



STAFF REPORT
RVTPO Policy Board Meeting July 22, 2021
SUBJ: Draft Regional Study on Transportation Project Prioritization for Economic Development and Growth

In Spring 2020, the RVTPO Policy Board requested staff to update the 2018 Regional Study on Transportation Project Prioritization for Economic Development and Growth (TED Study) including its list of priority projects. The RVTPO Policy Board determined that the TTC would be responsible for selecting and updating the project list but that the steering committee would be re-engaged. Given the turnover in original committee members and the re-assignment of the committee's primary responsibility to the TTC, an updated and more comprehensive approach for conducting this study included:

- Soliciting input from businesses on current transportation problems that affect their business
- Conducting interviews with local economic development staff and business representatives to better understand transportation needs for economic development
- Utilizing an economic development focused needs prioritization committee made up of business / economic development representatives to prioritize needs
- Engaging the full Transportation Technical Committee to select up to 10 projects that best address the priority needs identified by the economic development committee

The purpose of the projects identified in this study is to address the transportation related economic development needs of the Roanoke Valley and contribute to the overall regional priorities identified through the Roanoke Valley Transportation Plan development process. The economic development related needs, solutions, and projects in this study will be combined with those from other RVTPO studies/plans as well as studies and plans from the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation and the Virginia Department of Transportation to form an overall list of projects for inclusion and prioritization in the Roanoke Valley Transportation Plan.

The TTC reviewed the transportation needs and possible solutions identified by the Economic Development Stakeholders Committee and proposed a list of 10 specific projects to address several needs. The TTC chose not to directly address needs and/or solutions that are not surface transportation related with the understanding that while these needs are important, they could be better addressed by other organizations and funding sources. The TTC considered ongoing projects, items from current plans, anticipated applications for STBG and SMARTSCALE funding, and carryover projects from the previous 2018 TED Study in the identification of projects to address the identified priority needs.

The attached document includes the priority needs along with their specific solutions and recommended projects and a description of the process that was undertaken to update the 2018 TED Study.

RVTPO Policy Board Action:

Provide feedback on the draft document "Regional Study on Transportation Project Prioritization for Economic Development and Growth".

TPO POLICY BOARD: Cities of Roanoke and Salem; Counties of Bedford, Botetourt, Montgomery and Roanoke; Town of Vinton; Greater Roanoke Transit Company (*Valley Metro*); Roanoke-Blacksburg Regional Airport; Virginia Department of Rail & Public Transportation; Virginia Department of Transportation