

**FY 2024 Rural Transportation Planning
Work Program
SCOPE OF WORK
for the
Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission
(July 1, 2023 – June 30, 2024)**



Roanoke Valley-Alleghany
REGIONAL
commission

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Prepared by the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission staff through a cooperative process involving the City of Covington, the Towns of Clifton Forge and Rocky Mount, the Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin and Roanoke, the Virginia Department of Transportation, and the Federal Highway Administration.

I. PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) allocates part of the State Planning and Research (SPR) funding, granted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), to provide annual transportation planning assistance for non-urbanized areas within the Commonwealth. The Rural Transportation Planning (RTP) Program was created to aid the State in fulfilling the requirements of the State Planning Process to address the transportation needs of non-metropolitan areas. Funds appropriated under 23 U.S.C. 505 (SPR funds) are used in cooperation with the Department of Transportation, Commonwealth of Virginia for transportation planning as required by Section 135, Title 23, U.S. Code. These Federal funds provide 80 percent funding and require a 20 percent local match.

In this fiscal year each planning district commission / regional commission that has rural area will receive \$58,000 in federal funds from VDOT's Rural Transportation Planning Assistance Program. The corresponding planning district commission / regional commission will provide a local match of \$14,500 to conduct rural transportation planning activities. This resource may be supplemented with additional planning funds. The arrangement of all such funds involves the development of a scope of work, approval and other coordination in the Transportation & Mobility Planning Division's administrative work programs.

The scope of work shall include specific activities as requested by VDOT and/or the Federal Highway Administration. The scope of work may also include activities or studies addressing other transportation planning related issues that may be of specific interest to the region. The criteria for the determination of eligibility of studies for inclusion as part of this work program are based upon 23 U.S.C. 505, State Planning and Research.

II. PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION (\$12,513)

Background and Objective: The purpose of this work element is to provide oversight of regional transportation planning and programming efforts and facilitate regional participation and consensus building on transportation-related issues through a continuing, comprehensive, and coordinated planning process.

Description: This activity includes all ongoing department-wide management and administrative activities, not attributable to specific program activities. In general these activities include but are not limited to:

- Completion and submission of necessary agreements and contracts, invoices, progress reports, correspondence, and grant applications in support of the work program.
- Conduct and attend meetings, trainings, and conferences.
- Administer the current transportation planning work program.
- Prepare the next year's work program, scope of work, management program funds, provide outreach and data;
- Participation in Regional Commission and other meetings with staff and stakeholders regarding the management of the work program; and
- Maintain Title VI and Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance, and ensuring environmental justice, nondiscrimination, and equity, including consultation with appropriate groups, committees, and community representatives through the application of the approved Title VI and Public Involvement Plan.

Deliverable End Products and Schedule: The primary result of this task will be a well-functioning transportation program.

- Preparation of Commission and other transportation stakeholder meeting agendas, notices, minutes and memorandums.
- Participation in Commission and other administrative meetings.
- Preparation of the next fiscal year's Work Program and any amendments or revisions to the existing scope of work as needed.
- Update the RVARC's webpage with transportation information.
- Preparation of quarterly financial and work program progress reports.
- Purchase of professional reports, materials, equipment, and services as needed to assist staff in work activities.

Lead: RVARC staff

FHWA Funds via VDOT SPR program (80%)	\$10,010
PDC Funds (20%)	\$ 2,503
Total Budgeted Expenditure for Program Administration	\$12,513

III. PROGRAM ACTIVITIES (\$59,987)

Background and Objective: Address regional transportation issues that are identified by member local governments and/or the Planning District Commission. Individual projects and work elements are described below:

A. Multimodal Transportation Planning and Studies (\$41,329)

In 2011, the Rural Transportation Plan was adopted. Work has been underway to implement that plan through additional related studies, analysis, funding pursuits, and planning efforts. Staff is updating that document to include new elements including a needs assessment, prioritization, and consideration of possible solutions which will be an ongoing effort. The work is being coordinated with other planning efforts including the Roanoke Valley Transportation Plan and Virginia's transportation plan, VTrans.

In addition to staff working with VDOT and localities towards a well-functioning and safe roadway network for motorists, staff supports multimodal transportation planning which impacts many people's mobility in the rural area. The Unified Human Services Transportation Systems, Inc. (RADAR) provides deviated fixed-route transit service in the Alleghany Highlands and limited fixed-route service between Ferrum College and Roanoke. Other specialized transit services are provided by the Alleghany Highlands Community Services Board, Botetourt County's Senior and Accessible Van Program, and the County of Roanoke Transportation (CORTRAN) operated by RADAR. RIDE Solutions provides transportation demand management services. The Commission approved a Rural Transit Feasibility Study in 2019.

The RVARC has a Rural Bicycle Plan approved in 2020 and engages in bicycle/pedestrian planning to increase non-motorized transportation and the safety of non-motorized travelers in the rural area. This work seeks to evaluate the development of related infrastructure, such as sidewalks, shared-use paths, greenways, bike lanes, and other facilities. RVARC facilitates the Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Committee.

The RVARC aims to provide transportation planning assistance as needed to support a well-coordinated, safe, and efficient transportation system within the rural area as well as to the Roanoke Valley urban area. To do this, staff will participate in transportation planning, analysis, studies, and stakeholder outreach meetings throughout the fiscal year pertaining to:

- Update and implement the Rural Transportation Plan.
- Participate in VTrans or other state planning meetings and webinars.
- Participate with the RVTPO and VDOT on setting and tracking performance measure goals and coordinating with state/urban plans.

- Assure any work completed considers FHWA's 2021 Planning Emphasis Areas dated December 30, 2021:
 - *Tackling the Climate Crisis – Transition to a Clean Energy, Resilient Future*
 - *Equity and Justice40 in Transportation Planning*
 - *Complete Streets*
 - *Public Involvement*
 - *Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET)/U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) Coordination*
 - *Federal Land Management Agency (FLMA) Coordination*
 - *Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL)*
 - *Data in Transportation Planning*
- Assist local governments with identifying high growth areas (UDAs, future growth areas), corridor/area studies or analysis of transportation conditions, or other planning work to support future transportation grant applications.
- Assist in the development of project pipeline studies (recommendation development, public involvement).
- Park & Ride Lot Use Counts and Conditions Assessment – conduct manual usage counts and conditions assessment at referenced rural P&R lots using VDOT's P&R manual count methodology. VDOT will prioritize lot count locations, provide data collection form, and basic count training as necessary.
- Participation on the Appalachian Trail Pedestrian Bridge over Route 311 steering committee.
- Integrate data from the FY23 regional travel survey to support planning efforts, particularly the Rural Transportation Plan update and the Commuter Assistance Program (RideSolutions) Strategic Plan. Provide VDOT's Transportation Mobility and Planning Division – Central Office with the TDM Plan when submitted to DRPT.
- Participate in meetings with VDOT staff regarding Title VI and Environmental Justice compliance or other outreach meetings (e.g RADAR Advisory Committee, Regional Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee, etc.) and provide / review data as requested throughout the fiscal year.
- Attend rural transportation-related meetings and conferences (such as the VA Governor's Transportation Conference, the VA Transit Association annual conference, and the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) annual conference), and any other related stakeholder meetings that may arise.
- Providing public transportation, vanpooling, or other commuter assistance planning support, as needed.
- Other related corridor/area, transit, bike/ped, land use, or traffic analysis.

Deliverable End Products: Updated Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan, specific assistance to be requested by member localities, VDOT, or others as necessary to provide input into the statewide transportation planning and programming process; staff participation in related rural transportation meetings, conferences, and management of the Regional Bike/Pedestrian Committee; other planning/analysis assistance as needed.

Lead: RVARC staff

Through these activities, RVARC will meet the BIL requirement that each agency receiving federal SPR planning funds use at least 2.5% of its SPR funds on specified planning activities to increase safe and accessible options for multiple travel modes for people of all ages and abilities.

B. Transportation Funding Pursuit and Stakeholder Coordination (\$12,434)

Many funding programs exist to address regional transportation needs. SMART SCALE has been the largest funding program for determining Virginia's infrastructure investments, and staff has submitted applications for the RVARC each round. Staff provides assistance to member organizations as they pursue funding opportunities, monitors and coordinates the activities associated with funding pursuits as needed. This fiscal year, staff will:

- Participate in SMART SCALE, HSIP, TA, transit, or other programming meetings and webinars.
- Select and manage a consultant-led regional electric vehicles charging study.
- Support local governments/transit agencies prepare grant applications such as SMART SCALE, Transportation Alternatives, FTA 5310, FTA 5311, etc. and prepare grant applications for submission by the Regional Commission.
- Participate in the CTB's Six-Year Improvement Program Fall/Spring Transportation Meetings and when possible, provide a display to serve as outreach to the region's citizens.
- Continued work with state agencies and other stakeholders on I-81 including attendance at meetings related to I-81; monitoring of I-81 legislation and other efforts to improve the corridor.
- Participate in any additional outreach meetings that may arise and provide/review data as requested throughout the fiscal year.
- Participate with the MPOs and VDOT on setting and tracking performance measure goals.
- Monitor developments with federal and state funding opportunities and legislations; share relevant information with stakeholders; and, conduct analysis of performance in SMART SCALE and progress on project implementation.

Deliverable End Products: Submission of grant applications, analysis of RVARC performance in funding programs, a Regional Electric Vehicles Charging Study, coordination and assistance to member organizations and transit agencies related to the programming process, educated staff on transportation funding programs.

Lead: RVARC staff

C. General Technical Assistance (\$6,224)

Description: RVARC staff will engage in other planning/programming support activities that may arise over the year and research, develop, maintain, and analyze data for use in other technical support activities. Any combination of subtasks may be completed this fiscal year as opportunities and needs arise; however, circumstances may not permit all subtasks to be finalized by the end of the fiscal year.

- Provide / review / analyze data as needed during the fiscal year.
- **General Technical Assistance** to local governments, planners and citizens as requested.
- **Technical Support Activities** – a variety of planning support activities to support work program projects and/or the general planning process.

Deliverable End Products: Specific technical assistance products requested by member local governments and other partner agencies or as needed to support other elements of this Work Program.

Lead: RVARC staff

FHWA Funds via VDOT SPR program (80%)	\$47,990
PDC Funds (20%)	\$11,997
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Total Budgeted Expenditure for Program Activities	\$59,987

IV. BUDGET

Tasks	FHWA funds via VDOT SPR program 80%	Local 20%	Total
Program Administration	\$10,010	\$2,503	\$12,513
<u>Program Activities</u>	\$47,990	\$11,997	\$59,987
A. Multimodal Transportation Planning and Studies	\$33,063	\$8,266	\$41,329
B. Transportation Funding Pursuit and Stakeholder Coordination	\$9,947	\$2,487	\$12,434
C. General Technical Assistance	\$4,979	\$1,245	\$6,224
TOTALS	\$58,000	\$14,500	\$72,500

Note: Rounding of numbers may result in minor calculation discrepancies.