

## Summary of Public Input on 2022 Roanoke Valley Transportation Investments: Surface Transportation Block Grant

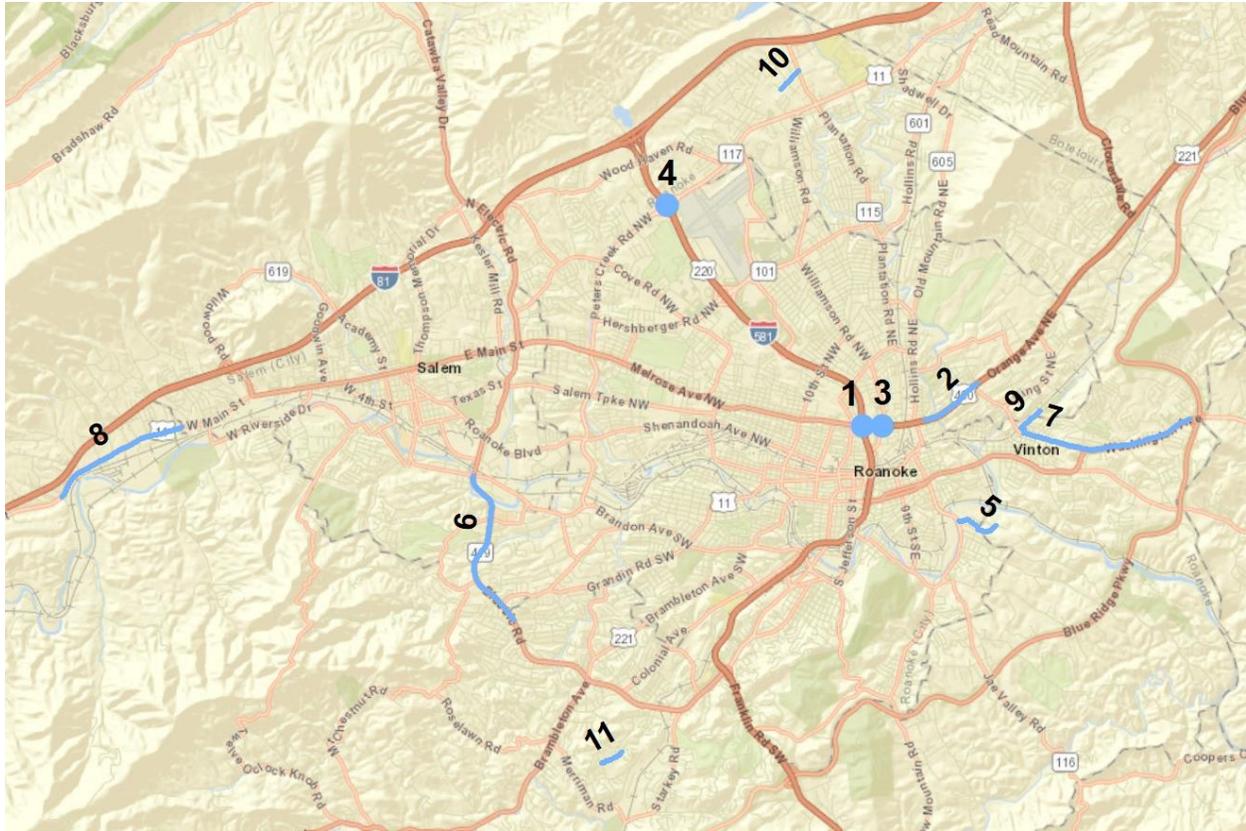
Public input was accepted on eleven new project requests for funding through the FY2023-2029 financial plan of the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG). The RVTPO Policy Board held a public comment period, and a survey to collect public input was available from February 10, 2022 to February 23, 2022. Public input was also accepted in the same survey on an adjustment to the FY2022-2027 STBG financial plan which considered additional funding for three existing projects; this information is not included in this summary.

The survey was promoted through:

- Blog post with the survey link on the RVARC website
- Emailed survey link to over 400 people who have taken an RVTPO survey, served on a committee, or participated in a workshop or meeting
- Survey link in an eblast to the media and to subscribers to the RVARC e-newsletter
- Facebook post on RVARC Facebook page
- Facebook post boosted to RVTPO zip codes
- Newspaper ads in the Roanoke Tribune and the Roanoke Times
- Shared by stakeholders including Roanoke County, Vinton, and the Roanoke Regional Chamber

The survey introduction referred respondents to the RVARC website for an interactive map and more information. 80 people participated in the survey.

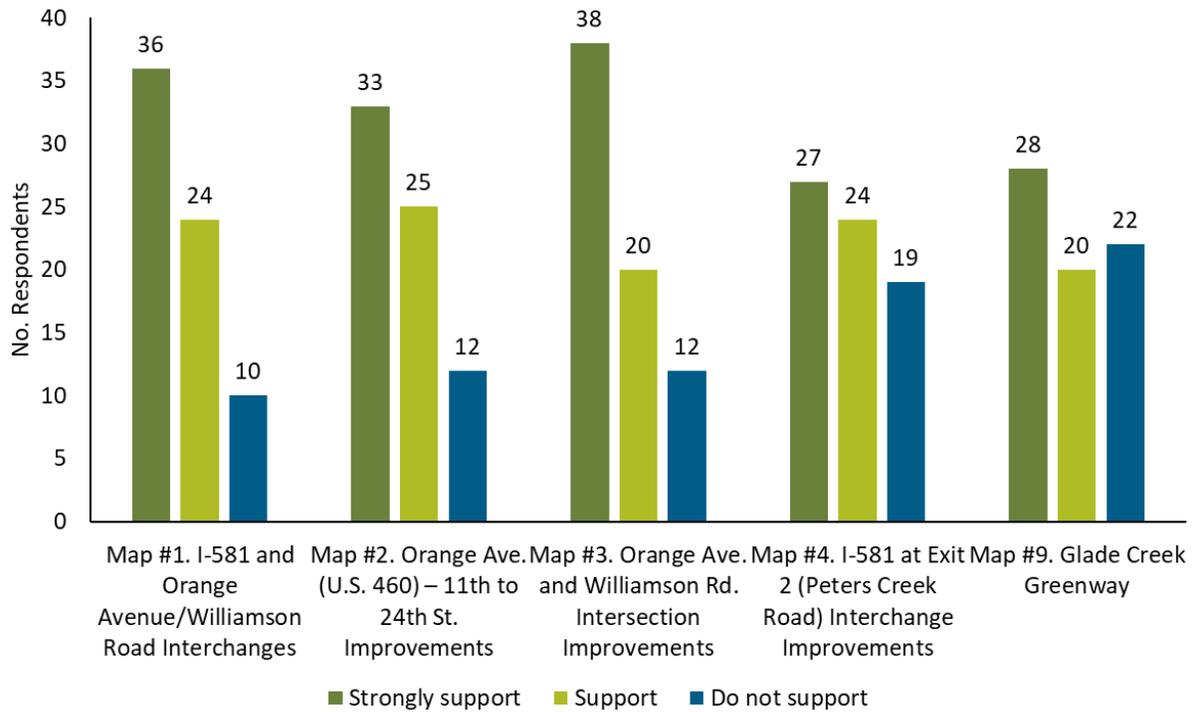
The survey asked respondents about their level of support for the investments under consideration for STBG funding and their level of support for investments that could be considered if additional funding becomes available. The funding requests, the project costs, and descriptions (if available) were included. The survey included the following map showing the locations of the projects and a [link to the draft financial plan](#).



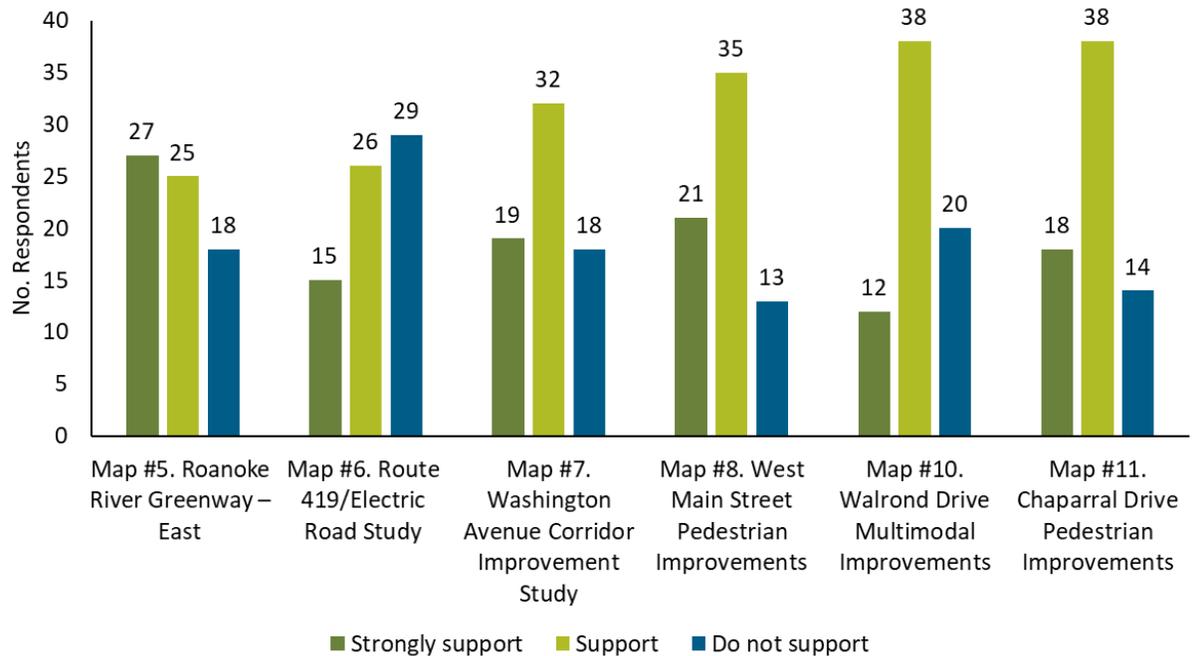
A majority of respondents supported or strongly supported all of the projects. In previous surveys, typically less than 20% of respondents do not support the proposed project investment. In the first part of the survey on the three existing projects (data not shown), an unusually high number of respondents opposed the project, and comments suggested this was due to the phrase “cost overruns”. This initial opposition may have influenced how respondents viewed the second part of the survey on the new projects. More than 20% did not support six of the eleven projects, including two of the projects recommended for funding:

- Map #4. I-581 at Exit 2 (Peters Creek Road) Interchange Improvements (27% did not support)
- Map #9. Glade Creek Greenway (31% did not support)
- Map #5. Roanoke River Greenway – East (26% did not support)
- Map #6. Route 419/Electric Road Study (41% did not support)
- Map #7. Washington Avenue Corridor Improvement Study (26% did not support)
- Map #10. Walrond Drive Multimodal Improvements (29% did not support)

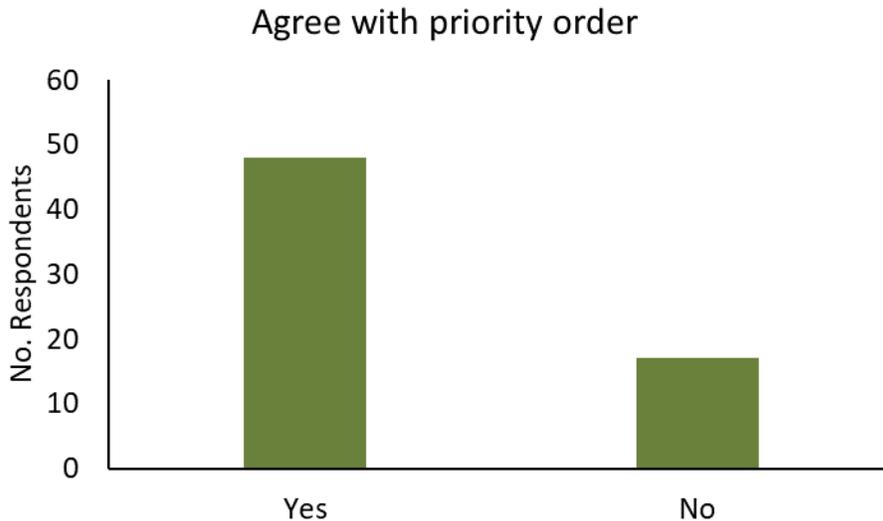
### Recommended for Funding



### Could be Considered if Additional Funding is Available



The projects' priority order was determined by the scores the projects received. Priority #9, Glade Creek Greenway Phase 3, is being considered for funding above higher priorities because funding of this project will allow the Phase 4 Glade Creek Greenway project to be eligible for funding via a different source of funding (Transportation Alternatives) for which it would not otherwise be eligible due to a lack of connection with a destination since Phase 4 is contained within Vinyard Park.



Participants who did not agree with the priority order commented:

- #5 Roanoke River Greenway should be ranked last
- 3,4,9,5,11 then rest.
- A sidewalk at a school take priority over a greenway .
- Don't understand #4 Which ramp? Orange/Williamson is interstate onto 6-lane and will always be a mess, don't waste money on it.
- Focus on roads and sidewalks vs bike lanes.
- Greenway waste of money walk at a track. People learn to drive no problems at intersections.
- Greenways over neighborhood sidewalks? That should give us a clue as to a portion of what's wrong with today's world.
- I believe that the projects that are going to have sidewalks should be given higher priority. Especially #11 - ALL streets with a school should have sidewalks the entire length of the street.
- I would move #4 up to #2.
- Once again, need more info.
- Pedestrian access should be prioritized.
- Sidewalks are ALWAYS more important than road work because of SAFETY, CONVENIENCE, and walkability reducing car trips.
- Very worried that making the Orange Ave/Williamson Road intersection larger with more turn lanes will only make it less safe. No safe way to bike or walk through that intersection as is. Expanding that intersection should not be a priority. The Peters Creek interchange is an expensive solution to crashes that are primarily property damage and non-serious injuries. Feels like a cheaper fix could be done and a full signal should not be a priority.

- While attractive, Greenways serve a relatively small number of people...and are not a safety priority.

Participants had these additional comments about the 2023-2029 STBG financial plan:

- Far more people use sidewalks to reach their jobs vs people using bike lanes that don't even pay attention to road laws. Ease of access to work should take priority over bike lanes.
- I cannot support anything for 5M dollars that's stated undecided.
- I would like to see more projects that include sidewalks and bike lanes. 419/Electric Rd, Brambleton Rd, Chaparral Dr, Merriman Rd - all need sidewalks and 419 / Brambleton needs bike lanes. Please consider these kinds of projects
- If you feel compelled to do "Orange Ave. (U.S. 460) and Williamson Rd. Intersection Improvement" then please create a safe and separated way to cross Orange Ave for people biking and walking somewhere. A Lick Run Greenway bridge would be my preference. A bigger, more complicated, intersection is just doubling down on a major barrier.
- Most in the Valley oppose more roundabouts in high traffic areas
- There is no sidewalk going up to Lucy Adison Middle School on 5th Street north of Salem, approximately. Very hilly and not much reaction time for drivers to spot children in the road.
- Would be nice to have running total for selections to prevent overspending of the available funds
- Would like to see some bike/ped safety projects in Botetourt.

Participants were invited to share any other comments or transportation problems:

- Bus service to Peters Creek Road for DMV access for underserved citizens.
- Enforce the removal of abandoned vehicles from streets/roads in Roanoke, Salem, Roanoke County. Provide bus service along the US 220 South corridor to alleviate traffic congestion. Restrict tractor-trailer and large trucks to right lane along US 220 South.
- Historically I have commented numerous times in the past on how important it is to prepare for and foresee the availability of Norfolk Southern's former Virginian Railway line between the New River Valley and the Roanoke Valley. I have urged that transportation planners in both valleys confer and come up with a plan to maximize use of this rail corridor in the likelihood that NS would decide it no longer needs two mainlines between the Valleys. Now what I predicted for several years has occurred, and the state of Virginia has acquired from NSD this line between Salem and Merrimac. The main justification for the purchase was to extend Amtrak service west to the NRV. But there would be little taxpayer or citizen return on this multi-million dollar investment running only one or two Amtrak trains daily. What we need now is a comprehensive study on the use of this line as a transit connection between the Valleys, with fast, frequent service. We have the SmartWay bus now, but it is inadequate and suffers reliability delays on I-81. In the future, to promote growth in both Valleys, we need a dependable, hourly service. The Virginian line serves South Yard in Roanoke, adjacent to the Carilion/Virginia Tech campus, and discussion now underway of the western terminus of the line indicates a most probable location at the New River Valley Mall. Some people who work for Tech now have to drive to and from the Roanoke Campus, sometimes more than once a day, taking their chances on I-81. A safer, faster, and more reliable rail link is the key to future growth in this corridor and a way for Virginia to maximize the benefit of purchasing this line. Furthermore, transit oriented development in Roanoke and Montgomery Counties in places such as Bradshaw, Ironto, and Ellett

Valley could help pay back the incremental investment in making this a high frequency transit link. One problem here, with this draft report where there is no mention of anything like this in Chapter 7, as well as other programs such as SmartScale, is that neither the Roanoke TPO nor the NRV MPO is excited about using a project choice or a funding opportunity for something that goes out of its jurisdiction. However, the benefits to both Valleys are so substantial that it behooves the two groups to cooperate and pursue a rigorous study of the engineering, energy, environmental and social costs and benefits of using this new state rail line to improve travel and commutation between the Valleys in the future.

- Look at solutions other than road construction. Would rather have more bus service and a train depot instead of signals and paving.
- Needs to better signage (or something) of Yield getting on 581 southbound at Hershberger while people are trying to get off the ramp. (crossing traffic) People getting OFF have the right of way vs getting on 581.
- Please keep working on 419 and 220 interchange.
- Sidewalk desperately needed from Mudlick Creek bridge on Grandin Rd to Garst Mill Rd and Brambleton Ave. intersection.
- Sidewalk extension from Kabuki restaurant on Franklin Rd to the Tanglewood area; Not pleased to be installing sidewalks in the county when the locality Roanoke County should have included those infrastructure improvements when residential construction occurred. Residents who choose to live in the suburbs should pay for their own additional infrastructure.
- SO MANY....
- There is no sidewalk going up to Lucy Adison Middle School on 5th Street north of Salem, approximately. Very hilly and not much reaction time for drivers to spot children in the road.
- Would like to see some bike/ped safety projects in Botetourt. Specifically connectivity between Ashley Plantation, Troutville Park, Greenfield Park, Daleville Town Center, to the Appalachian Trail, Carvins Cove, and the future Tinker Creek Greenway.

## Demographic

Demographic information was collected to determine if the participants' demographic characteristics are similar to those of the region. Participants were asked their zip code, race/ethnicity, household income, and age. Demographic information was provided by 84% of survey respondents.

Zip code information was used during the survey period to adjust advertising to reach zip codes that were under-responding relative to their proportion of the regional population. RVTPO standard practice is to target Facebook advertising to under-responding zip codes, but due to an error this was not done. Zip codes 24012, 24019, and 24153 are under-represented in this survey by 3% or more, and zip code 24019 is under-represented by 5%, which suggests that other outreach methods are now reaching these zip codes as well as 24017, which have in the past consistently been under-represented by at least 5% without targeted Facebook advertising (Table 1).

*Table 1. Zip code responses compared to population*

<b>Zip code</b>	<b>% population</b>	<b>% response</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>24012</b>	11%	8%	3% under
<b>24013</b>	3%	8%	5% over

<b>Zip code</b>	<b>% population</b>	<b>% response</b>	<b>Difference</b>
<b>24014</b>	7%	8%	1% over
<b>24015</b>	6%	17%	11% over
<b>24016</b>	3%	5%	2% over
<b>24017</b>	9%	7%	2% under
<b>24018</b>	14%	17%	3% over
<b>24019</b>	10%	5%	5% under
<b>24153</b>	14%	10%	4% under
<b>24175</b>	3%	2%	1% under
<b>24179</b>	7%	7%	Same
<b>Other RVTPO zip codes</b>	14%	7%	7% over

Race/ethnicity was provided by 67 participants (Table 2). Black or African American and Hispanic or Latino are underrepresented relative to the proportion of the population.

*Table 2. Race/ethnicity of participants*

<b>Race/ethnicity</b>	<b>% population</b>	<b>% response</b>	<b>Difference from population</b>
<b>White</b>	78%	84%	6% over
<b>Black or African American</b>	14%	6%	8% under
<b>Hispanic or Latino</b>	4%	1%	3% under
<b>Other</b>	4%	8%	4% over

Age was provided by 65 participants (Table 3). Age categories from 18 to 35 years and 65 years and over are underrepresented relative to the proportion of the population. People 35 to 44 years are represented in proportion to the population and people 45 years to 64 years are overrepresented relative to the proportion of the population.

*Table 3. Age of survey participants*

<b>Age</b>	<b>% population</b>	<b>% response</b>	<b>Difference from population</b>
<b>18 to 24 years</b>	10%	2%	8% under
<b>25 to 34 years</b>	15%	8%	7% under
<b>35 to 44 years</b>	14%	22%	8% over
<b>45 to 54 years</b>	16%	15%	1% over
<b>55 to 64 years</b>	17%	22%	5% over
<b>65 years and over</b>	28%	32%	4% over

Household income was provided by 65 participants (Table 4). Four percent of participants have a household income of less than \$20,000. It is likely that people in poverty are underrepresented in this survey. (Census data household income brackets do not align with the income brackets in the survey.)

*Table 4. Annual household income of survey participants*

<b>Annual household income</b>	<b>% population</b>	<b>Annual household income</b>	<b>% response</b>
<b>Less than \$25,000</b>	20%	Less than \$20,000	2%
<b>\$25,000 to \$49,999</b>	21%	\$20,000 to \$44,999	17%
<b>\$50,000 to \$99,999</b>	32%	\$45,000 to \$89,999	25%
<b>\$100,000 to \$149,999</b>	15%	\$90,000 to \$139,000	26%

<b>Annual household income</b>	<b>% population</b>	<b>Annual household income</b>	<b>% response</b>
<b>\$150,000 or more</b>	12%	<b>\$140,000 or more</b>	31%