shaped by citizens - those who know the Roanoke Valley best.

The goal of this effort is to promote economic opportunity and a greater quality of life for all Roanoke Valley residents.

Project Goals

Invite and engage all citizens of the valley in a process to develop the valley’s first coordinated regional plan.

Identify issues and opportunities facing the valley across a number of topic areas including housing, transportation, land use, energy and the environment, economic and workforce development and health and education.

Identify priorities and goals based on what we care about and our desired future vision for the Roanoke Valley.

Create scenarios about how the Roanoke Valley could grow and prosper and achieve its fullest potential.

Define strategies needed to achieve our collective vision and indicators to help measure our progress.

Develop a Livability Plan that defines strategic initiatives to support the valley’s vision.

Workshop Format

The workshop is set up as a series of four stations through which you can move at your own pace.

Station 1: Welcome - Understand goals of the Workshop and how to participate

Station 2: Orientation - Learn about the project process, how to get and stay involved, and highlights from the Partnership’s efforts to date

Station 3: Community Vision Statements - Review vision statements from participating jurisdictions and identify what resonates with you

Station 4: Livability Priorities - Review key findings from the public telephone survey of 1,000 valley residents and identify priorities and goals that are important to you

Workshop Locations

This workshop is being held in multiple locations across the valley in an effort to reach as many people as possible. Please tell your family, friends, co-workers and neighbors and encourage them to participate in a meeting that is convenient to their schedule. A meeting location handout is available at the Welcome Station.

TUESDAY October 16, 2012

The Hub 10:00 A.M. - 5:00 P.M. VA Transportation Museum

Satellite Sites

9:00 A.M. - 10:30 A.M. Salem City Council Chambers, Salem

3:30 P.M. - 5:00 P.M. Fincastle Library Meeting, Fincastle

7:00 P.M. - 8:30 P.M. New Castle Commons Community Room, New Castle

WEDNESDAY October 17, 2012

The Hub 11:00 A.M. - 8:00 P.M. VA Transportation Museum

Satellite Sites

11:00 A.M. - 12:30 P.M. Vinton War Memorial, Vinton

5:00 P.M. - 6:30 P.M. Board of Supervisors Meeting Room, Franklin County Government Center, Rocky Mount

6:30 P.M. - 8:00 P.M. South County Roanoke Library, Auditorium, Roanoke
Public Involvement Goals

— Ensure the public has an opportunity to plan for the region and help shape a vision for the future.
— Foster collaboration among the many cities and counties in the Roanoke Valley.
— Utilize multiple mediums for outreach to engage the greatest possible range of participants and perspectives, including those who have been previously under-represented.
— Emphasize storytelling as the primary method for visualizing and communicating the future vision and scenarios for the valley.
— Through scenario thinking, gain a deeper understanding of the risks facing the valley, key opportunities and the forces that will shape the valley in the future.
— Generate strategic decisions that are resilient to different futures.
— Set the foundation for ongoing dialogue, collaborative learning and planning for the valley.

Partnership Stakeholders

The Partnership for a Livable Roanoke Valley includes several advisory groups with specific roles in developing the Livable Roanoke Valley Plan:

**Steering Committee** is tasked with engaging the region’s decisionmakers, community leaders, under-represented groups, and citizens. This committee guides the entire process, including the development, review, and adoption of the plan, as well as the guidance and oversight of the Technical Committee and Stakeholder Committee.

**Stakeholder Committee** is responsible for directing the public involvement process and is composed of two representatives from each focus area subcommittee.

**Technical Committee** is responsible for advising the Project Director on day-to-day management and planning issues.

**Focus Area Subcommittees** are tasked with addressing the issues of housing, transportation, land use, energy & environment, economic development & workforce, and health & education.

How to Participate

— Provide feedback during this workshop on October 16 through 18.
— Attend the Livability Strategies Workshop in winter 2013 and the Livability Pathway Workshops in fall 2013.
— Participate online via www.livableroanoke.org and www.ideas/livableroanoke.org to share your ideas and “second” ideas you like.
Housing

Strengths
- Good community collaboration (nonprofit & faith)
- Leadership - business, etc.
- Short work commute
- Environmental resources
- Diversified workforce
- Relatively low crime rate
- Universities
- Historic housing stock
- Strong neighborhoods and communities
- Number of homeless programs
- People - talent & experience
- Large number of nonprofits
- Housing affordability - comparatively

Weaknesses
- Government collaboration among some jurisdictions
- City of Roanoke public education
- City to country transit disconnect
- Lack of funding sources - finance & grants
- Number of homeless programs (attracts clients)
- Age of housing stock
- Government working together
- Unemployment
- Neighbors don’t know each other
- Wealth inequality
- Education drop-out rate
- Loss of sense of community

Opportunities
- Leverage community housing improvement efforts
- Nearby schools and stores yield community
- Align and engage faith-base communities
- Collaborate to address threats
- Leverage neighborhood alliances
- Second homes as a growth market
- Community (village) development

Threats
- Political & organizational conflict
- Sustained unemployment
- Racial segregation
- Low incomes affect housing affordability
- Unemployment/low incomes
- Ridgetop/low incomes
- Centralization - wealth, media, etc.

Related Trends
- Increasing need for more safe, accessible and affordable housing
- Continued challenges with unemployment

Transportation

Strengths
- Greenways
- Good freight rail
- Little traffic compared to other places
- No extreme commutes
- Growing greenway/bikeway network
- Location & proximity to larger cities
- Outdoor recreation
- Existing communities & Grandin Village
- Easy access around the valley
- Talented people
- Natural areas and recreation
- Grassroots movement to improve area
- Interstate
- Private sector leadership
- Interstate 81 on edge, not through middle of city
- Side streets for bikes
- Valley Metro service

Weaknesses
- Lack of localities working together
- Lack of shared vision
- No intercity passenger rail service
- No sidewalks in counties
- Local disconnect: neighborhood & government
- Air transportation
- Limited public transit service area and schedule
- Under-utilized transit service
- Lack of transportation to work
- Remote region
- Narrow road shoulders

Opportunities
- Regional cooperation
- Alternative commuting options
- More focus on bicycles
- Create new partnerships
- Better utilization of greenways
- More greenways
- Integrate transit, greenways & bicycles
- Railroad electrification
- Transportation research - Virginia Tech Transportation Institute
- Available electric cars

Threats
- Intergovernmental bickering
- Job losses
- Lack of transport funding
- Congestion on Interstate 81
- Lack of funding or resources
- Political uncertainty (state & federal)
- Aversion to change (nostalgia)
- Transit shrinking
- Drivers not bicycle-friendly
- Lots of NIMBYism
- Reduced local government funds
- Shrinking population
- Political will to fund improvements
- Decline in valley businesses

Related Trends
- Decreasing government funding
- Increasing demand for multi-modal transportation
- Increasing value of natural environment (e.g. use of greenways)
### Land Use

**Strengths**
- Mountains and trees
- Greenway - bicycles & pedestrians
- People who appreciate nature
- Significant infill land available
- Support to protect view sheds

**Weaknesses**
- Resistance to change in general
- Sprawl makes transportation expensive
- Lack of regional cooperation
- Little political will
- Brownfields
- Topography limits development
- Lack of nature vision (value of nature)

**Opportunities**
- Completion of greenways
- Regional infrastructure policy
- Adaptive re-use of property
- Youth involvement
- Alternative energy education
- Small farm clusters
- Slowing sprawl
- Eco-village communities
- Affordable land in rural areas
- Progressive business community
- Aging population = more volunteers

**Threats**
- Not in my backyard (NIMBYs)
- Loss of farmland
- Sprawl
- The belief that any growth is a good idea
- Steep slope development
- Risk of losing additional forested land

### Energy & Environment

**Strengths**
- Lots of natural/open space
- Overall energy awareness
- Outdoor activities
- Stakeholder activity involvement
- Strong family life - activities
- Our environment
- Progressive city government - vision
- Motivated energy providers
- Material recovery centers
- Water quality
- Local government

**Weaknesses**
- Lack of regional cooperation
- Dependence on fossil fuels
- Renewable energy projects
- Air quality
- Lack of funding for Best Management Practices (BMPs)
- Lack of affordable housing
- Insufficient recycling initiatives
- Too much politics

**Opportunities**
- Clean energy production
- Regional/local food systems
- Outdoor experiences/education
- Regional cooperation
- Mitigation banks to offset development impacts
- Young adult involvement and activities
- Rising energy costs
- Investment in waste processing
- Planning District Commission efforts/city level efforts

**Threats**
- Inappropriate development
- Government regulations
- Climate change
- Political will
- Young adults moving away
- Uranium mining
- Loss of revenue
- Suburban sprawl
- Unemployment

### Related Trends

**Increasing aging population**

**Increasing livability in downtowns**

**Increasing need for more safe, accessible and affordable housing**

**Improvements in technology**

**Increasing energy costs**

**Increasing value of natural environment**

**Increasing need for more safe, accessible and affordable housing**
**Economic Development & Workforce**

**Strengths**
- Outdoors/Appalachian Trail/parkway/greenway
- Research technology centers
- Tourism and amenities
- Higher education resources
- Arts and cultural organizations
- Low cost of living
- Strong traditional work ethic
- Knowledge is here, we have the tools
- Transportation corridors/market access
- Ed Walker
- School improvement (K-12)
- Healthcare job growth
- Entrepreneur - young adults
- Strong family trends
- Green technologies
- Public safety

**Weaknesses**
- Lack of strong regional identity
- Airline options
- Lack of regional collaboration
- Weak/uneven job growth
- Public transportation
- Stagnant population growth
- Lack of unified vision
- Insufficient local business development support
- Negative attitude
- Too small for critical mass

**Opportunities**
- Growing arts and cultural community
- Open space, greenways and outdoor recreation
- Economic development in green sectors
- Regionalism
- VA Tech research and biomedical institute
- Local food production
- “Locals” movement
- Graduates from higher ed center
- Identifiable niches - healthcare - quality of life
- Vision that engages entrepreneurs
- Training programs for soft skills
- Health/life science growth
- Post secondary education

**Threats**
- Resistance to change
- Young professional migration away from Roanoke Valley
- Aging population
- Conflict more than cooperation
- Uneven public policy
- Unknown economy
- Rise of mega cities
- Businesses not locating in the valley
- No money
- Decline in durable good sector
- Unemployment
- Declining competitiveness
- Brain drain, young workers departing

**Health & Education**

**Strengths**
- Higher education opportunities
- Abundant natural resources
- Skilled, self-reliant workers
- Core of active, involved citizenry
- New medical school
- Natural resources/greenways/mountains
- Healthcare infrastructure/capacity
- Celebrate diversity
- Local food co-ops & city markets
- Rich arts & cultural opportunities
- Caring people

**Weaknesses**
- Dependence on emergency healthcare
- Regional cooperation insufficient
- Education not highly valued
- Lack of culturally diverse resources
- No strong voices in Washington
- Poor access - train and air
- Lack affordable dental care
- Limited resources - health & retail
- Jurisdictional collaboration
- Poor school conditions

**Opportunities**
- Build on local colleges & research
- Declining legislative influence of SW Virginia
- Natural resources attract visitors & residents
- Quality child care
- Health care & education as employment base
- Partnerships
- Wellness
- Collaboration between artists, nonprofits, etc.
- Research
- Regional cooperation (w/NRV)
- Regional cooperation increasing
- Managed healthcare

**Threats**
- High poverty in City of Roanoke
- Increase demand for healthcare
- Standards of learning “teaching to the test”
- Governments that do not think regionally
- Capacity
- Substance abuse issues
- Lack of economic growth
- Them versus us mentality
- Pollution
- Funding resources
- Valley does not have a clear “identity”
- Access to education

**Related Trends**
- Increasing need for a healthy and educated workforce
- Increase in aging population
- Increasing need for affordable and accessible health care
- Increasing need for more safe, accessible and affordable housing

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*Livable Roanoke Valley*

The SWOT and trends analyses for the six focus areas were developed by the Partnership for a Livable Roanoke Valley Stakeholders.
Future Scenarios

The “Future Scenarios” provide additional perspective on future outlooks for the Roanoke Valley. The outlooks are conceptual and intended to be provocative and plausible stories that capture a range of future possibilities - good, bad, expected, and surprising. The scenarios are not choices or predictions. Instead, they are hypothetical outcomes about how the region might evolve and they are intended to generate discussion.

The feedback and comments from this Framework for the Future Workshop, the telephone survey, and the website will be used in generating livability strategies that promote economic opportunity and a greater quality of life for all Roanoke Valley residents. The effectiveness of the livability strategies will be evaluated in light of the four potential outlooks described in the diagram to the right.

The scenario axes were developed by combining the trends that are shown on the stakeholder findings boards during a two-day intensive workshop including over 35 key regional organizations.

### Light at the End of the “Valley”
A region in which the people, companies, governments, and organizations are maintaining themselves despite poor social and economic conditions. The valley is poised to take advantage of any opportunity presented when conditions improve.

### Paradise Valley
A region in which good planning and favorable social and economic conditions have created an environment for the valley to thrive. The economy is strong and able to support a thriving community and robust social networks. Effective government and organizations are enablers of the community.

### Unhappy Valley
A region in which little has gone well. Hard economic times and increasing social demands combined with poor preparation has resulted in a region that is overly dependent on transfer payments from the Federal and State governments. Its economic engine has sputtered and seems like it is taking forever to get started.

### Happy Go Lucky Valley
A region which has benefited from a strong national and global economy. The rising tide of the nation has lifted all regions. Governments have had adequate budgets and social networks are strong. The valley has been in the right place at the right time. Inefficient readiness is of little consequence as long as the economy is always strong.
There are 27 Participants in this Project

- 27 Participants
- 25 different ideas
- Based on VT Survey
- Instant polls
- New ideas and voting
Livable Roanoke Valley

How would you rate the overall quality of life in our community?

- Excellent: 2 votes
- High: 7 votes
- Fair: 2 votes
- Poor: 0 votes
- I'm not sure: 0 votes

Movement of people and goods

How can our community improve the movement of people and goods throughout the region?

Submit your own ideas, 'second' the ideas you support and use the comment feature to share your thoughts.

Transportation

Review and participate in Transportation discussions. Topics within the Transportation category address movement, transportation options, mass transit, pedestrian, and pedestrian issues.
# Common Values & Priorities

## Workshop Results
1. Economic Development
2. Education
3. Land Dvt & Preservation
4. Transportation
5. Clean Water & Air

## Survey Results
1. Economic Development
2. Clean Air & Water
3. Health Care
4. Education
5. Fire & Police Services
Our Vision

community

economy

quality of life

recreation

education
Our Priorities
1. Promote equitable, affordable housing
   - Have more housing for the elderly and disabled
   - Availability of affordable housing options, including rentals, for all groups
   - Improvement of energy efficiency of all housing options for all groups

2. Provide more transportation choices
   - Provide public transportation for more citizens
   - Managing traffic in the area
   - Providing passenger rail service

3. Focus Land Development in Existing Communities
   - Preservation of green areas and rural land
   - Encouraging commercial development in green areas or rural land
   - Having less restriction on land development

4. Survey Findings - Priorities Low to High
   - Promotion of transportation options other than driving
   - Improvement of sidewalks, paths, and trails
   - Availability of housing for multi-generational families living in the same household

5. Availability of housing for multi-generational families living in the same household
   - Availability of affordable housing options, including rentals, for all groups
   - Improvement of energy efficiency of all housing options for all groups

6. Survey Findings - Priorities Low to High
   - Managing traffic in the area
   - Providing passenger rail service
   - Promoting energy efficiency of all housing options for all groups

7. Vote
   - Place a dot here to vote for this priority area

8. Survey Findings - Priorities Low to High
   - Improving sidewalks, paths, and trails
   - Providing passenger rail service
   - Managing traffic in the area

9. Survey Findings - Priorities Low to High
   - Improving sidewalks, paths, and trails
   - Providing passenger rail service
   - Managing traffic in the area

10. Survey Findings - Priorities Low to High
    - Improving sidewalks, paths, and trails
    - Providing passenger rail service
    - Managing traffic in the area
Encourage Energy Efficiency and Local Energy Sources

Ensure Clean Water and Air

Economic Development, Job Creation, and keeping Local Jobs is Our Highest Priority

Survey Findings - Priorities Low to High

1. Promote and encourage energy efficiency and conservation
   and... increase number of recycling programs

2. Generation of energy using local sources

3. Preservation of scenic vistas and views of the mountains

4. Pay more for the preservation of clean air

5. Programs that assist low income citizens with paying for energy such as heating and cooling

6. Reducing the regulation of traditional energy sources, such as coal

7. Beautification of public spaces

8. Exploration of alternative and renewable sources of energy

9. Reduction of pollution and greenhouse gas emissions

10. Paying for the preservation of clean air

Survey Findings - Priorities Low to High

1. Willing to pay more for preservation of clean water
   and... use greenways to preserve or water quality

2. Preserving scenic vistas and views of the mountains

3. Paying for the preservation of clean air

4. Beautification of public spaces

5. Programs that assist low income citizens with paying for energy such as heating and cooling

6. Reducing the regulation of traditional energy sources, such as coal

Survey Findings - Priorities Low to High

1. Preserve existing jobs and a stable population in the area
   and... make Roanoke Valley a young family re-location option

2. Bringing jobs and population growth to the area

3. Increasing manufacturing jobs in the area

4. Promoting local tourism attractions and outdoor recreation

5. Making the area attractive as a retirement destination

6. Promoting local tourism attractions and outdoor recreation

Vote
Place a dot here to vote for this priority area

Vote
Place a dot here to vote for this priority area

Vote
Place a dot here to vote for this priority area
Provide Preventative Health Care and Lower Health Care Costs

1. Provide high quality medical care available in the area
   and... improve transportation access to medical care

2. Programs aimed at preventative care

3. Programs aimed at assisting with health care costs for citizens who cannot afford care

4. Increasing programs aimed at improving the health of local residents such as programs targeting obesity

Strengthen Educational Options and Academic Performance

1. Improve graduation rates
   and... become a leader in technical education

2. Improving the performance of schools in the area

3. Providing college scholarship programs

4. Improving safety in the schools

5. Improving pre-school options in the community

Foster Local Arts and Culture

1. Highlight the unique culture of the region
   and... support heritage tourism

2. Bringing more live performances to the area

3. Supporting local area museums

4. Improving artistic and cultural offerings in the area

5. Improving safety in the schools

6. Improving pre-school options in the community

Survey Findings - Priorities Low to High

#3 Provide Preventative Health Care and Lower Health Care Costs

#4 Strengthen Educational Options and Academic Performance

#11 Foster Local Arts and Culture
Plan for Efficient and Reliable Fire and Police Services

Bring People Together for a Sense of Community

Infrastructure

1. Reduce criminal activity in the area
   and... improve services and coordination for rural county lands

2. Increasing emergency management services in the area for assistance in responding to natural disasters

3. Increasing fire protection services in the area

4. Increasing police in the area

Survey Findings - Priorities Low to High

#5

#9

#7

#11

1. Everyone doing their part to make the community a better place to live

2. Local governments combine efforts to provide services and solve community challenges

3. Being a community in which people care about each other

4. Increasing volunteerism in the community

Survey Findings - Priorities Low to High

1. Establish infrastructure prior to development

2. Further develop transportation infrastructure

3. Develop key energy infrastructure
### Parks & Recreation

**Survey Findings - Priorities Low to High**

1. Greenways and trails
2. Additional parks and recreation opportunities in rural areas
3. Outdoor recreational opportunities and tourism

**Vote**
Place a dot here to vote for this priority area

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### Character & Design

**Survey Findings - Priorities Low to High**

1. Define a valley identity
2. Character-based architecture and form
3. Maintain unique qualities of the community

**Vote**
Place a dot here to vote for this priority area

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#13

#14
Promote equitable, affordable housing  

Provide more transportation choices  

Focus Land Development in Existing Communities  

Other Goals

- Major need for low income families
- Promote neighborhoods with a variety of housing options and price ranges
- Deal with the homeless situation(s)

Other Goals

- Bike trails/lanes
- I-81
- Modern railroad - take freight off I-81, passenger
- Amtrak in Roanoke
- Traffic calming - roads safe for pedestrians and cycling
- Support all of western Virginia with a modern railroad to carry freight into the fuel expensive future to support our industry and private passenger service to keep us connected with the more urban but less livable centers
- Bus service to and from Fincastle
- Air travel (Fincastle)
- Improve passenger rail
- Improve passenger air travel
- Valley wide transit with SmartWay bus to Rocky Mount via US 220

Other Goals

- Retain and increase park lands
- Encourage redevelopment rather than sprawl
- Promote infill development
- Repurpose buildings
- Grants for rural development projects
- Parks and recreation needed badly in Craig. We do not have anything like this
- Sports complex for children
Encourage Energy Efficiency and Local Energy Sources

- Support wind energy
- Realize that there is no clean coal
- Promote local shopping and entertainment to save driving
- Promote livable, walkable communities (also for health reasons)

Ensure Clean Water and Air

- Maintain moratorium on uranium mining in Virginia

Economic Development, Job Creation, and keeping Local Jobs is Our Highest Priority

- Provide incentives/funding assistance for new businesses and industries
- Retention and creation of quality jobs
- Tourism
- Increase education about local opportunities to young people
- Support local-owned businesses
Provide Preventative Health Care and Lower Health Care Costs

Strengthen Educational Options and Academic Performance

Foster Local Arts and Culture

Other Goals

- Help low income families with health care choices (no emergency room as only choice)
- Church based health screening
- Encourage healthy living

Other Goals

- Support for teachers at a building level
- More teachers, smaller classes
- Freedom from testing/government regulations
- Tutoring/mentoring
- Encourage continuing education to update and expand skills
- Re-educate
- Leader in high school + 2 education (technical education)
- Arts and Culture
- Return of local theater
- Preserve and chronicle local heritage and history
- Grants for historic preservation
Plan for Efficient and Reliable Fire and Police Services

- Increase fire protection in Oak Grove
- Consolidation of waste and recycling services - tri county cooperative

Bring People Together for Sense of Community

- Cooperative food pantries
- Encourage newcomers to participate in local government and civic organizations
- Utilize and coordinate faith-based networks

Add a Priority Here:
Add a Priority Here:

**Vote**
Place a dot here to vote for this priority area

Survey Findings - Priorities Low to High

1.  
2.  
3.  
4.

Priority Goals
What goals should we set for this priority area? Write your ideas in the space below.