



Roanoke Valley-Alleghany

# REGIONAL commission

rvarc.org

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March 21, 2024

The March meeting of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission will be held as follows:

<b>DATE:</b>	<b>Thursday, March 28, 2024</b>
<b>TIME:</b>	<b>3:00 p.m.</b>
<b>LOCATION:</b>	<b>Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission office (Top Floor Conference Room). 313 Luck Ave., SW, Roanoke, VA</b>

**Please Note: RVARC's elevator is under maintenance and currently not in operation. Please contact Bryan Hill, RVARC's ADA Coordinator, at [bhill@rvarc.org](mailto:bhill@rvarc.org) to request remote participation if you need ADA accommodations. We apologize for the inconvenience!**

## AGENDA

1. Call to Order, Roll Call, Introductions ..... *Chair Wallace*
2. **Action Requested:** Approval of Consent Agenda Items ..... *Chair Wallace*
  - A. Approval of Agenda
  - B. Ratification of Actions Taken by the Executive Committee at the February 22, 2024 Emergency Meeting
    1. Staff Report, p. 4
    2. January 25, 2024 RVARC Minutes, pp. 5 – 22
    3. Financial Reports Ending January 31, 2024, pp. 23 – 26
    4. Approval of a Change to the CAC Bylaws, pp. 27 – 32
    5. Resolution, Approving the Application for State Commuter Assistance Program Operating Assistance Grant & General Project Grant p. 33
    6. Endorse FY26 SMART SCALE RVARC Candidate Project Requests, pp. 34 – 38
  - C. Financial Report, Ending February 29, 2024, pp. 39 – 42

**ACTION REQUESTED:** Approval of consent agenda items, voice vote
3. Chair's Remarks ..... *Chair Wallace*
4. Executive Director's Report..... *Jeremy Holmes*

**Member Governments:** Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin and Roanoke, Cities of Covington, Roanoke and Salem, Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount and Vinton



- 5. Urban Tree Canopy Assessment Overview, pp. 43 – 69.....*Amanda McGee*  
**ACTION REQUESTED:** No Action
- 6. RVARC Administration of Glade Creek Phase III, Preliminary Engineering pp. 70 –71..*Tori Williams*  
**ACTION REQUESTED:** Approval of Resolution, voice vote
- 7. Draft FY25 Work Program Review, pp. 72 – 96 .....*Billy Martin*  
**ACTION REQUESTED:** No Action
- 8. SERDI Organizational Assessment Final Document, pp. 97 – 140 .....*Jeremy Holmes*  
**ACTION REQUESTED:** No Action
- 9. Staff Highlights.....*Jeremy, Alison, Gabriel & Sophie*  
**ACTION REQUESTED:** No Action
- 10. Reports from Standing Committees:
  - A. Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness Report ..... *Bryan Hill*
  - B. Roanoke River Blueway Advisory Committee Report.....*Amanda McGee*
  - C. Roanoke Valley Collective Response Advisory Committee Report ..... *Robert Natt*
  - D. Comprehensive Economic Development Committee Report ..... *Eddie Wells*
  - E. Legislative Committee Report..... *Jeremy Holmes***ACTION REQUESTED:** No action
- 11. Other Business
- 12. Comments from Commission Members and/or the Public
- 13. Adjournment

The meeting will be live streamed on the Regional Commission’s Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/rvarc>.

**Public Input Policy**

“At the end of each Regional Commission meeting, the Commission will allow for an open public forum/comment period. This comment period shall not exceed one-half hour in length and each speaker will be asked to sign up and be allowed a maximum of three (3) minutes to speak.”

**ADA Compliance**

The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission intends to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act and confirms that the office located at 313 Luck Avenue, SW, Roanoke, VA is ADA compliant. If you have a disability and wish to request assistance or a special accommodation, please inform Bryan Hill at 540-343-4417 or [bhill@rvarc.org](mailto:bhill@rvarc.org) no later than 48 hours in advance of the posted meeting.

## **FEBRUARY 2024 REGIONAL COMMISSION REGULAR MEETING NOT CONVENED DUE TO LACK OF A QUORUM**

A quorum of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission Board was not present at 3:00 p.m., Thursday, February 22nd, 2024, for its February Regular Meeting and was unable to be convened by the Chairman.

Through consultation with staff, a determination was made that two items on the Regional Commission's February agenda were of such a critical and time sensitive nature that they could not be postponed. Those items were:

1. Consideration of a resolution authorizing an application for the state Commuter Assistance Program Operating Assistance Grant and general project grant; and
2. Endorsement of the FY2026 RVARC SMART SCALE candidate project request from Franklin County for the Iron Ridge Road and Route 220 Intersection improvement Project.

The deadlines for submittal of both items will have passed when the Regional Commission meets again on March 28<sup>th</sup>.

Through additional consultation with staff, and pursuant to Code of Virginia §2.2-3707(E), an Emergency Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission was called on Thursday, February 22, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. at Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission offices at 313 Luck Avenue, SW, Roanoke, VA. The meeting was streamed live via the Regional Commission's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/rvarc>, therefore notifying the public at the same moment as Executive Committee members.

The Executive Committee also approved a Consent Agenda consisting of the following items:

1. February 22, 2024 Emergency RVARC Executive Committee Meeting Agenda
2. January 25, 2024 RVARC Minutes
3. Financial Reports Ending January 31, 2024
4. CAC Bylaws Change Report

Except for Item #1 of the Consent Agenda, the Executive Committee will forward the aforementioned items to the Regional Commission Board for ratification at their March 28<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting.



**STAFF REPORT**

**RVARC Meeting March 28, 2024**

**SUBJ: Ratification of Actions Taken by the Executive Committee at the February 22, 2024  
Emergency Meeting**

Prior to the February 22, 2024 Regular Meeting of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, the Secretary communicated to the Chairman that a quorum was not present and the meeting could not be convened. Through consultation with staff, a determination was made that two items on the Regional Commission's February agenda were of such a critical and time sensitive nature that they could not be postponed.

Through additional consultation with staff, and pursuant to Code of Virginia §2.2-3707(E), an Emergency Meeting of the Executive Committee of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission was called on Thursday, February 22, 2024, at 3:00 p.m. at Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission offices at 313 Luck Avenue, SW, Roanoke, VA. The meeting was streamed live via the Regional Commission's Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/rvarc>, therefore notifying the public at the same moment as Executive Committee members.

Chair Wallace expressed a desire to utilize the same agenda for the RVARC Board meeting. As such, a motion was made, seconded, and carried to approve the Consent Agenda as presented:

1. February 22, 2024 Emergency RVARC Executive Committee Meeting Agenda
2. January 25, 2024 RVARC Minutes
3. Financial Reports Ending January 31, 2024
4. CAC Bylaws Change Report

Additionally, the two items warranting emergency action by the Executive Committee were:

1. Consideration of a resolution authorizing an application for the state Commuter Assistance Program Operating Assistance Grant and general project grant; and
2. Endorsement of the FY2026 RVARC SMART SCALE candidate project request from Franklin County for the Iron Ridge Road and Route 220 Intersection improvement Project.

The deadlines for submittal of both items would have effectively passed by the date of the next Regular Meeting of the Regional Commission, on March 28<sup>th</sup>.

At its March 18<sup>th</sup> Regular Meeting, the RVARC Executive Committee recommended the following: ratification by the RVARC Board, at their next Regular Meeting, of all action items approved by the Executive Committee at their Emergency Meeting on February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024. Item #1 of the Consent Agenda, the Emergency Executive Committee Meeting Agenda, does not require ratification by the RVARC Board.

**RVARC Board Action:**

Consideration of recommendation from the RVARC Executive Committee to ratify actions taken at the February 22, 2024 Emergency Meeting.



## MINUTES

The January meeting of the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission was held on Thursday, January 25, 2023, at 3:00 p.m. at the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission office, 313 Luck Avenue, SW, Roanoke, VA. The meeting was streamed live via the Regional Commission’s Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/rvarc>.

### 1. WELCOME, CALL TO ORDER, INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Wallace called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. A quorum was present.

#### **VOTING MEMBERS ATTENDING**

Steve Clinton	Botetourt County
Dawn Erdman	City of Roanoke
Barbara Duerk	City of Roanoke
Peter Volosin	City of Roanoke
Stephanie Moon Reynolds	City of Roanoke
Jim W. Wallace III, <i>Chair</i>	City of Salem
Denise King	City of Salem
Hunter Holliday	City of Salem
Lorie Smith, <i>Vice Chair</i>	Franklin County
Dean Martin, <i>Treasurer</i>	Roanoke County
Lee Osborne	Roanoke County
David Radford	Roanoke County
Robert Wood	Town of Rocky Mount
Richard “Pete” Peters	Town of Vinton
Mayor Brad Grose	Town of Vinton

#### **VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT**

Reid Walters	Alleghany County
James Griffith	Alleghany County
Gary Larrowe	Botetourt County
Mayor Tom Sibold	City of Covington
Allen Dressler	City of Covington
Dan Collins	Craig County
Jesse Spence	Craig County
Keri Green	Franklin County
Chris Whitlow	Franklin County
Mike Carter	Franklin County
Phil North	Roanoke County



David Clements  
Debbie Laudermilk  
Chuck Unroe

Town of Rocky Mount  
Town of Clifton Forge  
Town of Clifton Forge

**Others Present:** Josh Taylor, Alleghany Highlands Chamber of Commerce and Tourism; Steve Sandy, Franklin County; Misty Crosby, Southeastern Regional Directors Institute; Tim Ware, Southeastern Regional Directors Institute.

**Staff:** Jeremy Holmes, Robert Natt, Gabriel Irigaray, Andrea Garland, Sherry Dean, Eddie Wells, Virginia Mullen, and Elizabeth Elmore.

## 2. **ACTION REQUESTED: APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA ITEMS**

The Consent Agenda items were as follows:

- A. Approval of Agenda
- B. December 14, 2023, RVARC Minutes
- C. Financial Reports Ending December 31, 2023

**MOTION:** by Dean Martin to approve consent agenda items (A), (B) and (C), as presented. The motion was seconded by David Radford.

**Regional Commission Action:** Motion carried unanimously.

## 3. **REMARKS BY THE CHAIR**

- Chair Wallace noted that today's meeting is being livestreamed on the Commission's Facebook page. This is part of an ongoing effort to improve public awareness of the important work undertaken by the Regional Commission.
- Chair Wallace reported that the Commission is beginning its annual Work Program Development process for the fiscal year 2025. Along with the various continuing and federally required projects the Commission undertakes each year; staff are now accepting work program project requests from our local government members as well as community organizations in partnership with our localities. Executive Director Jeremy Holmes distributed a memo outlining the Commission's various funding sources and the kinds of projects that can be completed under those sources. The memo also outlines a timeline for the work program development process and the Commission's current strategic goals. Commission staff will meet with locality planning staff next week as part of the regular Planner's Luncheon to collect additional ideas.
- Chair Wallace reported that representatives from the Southeastern Directors Institute (SERDI) have conducted interviews and focus group sessions throughout this week to obtain information for their organizational assessment. This assessment will form the basis for RVAR's strategic plan update after the



full Commission has had a chance to review and discuss along with SERDI at the February 22<sup>nd</sup> meeting.

#### 4. **EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT**

- Mr. Holmes updated that the staff is in the process of getting the elevator renovated but the process will take a while. In the meantime, anyone that needs ADA accommodation is encouraged to reach out to staff.
- Mr. Holmes reported that staff recently had the chance to get out in the field and explore projects being undertaken by two major partners in the region. The first was attending an automated vehicle demonstration day at the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute, where together with the Director of Transportation, Tori Williams, had the chance to site with VTTI scientists and engineers working on developing the software and systems that would allow automated vehicles to respond quickly and appropriately in emergency situations, including traffic stops and maneuvering around law enforcement and emergency vehicles. This was an opportunity to observe first-hand the complicated technologies involved in these vehicles and to forge stronger relationships with VTTI, who is a leader in automated vehicle development. Staff then had an opportunity to tour the new Carilion Clinic Cardiovascular center development, led by Carilion VP Mike Abbot. The tour began with an elevator ride up the construction elevator and then continued with a detailed review of the complex infrastructure, technology, and emergency systems in this state-of-the-art healthcare building. This major economic development project is the next huge step in the Roanoke region's continuing evolution as a trains-to-brains economic center.

#### 5. **APPOINTMENT OF AT LARGE MEMBER TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

Chair Wallace reported that with the departure of Mr. Billy Martin as the at-large member to the Executive Committee, he had asked Mayor Grose of Vinton to return as the Committee's at large member. Mayor Grose has been a long-time member of the Executive Committee and now enters his twentieth year of service on the Regional Commission. His experience and insight on the Executive Committee are appreciated.

**MOTION:** by Lee Osborne to approve the appointment of Mayor Grose as at-large member to the Executive Committee. The motion was seconded by Barbara Duerk.

**Regional Commission Action:** Motion carried unanimously.

#### 6. **APPROVAL OF REVISED FY24 BUDGET**



Mr. Holmes reported that members of the RVARC's Executive Committee met on January 12, 2024 to discuss the proposed revised FY2024 budget. The staff report (page 42 of the agenda packet) outlines the revisions in the revenues and expenses. The Executive Committee recommended the approval of the revised FY24 budget by the full Board.

**MOTION:** by David Radford to approve the revised FY 2024 budget, as presented. The motion was seconded by Dawn Erdman.

**Regional Commission Action:** Motion carried unanimously.

## 7. **WORK PROGRAM COMMITTEE APPOINTMENT**

Mr. Jeremy Holmes reported that every year a Work Program Committee is formed to work closely with the Executive Director and staff to develop a Work Program for the next fiscal year. It is anticipated that the Committee will meet three times between January and April, typically following the adjournment of the monthly Commission meeting. The final Work program will be brought before the Commission at the April or May 2024 meeting.

Chair Wallace appointed the following Commissioners to serve on the Regional Commission's FY25 Work Program Committee:

Billy Martin – Botetourt County, Committee Chair  
Stephanie Moon Reynolds – City of Roanoke  
Robert Wood – Town of Rocky Mount  
Chuck Unroe – Town of Clifton Forge  
Jim Wallace – City of Salem, Ex Officio

**MOTION:** by Peter Volosin to approve the appointments to the RVARC's FY25 Work Program Committee, as presented. The motion was seconded by Dee King.

**Regional Commission Action:** Motion carried unanimously.

## 8. **ROANOKE CITY FY25 HUD GRANT APPLICATION – BETTER BUS STOPS FOR NEIGHBORGOODS**

1. Program Scope
2. Approval of Certification of Application

Ms. Andrea Garland reported that Better Bus Shelter for Neighborhoods is a program by RIDE Solutions with the goal to facilitate the process to acquire and install bus shelters in neighborhoods served by the region's transit service- Valley Metro (the PowerPoint presentation is included in the Minutes).

**MOTION:** by Barbara Duerk to approve the certification application, as presented.





The motion was seconded by Stephanie Moon Reynolds.

**Regional Commission Action:** Motion carried unanimously.

9. **2023 GREATER ROANOKE REGION TRAVEL SURVEY**

Ms. Andrea Garland presented an update on the 2023 Greater Roanoke Region Travel Survey (the PowerPoint presentation is included with the Minutes).

10. **REGIONAL COMMISSION'S COMMITTEES REPORTS**

**A. Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness (BRICH) Report**

There was no report.

Mr. Lee Osborne commented that while most of the burden falls on Roanoke City, homelessness is a regional issue and the Commission should look into a regional approach to homelessness.

**B. Roanoke River Blueway Advisory Committee Report**

Mr. Gabriel Irigaray commented that the January Blueway meeting was rescheduled to February 7<sup>th</sup> due to weather and there is nothing to report at this time.

**C. Roanoke Valley Collective Response Advisory Committee Report**

Mr. Robert Natt reported that Collective Response decided at their January Meeting to reengage and update their asset mapping process. Currently they are working on the scope of the project and in close partnership with the Virginia Institute of Policy and Governance. The Collective Response continues to devote significant effort in supporting localities through the identification and prioritization of prospective projects for the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority. Additionally, the Collective Response will be facilitating a workshop in late February, more information will be forthcoming. In March 2024, the Collective Response will enter their strategic planning phase.

**D. Comprehensive Economic Development Committee (CEDS) Report**

Mr. Eddie Wells reported that the CEDS met in December at Stave and Cork Restaurant in Salem. At that meeting, Mr. Tommy Miller presented several of the City of Salem's economic development projects. Mr. Joe Cobb was elected as the new chair of the committee. The Committee has started work on the annual demographic update. The next CEDS meeting will be held in March.

**E. Legislative Committee Report**

Mr. Holmes reported that the legislative committee approved the legislative priorities in December. The one sheet summary of the legislative priorities was sent out to legislators and delegates. The committee also created the 2024 legislative priorities pamphlet card – the card is easy to fold and carry in a pocket. Mr. Holmes added that the 2024 legislative priorities are listed on the Commission's website. If any member would like a hard copy they can send in a request to Mr. Holmes.



## 11. OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Jeremy Holmes commented that the price of legal ads in the local newspaper had increased tremendously. Typically, public hearing notices are being advertised for a week but with the high price of the advertisement is becoming a huge financial strain. The General Assembly had revisited the request to change the requirement a number of times and it had failed. There is another attempt to make that change this year. Mr. Holmes asked members if the Commission has permission to support the effort in changing the requirement to advertise in the local newspaper.

**MOTION:** by Dee King to approve the request. The motion was seconded by Stephanie Moon Reynolds.

**Regional Commission Action:** Motion carried unanimously.

## 12. COMMENTS FROM COMMISSION MEMBERS AND/OR THE PUBLIC

Ms. Barbara Duerk shared a concern on bicycle safety issues, vulnerable road users' definition according to code of Virginia and raised attention to the Virginia Bicycle safety bills that are coming forward. Ms. Duerk also stated that currently 2% of the maintenance money is supposed to be directed to paved shoulders.

Vice Chair Lorie Smith commented that she would like the Commission to investigate ways to support the rural localities footprint regarding transportation.

Vice Chair Smith announced that the Commonwealth Transportation Board representative for our region, Dr. Ray Smoot, will be attending the April 25<sup>th</sup> meeting of the RVTPO.

Adjournment at 3:58 p.m.

Jeremy Holmes, Secretary  
Secretary to the Regional Commission



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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Commissioners, Chief Executive Officers, Planning Directors  
**From:** Jeremy Holmes, Executive Director  
**Date:** January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2024  
**Subject:** FY25 Work Program Project Request Guidance

The Regional Commission is undertaking its annual Work Program Development Process and invites member localities to submit project requests by **Friday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>**. Please submit your requests to the Executive Director, Jeremy Holmes, via email at [jholmes@rvarc.org](mailto:jholmes@rvarc.org).

The annual Work Program captures the projects that the Commission is expected to undertake in the following fiscal year, and is a combination of continuing work, mandated state and Federal activities, staff-initiated projects, locally requested projects, and general technical support. The work program development process is a collaborative effort between Commission and locality staff, with input and direction from the Commission-appointed Work Program Committee and the full Board.

Please keep the following in mind when submitting project requests:

- Project requests must align with staff capacity and any limitations imposed by our various funding sources.
- Project requests without an identified funding source may require a separate charge at an hourly rate.
- To support the Commission's mission of addressing issues of more than local significance, projects that support two or more localities are generally preferred.
- Projects that require third-party support through a consultant can be considered.
- Projects can pool resources from several funding sources when appropriate.
- Project/plan hour requirements can range from 5 to 10 hours for a small research, GIS, or analytical project, to 200-500 hours for a full plan, comprehensive plan chapter, corridor study, or similarly scoped effort.

To assist in determining whether a project aligns with the Commission's resources, please refer to the following list of our primary funding sources, approximate pool of available hours, and project guidance based on the scope and limitations set by the funding source. Please note that the hour budget provided is an estimate and can be impacted by available funding, travel or materials costs, consultant support, and other considerations.

### Project Guidance

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#### Urban Transportation Program

- *General Description:* Projects and activities undertaken under the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization focused on the urban surface transportation network: e.g., roads, greenways, pedestrian facilities, freight, et al.
- *Budget:* Approximately 2,000 hours
- *Project guidance:*
  - Plans focused on analysis of safety, performance, impact of surface road network.
  - Plans focused on analysis of congestion management tools and strategies (TDM, park and ride capacity).

**MEMBER GOVERNMENTS:** Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin and Roanoke  
Cities of Covington, Roanoke and Salem, Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount and Vinton



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- Plans focused on analysis of transportation technology (safety measures, EV and related infrastructure).
- Modal plans (bike, transit, pedestrian, other).
- Grant writing and technical assistance for VDOT or Federal funding (such as RAISE).
- Development and deployment of GIS tools to visualize transportation performance.
- *Example projects from previous Work Programs:*
  - 419 Corridor Study
  - Active Transportation Plan
  - Transit Vision Plan

#### **Rural Transportation Program:**

- *General Description:* Projects and activities studying the rural surface transportation network: e.g., roads, greenways, pedestrian facilities, freight, et al. Available to Franklin, Botetourt, Craig, and Alleghany Counties and their towns and cities.
- *Budget:* Approximately 750 hours
- *Project guidance:*
  - Plans focused on analysis of safety, performance, impact of surface road network.
  - Plans focused on analysis of congestion management tools and strategies (TDM, park and ride capacity).
  - Plans focused on analysis of transportation technology (safety measures, EV and related infrastructure).
  - Modal plans (bike, transit, pedestrian, other).
  - Grant writing and technical assistance for VDOT or Federal funding (such as RAISE).
  - Development and deployment of GIS tools to visualize transportation performance.
- *Example projects from previous Work Programs:*
  - Rural Transportation Plan
  - Transportation Chapter in Clifton Forge Comprehensive Plan
  - Rural Bikeway Plan

#### **Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC):**

- *General Description:* Projects and plans supporting our Appalachian Regional Commission-member localities: Alleghany County, Botetourt County, Craig County, Covington, and Clifton Forge.
- *Budget:* Approximately 2,000 hours
- *Project guidance:*
  - Plans and projects supporting community development, economic development, workforce development, and general quality of life in ARC communities.
  - Grant writing assistance for VA, ARC, or other Federal grant sources
- *Example projects from previous Work Programs:*
  - Clifton Forge Comprehensive Plan
  - Alleghany Highlands Microtransit Research
  - Fincastle Rezoning Project
  - Alleghany Highlands Outdoors Plan

#### **Economic Development Administration (EDA):**

- *General Description:* Planning funds supporting general economic development activities and studies in our EDD region which consists of Alleghany County, Botetourt County, Craig County, Roanoke County, Covington, Roanoke, Salem, Clifton Forge, and Vinton.
- *Budget:* Approximately 1,600 hours

**MEMBER GOVERNMENTS:** Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin and Roanoke  
Cities of Covington, Roanoke and Salem, Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount and Vinton



- *Project guidance:*
  - Grant writing, particularly for EDA Economic Adjustment Assistance grants and other EDA-family grants.
  - Workforce-related studies and data analysis.
  - Economic analysis including demographic, economic impact, and job creation impacts.
  - Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy updates and implementation.
  - GIS visualization of economic trends, activities, status, etc.
- Example projects from previous Work Programs
  - Economic Impact of the Arts
  - Broadband Deployment
  - Regional Food System Planning
  - Blue Ridge Marathon Economic Impact

#### **Virginia Housing PDC Housing Development Program:**

- *General Description:* Primarily construction funding for recipients of the Virginia Housing PDC Housing Development grant, but there is some capacity for research and analysis of other regional housing needs.
- *Budget:* Approximately 400 hours
- *Project guidance:*
  - Research or activities focused on increasing workforce housing (80% AMI or better) supply in the region.
- *Example projects from previous Work Programs:*
  - *Funding to date has primarily focused on the administration of the housing construction subsidies and initial program design.*

#### **Southeast Crescent Regional Commission (SCRC)**

- *General Description:* The SCRC is a new Federal regional commission similar to the ARC but focused on the communities from Virginia to Florida not covered by the ARC. In our region, this covers Roanoke and Franklin Counties, the cities of Roanoke and Salem, and the towns of Rocky Mount and Vinton. Our SCRC activities are focused on increasing affordable housing supply in Franklin County and the City of Roanoke.
- *Budget:* Approximately 200 hours
- *Project guidance:*
  - Housing studies and research.
  - Development of outreach materials and coordination of stakeholder meetings and input.
  - GIS visualization of housing needs, trends, and activities in the target region.
- *Example projects from previous Work Programs:*
  - *SCRC funding is new to RVARC for FY24 so no projects have been completed to date.*

#### **Commuter Assistance Program (RIDE Solutions):**

- *General Description:* Program focused on the efficient management of the region's surface road network through behavior change programs encouraging carpooling, biking, telework, vanpool, and other Transportation Demand Management strategies. All RVARC member localities have access to these services.
- *Budget:* Approximately 1,000 hours
- *Project guidance:*
  - Targeted employer outreach based on geography or sector.
  - Targeted commuter outreach based on geography.



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- General community education.
- Local government consultation and technical support.
- Commute pattern analysis, research, and GIS visualization.
- *Example projects from previous Work Programs:*
  - Park and Ride Study
  - National Bike Month Support
  - Bicycle Friendly Community/Business technical support
  - VA Medical Center Vanpool Formation

#### **Roanoke Valley Collective Response (RVCR):**

- *General Description:* Program focused on the regional response to the opioid addiction crisis, including crisis response, law enforcement support, human services coordination, new program development, recovery housing, and workforce reentry. Activities under the RVCR are particularly focused on the regional response to the crisis and the recognition that where people live and where they receive services may cross jurisdictional boundaries. All RVARC members have access to these services.
- *Budget:* Approximately 3,000 hours
- *Project guidance:*
  - Projects and activities specifically related to opioid addiction abatement.
  - Workforce training and support for those in recovery.
  - Peer training, development, networking, and support.
  - Research and analysis of the impact of addiction, including GIS visualization
- *Example projects from previous Work Programs:*
  - 2023 white paper Building on Hope
  - Technical assistance for Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority (VOAA) grant writing.

#### **General Regional/Local Projects:**

- *General Description:* All projects paid for out of local dues/DHCD/other unrestricted funds that do not fall into one of the program areas above. The most flexible project funding source we have, but projects here compete for the use of these funds as matching funds against other grants – Transportation, Commuter Assistance, EDA, ARC all require a local match.
- *Budget:* Approximately 1,500 hours
- *Project guidance:*
  - Recreational infrastructure and activities planning and analysis.
  - Environmental planning and analysis including stormwater, tree canopy, and others.
  - Purely local support projects not included in a category above.
- *Example projects from previous Work Programs:*
  - Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness administration
  - Regional Trail Counter Program
  - Regional Greenway Plan
  - Solar@Scale Workshop

#### **Work Program Development Calendar**

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- January 25: Appointment of Work Program Committee
- January 26: Invitation to request projects distributed to regional stakeholders.
- Week of January 29<sup>th</sup>: Work Program Committee meets to discuss process and priorities.
- January 31: Staff hosts regional planners lunch to generate project ideas.

**MEMBER GOVERNMENTS:** Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin and Roanoke  
Cities of Covington, Roanoke and Salem, Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount and Vinton



- March 4 - 8: Work Program Committee reviews draft projects with staff recommendations.
- March 14: RVTPO Transportation Technical Committee reviews the draft Roanoke Valley Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – the urban transportation element of the RVARC Work Program.
- March 28: RVTPO Policy Board reviews the draft UPWP – the urban transportation element of the RVARC Work Program.
- March 28: RVARC Board approves Rural Transportation Work Program.
- March 28: Work Program Committee approves draft RVARC Work Program.
- April 11: RVTPO Transportation Technical Committee reviews the draft UPWP.
- April 25: RVTPO Policy Board approves the UPWP.
- April 25: RVARC members review the draft RVARC Work Program.
- May 23: RVARC reviews and approves the complete RVARC Work Program, inclusive of the UPWP and Rural Transportation Work Program.

## RVARC Strategic Priorities

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The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission has identified its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) plan as the organization's strategic plan. In addition, the Commission completed a strategic planning effort in 2019 that identified several goals focused on communications, improving staff capacity, and strengthening the organization.

This year, the Commission is working with the Southeastern Regional Directors Institute to update our Strategic Plan. To the extent possible, recommendations from the revised plan will be considered when finalizing the FY25 Work Program.

Our strategic priorities are as follows:

### **I. Economic Growth**

- A. The Commission will ensure the region has adequate infrastructure in place to facilitate the growth of higher-wage industry clusters and to ensure connectivity with regions nationally and globally. (CEDS 2022)
- B. The Commission will improve the Multimodal Transportation Network of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Region. (CEDS 2022)

### **II. Quality of Life**

- A. The Commission will address resiliency through coordination of the Regional Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan, COVID-19 response activities, and CEDS. (CEDS 2022)
- B. The Commission will seek to reuse existing underutilized commercial, institutional, and industrial properties and target them for redevelopment. (CEDS 2022)
- C. The Commission will seek to ensure that the region offers a strong and diverse mix of housing opportunities. (CEDS 2022)

### **III. Sustainability**

- A. The Commission will seek to maintain and promote the region's natural beauty as well as its cultural amenities and seek sustainable growth opportunities. (CEDS 2022)

### **IV. Communication and Outreach**

- A. Project a positive identity for the Roanoke Valley - Alleghany Region. (CEDS 2022)
- B. The Commission will improve Communication among RVARC and its stakeholders. (2019 Strategic Plan)
- C. The Commission will improve engagement among RVARC and its members. (2019 Strategic Plan)



Roanoke Valley-Alleghany

**REGIONAL**  
**commission**

[RVARC.ORG](http://RVARC.ORG)

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**V. Organizational Capacity**

- A. The Commission will adequately prepare for the future. (2019 Strategic Plan)

**VI. Local Technical and Implementation Support**

- A. The Commission will continue in its role as a convener of regional stakeholders on issues of more than local significance and implementer of programs on behalf of our local government members.



# Our region has spoken.

Highlights from  
the 2023 Greater Roanoke  
Region Travel Survey



1

## Background

In 2023, The Roanoke Valley-Allegheny Regional Commission (RVARC) hired a research company to survey local residents about travel patterns, trip satisfaction and transportation options. The following insights reflect the answers given by the survey's 1,662 responses.



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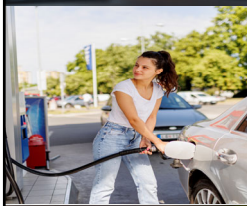
## Key finding #1:

Personal vehicles are the main mode of transportation in our region, but gas prices, maintenance costs and traffic congestion are burdening residents.



3

## Key Finding #1



Of all the people surveyed, almost half (42%) work outside the home. Among those, 87% drive to work alone, and 61% are commuting to the city of Roanoke and/or Roanoke County. These commuters face a number of challenges:

- A majority of those surveyed (59%) said high gas prices were the biggest challenge for commuting in a personal vehicle.
- 39% said the cost and time of personal vehicle maintenance was a challenge.
- 40% said traffic congestion is a challenge.\*

\*Note: Research from the national transportation research nonprofit TRIP found that traffic congestion costs the average Roanoke region driver is \$629 annually – the result of losing 25 hours stuck in traffic and wasting 11 gallons of fuel.

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## Key finding #2:

Many areas throughout our region need more public transportation, bike paths, and safer and better-connected sidewalks.



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## Key Finding #2



According to the survey, most people believe we need better solutions for transit in the Roanoke Valley

- About half of respondents (43%-59%) agreed that our area needs **more public transportation**, with younger adults agreeing most strongly.
- The majority of respondents said our Region needs **better bike paths**, with Roanoke City (66%), Roanoke County (67%) and the City of Salem (70%) leading the way in their agreement.
- Many respondents (40%-55%) strongly favor improving the **sidewalks** in their communities.

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## Key finding #3:

Commuting in our region can be expensive and frustrating, especially for certain groups – but carpooling and vanpooling could help.



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## Key Finding #3



According to a TRIP study, drivers in the greater Roanoke region pay an average of **\$407 in yearly vehicle operation costs** as a result of fuel consumption, wear and tear and other factors.

- RIDE Solutions' **free carpooling and vanpooling** assistance program can help ease commuters' costs – but only 27-40% of the RVARC survey's respondents were aware of these services. This shows that carpool and vanpool promotion and education need to be expanded in the Roanoke Region.
- The survey also showed that the top motivator for carpooling or vanpooling is the offer of a **free ride home in case of emergencies** (46%).

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## Full Report

August 2023

### Moving Forward: 2023 Greater Roanoke Region Travel Survey



9



Roanoke Valley-Alleghany

**REGIONAL**  
**commission**

## Better Bus Stops for Neighborhoods

**Andrea Garland**  
*Director of RIDE Solutions*

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## Background

### Better Bus Stops For Neighborhoods 2023 Northwest Roanoke Bus Shelters

With the support of federal Community Development Block Grant funds, the Regional Commission partnered with Valley Metro, and artist Dan Kuehl to add additional shelters to Northwest Roanoke.

- Lansdowne Park (2624 Salem Turnpike, NW,
- Burrell Center (611 McDowell Ave. NW) and
- Melrose Park (Melrose Ave & 15th Street NW).

We are continuing the artistic bus shelter effort as part of the target area strategy, and creative work is already underway in Southeast Roanoke.



never possible



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## Action

### **City of Roanoke HUD CDBG Grant Application Approval**

- Install 3 bus shelters in Southeast Roanoke in 2025
- Proposed Budget: \$79,667
- ACTION: Approval of Certification of Application

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## Agencywide Line Item Revenues and Expenditures

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission

Run Date: 02/14/2024

Period: 7/1/2023 to 1/31/2024

Run Time: 3:02:13 pm

Page 1 of 2

Code	Description	Budget	Current	YTD	Un/Over	% Bud
<b>Revenues</b>						
40000	ARC	101,506.00	0.00	49,656.60	51,849.40	48.92 %
40200	FEDERAL - PL	877,275.00	66,880.72	125,290.34	751,984.66	14.28 %
40210	VDOT PL	75,284.00	8,360.09	15,661.24	59,622.76	20.80 %
40400	VDHCD ALLOCATION	89,971.00	22,493.00	67,478.00	22,493.00	75.00 %
40410	ROANOKE VALLEY BROADBAND AUTHORIT	1,200.00	0.00	660.00	540.00	55.00 %
40411	HUD CITY OF ROANOKE	85,246.00	3,095.42	4,880.90	80,365.10	5.73 %
40500	VIRGINIA DEPT EMERGENCY MGMT	63,900.00	0.00	0.00	63,900.00	0.00 %
40570	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATI	84,344.00	0.00	14,344.07	69,999.93	17.01 %
40580	ARP ACT COLLECTIVE RESPONSE	162,594.00	0.00	162,593.97	0.03	100.00 %
40585	SAMHSA	399,941.00	34,763.15	137,363.43	262,577.57	34.35 %
40590	VOAA CITY OF ROANOKE	500,000.00	500,000.00	500,000.00	0.00	100.00 %
40600	ALLEGHANY COUNTY	11,707.00	0.00	11,707.00	0.00	100.00 %
40604	WVRIFA	25,000.00	6,250.00	12,500.00	12,500.00	50.00 %
40699	BEDFORD COUNTY	240.00	0.00	240.00	0.00	100.00 %
40700	BOTETOURT COUNTY	36,491.00	0.00	36,491.00	0.00	100.00 %
40800	CLIFTON FORGE	3,444.00	0.00	3,444.00	0.00	100.00 %
40900	COVINGTON	5,729.00	0.00	5,729.00	0.00	100.00 %
41000	CRAIG COUNTY	4,885.00	0.00	4,885.00	0.00	100.00 %
41010	FRANKLIN COUNTY	49,476.00	0.00	49,476.00	0.00	100.00 %
41020	MONTGOMERY COUNTY	201.00	0.00	201.00	0.00	100.00 %
41100	CITY OF ROANOKE	139,065.75	0.00	139,065.77	(0.02)	100.00 %
41200	ROANOKE COUNTY	111,738.90	0.00	111,738.90	0.00	100.00 %
41210	ROCKY MOUNT	4,712.00	0.00	4,712.00	0.00	100.00 %
41300	SALEM	31,926.22	0.00	31,926.22	0.00	100.00 %
41400	VINTON	10,344.13	0.00	10,344.13	0.00	100.00 %
41500	VDRPT/FTA - TRANSIT	171,101.00	18,307.47	37,103.47	133,997.53	21.69 %
41600	VDRPT/STATE TRANSIT	21,388.00	2,288.43	4,638.43	16,749.57	21.69 %
41800	VDOT/SPR RURAL TRANSP	58,000.00	10,700.67	16,427.40	41,572.60	28.32 %
41900	VDRPT - RIDESHARE	171,942.00	8,791.44	35,244.44	136,697.56	20.50 %
41902	VDRPT	60,820.00	2,041.63	15,129.63	45,690.37	24.88 %
41950	VIRGINIA HOUSING	734,299.00	0.00	0.00	734,299.00	0.00 %
42100	DEPT ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	58,000.00	30,561.16	30,561.16	27,438.84	52.69 %
42150	VIRGINIA ENVIRONMENTAL ENDOWMENT	33,076.00	0.00	10,814.32	22,261.68	32.70 %
42400	SOUTHEAST CRESENT REGIONAL COMMISS	15,747.00	0.00	0.00	15,747.00	0.00 %
43000	INTEREST INCOME	40,000.00	5,940.86	34,473.49	5,526.51	86.18 %
43200	MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	2,500.00	0.00	2,173.54	326.46	86.94 %
43250	SPONSORSHIPS	2,000.00	0.00	1,818.50	181.50	90.93 %
43707	SERDI	1,538.00	0.00	769.00	769.00	50.00 %
44700	DEPT OF FORESTRY	36,860.00	0.00	0.00	36,860.00	0.00 %
49000	CARRYOVER FUNDS	39,441.00	0.00	39,440.57	0.43	100.00 %
	<b>Revenues</b>	<b>4,322,933.00</b>	<b>720,474.04</b>	<b>1,728,982.52</b>	<b>2,593,950.48</b>	<b>40.00 %</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
50000	SALARIES	1,049,557.00	76,286.74	525,565.54	523,991.46	50.07 %
50500	FRINGE BENEFITS	319,691.00	22,102.91	152,785.28	166,905.72	47.79 %
52000	INSURANCE	5,500.00	371.89	3,047.44	2,452.56	55.41 %
52100	SUPPLIES	29,195.00	3,371.76	6,663.50	22,531.50	22.82 %
52200	POSTAGE	2,050.00	9.65	714.65	1,335.35	34.86 %
52300	SUBSCRIPTIONS	3,170.00	0.00	365.44	2,804.56	11.53 %
52400	DUES	14,880.00	1,940.32	12,097.01	2,782.99	81.30 %

## Agencywide Line Item Revenues and Expenditures

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission

Run Date: 02/14/2024

Period: 7/1/2023 to 1/31/2024

Run Time: 3:02:13 pm

Page 2 of 2

Code	Description	Budget	Current	YTD	Un/Over	% Bud
52500	PRINTING	2,000.00	24.66	1,403.74	596.26	70.19 %
52700	TRAINING	13,150.00	4,450.00	5,117.00	8,033.00	38.91 %
52800	TELEPHONE & INTERNET	8,545.00	613.07	4,354.90	4,190.10	50.96 %
52900	TRAVEL	50,321.00	460.95	4,689.47	45,631.53	9.32 %
53000	AUDIT FEES	16,000.00	0.00	15,700.00	300.00	98.13 %
53200	CONFERENCES	11,325.00	257.50	2,386.02	8,938.98	21.07 %
53300	FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT	7,000.00	(50.00)	643.77	6,356.23	9.20 %
53400	DEPRECIATION F & E	500.00	0.00	0.00	500.00	0.00 %
53500	MAIN F & E	10,000.00	370.37	5,126.42	4,873.58	51.26 %
53600	MISCELLANEOUS	2,100.00	(151.03)	393.84	1,706.16	18.75 %
53650	BANK FEES	1,100.00	87.00	593.25	506.75	53.93 %
53700	ADVERTISING	61,565.00	384.34	5,574.99	55,990.01	9.06 %
53800	RECRUITMENT	1,000.00	24.65	4,028.97	(3,028.97)	402.90 %
53900	MEETINGS	11,050.00	410.65	10,765.70	284.30	97.43 %
54100	LEGAL FEES	8,250.00	157.50	599.76	7,650.24	7.27 %
54400	CONTRACT SERVICES	1,838,950.00	37,271.81	86,140.58	1,752,809.42	4.68 %
54900	COMPUTER SERVICES	37,147.00	1,314.85	16,636.19	20,510.81	44.78 %
55000	DEPRECIATION COMP EQUIPT	1,050.00	86.43	605.01	444.99	57.62 %
55200	UTILITIES	14,000.00	1,320.90	8,757.58	5,242.42	62.55 %
55300	LEASE PAYMENTS	5,000.00	0.00	1,967.60	3,032.40	39.35 %
55800	BUILDING MAINTENANCE	36,928.00	1,761.86	12,951.75	23,976.25	35.07 %
56000	DEPRECIATION BUILDING	14,000.00	737.66	5,375.54	8,624.46	38.40 %
90000	OPERATING RESERVE	747,909.00	0.00	0.00	747,909.00	0.00 %
	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>4,322,933.00</b>	<b>153,616.44</b>	<b>895,050.94</b>	<b>3,427,882.06</b>	<b>20.70 %</b>
	<b>Agency Balance</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>566,857.60</b>	<b>833,931.58</b>		



## Balance Sheet

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission  
 Period From : 7/1/2023 to 1/31/2024

Run Date: 2/14/24  
 Run Time: 3:09:47 pm

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**Assets:**

10000	CASH IN BANK TRUIST (OLD BB&T )	608,938.29
10050	LGIP INVESTMENT	1,269,589.21
10300	PETTY CASH	150.00
10700	A/R GRANTORS	244,983.10
10900	PREPAID EXPENSES	7,773.55
11000	PREPAID INSURANCE	17,305.26
11600	PREPAID PHYSICAL ASSETS	608,262.89
11700	PHYSICAL ASSETS, ACCUM DEP	(387,808.74)
12200	PREPAID COMPUTER EQUIPT	5,185.96
12250	PREPAID SOFTWARE	40,000.00
12300	COMPUTER EQUIPT, ACC DEP	(1,901.46)
12500	PREPAID TELEPHONE EQUIPT	1,591.00
12600	TELEPHONE EQUIPT, ACC DEP	(1,591.00)
12800	PREPAID DUES	5,383.38
	<b>Total Assets:</b>	<b>2,417,861.44</b>

**Liabilities:**

20000	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	32,679.56
20100	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE1	7,989.97
20300	ACCRUED ANNUAL LEAVE	30,014.60
20400	FICA WITHHELD	2,910.33
20500	FEDERAL TAX WITHHELD	2,674.23
20600	STATE TAX WITHHELD	1,422.38
20700	RETIREMENT	6,315.51
20800	DEFERRED REVENUE	4,136.00
21200	BUILDING FUND	15,000.00
	<b>Total Liabilities:</b>	<b>103,142.58</b>

**Projects**

30100	REGIONAL/LOCAL PROJECTS	(60,161.98)
30140	EDA	(45,902.51)
30210	TREE CANOPY	(9,339.98)
30300	INDUSTRIAL FACILITY AUTHORITY	1,067.05
30305	VIRGINIA ENVIRONMENTAL ENDOWMENT	(754.23)
30306	CHESAPEAKE BAY	258.07
30307	VIRGINIA HOUSING	76,788.55
30500	RURAL TRANSPORTATION	(5,923.62)
30600	PL TRANSPORTATION	(10,470.63)
30800	VDRPT/FTA TRANSPORTATION	(7,138.67)
30880	HUD COMMUNITY RESOURCES-CDBG	(1,010.33)
30900	RIDESOLUTIONS	(37,731.65)
30901	REGIONAL BIKE COORDINATION	13,407.03
30902	COMMUTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM STRATEGIC PLAN	(3,478.75)
30903	ROANOKE RIVER BLUEWAY	42,826.56
30905	BROADBAND	88.73
30906	SERDI	640.41

## Balance Sheet

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission  
 Period From : 7/1/2023 to 1/31/2024

Run Date: 2/14/24  
 Run Time: 3:09:47 pm

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31700	ROANOKE VALLEY COLLECTIVE RESPONSE	108,563.01
31710	SAMHSA FUNDING	(21,152.62)
31720	VIRGINIA OPIOID ABATEMENT AUTHORITY	485,635.90
35106	ARC 2023	1,758.86
35150	SOUTHEAST CRESENT	(26.20)
37200	HAZARD MITIGATION	(3,178.00)
37605	COMMUTER OPERATING ASSISTANCE	(1,201.38)
39000	GENERAL OPERATING FUND	310,368.00
39400	UNRESTRICTED FUND BALANCE & INVEST CA	1,470,125.65
<b>Total Projects</b>		<b>2,304,057.27</b>
<b>Total Liabilities and Projects</b>		<b>2,407,199.85</b>
<b>Net Difference to be Reconciled</b>		<b>10,661.59</b>
<b>Total Adjustment</b>		<b>10,661.59</b>
<b>Unreconciled Balance</b>		<b>0.00</b>

### Reconciling Items .....

(1)	Paid Salaries are Timesheets show Difference	514,903.89 514,903.89 0.00
(2)	Leave accrued this year	10,661.65
(3)	Fringe Pool is Fringe allocated Difference	152,785.30 152,785.28 (0.02)
(4)	Indirect Pool is Indirect Allocated Difference	174,413.77 174,413.73 (0.04)
<b>Total adjustments</b>		<b>10,661.59</b>



Roanoke Valley-Alleghany

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## **STAFF REPORT**

### **February 15, 2024**

#### **RVCR Advisory Committee Bylaws Update**

The Advisory Committee for the Roanoke Valley Collective Response requests an adjusted meeting cycle to facilitate increased planning and participation. This action requires amending the Bylaws and approval of the Commission Board.

The attached Bylaws of the Advisory Committee for the Roanoke Valley Collective Response have been amended to alter the meeting cycle from the second Wednesday of the month to the third Wednesday of the Month. This change is reflected in Article III, Section 1, Line 2.

This revision also includes minor grammatical changes to correct a typo and eliminate redundancy.

This was unanimously approved by the RVCR Advisory Committee on February 14th, 2024.

**Recommended Action:** Vote to approve amended Bylaws.



Roanoke Valley-Alleghany  
**REGIONAL**  
**commission**

*Approved by CAC 2-14-24*  
*Approved by RVARC Board – \_\_\_\_\_*

**BYLAWS**  
**of the**  
**ROANOKE VALLEY COLLECTIVE RESPONSE**  
**ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**ARTICLE I**

**NAME AND GENERAL AUTHORITY**

- Section 1            The name of this committee shall be the Roanoke Valley Collective Response Advisory Committee, hereinafter known as the “CAC”, and shall be a program advisory committee to the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, hereinafter referred to as “RVARC.”
- Section 2            As a part of the RVARC’s fiduciary responsibility to partner localities, state and federal agencies, and other stakeholders in pursuit of identifying strategies and building programs to address the regional addiction crisis and its related mental health challenges, the CAC is responsible for advising the RVARC Board and providing technical advice to the RVARC staff on activities related to the regional response to the addiction crisis.
- Section 3            The CAC shall provide the RVARC subject matter expertise and technical advice pertaining to the execution of the Roanoke Valley Collective Response Blueprint for Action, the Roanoke Valley Collective Response strategic plan, and other such programs as initiated by the staff of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission or undertaken by the RVARC on behalf of its partner localities. The CAC shall also undertake other duties that may be requested by the RVARC.

**ARTICLE II**  
**MEMBERSHIP**

- Section 1            The membership of the CAC shall be composed of representatives of appropriate nonprofits, human services agencies, and other organizations providing addiction-related services within the service area of the Roanoke

Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission and other agencies as deemed necessary by the RVARC.

Section 2 The CAC shall be composed of individuals representing the following areas of interest:

1. At least 2 members representing a health system and/or medical provider.
2. At least 2 members representing a mental health system and/or service provider.
3. At least 2 members representing higher education/academic institutions.
4. At least 2 members representing law enforcement and/or first responders.
5. At least 50% of the total membership are persons with lived experience of addiction and recovery, per the Virginia State Board of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services regulation 12VAC35-250-40.

A member may represent more than one area of interest.

Section 3 CAC membership shall be comprised initially of the chair or co-chair, as designated by the CAC, of each Workgroup of the Roanoke Valley Collective Response. Any gaps in the composition of membership as defined in Article II Section 2 shall then be appointed through the process outlined in Section 5 or 7 of this article.

Section 4 CAC voting members shall be appointed as noted below for a term of two years following the RVARC fiscal year calendar of July through June. Members appointed ex officio shall serve a term contemporaneous with their term in office and shall be succeeded by their successor in office.

Section 5 At the May meeting each year, the CAC will consider and vote on a slate of candidates to fill any seats that may become open the following July. The slate will be provided to the CAC by the Chair at least five days before the meeting. Any member of the CAC may put forward a candidate for open seats, and any interested candidates may submit their name to the Chair for consideration.

Section 6 Representatives who are not ex-officio may serve up to two consecutive terms.

Section 7 In the case of a vacancy in the CAC voting membership, the Chair will provide the CAC with a candidate to consider and vote upon at the next meeting after which the vacancy occurs, allowing such candidate meets the requirements of Section 2 of this Article.

Section 8 The CAC may invite non-voting, interested organizations to participate in CAC meetings with voice, but not vote. The non-voting members representing the interested organizations shall be appointed by their respective organizations.

Section 9 All CAC members shall sign a Conflict-of-Interest statement before the start of their initial term.

### **ARTICLE III MEETINGS**

Section 1 Meetings of the CAC shall be held in the Conference Room of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission at 9:00 am, on the third Wednesday of every month, except that when a meeting day falls on or adjacent to a State-recognized holiday, the meeting shall be held as determined by the CAC Chair and the Secretary.

Section 2 Meetings may be canceled if no business is to be conducted. Notice of cancellations shall be mailed or electronically communicated to each member at least five days prior to the scheduled meeting date.

Section 3 Special meetings of the CAC shall be held at the discretion of the Chair.

Section 4 Notice stating the time, date, place and agenda for all meetings of the CAC shall be mailed or electronically communicated to each member at least five days prior to the meeting date.

### **ARTICLE IV ATTENDANCE**

Section 1 Whenever a voting member fails to attend three (3) consecutive meetings, the Secretary of the CAC shall notify the member by email and/or letter. If five (5) consecutive meetings are missed, the Chair may call for a vote to remove the member and nominate a replacement to be voted on at the next meeting of the CAC.

### **ARTICLE V VOTING RIGHTS AND PROCEDURES**

Section 1 Each voting member in attendance shall be entitled to one equal vote in all matters before the CAC.

Section 2 Except where indicated otherwise in these bylaws, all actions of the CAC shall be approved by a majority vote of the members present.

Section 3 50% of the total voting membership in attendance shall constitute a quorum at meetings of the CAC.

Section 4 In all matters of voting or other procedures not specifically covered by these bylaws, Roberts Rules of Order, latest edition as modified for small boards, shall

be observed.

## **ARTICLE VI OFFICERS**

- Section 1            The officers of the CAC shall include a Chair and a Vice Chair who shall be elected from the membership of the CAC.
- Section 2            The Chair and Vice Chair shall serve for a two-year term or until their successors are elected and shall be eligible for re-election. The election of officers shall be held at the July meeting of every even numbered year and those members elected to office shall assume their duties at the conclusion of the meeting.
- Section 3            At least one month prior to the election, the Chair shall appoint a nominating committee of at least two members. The nominating committee shall mail or electronically communicate to each CAC member the name(s) of the nominee(s) for the offices of Chair and Vice Chair one week prior to the meeting at which the election will be held. Additional nominations may be made from the floor at the time the elections are held.
- Section 4            The Chair shall preside over all CAC meetings, shall sign all actions necessary to carry out the will of the CAC, shall have the authority to assign routine administrative functions to the Secretary, and shall be eligible to vote on all matters before the CAC. The Chair of the CAC shall serve on the RVARC in a non-voting, ex-officio capacity.
- Section 5            The Vice Chair shall serve as Chair in the absence of the Chair.
- Section 6            A vacancy in the office of Chair or Vice Chair shall be filled for the unexpired term at an election during the next CAC meeting following occurrence of the vacancy, except that no such action shall be taken unless placed on the agenda mailed or electronically communicated to all members.
- Section 7            The Chair and Vice Chair of the CAC shall not be representatives of the same organization or area of interest as defined in Article II Section 2.
- Section 8            The Director of the Roanoke Valley Collective Response shall be the Secretary to the CAC. The Chair shall appoint an acting Secretary in the absence of the appointed Secretary.
- Section 9            The Secretary is responsible for the preparation and storage of written records of all CAC proceedings and shall transmit notices and agenda to the membership and shall transmit a copy of the minutes of each CAC meeting to each member prior to the next regular meeting.

**ARTICLE VII  
STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

- Section 1            The CAC may establish standing and special subcommittees and workgroups as it deems necessary and shall determine the instructions for and method of appointing members to each subcommittee.
- Section 2            All appointments to standing and special subcommittees shall be for a term determined by the CAC.
- Section 3            The Chair of the CAC shall be an ex-officio member of all subcommittees and workgroups.
- Section 4            Reports of all subcommittees and workgroups shall be in writing and shall be made part of the permanent records of the CAC.

**ARTICLE VIII  
AMENDMENT**

- Section 1            Any proposed amendment to these bylaws shall be mailed or electronically communicated to each member at least five days prior to the meeting at which they are to be voted upon. A majority vote (10 members or more) of all members of the CAC, voting at a regular meeting, shall be required to recommend adoption to the RVARC of any proposed amendment to the bylaws.

**ARTICLE IX  
EFFECTIVE DATE**

- Section 1            These bylaws and any amendments shall become effective immediately upon approval by the RVARC.

*CAC Bylaws 2024 Update*  
*Approved by the RVARC Date: \_\_\_\_\_*





Roanoke Valley-Alleghany

**REGIONAL**  
**commission**

313 Luck Avenue, SW | Roanoke, Virginia 24016 | P: 540.343.4417 | F: 540.343.4416 | rvarc@rvarc.org

The 22<sup>nd</sup> day of February 2024

## **RESOLUTION**

**by the**

**Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission**

**Authorizing the Application for State Commuter Assistance Program Operating Assistance and General Project Grant**

**BE IT RESOLVED** by the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, hereafter referred to as the RVARC, that the Executive Director is authorized to execute and file an application to the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Commonwealth of Virginia, hereafter referred to as the DEPARTMENT, for a grant of financial assistance in the amount of \$227,331 to defray the costs borne by the RVARC for operating a commuter assistance program, and to accept from the DEPARTMENT grant in such amount as may be awarded, and to authorize the Executive Director to furnish to the DEPARTMENT such documents and other information as may be required for processing the grant request.

The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission certifies that the funds shall be used in accordance with the requirements of Section 58.1-638.A.4 of the Code of Virginia, and will provide funds, in the amount of \$45,466, which will be used to match the state funds in the ratio as required in such Act, that the records of receipts of expenditures of funds granted the RVARC may be subject to audit by the DEPARTMENT and by the State Auditor of Public Accounts, and that funds granted to the RVARC for defraying the expenses of the RVARC shall be used only for such purposes authorized in the Code of Virginia.

Jim Wallace,  
Chair



**STAFF REPORT**

**RVARC Meeting February 22, 2024**

**SUBJ: Recommendation on FY26 SMART SCALE RVARC Candidate Project Requests**

On February 5, 2024, staff received candidate project request forms submitted by member urban and rural localities from the RVTPO and RVARC for the FY26 round of SMART SCALE.

For Round 6, the RVARC has a maximum of four applications to submit by August 2024 but may initiate five pre-applications in March. Staff received one project request form from Franklin County for the Iron Ridge Road and Route 220 Intersection Improvement project. This project will provide a Restricted Crossing U-Turn, or RCUT, at the intersection of U.S. 220 and Iron Ridge Road in Franklin County.

The project request form follows this staff report.

For informational purposes, the RVTPO Policy Board will consider three requests from Roanoke County for their four application slots at their February 22 meeting (noted in table below).

No.	Agency	Project Name
1	Roanoke County	Peters Creek Road/Williamson Road Multimodal and Safety Improvements
2	Roanoke County	Peters Creek Road at Valleypointe Parkway Intersection Improvements
3	Roanoke County	Route 11/460/West Main Street at Dow Hollow Road Intersection Safety Improvements

Staff recommends to the Board the acceptance of Franklin County’s project request for Round 6 of SMART SCALE.

**RVARC Policy Board Action:**

Consideration of FY26 SMART SCALE RVARC candidate project requests.

## **Candidate Project Request Form for RVARC and RVTPO SMART SCALE Applications**

Upload the completed Project Request Form through this link:

<https://netorgft2106167->

[my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/bhill\\_rvarc\\_org/EsAufW2il0ZBnsoy9OijGalBw16BqJA13G3TrBdpCkOj1w](https://netorgft2106167-my.sharepoint.com/:f:/g/personal/bhill_rvarc_org/EsAufW2il0ZBnsoy9OijGalBw16BqJA13G3TrBdpCkOj1w)

**Form to be submitted no later than Monday, February 5, 2024**

Date Submitted: **02/05/2024**

Submitter's Name: **Stephanie Mathena**

Organization: **Franklin County**

Submitter's Email and Phone #: **stephanie.mathena@franklincountyva.gov 540-482-6700**

Project Title: **Iron Ridge Road and Route 220 Intersection Improvement**

Project Description/Scope: **Intersection improvements at the intersection of Iron Ridge Road and Route 220 to provide an R-Cut.**

Project Cost Estimate: **\$8,789,397**

1. Is this project in the Roanoke Valley Transportation Plan?

Yes - Please reference project/page #:

No - If no, please state the project's purpose and need.

**Franklin County is not included in Roanoke Valley Transportation Plan, but as a member of another PDC, it is included in the West Piedmont Planning District Commission's 2035 Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan. This Plan specifically calls out the need for improvements around the proposed intersection. Priority #26 in Franklin County is improvements from VA-775 (Iron Ridge Road) from Route 220 to VA 697 (Wirtz Road), effectively including the intersection of Iron Ridge Road and Route 220.**

[https://westpiedmontpdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/west\\_piedmont\\_2035\\_rlrp\\_final.pdf](https://westpiedmontpdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/west_piedmont_2035_rlrp_final.pdf)

**Additionally, this intersection is identified as a needed improvement in VDOT's 2020 US 220 Arterial Preservation Program Report. This Report identifies the intersection of Iron Ridge Road and Route 220 as a "safety improvement" need and stated that the intersection has been studied and identified as an "emerging intersection," with a 2016 PSI Rank (Salem District) of 133. While more recent data is available, it should be noted that this intersection has been identified by VDOT, WPPDC, and Franklin County as needing a safety improvement.**

If no, why is it more important for the region to pursue this project now rather than other projects in the Plan?

**As noted above, while this intersection is not found in the Roanoke Valley Transportation Plan, its significance and regional importance is noted in other entities' transportation plans.**

2. Is this project in the Roanoke Urbanized Area (RVTPO Service Area)? No  Yes   
If so, which organization are you requesting to submit the application? RVTPO  RVARC
3. Is this project in the Rural portion of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Region? No  Yes
4. In what way does this project serve a Corridor of Statewide Significance or Regional Network?  
Please identify needs from the 2021 InteractVTrans Mid-Term Needs and Priorities  
(<https://vtrans.org/interactvtrans/map-explorer>).

**This intersection is along Route 200, a CoSS. Additionally, it has designated UDA needs according to VTrans, as it is in the 220-North Corridor Designated Growth Area.**

5. Is this project in the RVARC's Regional Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS)?

If yes, list page #.

If no, please state project's purpose & need.

**While Franklin County is not included in RVARC's CEDS, it is included in the West Piedmont Planning District Commission's CEDS. The WPPDC CEDS includes priority projects related to various topics, including infrastructure. The WPPDC CEDS priority projects lists "Transportation Improvements – Smart Scale Projects" as a Priority 1, intended for road and intersection improvements to improve safety by reducing fatalities and accidents. While the WPPDC CEDS does not list specific intersections, the CEDS does highlight the significance of Route 220 and the increased traffic and development that occurs along the corridor, particularly in proximity to Summit View Business Park.**

<https://westpiedmontpdc.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/West-Piedmont-CEDS-Final-2-3.24.2022.pdf>

If no, why is it more important for the region to pursue this project now rather than other projects in the CEDS?

**As noted above, while this project, nor Franklin County, are listed in the RVARC CEDS, the call for intersection improvements along Route 220 is evident in other Plans, including those have regional significance.**

6. Is this project within a certain travel distance to an eligible VirginiaScan project as outlined in Figure 10.2 on Page 88 of the SMART SCALE Technical Guide?  
**Yes**
7. Has this project been submitted for previous rounds of SMART SCALE? If so, which round(s)?  
**Yes; Rounds 4 and 5.**
8. Has this project had funds previously committed to it (STBG, CRP, TA, Local funds, Other)?  
**No.**

9. Is it anticipated that new or additional funds will be committed by the sponsor organization or requested from the RVTPO?

**No.**

10. For locality applicants only, is this project listed as a priority in the comprehensive plan?

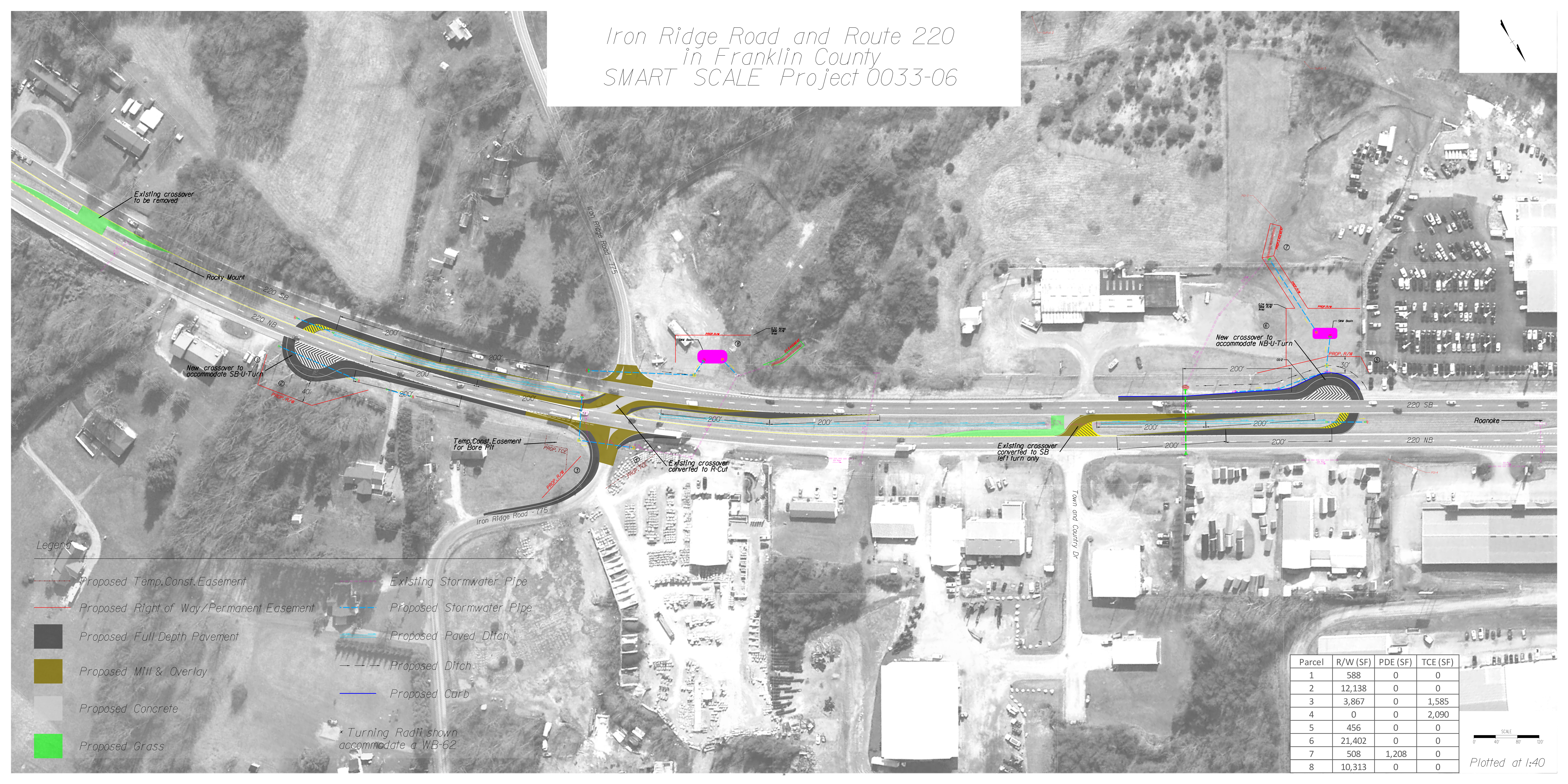
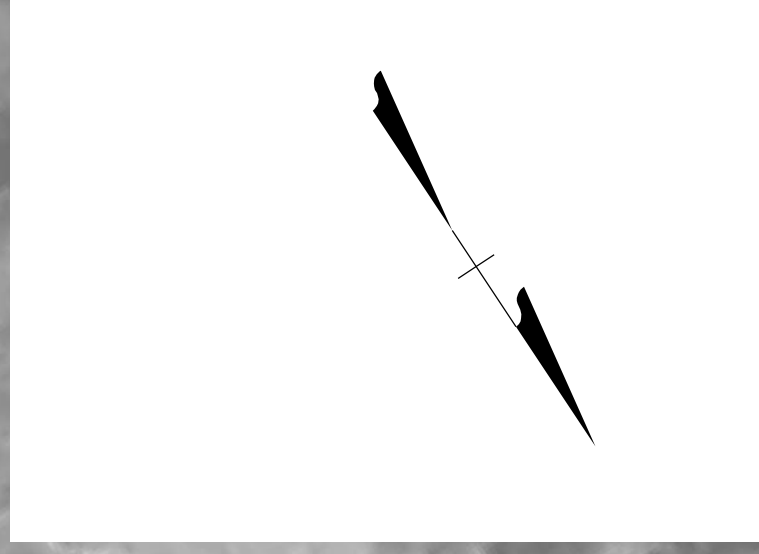
Yes - Please reference project/page #:

No - If no, please state the project's purpose and need.

If no, why is it more important for the region to pursue this project now rather than other projects in the Plan?

**The current Franklin County Comprehensive Plan was last updated in 2007; an update is currently underway and will include an updated list and mapping of priority projects throughout the County. Nonetheless, this intersection has been a priority of the County for some time and was a Smart Scale application in previous years. The County will be including this as a priority project in the next Comprehensive Plan update. Other projects that are listed in the Plan have either been funded in previous Smart Scale rounds, or circumstances have changed, and priorities have shifted. Thus, there is a current focus on Iron Ridge Road and Route 220.**

# Iron Ridge Road and Route 220 in Franklin County SMART SCALE Project 0033-06



### Legend

- Proposed Temp. Const. Easement
- Existing Stormwater Pipe
- Proposed Right of Way/Permanent Easement
- Proposed Stormwater Pipe
- Proposed Full Depth Pavement
- Proposed Mill & Overlay
- Proposed Concrete
- Proposed Grass
- Proposed Paved Ditch
- Proposed Ditch
- Proposed Curb

\* Turning Radii shown accommodate a WB-62

Parcel	R/W (SF)	PDE (SF)	TCE (SF)
1	588	0	0
2	12,138	0	0
3	3,867	0	1,585
4	0	0	2,090
5	456	0	0
6	21,402	0	0
7	508	1,208	0
8	10,313	0	0

SCALE  
0 40 80 120'

Plotted at 1:40

## Agencywide Line Item Revenues and Expenditures

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission

Run Date: 03/07/2024

Period: 7/1/2023 to 2/29/2024

Run Time: 4:29:13 pm

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Code	Description	Budget	Current	YTD	Un/Over	% Bud
<b>Revenues</b>						
40000	ARC	101,506.00	(14,323.85)	35,332.75	66,173.25	34.81 %
40200	FEDERAL - PL	877,275.00	(0.38)	125,289.96	751,985.04	14.28 %
40210	VDOT PL	75,284.00	0.00	15,661.24	59,622.76	20.80 %
40400	VDHCD ALLOCATION	89,971.00	0.00	67,478.00	22,493.00	75.00 %
40410	ROANOKE VALLEY BROADBAND AUTHORIT	1,200.00	0.00	660.00	540.00	55.00 %
40411	HUD CITY OF ROANOKE	85,246.00	0.00	4,880.90	80,365.10	5.73 %
40500	VIRGINIA DEPT EMERGENCY MGMT	63,900.00	0.00	0.00	63,900.00	0.00 %
40570	ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT ADMINISTRATI	84,344.00	0.00	14,344.07	69,999.93	17.01 %
40580	ARP ACT COLLECTIVE RESPONSE	162,594.00	0.00	162,593.97	0.03	100.00 %
40585	SAMHSA	399,941.00	0.00	137,363.43	262,577.57	34.35 %
40590	VOAA CITY OF ROANOKE	500,000.00	0.00	500,000.00	0.00	100.00 %
40600	ALLEGHANY COUNTY	11,707.00	0.00	11,707.00	0.00	100.00 %
40604	WVRIFA	25,000.00	0.00	12,500.00	12,500.00	50.00 %
40699	BEDFORD COUNTY	240.00	0.00	240.00	0.00	100.00 %
40700	BOTETOURT COUNTY	36,491.00	0.00	36,491.00	0.00	100.00 %
40800	CLIFTON FORGE	3,444.00	0.00	3,444.00	0.00	100.00 %
40900	COVINGTON	5,729.00	0.00	5,729.00	0.00	100.00 %
41000	CRAIG COUNTY	4,885.00	0.00	4,885.00	0.00	100.00 %
41010	FRANKLIN COUNTY	49,476.00	0.00	49,476.00	0.00	100.00 %
41020	MONTGOMERY COUNTY	201.00	0.00	201.00	0.00	100.00 %
41100	CITY OF ROANOKE	139,065.75	0.00	139,065.77	(0.02)	100.00 %
41200	ROANOKE COUNTY	111,738.90	0.00	111,738.90	0.00	100.00 %
41210	ROCKY MOUNT	4,712.00	0.00	4,712.00	0.00	100.00 %
41300	SALEM	31,926.22	0.00	31,926.22	0.00	100.00 %
41400	VINTON	10,344.13	0.00	10,344.13	0.00	100.00 %
41500	VDRPT/FTA - TRANSIT	171,101.00	0.00	37,103.47	133,997.53	21.69 %
41600	VDRPT/STATE TRANSIT	21,388.00	0.00	4,638.43	16,749.57	21.69 %
41800	VDOT/SPR RURAL TRANSP	58,000.00	0.00	16,427.40	41,572.60	28.32 %
41900	VDRPT - RIDESHARE	171,942.00	17,226.89	52,471.33	119,470.67	30.52 %
41902	VDRPT	60,820.00	0.00	15,129.63	45,690.37	24.88 %
41950	VIRGINIA HOUSING	734,299.00	0.00	0.00	734,299.00	0.00 %
42100	DEPT ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY	58,000.00	0.00	30,561.16	27,438.84	52.69 %
42150	VIRGINIA ENVIRONMENTAL ENDOWMENT	33,076.00	0.55	10,814.87	22,261.13	32.70 %
42400	SOUTHEAST CRESENT REGIONAL COMMISS	15,747.00	0.00	0.00	15,747.00	0.00 %
43000	INTEREST INCOME	40,000.00	5,952.43	40,425.92	(425.92)	101.06 %
43200	MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	2,500.00	76.00	2,249.54	250.46	89.98 %
43250	SPONSORSHIPS	2,000.00	0.00	1,818.50	181.50	90.93 %
43707	SERDI	1,538.00	769.00	1,538.00	0.00	100.00 %
44700	DEPT OF FORESTRY	36,860.00	0.00	0.00	36,860.00	0.00 %
49000	CARRYOVER FUNDS	39,441.00	0.00	39,440.57	0.43	100.00 %
	<b>Revenues</b>	<b>4,322,933.00</b>	<b>9,700.64</b>	<b>1,738,683.16</b>	<b>2,584,249.84</b>	<b>40.22 %</b>
<b>Expenses</b>						
50000	SALARIES	1,049,557.00	80,954.17	606,519.71	443,037.29	57.79 %
50500	FRINGE BENEFITS	319,691.00	22,914.20	175,699.48	143,991.52	54.96 %
52000	INSURANCE	5,500.00	371.89	3,419.33	2,080.67	62.17 %
52100	SUPPLIES	29,195.00	906.90	7,570.40	21,624.60	25.93 %
52200	POSTAGE	2,050.00	0.00	714.65	1,335.35	34.86 %
52300	SUBSCRIPTIONS	3,170.00	62.86	428.30	2,741.70	13.51 %
52400	DUES	14,880.00	633.32	12,730.33	2,149.67	85.55 %

## Agencywide Line Item Revenues and Expenditures

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission  
 Period: 7/1/2023 to 2/29/2024

Run Date: 03/07/2024  
 Run Time: 4:29:13 pm  
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Code	Description	Budget	Current	YTD	Un/Over	% Bud
52500	PRINTING	2,000.00	0.00	1,403.74	596.26	70.19 %
52700	TRAINING	13,150.00	525.00	5,642.00	7,508.00	42.90 %
52800	TELEPHONE & INTERNET	8,545.00	613.60	4,968.50	3,576.50	58.15 %
52900	TRAVEL	50,321.00	356.74	5,046.21	45,274.79	10.03 %
53000	AUDIT FEES	16,000.00	0.00	15,700.00	300.00	98.13 %
53200	CONFERENCES	11,325.00	0.00	2,386.02	8,938.98	21.07 %
53300	FURNITURE & EQUIPMENT	7,000.00	134.48	778.25	6,221.75	11.12 %
53400	DEPRECIATION F & E	500.00	0.00	0.00	500.00	0.00 %
53500	MAIN F & E	10,000.00	957.56	6,083.98	3,916.02	60.84 %
53600	MISCELLANEOUS	2,100.00	0.00	393.84	1,706.16	18.75 %
53650	BANK FEES	1,100.00	88.25	681.50	418.50	61.95 %
53700	ADVERTISING	61,565.00	44.56	5,619.55	55,945.45	9.13 %
53800	RECRUITMENT	1,000.00	295.00	4,323.97	(3,323.97)	432.40 %
53900	MEETINGS	11,050.00	524.90	11,290.60	(240.60)	102.18 %
54100	LEGAL FEES	8,250.00	0.00	599.76	7,650.24	7.27 %
54400	CONTRACT SERVICES	1,838,950.00	44,177.08	130,317.66	1,708,632.34	7.09 %
54900	COMPUTER SERVICES	37,147.00	1,547.50	18,183.69	18,963.31	48.95 %
55000	DEPRECIATION COMP EQUIPT	1,050.00	86.43	691.44	358.56	65.85 %
55001	AMORTIZATION SOFTWARE	0.00	476.19	476.19	(476.19)	0.00 %
55200	UTILITIES	14,000.00	651.31	9,408.89	4,591.11	67.21 %
55300	LEASE PAYMENTS	5,000.00	1,180.56	3,148.16	1,851.84	62.96 %
55800	BUILDING MAINTENANCE	36,928.00	1,144.00	14,095.75	22,832.25	38.17 %
56000	DEPRECIATION BUILDING	14,000.00	792.73	6,168.27	7,831.73	44.06 %
90000	OPERATING RESERVE	747,909.00	0.00	0.00	747,909.00	0.00 %
	<b>Expenses</b>	<b>4,322,933.00</b>	<b>159,439.23</b>	<b>1,054,490.17</b>	<b>3,268,442.83</b>	<b>24.39 %</b>
	<b>Agency Balance</b>	<b>0.00</b>	<b>(149,738.59)</b>	<b>684,192.99</b>		



## Balance Sheet

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission  
 Period From : 7/1/2023 to 2/29/2024

Run Date: 3/7/24  
 Run Time: 4:28:52 pm

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**Assets:**

10000	CASH IN BANK TRUIST (OLD BB&T )	290,163.39
10050	LGIP INVESTMENT	1,575,537.31
10300	PETTY CASH	150.00
10700	A/R GRANTORS	114,278.50
10800	A/R CONTRACTS	1,538.00
10900	PREPAID EXPENSES	6,785.02
11000	PREPAID INSURANCE	17,739.69
11600	PREPAID PHYSICAL ASSETS	628,262.89
11700	PHYSICAL ASSETS, ACCUM DEP	(388,601.47)
12200	PREPAID COMPUTER EQUIPT	5,185.96
12250	PREPAID SOFTWARE	40,000.00
12251	SOFTWARE, ACC AMORTIZATION	(476.19)
12300	COMPUTER EQUIPT, ACC DEP	(1,987.89)
12500	PREPAID TELEPHONE EQUIPT	1,591.00
12600	TELEPHONE EQUIPT, ACC DEP	(1,591.00)
12800	PREPAID DUES	4,750.06
	<b>Total Assets:</b>	<b>2,293,325.27</b>

**Liabilities:**

20000	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE	58,552.94
20100	ACCOUNTS PAYABLE1	6,772.22
20300	ACCRUED ANNUAL LEAVE	30,014.60
20400	FICA WITHHELD	3,168.59
20500	FEDERAL TAX WITHHELD	2,804.28
20600	STATE TAX WITHHELD	1,543.84
20700	RETIREMENT	4,844.59
20800	DEFERRED REVENUE	4,905.00
21200	BUILDING FUND	15,000.00
	<b>Total Liabilities:</b>	<b>127,606.06</b>

**Projects**

30140	EDA	(34,493.55)
30210	TREE CANOPY	(24,665.98)
30300	INDUSTRIAL FACILITY AUTHORITY	(801.95)
30305	VIRGINIA ENVIRONMENTAL ENDOWMENT	(1,017.18)
30306	CHESAPEAKE BAY	(6,349.30)
30307	VIRGINIA HOUSING	72,746.79
30500	RURAL TRANSPORTATION	(10,957.89)
30600	PL TRANSPORTATION	(36,575.44)
30800	VDRPT/FTA TRANSPORTATION	(15,883.47)
30880	HUD COMMUNITY RESOURCES-CDBG	(1,610.24)
30900	RIDESOLUTIONS	(17,418.64)
30901	REGIONAL BIKE COORDINATION	12,856.47
30902	COMMUTER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM STRATEGIC PLAN	(9,411.65)
30903	ROANOKE RIVER BLUEWAY	42,233.08
30905	BROADBAND	102.74

## Balance Sheet

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission  
 Period From : 7/1/2023 to 2/29/2024

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30906	SERDI	1,289.99
31700	ROANOKE VALLEY COLLECTIVE RESPONSE	106,203.49
31710	SAMHSA FUNDING	(46,950.54)
31720	VIRGINIA OPIOID ABATEMENT AUTHORITY	478,760.68
35106	ARC 2023	(21,342.31)
35150	SOUTHEAST CRESENT	(25.56)
37200	HAZARD MITIGATION	(3,366.14)
37605	COMMUTER OPERATING ASSISTANCE	(1,333.32)
39000	GENERAL OPERATING FUND	202,202.91
39400	UNRESTRICTED FUND BALANCE & INVEST CA	1,470,125.65
	<b>Total Projects</b>	<b>2,154,318.64</b>
	<b>Total Liabilities and Projects</b>	<b>2,281,924.70</b>
	<b>Net Difference to be Reconciled</b>	<b>11,400.57</b>
	<b>Total Adjustment</b>	<b>11,400.57</b>
	<b>Unreconciled Balance</b>	<b>0.00</b>

### Reconciling Items .....

(1)	Paid Salaries are Timesheets show Difference	595,119.12 595,119.12 0.00
(2)	Leave accrued this year	11,400.59
(3)	Fringe Pool is Fringe allocated Difference	175,699.50 175,699.48 (0.02)
(4)	Indirect Pool is Indirect Allocated Difference	195,385.84 195,385.84 0.00
	<b>Total adjustments</b>	<b>11,400.57</b>

# URBAN TREE CANOPY ASSESSMENT

ROANOKE VALLEY, VIRGINIA  
FEBRUARY | 2024

The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC) and the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOF) provided funding for this project.





ROANOKE VALLEY, VIRGINIA

# TREE CANOPY ASSESSMENT



To be without trees would, in the most literal way, to be without our roots.

-RICHARD MABEY



**PREPARED BY**

PlanIT Geo, Inc., Arvada, Colorado

**PREPARED FOR**

The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC)

**COMPLETED**

February 2024

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4.....	IDENTIFYING POSSIBLE PLANTING AREAS AND UNSUITABLE AREAS FOR PLANTING
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**132,569**  
**ACRES OF CANOPY**

**67%**  
**OF ROANOKE VALLEY'S**  
**LAND AREA WAS**  
**COVERED WITH**  
**CANOPY IN 2021**

## EXECUTIVE

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# SUMMARY

### BACKGROUND OF THIS ANALYSIS

Urban tree canopies are in perpetual motion. New tree plantings and existing tree growth add canopy, while development, natural disasters, disease, and pests take it away. These changes can be difficult to gauge from the ground, but tree canopy change can be precisely tracked by analyzing aerial imagery from the past and present. This assessment evaluated urban tree canopy (UTC) and possible planting area (PPA) in 2021 within the Roanoke Valley Region, located in the heart of western Virginia's Blue Ridge Mountains. This metropolitan area is one of the largest urban expanses in Virginia, home to over 300,000 residents.

The Roanoke Valley boundary encompasses four distinct jurisdictions - the City of Roanoke, Roanoke County, the City of Salem, and the Town of Vinton. Each municipality has been individually recognized as a Tree City member for many years, Roanoke City for 28 years, Roanoke County for 25 years, Salem City for 24 years, and Town of Vinton for 21 years. This award shows their commitment to their trees and natural environment. The urban forest is an invaluable asset for the Roanoke Valley Region that encompasses these jurisdictions, providing residents and visitors

with meaningful, quantifiable environmental, social, and economic benefits. Individual Roanoke Valley jurisdictions and their stakeholders can utilize the results of this assessment by creating or amending canopy goals, policies, ordinances, management practices, and priorities. This assessment serves as a strategic compass for future planning efforts by highlighting areas where current efforts work well and where improvement is needed.

### PROJECT METHODOLOGY

Based on 2021 imagery from the USDA's National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP), the results provide a near-current look at the land cover in Roanoke Valley. They will allow the area to revise existing and develop new strategies to protect and expand the urban forest. This study utilized modern machine learning techniques to create reproducible land cover data and allow a more uniform comparison in future tree canopy and land cover assessments. **This assessment report will follow the standards established by the US Forest Service and report tree canopy metrics as a percentage of the land area (excluding water bodies) unless stated otherwise.**

### ROANOKE VALLEY'S URBAN FOREST

In 2021, Roanoke Valley's boundary (which includes Roanoke County, the City of Roanoke, the City of Salem, and the Town of Vinton), excluding bodies of water, had 67% of its land covered with urban tree canopy and 19% available for potential planting. The remaining 14% of the County's land area was deemed unsuitable for planting without substantial land modification. Roanoke Valley,

including water bodies, was categorized by 67% tree canopy, 20% other vegetation, 11% impervious surfaces, and less than 1% each of soil/dry vegetation, water, and shrubs.

Roanoke County covers 80% of the Roanoke Valley area and 90% of the total tree coverage. Of the unified land use types, Single Family Residential and Multi-Family residential accounts for 36% of the overall UTC and 60% of the overall PPA. Out of 155 census block groups, 17 had tree canopy percentages above the Roanoke Valley average of 67%. However, these 17 block groups account for almost 70% of the total land area.

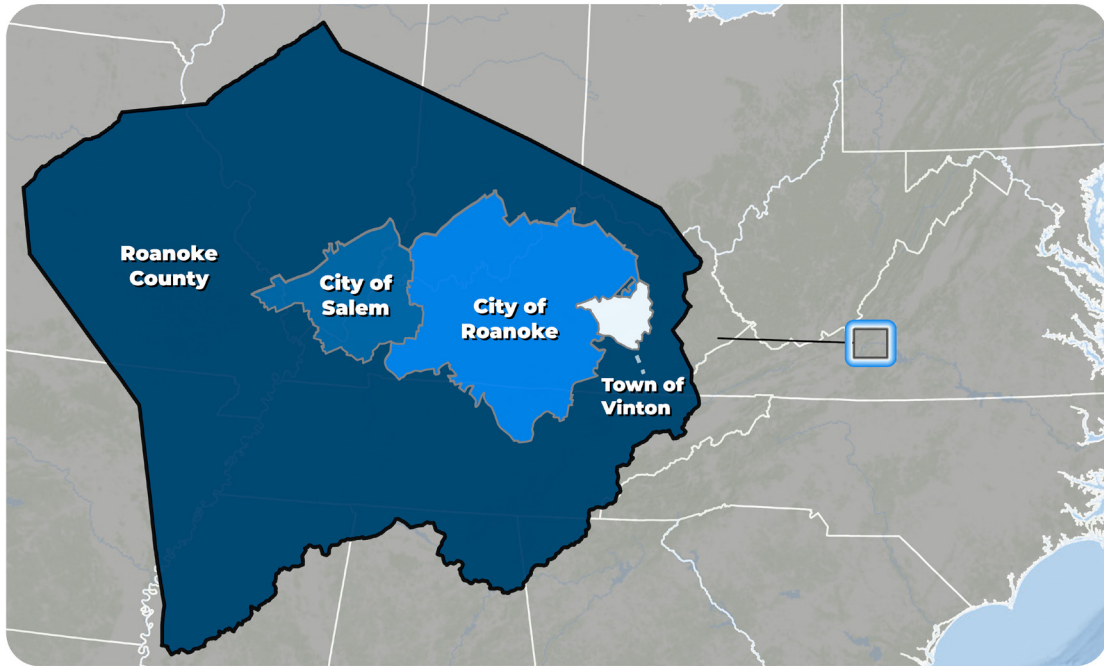


Figure 1. The Roanoke Valley Region occupies approximately 309 square miles in the Blue Ridge Mountains of western Virginia.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

Jurisdictions and stakeholders should use this analysis to develop a strategy to protect and expand Roanoke Valley's urban forest. This study revealed that the Roanoke Valley Region contains 132,569 acres of tree canopy. However, together the jurisdictions within Roanoke Valley have a chance to boost tree coverage by nearly a third of its current level, potentially reaching 86% canopy cover. These improvements are made possible by the Region's 37,643 acres of land suitable for planting more trees on public and private properties. Through partnerships, education, and outreach programs to private landowners, Roanoke Valley and its various stakeholders can aim to plant native trees to provide shade in urban areas and increase environmental equity. The Roanoke Valley Region has an exciting opportunity to expand the quality and quantity of its current tree canopy to benefit future generations.

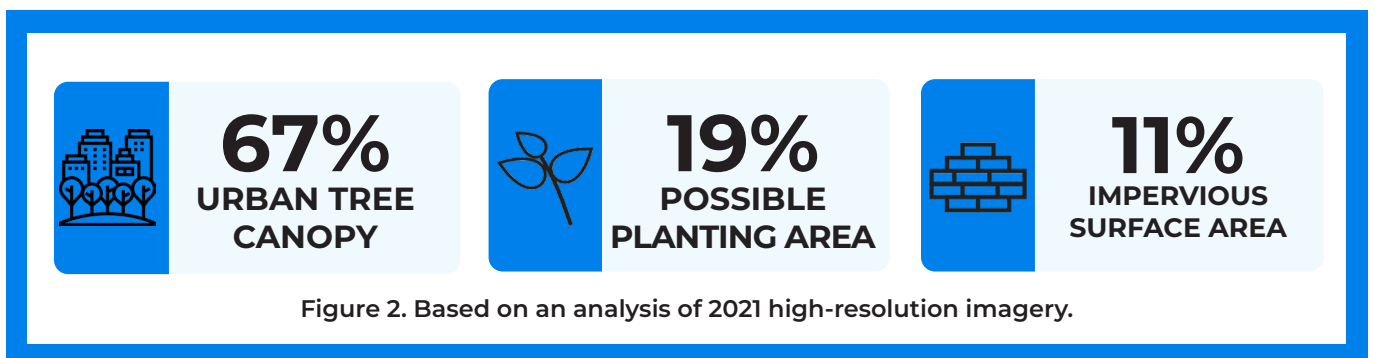


Figure 2. Based on an analysis of 2021 high-resolution imagery.

# PROJECT

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# METHODOLOGY

This study mapped land cover, urban tree canopy, and possible planting areas using the sources and methods described below. These data sets provide the foundation for the metrics reported at the selected geographic assessment scales.

## DATA SOURCES

This assessment utilized high-resolution (60-centimeter) multi-spectral imagery from the U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agriculture Imagery Program (NAIP), collected in 2021. The study used NAIP imagery to derive the land cover data and classify all types of land cover described below. Additionally, LiDAR was used to train the AI classification model used in this analysis.

## MAPPING LAND COVER

The land cover data set is the most fundamental component of a tree canopy assessment. Tree canopy and land cover data from the EarthDefine US Tree Map (<https://www.earthdefine.com/treemap/>) provided a six-class land cover data set. EarthDefine produces the US Tree Map using a machine-learning technique to extract tree canopy cover and other land cover types from the latest 2021 NAIP imagery. Figure 3 below describes the six land cover classes identified by this process.



**Figure 3.** This study identified six (6) unique land cover classes within the 2021 assessment imagery: tree canopy, shrubs, other vegetation, bare soil and dry vegetation, impervious surfaces, and water.



**IDENTIFYING POSSIBLE PLANTING AREAS AND UNSUITABLE AREAS FOR PLANTING**

In addition to quantifying Roanoke Valley’s existing tree canopy cover, the methods of this study also identified possible planting areas (PPA) for new trees by analyzing all non-canopy areas and reclassifying them as either PPA or areas otherwise unsuitable for planting. The process derived PPA from shrubs and other vegetation land cover classes. Unsuitable areas, or areas where it was not feasible to plant trees (e.g., recreation fields, utility corridors, landfills, airports, wastewater treatment areas, golf courses, etc.), were manually delineated and overlaid with the existing land cover data set (Figure 4). This report describes the final classifications as PPA Vegetation, Unsuitable Impervious, Unsuitable Vegetation, Unsuitable Soil, and Water.

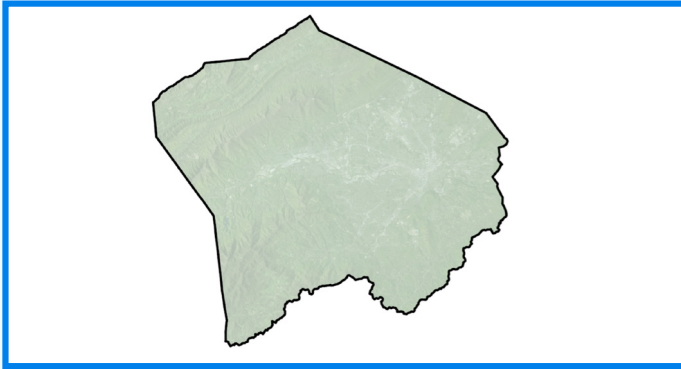


Figure 4. The study identified vegetated areas where it would be feasible for tree plantings but undesirable based on their current usage (left) in the data as “Unsuitable” (right).



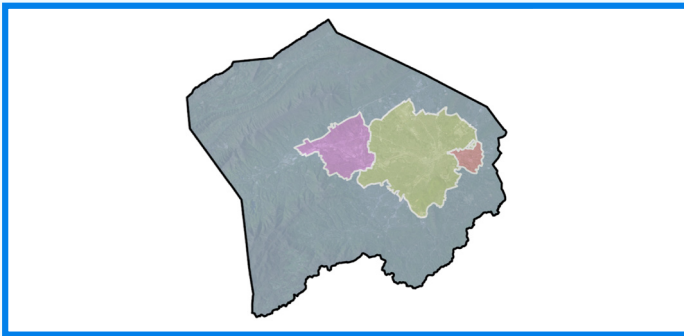
## DEFINING ASSESSMENT LEVELS

Urban tree canopy and other associated metrics were tabulated across several geographic boundaries to inform Roanoke Valley and its stakeholders best. These assessment levels include the **(1) Roanoke Valley Boundary (AOI), (4) jurisdictions, (4) floodplains summarized by jurisdictions, (8) unified land use types, and (155) census block groups.**



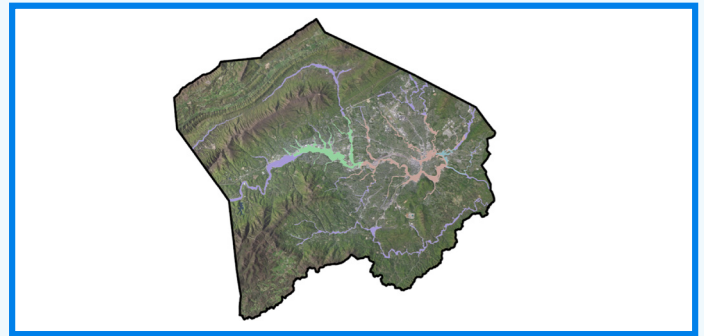
### Roanoke Valley (AOI)

The Area of Interest is defined the Roanoke Valley Region boundary that encompasses the jurisdictions of Roanoke County, the City of Roanoke, the City of Salem, and the Town of Vinton. It is the one (1) main AOI over which all metrics are summarized.



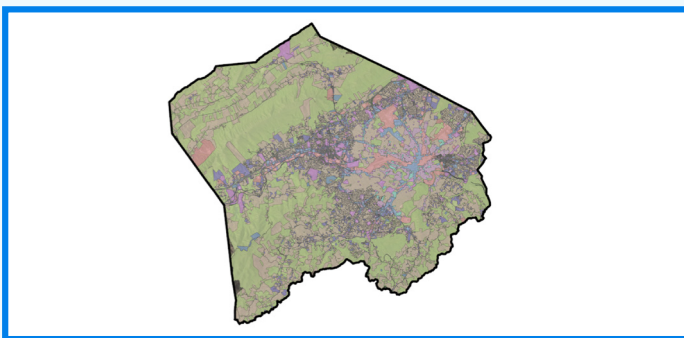
### Jurisdictions

Four (4) jurisdictions were assessed to understand how urban forest metrics differ under different management authorities within Roanoke Valley.



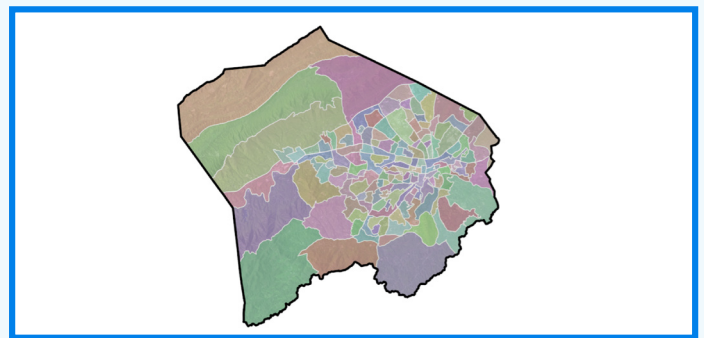
### Floodplains by Jurisdictions

Because trees play an important role in stormwater and flood management, floodplains and flood hazard areas were assessed for each of the four (4) jurisdictions.



### Unified Land Use

Tree canopy was assessed on eight (8) unified land use types to assess how humans impact our natural surroundings.



### Census Block Groups

One hundred and fifty-five (155) census block groups were assessed to show relationships between canopy and sociodemographic factors, and highlight potential environmental justice issues.

**Figure 5. The tree canopy study explored five (5) distinct geographic boundaries in this analysis: Roanoke Valley Boundary (AOI), jurisdictions, floodplain by jurisdiction, unified land use types, and census block groups.**

# STATE OF THE CANOPY AND ———— KEY FINDINGS

Decision-makers of each jurisdiction should use the results of this study to design a strategic approach to identifying existing canopy and future planting areas. Land cover data and maps presented below are based on the assessment’s entire AOI (Roanoke Valley Region). The area includes six land cover classes: tree canopy (over impervious and pervious surfaces), shrub/scrub, soil and dry vegetation, other vegetation, impervious surfaces, and water. The Region-wide land cover data below outlines the basic types of land cover classes, including surface water. This land cover data is distinct from the urban tree canopy data, including Potential Planting Areas and unsuitable areas based on land area excluding water bodies (explained in more detail in the following pages).

## ROANOKE VALLEY LAND COVER

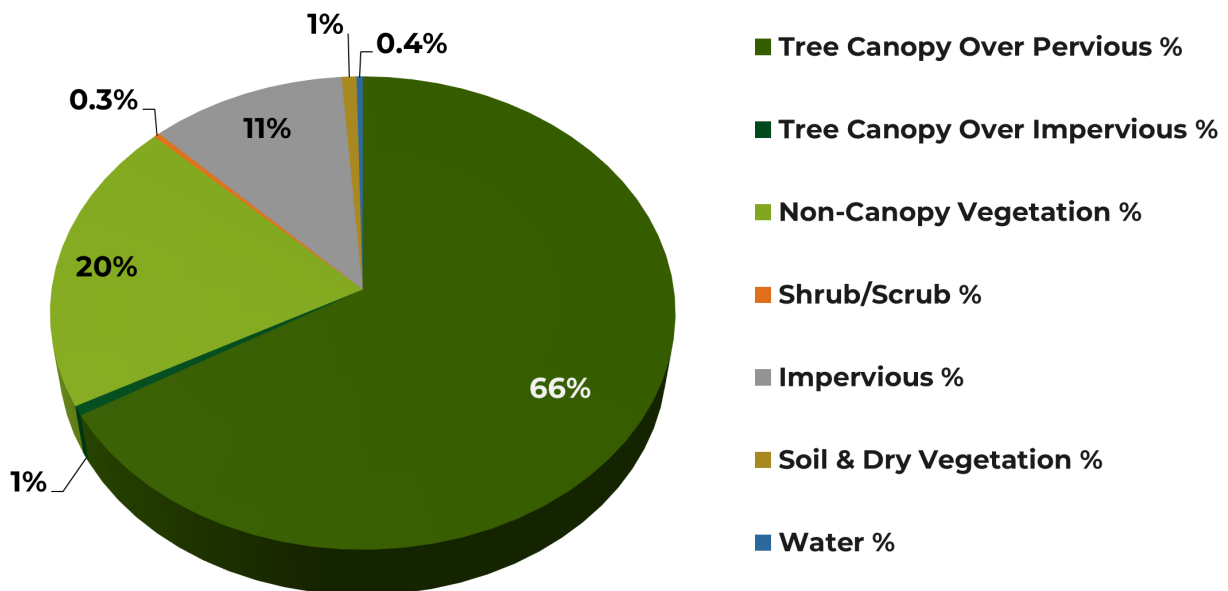


Figure 6. Land cover classification results (percentages based on total area of Roanoke Valley's AOI including water bodies).

Table 1. Land cover classes in acres and percent in Roanoke Valley.

Roanoke Valley, VA	Acres	% of Total
AOI Boundary	197,480	100%
Tree Canopy	132,569	67%
Non-Canopy Vegetation (not including shrubs)	39,815	20%
Impervious	22,069	11%
Soil & Dry Vegetation	1,664	0.8%
Water	694	0.4%
Shrub/Scrubs	668	0.3%

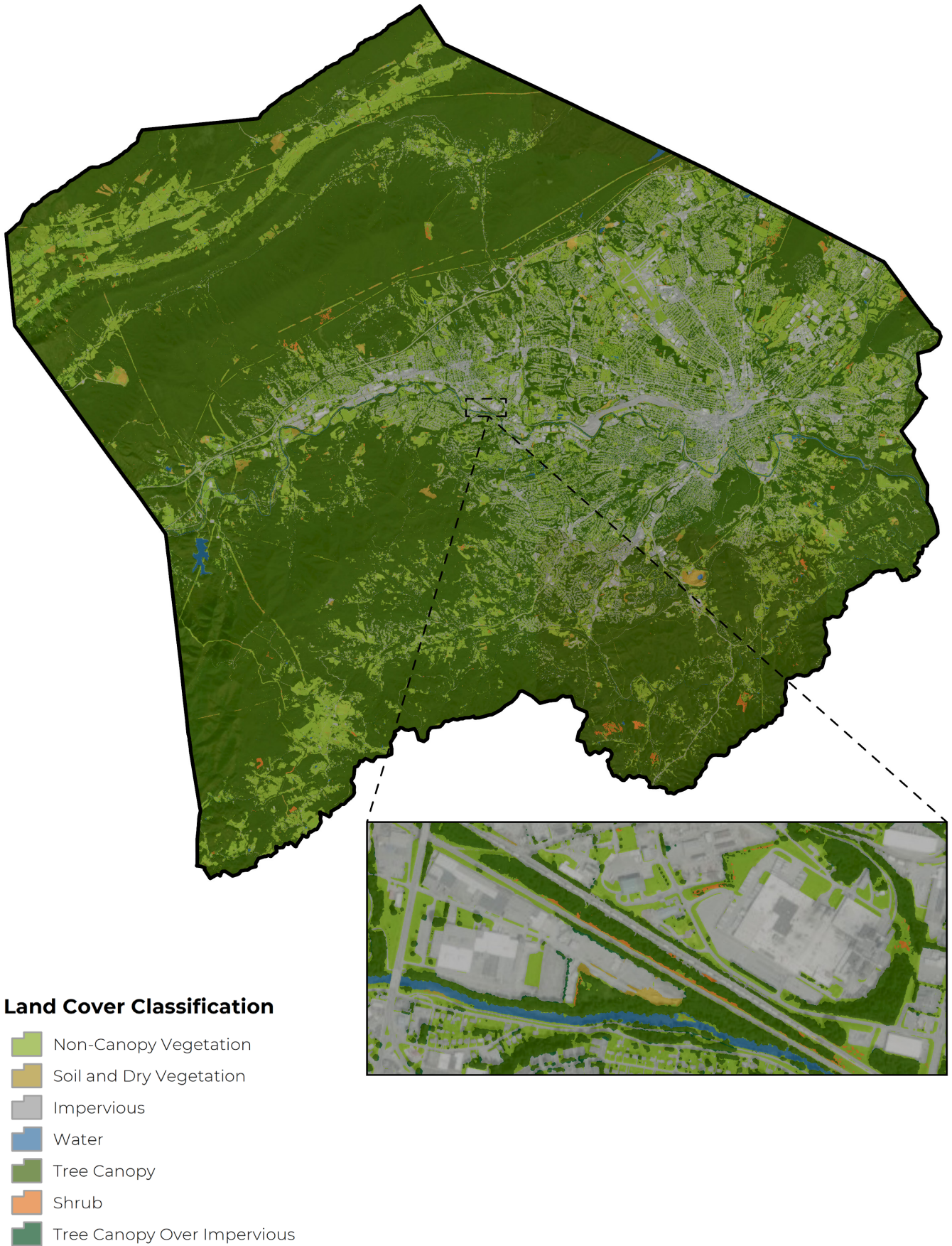


Figure 7. Distribution of land cover classes throughout Roanoke Valley.

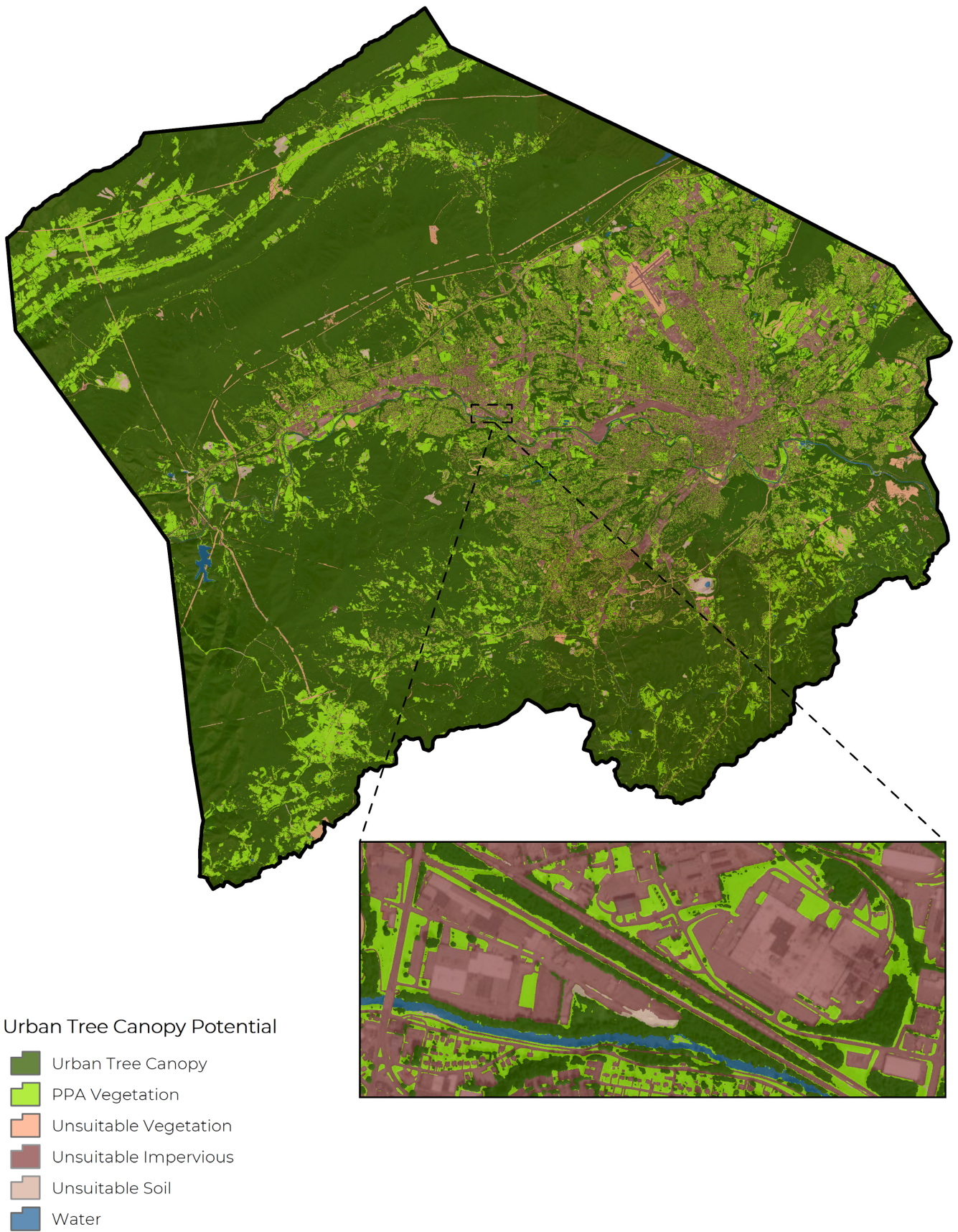


Figure 8. Distribution of UTC, possible planting area, and areas unsuitable for UTC throughout Roanoke Valley.

### REGION-WIDE TREE CANOPY COVER

This urban tree canopy assessment utilized the land cover data mentioned above as a foundation to determine tree canopy cover and possible planting areas (PPA) throughout the Roanoke Valley Region. Results of this study indicate that within the boundary of the entire Region, 132,569 acres are covered with urban tree canopy, making up 67% of the Region’s 196,786 land acres; 37,643 acres are covered with other vegetation where it would be possible to plant trees, making up 19% of the area; and the additional 26,574 acres were considered unsuitable for tree planting, making up 14% of the area. Impervious surfaces comprised 83% (or 22,069 acres) of unsuitable areas.

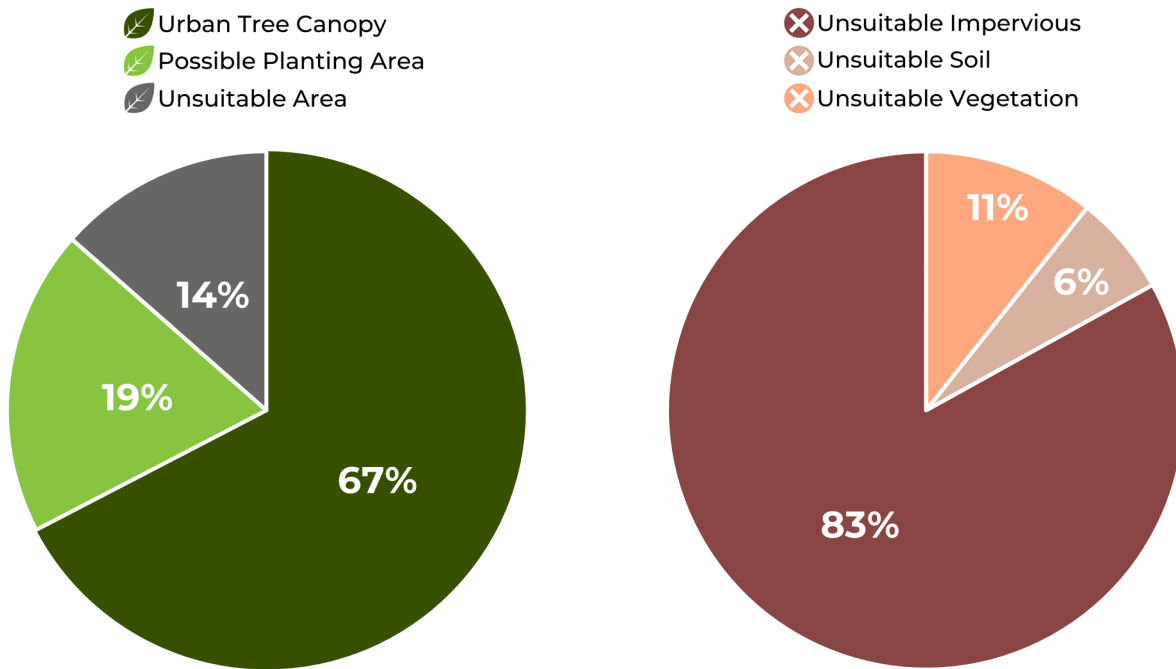


Figure 9. Tree canopy, possible planting area, and area unsuitable for tree canopy (left). The total unsuitable area is broken down by unsuitable soil, unsuitable impervious, and unsuitable vegetation percentages (right) within the Roanoke Valley Region boundary.





### **CANOPY AND IMPERVIOUS SURFACES**

The Region's 132,569 acres of urban tree canopy were further divided into subcategories based on whether the canopy was overhanging pervious or impervious surfaces. Tree canopy overhanging an impervious surface offers many ecological advantages, such as localized cooling through shading and increased storm-water absorption. Results indicated that Roanoke Valley's UTC was predominantly overhanging pervious surfaces at 99%, while just 1% was overhanging impervious surfaces. Planting trees in rights-of-ways, along streets and sidewalks, and in other public areas, as well as strengthening ordinances for planting around parking lots in new developments, can help offset the harmful effects of impervious surfaces.



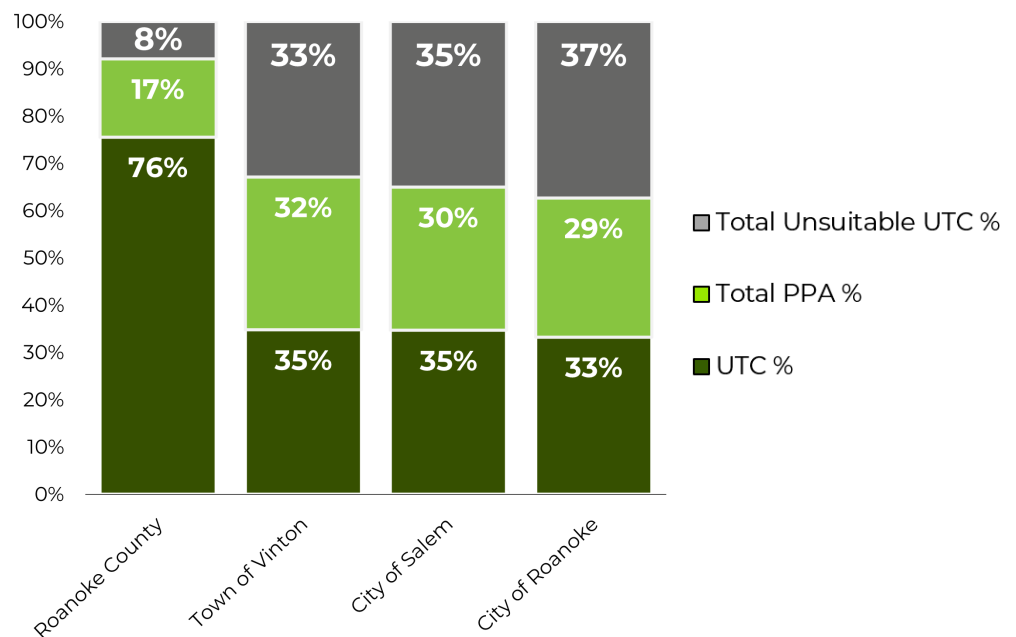
### TREE CANOPY COVER BY JURISDICTIONS

Four jurisdictions within Roanoke Valley have joined forces to oversee the expansion and management of their tree canopy cover, fostering a unified effort towards regional canopy goals. The assessment summarized urban forestry metrics for each of these four jurisdictions. Roanoke County covers the largest land area (80%) within the Roanoke Valley boundary, contributing 90% of the UTC distribution for the Region. Roanoke County, with 76% tree canopy coverage within its boundaries, has the highest tree cover among the jurisdictions. The extensive tree canopy in this area is likely due to its more rural setting compared to other jurisdictions. The County jurisdiction also has the least impervious surface coverage at just 6%, a notable contrast to the second smallest coverage in the Town of Vinton, which is at 32% impervious cover.

The City of Roanoke added the second-largest contribution to the Region's total tree canopy, encompassing 27,425 acres (33% UTC). Additionally, the City of Salem contributed 9,358 acres of UTC (35%), while the Town of Vinton contributed 2,018 acres of UTC (35%).

Because of its large land area, the jurisdiction of Roanoke County offers the most acreage in terms of potential planting area (26,157 acres). However, the County has the smallest proportion of plantable space by percentage within its boundaries, at 17%. The Town of Vinton, the City of Salem, and the City of Roanoke have nearly equal PPA percentages at 32%, 30%, and 29% respectively. Together, these three jurisdictions offer 11,486 acres of PPA, equating to approximately 30% of the overall distribution of PPA in the Region. These three jurisdictions have a nearly equal distribution of UTC, PPA, and impervious surface coverage. By implementing practices that encourage more efficient utilization of plantable space, the Town of Vinton, the City of Salem, and the City of Roanoke can each theoretically double their respective canopy coverages.

**“BY UTILIZING THEIR PPA, THE CITY OF ROANOKE, CITY OF SALEM, AND TOWN OF VINTON HAVE THE POTENTIAL TO THEORETICALLY DOUBLE THEIR INDIVIDUAL UTC PERCENTAGES.”**



**Figure 10. Tree canopy, possible planting area, and area unsuitable for tree canopy by jurisdiction.**



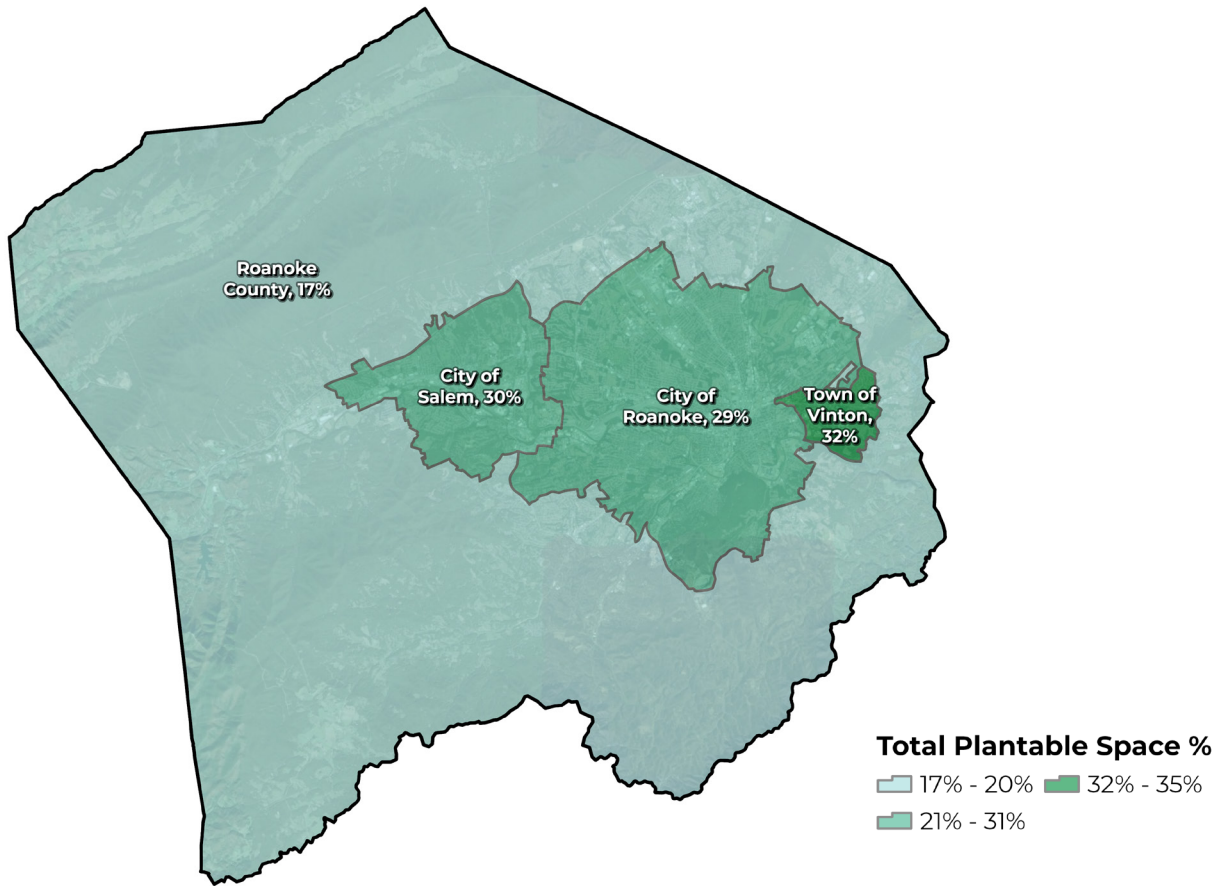


Figure 11. Possible planting area percent by jurisdictions.

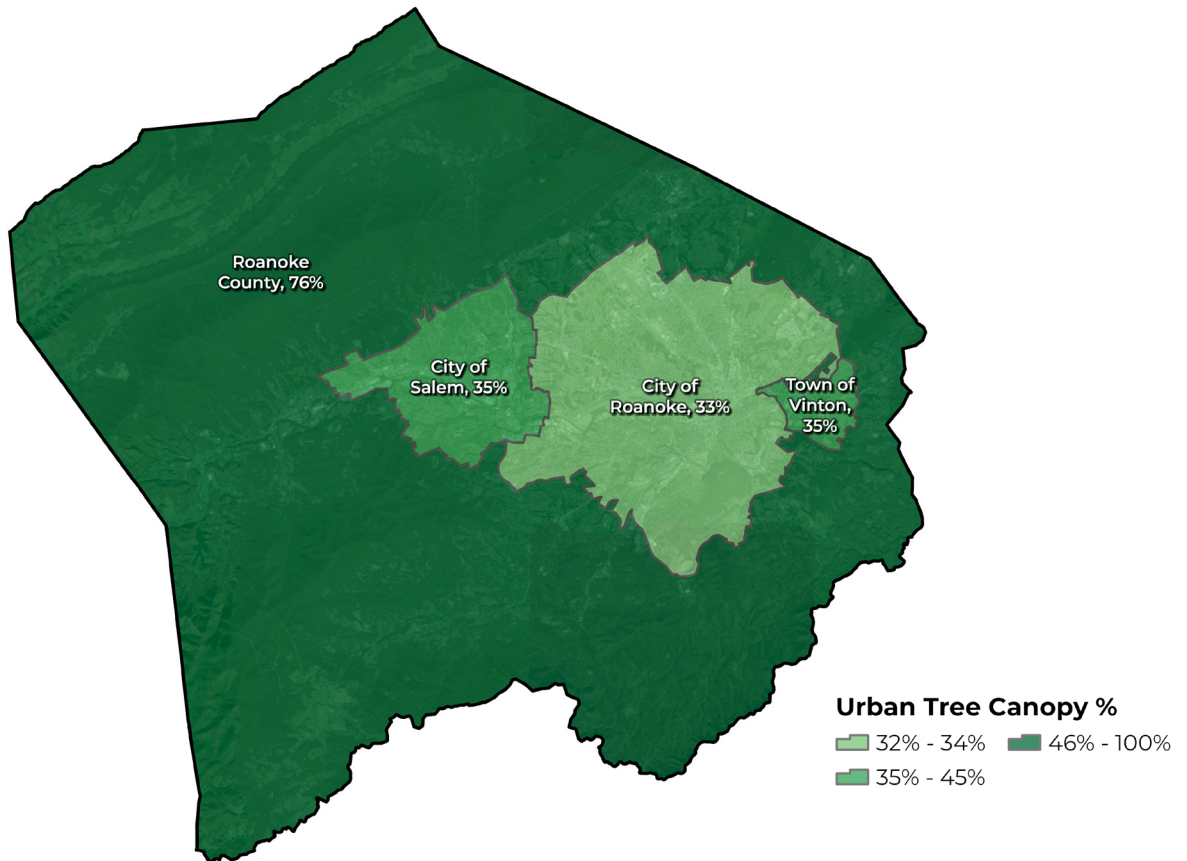


Figure 12. Urban tree canopy percent by jurisdictions.

### TREE CANOPY COVER BY JURISDICTION FLOODPLAINS

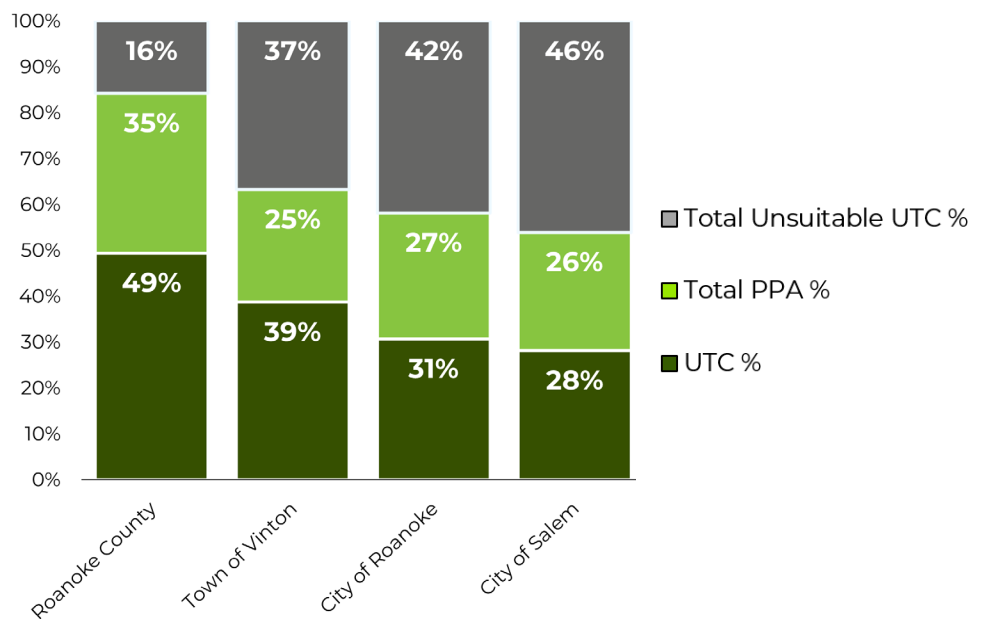
Trees mitigate stormwater runoff, filter pollutants and sediment and, as a result, reduce flooding and enhance water quality. To help target stormwater protection efforts, UTC and PPA were assessed across floodplains and flood hazard areas within each of Roanoke Valley’s jurisdictions. Areas with a high risk of flooding account for 3% of the overall land in Roanoke Valley. The assessment revealed that every jurisdiction had a lower percentage of tree canopy in floodplains than in their broader area, except the Town of Vinton. Vinton’s floodplain UTC stood at 39%, 4% higher than its overall canopy coverage.

Surprisingly, Roanoke County’s UTC experienced a comparative decrease from 76% in the overall jurisdiction boundary to just 49% in floodplain areas. The County jurisdiction’s floodplains had proportionally higher impervious surface coverage of 12% compared to the jurisdiction boundary as a whole (6%).

The City of Roanoke and the City of Salem’s floodplains had a canopy cover that is slightly below their overall jurisdiction UTC levels with 31% and 28%, respectively. It’s worth noting that floodplain areas make up 20% of the City of Salem’s overall area. Still, it has the lowest UTC percent within floodplains and the highest impervious surface coverage (42%).

The City of Salem should prioritize using its 503 acres of PPA, which, in theory, could increase its canopy coverage to 54%. Similarly, Roanoke County, the City of Roanoke, and the Town of Vinton should make use of their respective 1,585 acres (35%), 755 acres (27%), and 68 acres (25%) of PPA. Planting native trees that can withstand long periods of wet soil and occasional flooding can reduce the harmful effects of floods. These trees can absorb large volumes of rainwater, increase soil permeability, and help prevent erosion along riverbanks.

**“AMONG THE FOUR FLOODPLAINS, SALEM'S FLOODPLAIN HAS THE LOWEST UTC PERCENTAGE AND THE HIGHEST IMPERVIOUS SURFACE COVERAGE.”**



**Figure 13. Tree canopy, possible planting area, and area unsuitable for tree canopy by each jurisdiction's floodplain.**

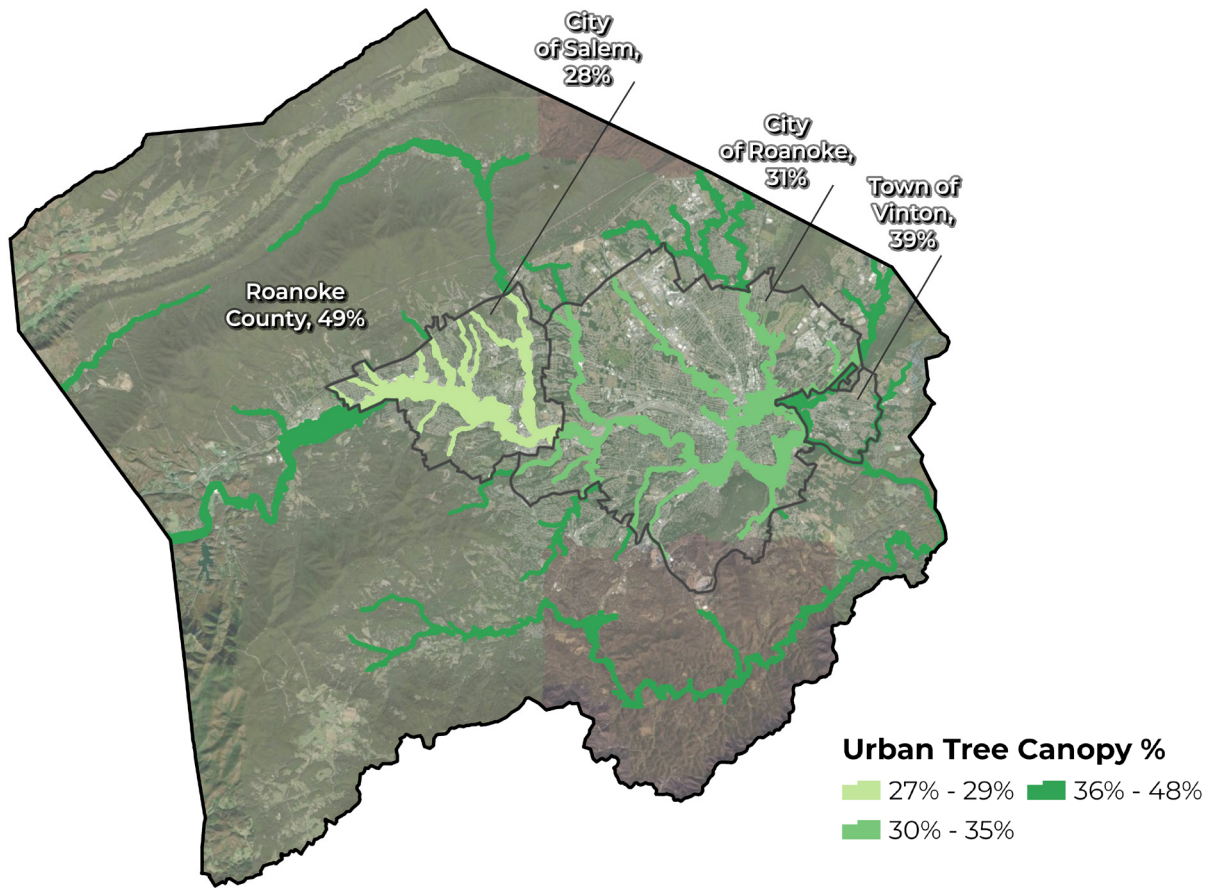


Figure 14. Urban tree canopy percent by each jurisdiction's floodplain.

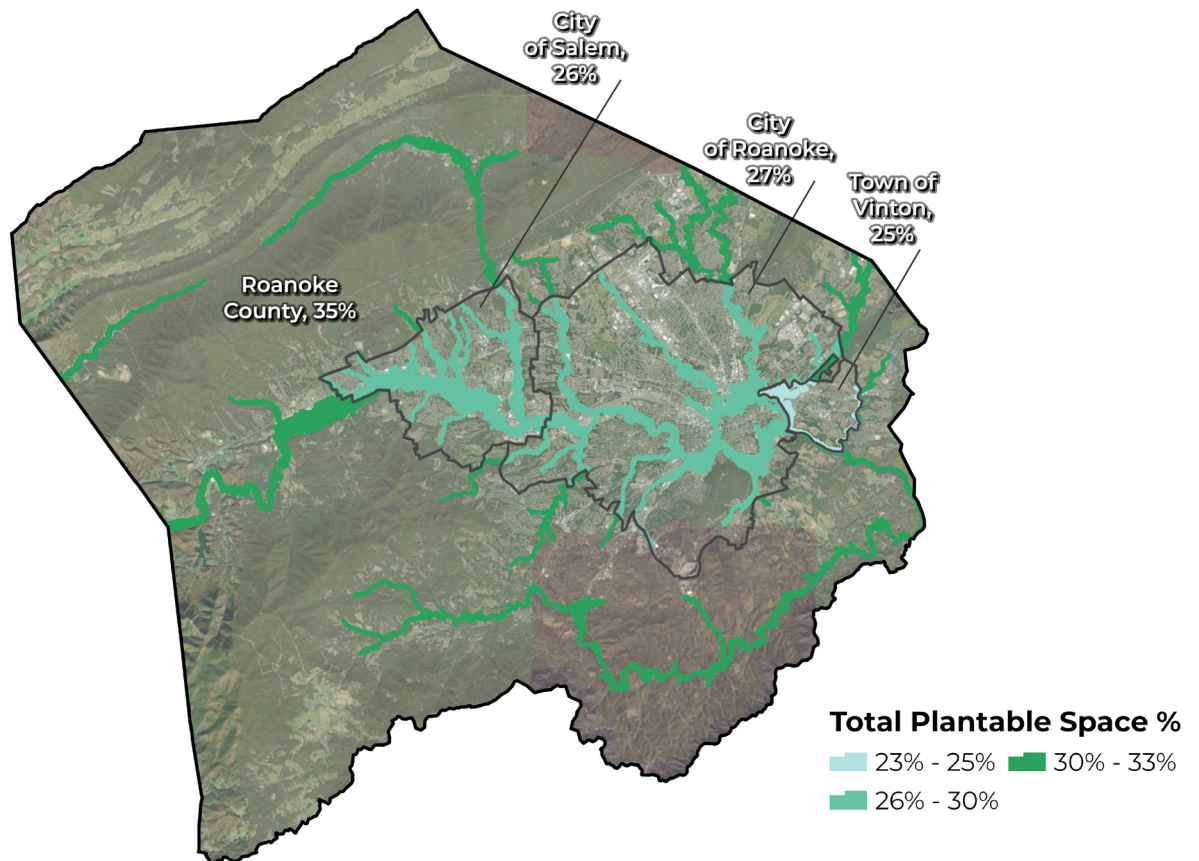


Figure 15. Possible planting area percent by each jurisdiction's floodplain.

### TREE CANOPY COVER BY UNIFIED LAND-USE TYPES

To better understand how humans impact our natural surroundings, tree canopy, and plantable space were assessed across Roanoke Valley's eight unified land use types. Two land use types, Single Family Residential and Forest and Natural Area, together made up 80% of the total unified land use area. They also account for 88% of UTC distribution, with Single Family Residential covering 45,439 acres and Forest and Natural Area spanning 68,093 acres. Unsurprisingly, areas designated as Forest and Natural Areas boasted the highest canopy coverage of all land use types.

Land use areas designated as vacant had the second highest UTC percentage at 73%, which is worth considering if these vacant lots are to be redeveloped. If these lots were to be cleared entirely, over 6,500 acres of tree canopy could be lost (5% of Roanoke Valley's total UTC).

Commercial and Mixed-Use land use areas had the lowest UTC levels at 25% and 26%, respectively. These land use types also had the highest impervious surface coverage (55% and 49%). Together, these land use categories contain 1,200 acres PPA that could be leveraged to mitigate the adverse effects of high impervious surface coverage, such as increased localized temperatures and heightened flooding risk.

Residential areas had the highest percentage of PPA at 32%, and the Institutional land use type had the second highest percentage at 30%. The two residential land use types (Single Family Residential and Multi-Family Residential) contain 60% of Roanoke Valley's entire distribution of PPA. These areas offer ample opportunity to connect with local neighborhoods and community-based organizations to expand canopy coverage, especially on private property.

**“COMBINED, SINGLE FAMILY RESIDENTIAL AND MULTI-FAMILY RESIDENTIAL LAND USE CATEGORIES ACCOUNT FOR 60% OF THE TOTAL DISTRIBUTION OF PPA IN THE ROANOKE VALLEY REGION.”**

Table 2. Urban tree canopy metrics by unified land use types.

Unified Land Use Type	Land Area (Acres)	Distribution of Land Area %	UTC Acres	UTC %	Distribution of UTC %	Total PPA (Acres)	Total PPA %	Distribution of PPA %
Commercial	5,501	3%	1,381	25%	1%	972	18%	3%
Forest and Natural Areas	78,308	42%	68,093	87%	53%	7,265	9%	20%
Industrial	8,282	4%	2,608	31%	2%	1,700	21%	5%
Institutional	7,201	4%	3,157	44%	2%	2,155	30%	6%
Mixed Use	1,227	1%	324	26%	0%	296	24%	1%
Multi-Family Residential	5,656	3%	1,753	31%	1%	1,797	32%	5%
Single Family Residential	72,923	39%	45,439	62%	35%	19,863	27%	55%
Vacant	9,172	5%	6,664	73%	5%	2,002	22%	6%
<b>Totals</b>	<b>*188,868</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>129,418</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>36,049</b>	<b>19%</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Please note that the total area covered by zoning classes is less than the overall area of interest. This discrepancy is because the zoning classifications do not extend fully to the roads or along the right-of-way.

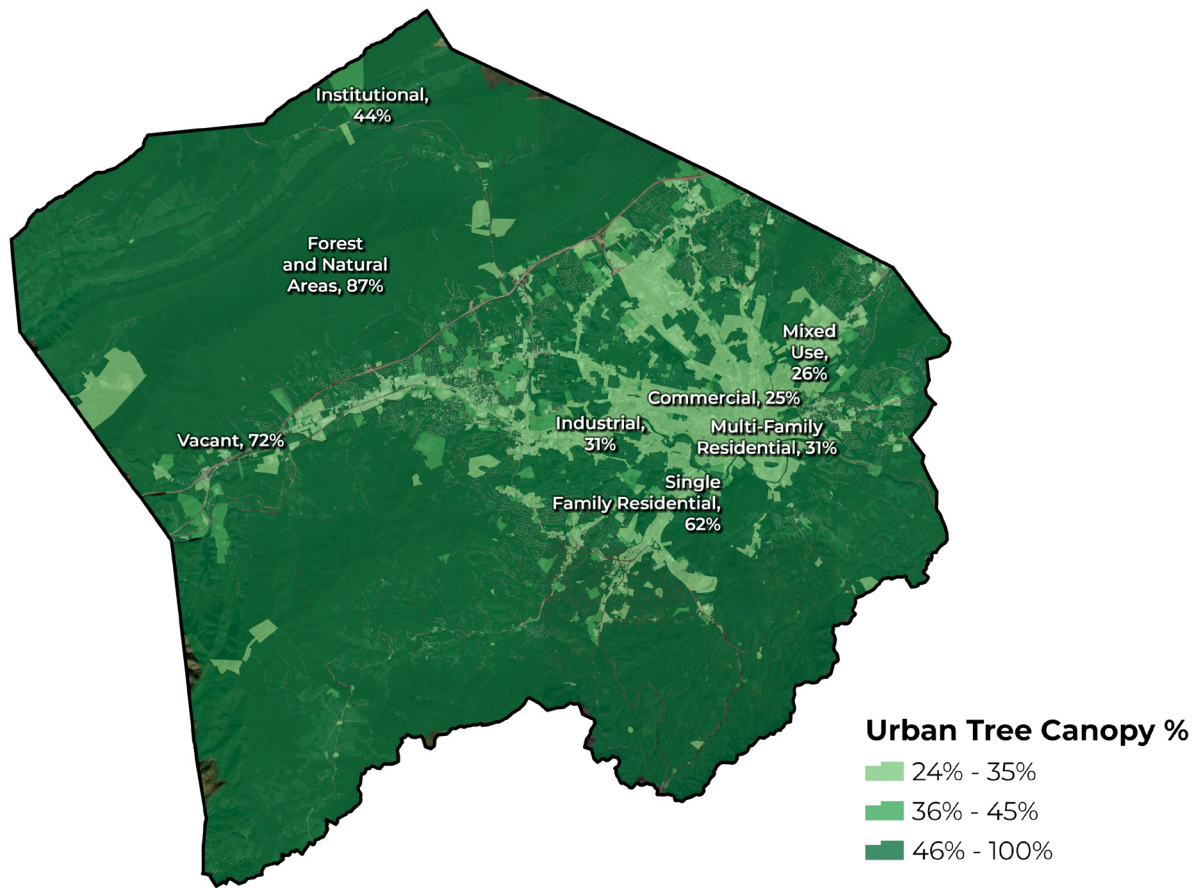


Figure 16. Urban tree canopy percent by unified land use.

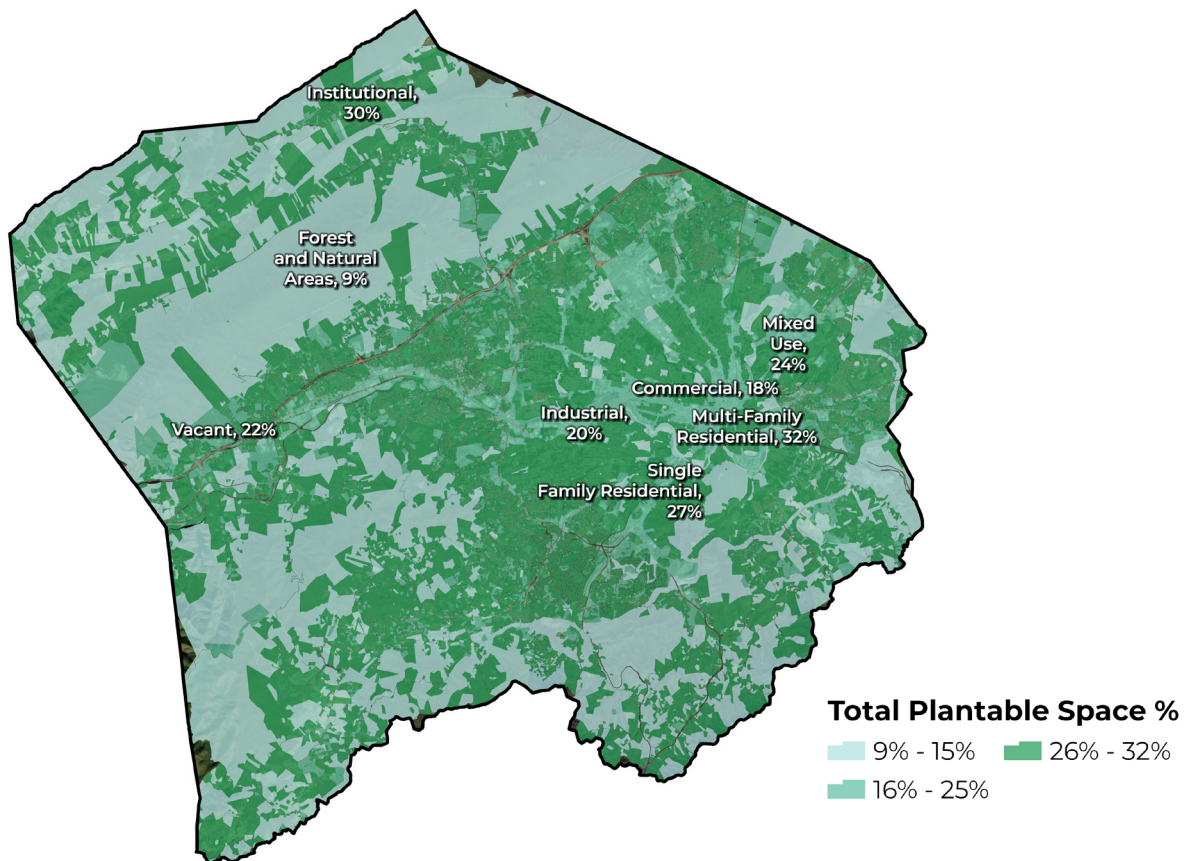


Figure 17. Possible planting area percent by unified land use.

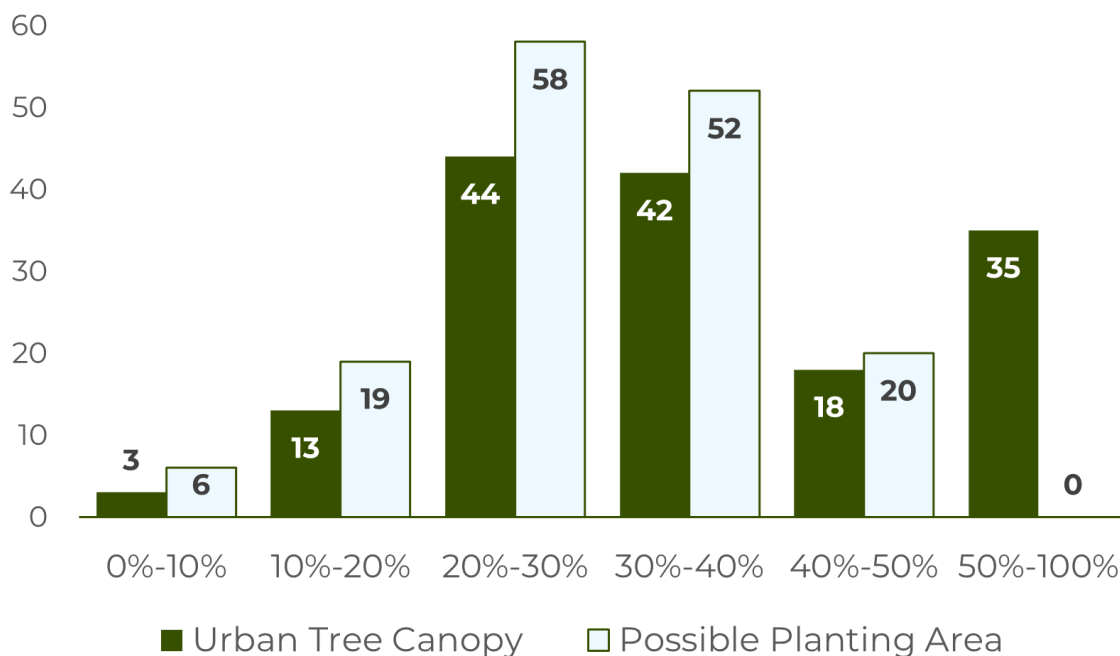
### TREE CANOPY COVER BY CENSUS BLOCK GROUPS

UTC and PPA were also assessed at the census block group level, which is valuable for determining the equitable distribution of tree canopy throughout Roanoke Valley, as the block groups are linked to readily available demographic and socio-economic data. Census block groups contain clusters of census block boundaries. This geographic scale is the second smallest unit of measure at which the U.S. Census publishes statistical data within a state and represents between 600 and 3,000 people. Census block groups with the lowest UTC are found in the City of Roanoke. The further away you get from downtown Roanoke, there is a general trend of increasing canopy coverage among census block groups. The largest census block groups are found in more rural areas of Roanoke County and generally have the highest canopy coverage overall.

The three block groups with the least amount of tree coverage are situated near downtown Roanoke, just south of the Roanoke District railroad. These areas contain landmarks such as the First Baptist Church on Luck Avenue SW, Elmwood Park, Carilion Roanoke Community Hospital, and River's Edge North Park.

Census block groups identified with the most potential for planting trees are primarily located in the northeast part of the Roanoke Valley Region. Out of the 155 census block groups in the Region, 58 have 20% to 30% of their land suitable for planting. There are 52 block groups that have between 30% to 40% of their land available for new trees. However, none of the block groups have more than 50% of their land identified as PPA.

**“IN GENERAL, CENSUS BLOCK GROUPS IN THE NORTHEAST PORTION OF ROANOKE VALLEY HAVE THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF POTENTIAL PLANTING AREA.”**



**Figure 18. Number of census block groups within UTC and PPA ranges.**

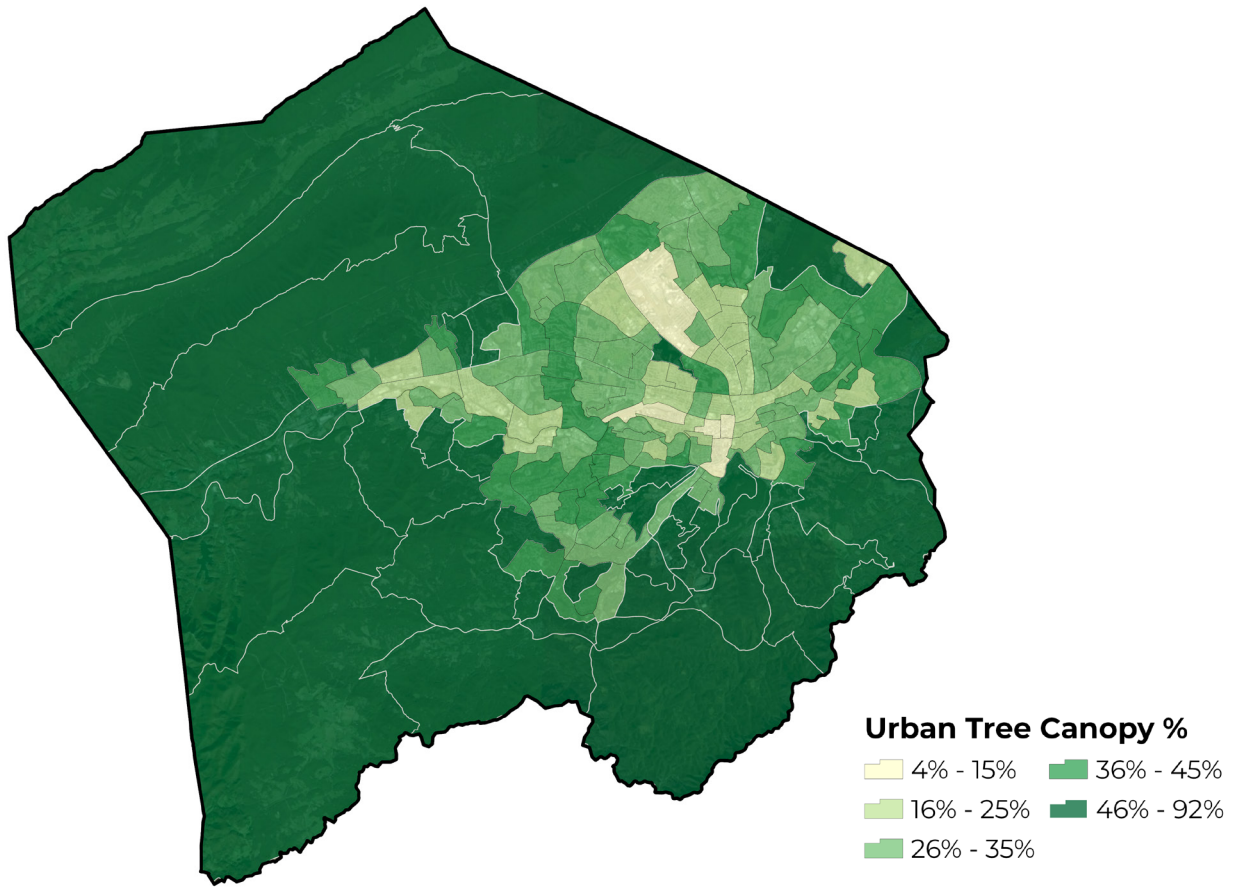


Figure 19. Urban tree canopy percent by census block groups.

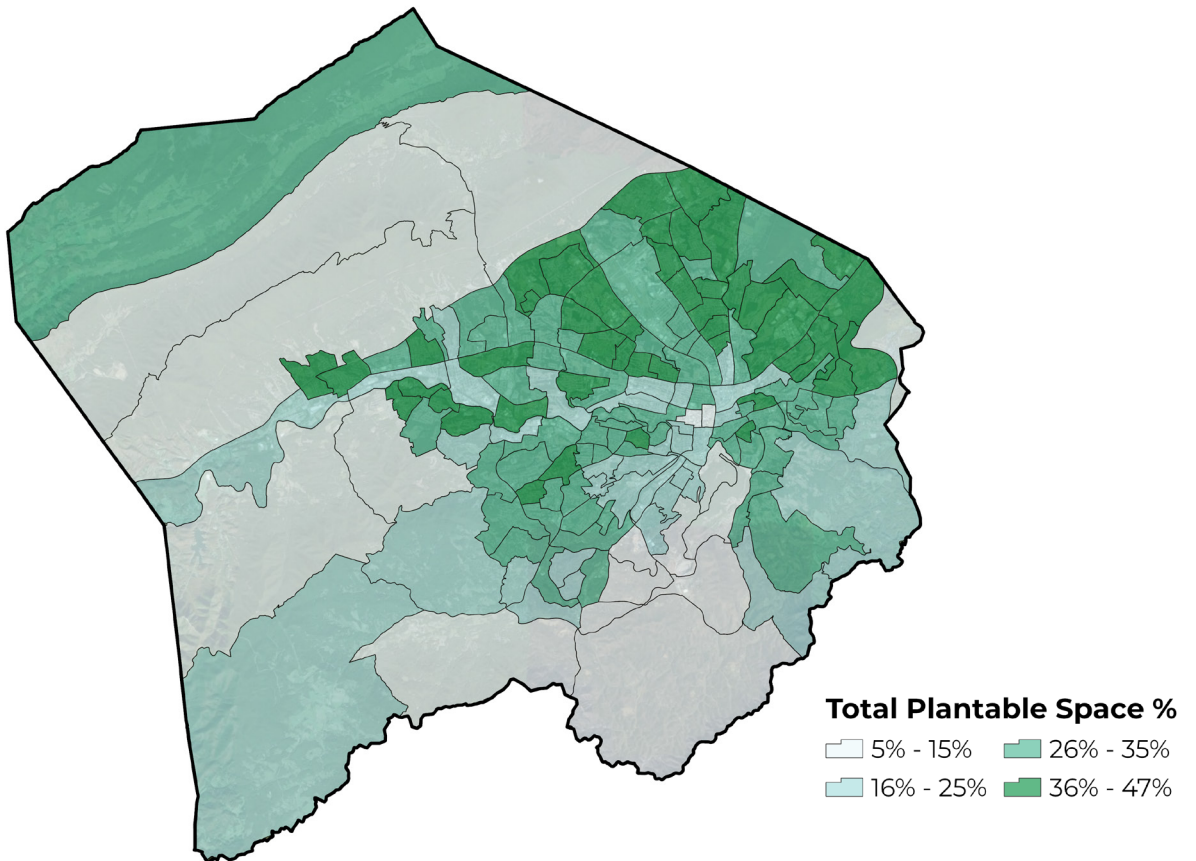


Figure 20. Possible planting area percent by census block groups.

# CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Roanoke Valley has demonstrated that it values its natural resources and wants to maintain a healthy and sustainable urban environment. Recurring assessments of the Region's tree canopy represent essential steps in ensuring the long-term health of its urban forest. The Region can achieve greater canopy cover with proper planning, investment, and care of existing trees. The Region's jurisdictions should continue to monitor the health of the urban forest and implement the following recommendations to ensure the urban forest is considered during future planning and development to sustain and enhance the benefits trees provide to the community.

To protect tree canopy, the Region should continue to have tree canopy assessments performed regularly through a TreePlotter CANOPY subscription or continue traditional projects. As the area grows, these data will be able to be used to ensure that urban forest policies and management practices prioritize its maintenance, health, and growth. Roanoke Valley's urban forest provides the Region with a wealth of environmental, social, and even economic benefits related to increased community pride and interest in region-wide initiatives and priorities. These results can be used to identify where the Region should preserve existing tree canopy cover, where there are opportunities to expand canopy cover, and which areas would benefit most from investing valuable resources into the urban forest.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### 1. Leverage the results of this assessment to promote the urban forest and set evidence-based canopy goals.

The findings of this assessment are pivotal for promoting investment in urban forest monitoring, maintenance, and management and offer essential support for state, county, and local budget requests and grant applications. These results can be used to craft targeted presentations and resources for government leaders, planners, engineers, resource managers, and the public to make an empirical case for urban forest needs and benefits.

As Roanoke Valley's population grows and urbanization expands, preserving and growing the existing canopy is vital. These assessment findings can be used to develop short and long-term goals, such as establishing annual tree planting targets, improving the quality of tree cover by planting a wider variety of large maturing trees or setting specific canopy coverage goals by a future date.

### 2. Identify areas to prioritize canopy expansion.

The Region and its various stakeholders can utilize the results of the UTC and PPA analyses to identify the best locations for jurisdiction-owned property canopy expansion efforts. Planting in jurisdictions' rights-of-way could provide significant shading for walkways and roadways. Planting trees adjacent to impervious surfaces within floodplains could be particularly valuable and limit the risks of floods. The Region's jurisdictions can develop collaborative or individual proactive street tree maintenance programs to take on the responsibility of planting and managing street trees, ensuring healthy trees are distributed equitably across the Region. Each jurisdiction within Roanoke Valley should evaluate county/city/town codes to increase tree preservation, create space for existing trees during the development process, and set aside space for large-stature trees to be planted within the public right-of-way to maximize the benefits of trees. Adopting ordinances and policies reflecting a "complete green streets" design methodology can help harmonize gray and green infrastructure, maximizing public functionality and environmental benefits while reducing associated costs.



### 3. Develop outreach programs toward private landowners.

Residential unified land use areas (Single Family Residential and Multi-Family Residential) accounted for 36% of the Region's tree canopy and 60% of all region-wide PPA. When considering tools to increase canopy in Roanoke Valley, it's essential to understand that most urban forests are often situated on private land. Incorporating these findings into community outreach and education programs for citizens and private landholders is crucial. Disseminating this information and data will help residents understand the changes in their local urban forests and the numerous benefits trees offer. Pairing educational programming with tree giveaways, tree planting programs, and tree maintenance events can help increase urban tree canopy in the 21,500+ acres of plantable space on residential unified land areas.

### 4. Use TreePlotter to identify areas needing tree canopy, prioritize planting efforts, and continue monitoring the urban forest.

Utilization of TreePlotter™ CANOPY enables Roanoke Valley jurisdictions and other urban forest stakeholders to create detailed planting priority maps. Users can create uniquely weighted scenarios to target areas based on specific criteria such as low UTC, high PPA, or specific socio-demographic criteria. By focusing on these areas, the allocation of urban forest management resources can be maximized, offering a greater return on investment.



# REPORT

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# APPENDIX

## ACCURACY ASSESSMENT

Classification accuracy serves two primary purposes. Firstly, accuracy assessments provide information to technicians producing the classification about where processes need to be improved and where they are effective. Secondly, accuracy measures provide information about how to use the classification and how well land cover classes are expected to estimate actual land cover on the ground. Even with high-resolution imagery, slight differences in classification methodology and image quality can significantly impact overall map area estimations. The classification accuracy error matrix illustrated in Table 3 contains confidence intervals reporting the high and low values that could be expected to compare the classification data and the actual on-ground land cover in 2021. This accuracy assessment was completed using high-resolution aerial imagery, with computer and manual verification. This study did not include field verification.

### THE INTERNAL ACCURACY ASSESSMENT WAS COMPLETED IN THESE STEPS:

1. Seven hundred and seventy-five, or approximately 2.5 points per square mile area in Roanoke Valley (309 sq. miles), were randomly distributed across the study area and assigned a random numeric value by a trained technician.
2. Each sample point was then referenced using the NAIP aerial photo and assigned one of the five generalized land cover classes ("Ref\_ID") mentioned above.
3. If the technician could not discern the reference value from the imagery, the point was dropped from the accuracy analysis. In this case, no points were dropped.
4. An automated script was then used to assign values from the classification raster to each point ("Eval\_ID"). The classification supervisor provides unbiased feedback to quality control technicians regarding the types of corrections required. Misclassified points (where reference ID does not equal evaluation ID) and corresponding land cover are inspected for necessary corrections to the land cover.<sup>1</sup>
5. Accuracy is re-evaluated (repeat steps 3 & 4) until an acceptable classification accuracy is achieved.

### SAMPLE ERROR MATRIX INTERPRETATION

Statistical relationships between the reference pixels (representing the actual conditions on the ground) and the intersecting classified pixels are used to understand how closely the entire classified map represents Roanoke Valley's landscape. The error matrix in Table 3 represents the intersection of reference pixels manually identified by a human observer (columns) and the classification category of pixels in the classified image (rows). The blue boxes along the diagonals of the matrix represent agreement between the two-pixel maps. Off-diagonal values represent the number of pixels manually referenced to the column class classified as another category in the classification image.

Overall accuracy is computed by dividing the total number of correct pixels by the total number of pixels reported in the matrix ( $501 + 142 + 92 + 24 + 11 = 770/775 = 99.3\%$ ), and the matrix can be used to calculate per class accuracy percentages. For example, technicians manually identified 142 points in the reference map as non-canopy vegetation, and 145 of those pixels were classified as non-canopy vegetation in the classification map. This relationship is called the "Producer's Accuracy" and is calculated by dividing the agreement pixel total (diagonal) by the reference pixel total (column total). Therefore, the Producer's Accuracy for non-canopy vegetation is calculated as  $142/145 = 0.979$ ,

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1. Note that by correcting locations associated with accuracy points, bias is introduced to the error matrix results. This means that matrix results based on a new set of randomly collected accuracy points may result in significantly different accuracy values.

meaning that we can expect that ~98% of all 2021 non-canopy vegetation in the Roanoke Valley study area was classified as non-canopy vegetation in the 2021 classification map. This same procedure was utilized for tree canopy classifications as well.

Conversely, the “User’s Accuracy” is calculated by dividing the number of agreement pixels by the number of classified pixels in the row category. For example, classification pixels intersecting reference pixels were classified as Tree Canopy, and 1 pixel was identified as canopy in the reference map. Therefore, the User’s Accuracy for Tree Canopy is calculated as “501/502 =.998”, meaning that ~100% of the pixels classified as Tree Canopy in the classification were actual tree canopy. It is important to recognize the Producer’s and User’s accuracy percent values based on a sample of the existing ground cover, represented by the reference pixels at each sample point. Interpretation of the sample error matrix results indicates this assessment accurately mapped land cover and, more importantly, tree canopy in Roanoke Valley in 2021.

**Table 3. Accuracy matrix for the Roanoke Valley Region.**

		Reference Data					Total Reference Pixels
		Tree Canopy	Vegetation	Impervious	Soil / Dry Veg.	Water	
Classification Data	Tree Canopy	501	1	0	0	0	502
	Vegetation	1	142	0	0	0	143
	Impervious	0	2	92	0	0	94
	Soil / Dry Veg.	0	0	1	24	0	25
	Water	0	0	0	0	11	11
	Total	502	145	93	24	11	775

<b>Overall Accuracy =</b>	<b>99%</b>
<b>Overall Margin of Error=</b>	<b>1.4%</b>
<b>Canopy Margin of Error =</b>	<b>1.5%</b>

<u>Producer's Accuracy</u>		<u>User's Accuracy</u>	
Tree Canopy	100%	Tree Canopy	100%
Veg. / Open Space	98%	Veg. / Open Space	99%
Impervious	99%	Impervious	98%
Bare Ground / Soil	100%	Bare Ground / Soil	96%
Water	100%	Water	100%

*Margin of error values reported at 90% confidence interval*

**ACCURACY ASSESSMENT RESULTS**

Interpreting the sample error matrix offers some critical insights when evaluating Roanoke Valley’s urban tree canopy coverage and how well-aligned the land cover data are with interpretations by the human eye. The high accuracy of the 2021 data indicates that Roanoke Valley’s current tree canopy can be safely assumed to match the figures stated in this report (approximately 67%).

## GLOSSARY/KEY TERMS

**Land Acres:** The total land area in acres of the assessment boundary (excludes water).

**Non-Canopy Vegetation:** Areas of grass and open space where tree canopy does not exist.

**Possible Planting Area - Vegetation:** Areas of grass and open space where tree canopy does not exist, and it is biophysically possible to plant trees.

**Shrub:** Areas of shrub or other leafy and woody vegetation (smaller than 6ft tall) that are not classified as tree canopy.

**Soil/Dry Vegetation:** Bare soil and dried, dead vegetation.

**Total Acres:** Total area, in acres, of the assessment boundary (includes water).

**Unsuitable Impervious:** Areas of impervious surfaces that are not suitable for tree planting. These include buildings, roads, and all other types of impervious surfaces.

**Unsuitable Planting Area:** Areas where it is not feasible to plant trees. Airports, ball fields, golf courses, etc., were manually defined as unsuitable planting areas.

**Unsuitable Soil:** Areas of soil/dry vegetation considered unsuitable for tree planting. Irrigation and soil augmentation may be required to keep trees alive in these areas.

**Unsuitable Vegetation:** Areas of non-canopy vegetation that are not suitable for tree planting due to their land use.

**Urban Tree Canopy (UTC):** The “layer of leaves, branches and stems that cover the ground” (Raciti et al., 2006) when viewed from above; the metric used to quantify the extent, function, and value of the urban forest. The tree canopy was generally taller than 10-15 feet tall.

**Water:** Areas of open, surface water, not including swimming pools.



FEBRUARY | 2024

URBAN TREE CANOPY  
**ASSESSMENT**  
ROANOKE VALLEY, VIRGINIA



The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC) and the Virginia Department of Forestry (VDOT) provided funding for this project.



Roanoke Valley-Alleghany

**REGIONAL**  
**commission**

[RVARC.ORG](http://RVARC.ORG)

313 Luck Avenue, SW | Roanoke, Virginia 24016 | P: 540.343.4417 | F: 540.343.4416 | [rvarc@rvarc.org](mailto:rvarc@rvarc.org)

## **STAFF REPORT**

### **RVARC Meeting March 28, 2024**

#### **SUBJ: RVARC Administration of Glade Creek Phase III, Preliminary Engineering**

In the last few years, and in an effort to expand technical assistance capacity to localities administering their own local transportation projects, several members of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC) staff were certified through the Locally Administered Projects Qualification Program. The Program was established by VDOT's Local Assistance Division in 2019 to help localities successfully administer transportation projects.

As an activity under the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization's (RVTPO) FY24 Unified Planning Work Program, staff initiated a VDOT Request to Administer (RTA) for managing Professional Engineering Services to support the Glade Creek Greenway Phase III project. The RVARC submitted a Request to Administer application to VDOT in January 2024 which was subsequently approved in early March. Prior to this request, in 2022, the RVTPO allocated \$275,000 in Federal Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) funds to the Town of Vinton for this project. From this funding stream, the RVARC will be compensated for administrative services provision.

As part of the upcoming RVARC FY25 Work Program, the Town of Vinton requested that qualified RVARC staff serve as the local administrator of the Glade Creek Phase III Preliminary Engineering project. For this project, RVARC staff will be responsible for project scope development and procurement of a consultant to conduct preliminary engineering.

In order for the project administration agreement to be finalized, VDOT needs a signatory authority resolution from the RVARC.

#### **RVARC Board Action:**

Consideration of Signatory Authority Resolution for Glade Creek Phase III Preliminary Engineering project for the Town of Vinton.



Roanoke Valley-Alleghany

**REGIONAL**  
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The 28<sup>th</sup> day of March 2024

## **RESOLUTION**

### **Affirming RVARC Signatory Authority for the Glade Creek Phase III Preliminary Engineering Project**

**WHEREAS**, in an effort to expand technical assistance capacity to localities administering their own local transportation projects, several members of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC) staff were certified through the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) Locally Administered Projects Qualification Program; and,

**WHEREAS**, this Program was established by VDOT in 2019 to assist localities successfully administer transportation projects; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Vinton is a recipient of Virginia Department of Transportation funds under various grant programs for transportation-related projects; and,

**WHEREAS**, the Town of Vinton was allocated \$275,000 in Surface Transportation Block Grant Program funds by the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization in 2022 for preliminary engineering on Glade Creek Phase III (UPC 124024); and,

**WHEREAS**, during the FY25 RVARC Work Program process, the Town of Vinton requested that staff of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission serve as the local administrator for the preliminary engineering phase of this project; and,

**WHEREAS**, from this funding stream, the RVARC will be compensated for the provision of administrative services relative to the completion of the project.

**THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED**, that Jeremy Holmes, Executive Director of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission, is authorized to execute all agreements and/or addenda for the Glade Creek Phase III Preliminary Engineering Project with the Virginia Department of Transportation.

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Jim Wallace  
Chair



# Annual Work Program, Fiscal Year 2025

*Approved May 23, 2024*

Staff, Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission

Report #PR-20240523-02

Published: May 2024



## Welcome

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The FY25 Work Program sets the basic schedule of work for the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission over the 2024-2025 fiscal year. It is comprised of ongoing tasks, staff-generated projects, locality requested projects, required activities under our various grants, and general technical assistance.

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## Introduction

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The annual Comprehensive Work Program is the basis for achieving the objectives and strategies outlined in the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission's Strategic Plan. The Commission strives to maximize its limited staff and resources by developing a comprehensive work plan based on current and anticipated needs and priorities of the region while providing flexibility to take advantage of opportunities as they arise over the year.

Projects are submitted by Commission members, local Chief Administrative Officials, staff of planning and economic development departments of member governments, and generated internally by Commission staff. From time to time, projects submitted by other regional organizations or nonprofits may be considered on a fee basis or under one of the Commission's existing funding sources as approved by the Commission and impacted member government(s).

To meet State and Federal requirements several program areas are required to have specially formatted work programs which are also submitted and approved separately from the RVARC work program. While these work programs are separate documents, a summary of their activities is included in this document for reference.

### **How Projects Get into the Work Program**

Projects enter the work program in a variety of ways, through initiatives identified by staff and approved by the impacted local governments, to formal submissions from locality administration or state agencies. Many projects enter the work program during the January through March period of each year, aligning with Commission and locality budgeting timelines. Project ideas may also arise throughout the year through Commission meetings, our Chief Administrative Officer luncheons, and our quarterly Planner's Lunches. Commission staff seek to be proactive in identifying issues of regional significance, with a particular focus on leveraging local planning resources towards larger Federal implementation programs like DOT's RAISE grants, ARC's ARISE grant, and EDA Economic Adjustment Assistance.

While the Commission does its best to identify its annual scope of work before the start of the fiscal year, we recognize that needs change throughout the year through unexpected changes and opportunities. The Work Program is intended to be flexible enough to respond to these needs, with sufficient general technical assistance built in to field requests throughout the year, and the capacity to reschedule or change the scope of projects as necessary to free up resources.

## Strategic Priorities

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The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission has identified its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) plan as the organization's strategic plan. In addition, the Commission completed a strategic planning effort in 2019 that identified several goals focused on communications, improving staff capacity, and strengthening the organization.

MEMBER GOVERNMENTS: Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke; Cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount, and Vinton. [www.rvarc.org](http://www.rvarc.org)

It is the intention of the Commission to undertake an updated comprehensive strategic planning effort in the coming years. In the interim, the strategic goals for this work program are derived from both the CEDS and the 2019 Strategic Plan.

Our strategic priorities are as follows:

### **I. Economic Growth**

- A. The Commission will ensure the region has adequate infrastructure in place to facilitate the growth of higher-wage industry clusters and to ensure connectivity with regions nationally and globally. (CEDS 2022)
- B. The Commission will improve the Multimodal Transportation Network of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Region. (CEDS 2022)

### **II. Quality of Life**

- A. The Commission will address resiliency through the coordination of the Regional Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan, COVID-19 response activities, and CEDS. (CEDS 2022)
- B. The Commission will seek to reuse existing underutilized commercial, institutional, and industrial properties and target them for redevelopment. (CEDS 2022)
- C. The Commission will seek to ensure that the region offers a strong and diverse mix of housing opportunities. (CEDS 2022)

### **III. Sustainability**

- A. The Commission will seek to maintain and promote the region's natural beauty as well as its cultural amenities and seek sustainable growth opportunities. (CEDS 2022)

### **IV. Communication and Outreach**

- A. Project a positive identity for the Roanoke Valley - Alleghany Region. (CEDS 2022)
- B. The Commission will improve Communication among RVARC and its stakeholders. (2019 Strategic Plan)
- C. The Commission will improve engagement among RVARC and its members. (2019 Strategic Plan)

### **V. Organizational Capacity**

- A. The Commission will adequately prepare for the future. (2019 Strategic Plan)

### **VI. Local Technical and Implementation Support**

- A. The Commission will continue in its role as a convener of regional stakeholders on issues of more than local significance and implementer of programs on behalf of our local government members.

In the project listings, below, projects will reference which strategic priority or priorities they support by reference to the category (I – VI) and subcategory (A – C) of each priority.

## Transportation

### *Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization*

The Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization (RVTPO) manages transportation planning activities within the census-defined urbanized core of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Region. This includes the counties (or portions thereof) of Roanoke, Botetourt, Bedford, and Montgomery; the cities of Roanoke and Salem; and the town of Vinton.

The RVTPO is staffed by the Regional Commission.

Key activities of the RVTPO include the development and maintenance of the region’s long-range transportation plan, management of the Transportation Improvement Program process, support for regional SMART SCALE applications, and management of the Surface Transportation Block Grant program and Carbon Reduction program. RVTPO staff also manage numerous short- to mid-range planning efforts.

Projects undertaken by the RVTPO are documented in the annual Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

### *Rural Transportation Summit*

In partnership with the West Piedmont Planning District Commission, the Regional Commission will organize and host a Rural Transportation Summit to be hosted at The Harvester in Rocky Mount. The summit will focus on organizing regional leaders, members of the General Assembly, private sector partners, and others to identify the growing needs of rural transportation infrastructure and map a path forward.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	1.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Action plan, legislative priorities, or other document
<i>Localities Served</i>	City of Covington; Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke; Towns of Clifton Forge and Rocky Mount
<i>Project Leader</i>	Tori Williams
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	PL – XXX; Rural – XXX

### *Rural Microtransit Support*

The Commission will provide outreach, coordination, and technical support to rural communities interested in implementing new microtransit strategies.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	1.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Technical support, surveys, coordination with providers and DRPT, feasibility studies

MEMBER GOVERNMENTS: Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke; Cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount, and Vinton. [www.rvarc.org](http://www.rvarc.org)

<b>Localities Served</b>	City of Covington; Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke; Towns of Clifton Forge and Rocky Mount
<b>Project Leader</b>	Tori Williams
<b>Funding and Hours</b>	ARC – XXX; Rural – XXX

**Transportation and Economic Development (TED) Study Update**

Staff will update the 2018 *Regional Study on Transportation Project Prioritization for Economic Development and Growth* (TED Study), with a particular focus on the implications of new SMART SCALE scoring rubrics that take into account the Virginia Economic Development Partnership’s (VEDP) priorities.

<b>Strategic Priorities</b>	1.A,
<b>Deliverables</b>	Website dashboard update, report, and associated collateral development,
<b>Localities Served</b>	RVTPO membership
<b>Project Leader</b>	Tori Williams
<b>Funding and Hours</b>	PL – XXX; EDA – XXX

**Truck Parking Study**

The RVTPO will study the impacts of truck parking demand in the Roanoke Valley, complementing recent efforts by VDOT and the Appalachian Regional Commission, with a particular focus on the quality of life, congestion, land use, and other impacts of unmanaged truck parking on the Roanoke Valley’s infrastructure.

<b>Strategic Priorities</b>	1.A
<b>Deliverables</b>	Study on impact and recommendation for strategies to address
<b>Localities Served</b>	RVTPO membership
<b>Project Leader</b>	Tori Williams
<b>Funding and Hours</b>	PL – XXX; EDA – XXX; ARC -

**VDOT Locally Administered Project: Glade Creek Greenway Phase III PE**

Regional Commission staff will serve as the Town of Vinton’s Local Project Administrator for the administration of STBG-funded Glade Creek Greenway Phase III Preliminary Engineering. Staff will work with VDOT and locality stakeholders to develop a project scope and schedule, research existing conditions, conduct RFP and contractor negotiations per VDOT’s guidelines, work with the consultant to develop 100% design plans, and identify ROW challenges.

<b>Strategic Priorities</b>	I.B, III.A, IV.A
<b>Deliverables</b>	Development of project scope, acquisition of consultant to produce preliminary engineering, coordination with VDOT and Town of Vinton on alignment challenges such as planned ROW acquisition

MEMBER GOVERNMENTS: Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke; Cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount, and Vinton. [www.rvarc.org](http://www.rvarc.org)

*Localities Served* Town of Vinton  
*Project Leader* Amanda McGee  
*Funding and Hours* STBG – 150 Hours

## Mobility & Transportation Demand Management

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The Director of RIDE Solutions will work with stakeholders toward addressing the transportation demand and mobility priority needs in the Region, identifying possible and preferred solutions, and pursuing funding.

### *Bicycle Friendly Business*

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The Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission will strive to improve its ranking in the League of American Bicyclists’ Bicycle Friendly Business rankings. Staff will work with our Public Engagement Manager and Director of RIDE Solutions to communicate our progress and use our success to model opportunities for other area businesses and local government facilities to apply for and achieve designation.

*Strategic Priorities* III.A, V.A  
*Deliverables* Silver-level Bicycle Friendly Business designation  
*Localities Served* Commission operations  
*Project Leader* Andrea Garland  
*Funding and Hours* Local – 50 hours

### *City of Roanoke Bicycle and Pedestrian Support*

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Provide planning and outreach support for bicycle and pedestrian programs, including support for the City’s Vision Zero plan, annual traffic safety media campaigns, and city bicycle parking program

*Strategic Priorities* I.B, IV.A, VI.A  
*Deliverables* Technical Assistance for Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning  
*Localities Served* City of Roanoke  
*Project Leader* Andrea Garland  
*Funding and Hours* City of Roanoke - 191 hours

### *City of Roanoke Better Bus Stops for Neighborhoods*

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RVARC staff has secured a City of Roanoke HUD Neighborhood Development Grant to coordinate the installation of 3 Bus Shelters in a low-income neighborhood for the City of Roanoke. RVARC staff will work with Valley Metro Staff, the City of Roanoke Transportation division, the Roanoke City Art Commission, and Neighborhood Services, to complete this project.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	I.B, IV.A, VI.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Technical Assistance for Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning
<i>Localities Served</i>	City of Roanoke
<i>Project Leader</i>	Andrea Garland
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	City of Roanoke - 215 hours

*Commuter Assistance Program - Operations*

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Staff will operate the regional Commuter Assistance Program, RIDE Solutions, under the direction of the DRPT Commuter Assistance Program requirements. Operations of the program include providing a central resource for the Roanoke Valley localities about access and use of transportation options for employers in the region, including transit, vanpooling, and ridesharing services.

RIDE Solutions will conduct two primary marketing campaigns: 1.) Commuter and Employer Communications campaign to Increase awareness of the transportation solutions provided by RIDE Solutions to the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Region travelers. 2) 2023 Writer by Bus Campaign, to engage the local artist community to get inspired by public transportation and create art that inspires others to use the service. RIDE Solutions will also perform ongoing general social media and media relations campaigns throughout the year.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	I.B, III.A, IV.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Ongoing commuter and employer support services
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Andrea Garland
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	DRPT CAP- 1680 hours

*Commuter Assistance Program – Strategic Plan*

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The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission will work with a consultant to develop a RIDE Solutions program strategic plan to meet the requirements of the Commuter Assistance Program Strategic Plan (CAPSP) guidelines published by the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), in January 2023. This plan will provide an objective-driven, performance-based planning framework for identifying TDM strategies and programs that increase the transportation system's efficiency through alternative modes of travel in the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany region.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	I.B, III.A, V.A, VI.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Five-year strategic plan
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Andrea Garland
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	DRPT Technical Assistance – 381 hours

## Economic Development Administration

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The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Region was designated an Economic Development District in 2017, and the Commission now receives planning funds to carry out the development and implementation of the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy. The EDA requires a separate 3-year comprehensive work plan for that program, but certain local and regional project requests can be funded under the EDA partnership planning grant. Some of those projects are noted below.

### *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy Update*

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Staff will work with the localities to promote economic development in the region, including updating the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy required by the Economic Development Administration.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	I, II, and III
<i>Deliverables</i>	Updated CEDS document and website
<i>Localities Served</i>	Cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem, Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, and Roanoke, and Towns of Clifton Forge and Vinton
<i>Project Leader</i>	Eddie Wells
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	EDA - 400 hours

### *Indicator Dashboard Development and Maintenance*

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Staff will develop and maintain a robust Indicators Dashboard on [www.rvarc.org](http://www.rvarc.org). The dashboard will include information on economic status, housing, environmental resiliency, quality of life, public health, and more.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	IV.A, VI.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Website pages with quarterly updates
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	TBD
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	EDA - XXX hours

### *Regional Food System Planning*

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Staff will continue to work with regional stakeholders to promote economic development, healthy living, environment, and natural resources stewardship within the region. Staff will work with our member governments to promote regional agribusiness/agritourism initiatives, sites, and activities as requested.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	IV.A, IV.C
<i>Deliverables</i>	Regional food plan
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities

MEMBER GOVERNMENTS: Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke; Cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount, and Vinton. [www.rvarc.org](http://www.rvarc.org)



*Project Leader* Amanda McGee  
*Funding and Hours* EDA - 100 hours

## Appalachian Regional Commission

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The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission partners with the multi-state Appalachian Regional Commission (ARC) to provide planning support, technical assistance, and grant-writing assistance to those localities located within the ARC: the counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, and Craig, the City of Covington, and the Town of Clifton Forge. ARC funding provides a wide range of allowable activities, from transportation and community development to natural resources management and tourism promotion, to industrial site development and infrastructure investment. Like the EDA program above, ARC activities are listed in their own comprehensive work program, but certain local and regional projects may be completed in whole or in part with ARC funding. Some of those ongoing and FY23 requests are listed below.

### *Alleghany Highlands Outdoor Recreation*

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Provide technical assistance for implementation of the Alleghany Highlands Outdoor Recreation Plan. Activities may include the preparation of grant applications to fund the development of outdoor assets, participation in planning sessions for the creation of site plans, organizing workshops to build capacity and support business development, and distributing data and map products.

*Strategic Priorities* I.A, II.A, VI.A  
*Deliverables* Technical Assistance and Grant Applications  
*Localities Served* Alleghany County, City of Covington, Towns of Clifton Forge and Iron Gate  
*Project Leader* TBD  
*Funding and Hours* ARC – 100 hours; EDA - 100 hours.

### *Fincastle Community Revitalization Project Planning Grant*

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Staff will work with Town staff and the Planning Grant Management Team to assist in carrying out the tasks outlined in the CDBG Planning grant.

*Strategic Priorities* IB, II.B, III.A  
*Deliverables* Technical assistance for planning grant activities  
*Localities Served* Town of Fincastle  
*Project Leader* Eddie Wells  
*Funding and Hours* ARC – 150 hours

*Ready LDD Grant-Writing Bench*

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The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission will continue to engage its grant-writing contractors to aid localities and locality-approved organizations access federal and other grant programs. The Commission will use *Ready LDD* funding via the Appalachian Regional Commission during this fiscal year to cover grant writing expenses. A program will be designed to determine how localities access the services, any funding caps or matching fund requirements that might be necessary, ongoing project management needs, and project prioritization.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	VI.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Assistance on writing and/or developing 15 grants
<i>Localities Served</i>	City of Covington; Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig; and Town of Clifton Forge
<i>Project Leader</i>	Jeremy Holmes
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	ARC – 25 hours

**Housing**

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The Regional Commission’s housing planning efforts are a growing element of our annual work program, to provide strategic housing planning and implementation guidance to our local governments to meet the dynamic and growing housing needs driven by our economic development successes in the region. Our housing work is intended to complement local housing needs studies and is not intended to replace local land use zoning and other regulatory mechanisms except in an advisory capacity as requested by our member localities.

*Assistance to the Blue Ridge Interagency Council on Homelessness*

---

Staff will continue coordination of the BRICH and related tasks as needed to encourage and facilitate cooperation between local governments, service providers, and community-based organizations to address homelessness in the Blue Ridge Continuum of Care region.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	II.A, VI.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Continued coordination of the BRICH and technical support and administration. Update of the BRICH Bylaws.
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Bryan Hill
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Local - 35 hours

*PDC Housing Development Program Grant*

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Provide oversight and quality control on the implementation of the Virginia Housing PDC Development grant towards the construction of a minimum of 20 affordable housing units in the region.

MEMBER GOVERNMENTS: Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke; Cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount, and Vinton. [www.rvarc.org](http://www.rvarc.org)

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	II.C
<i>Deliverables</i>	Quality control and reimbursement of contractor expenses, 20+ units.
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Bryan Hill
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Virginia Housing - 375 hours.

*Clifton Forge Downtown Housing Study*

To achieve strategies from the 2019 Comprehensive Plan, the Town of Clifton Forge seeks a study to assess the capacity for creating upper-story housing opportunities in its downtown. The study will consider current demographics, and market conditions, and assess the impacts of downtown living on the economy and quality of life in Clifton Forge.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	II.C
<i>Deliverables</i>	Downtown Housing Capacity Study
<i>Localities Served</i>	Town of Clifton Forge
<i>Project Leader</i>	Bryan Hill
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	ARC – 75

*Regional Homelessness Technical Support*

The Commission will provide expanded technical support and coordination to BRICH and other homelessness stakeholders to better communicate the complex issues surrounding homelessness in the region.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	II.A, VI.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Development of reports, dashboards, and other communications with BRICH and other regional stakeholders.
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Bryan Hill
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Local - 95 hours

*Regional Housing Summit*

The Commission will coordinate with BRICH and other regional homeless and housing organizations to host a regional Housing Summit. Topics of the summit will include not just homelessness but general housing trends, barriers, needs, and regional data.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	II.C
<i>Deliverables</i>	One day/half day event with resulting action plan
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Bryan Hill
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Local - 95 hours

*Southeast Crescent Regional Commission Promotion*

The Southeast Crescent Regional Commission is a new Federal regional commission focused on poverty reduction programs in the southeast crescent of the United States, in those counties not served by the Appalachian Regional Commission. RVARC’s activities under the SCRC planning funds are focused on identifying and overcoming barriers to housing development in our target SCRC communities, Roanoke City and Franklin County. Activities include general housing planning support, the development and support of a Developer’s Roundtable, and the creation and promotion of pro-housing educational materials.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	II.C
<i>Deliverables</i>	Regular meetings of a Developers Committee, presentations to boards and councils, website materials
<i>Localities Served</i>	City of Roanoke, Franklin County
<i>Project Leader</i>	Jeremy Holmes
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	SCRC – 140 hours

**Roanoke Valley Collective Response**

Launched in September 2018 as an all-volunteer effort, the Collective Response is a multi-sector approach working across systems to find new and effective strategies to solve the opioid and addiction crisis across the Roanoke Valley. It was formalized as a program of the Regional Commission in the Fall of 2021. RVCR members span law enforcement, Emergency Medical Services, healthcare, local and state government, education, community support organizations, faith community, business community, and individuals and families personally touched by addiction. Using a collective impact model, RVCR seeks to: 1) Tackle the root causes of the addiction crisis by influencing changes in policies, practices, social support, cultures and norms, and the physical environment; 2) Combine evidence-based practices with local insight and personal stories to recommend, develop, and implement regional solutions addressing critical aspects of prevention, treatment, overdose reversal, recovery, and child and family support.

*Collective’s Advisory Committee & Stakeholder Committee Management*

Convene monthly meetings of the Collective’s Advisory Committee (CAC) to identify project opportunities, new stakeholders, and potential expansion of CAC as necessary to reflect the geographic boundaries and service offerings of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Region. Staff will also manage the convening of the monthly Stakeholder meetings.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	IV.B, IV.C, VI.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Monthly meetings of the CAC
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Robert Natt
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	ARPA – 50 hours; OAA – 50 hours

MEMBER GOVERNMENTS: Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke; Cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount, and Vinton. [www.rvarc.org](http://www.rvarc.org)

*Opioid Abatement Authority Coordination*

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Staff will coordinate among member localities to identify and provide technical support to projects seeking funding through the Virginia Opioid Abatement Authority’s annual grantmaking window. Staff will provide grant-writing support on multi-jurisdictional Cooperative project grants, and advise, technical assistance, and grant-writing assistance on local projects as requested by member localities.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	VI.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Project submissions to the annual VOAA grant cycle.
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Robert Natt.
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	OAA – 80 hours

*Blueprint for Action Implementation*

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Staff will undertake activities to implement the recommendations for the Blueprint for Action, establishing and pursuing annual priorities with the assistance of the CAC. Staff will also undertake annual updates of the Blueprint for Action. Activities will include marketing and public awareness, stakeholder engagement, connections to funding opportunities through SAMHSA, OAA, and others, and coordination among wraparound service opportunities through the Commission’s transportation and community development programs.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	
<i>Deliverables</i>	Annual update and action plan
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Robert Natt
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	OAA – 1,272 hours;

*Peer Recovery Network*

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The Peer Recovery Network was created to ensure the area’s Peer Recovery Specialists are effectively collaborating across all segments of recovery services, systems, and resources to broaden their impact on the communities they serve. The Peer Recovery Network will continue to facilitate networking and professional development and seeks to fulfill the priorities of the 2022 White Paper which includes connecting Peer Recovery Specialists to First Responders and increasing the amount of Peer Recovery Specialists in the workforce.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	VI.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Annual update and action plan
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Bailey Helgeson
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	SAMHSA - 1,335 hours

### Conference Support

RVCR staff will provide support to VT, Carilion, and others in developing and promoting annual conferences on issues of addiction and recovery.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	VI.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Conference sessions, training, and certification opportunities
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Robert Natt
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	OAA – XXX; SAMHSA - XXX hours

### General Regional Projects

Regional projects are non-transportation programs that support two or more localities. They are generally funded by one or more funding sources depending on the scope and nature of the project, so may include funding from EDA, ARC, or other program areas cited above. Transportation projects are contained in the Unified Planning Work Program of the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization.

#### Chesapeake Bay Watershed

Staff will work with the Department of Environmental Quality, relevant Soil and Water Conservation Districts, and localities to undertake Phase III of the statewide Chesapeake Bay Watershed Implementation Plan. The focus will be on identifying effective combinations of DEQ best management practices and cost estimates for implementation.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	III.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Grant writing and technical assistance, environmental education, coordinate stakeholder group meetings, and project support.
<i>Localities Served</i>	City of Covington; Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, and Roanoke; and Town of Clifton Forge
<i>Project Leader</i>	Gabriel Irigaray
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	DEQ – 1,305 hours

#### General Technical Assistance

The staff will research, develop, maintain, and analyze data for use in a variety of technical and planning support activities, including issues related to federal and state legislation relevant to the region.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	IV.B, IV.C, VI.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Technical assistance
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Staff
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Local - 225 hours, ARC - 498 hours

MEMBER GOVERNMENTS: Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke; Cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount, and Vinton. [www.rvarc.org](http://www.rvarc.org)

*Grant Writing*

The staff will continue to aid localities in writing grant applications and researching funding opportunities for regional and local development projects.

*Strategic Priorities* IV.C, VI.A  
*Deliverables* Grant applications  
*Localities Served* All member localities  
*Project Leader* Staff  
*Funding and Hours* ARC - 295 hours, Local - 128 hours

*Legislative Agenda Promotion*

Under the guidance of the Legislative Committee, the Commission will develop an annual agenda of legislative priorities to promote to its General Assembly members.

*Strategic Priorities* V.A  
*Deliverables* Legislative agenda, website, summary document, postcard, and other collateral.  
*Localities Served* All member localities  
*Project Leader* Jeremy Holmes  
*Funding and Hours* Local - 120 hours

*Regional Energy Initiative*

Staff will continue to assist in coordinating responses to new green energy technology and trends, including solar, wind, and other sources.

*Strategic Priorities* III.A, VI.A  
*Deliverables* Technical assistance on energy-related tasks  
*Localities Served* All member localities  
*Project Leader* Amanda McGee  
*Funding and Hours* ARC – 50 hours, Local - 25 hours

*Regional Greenway Technical Assistance (Recreational)*

Staff will be responsible for data collection from trail counters on local recreational greenways and trails including the Appalachian Trail. Staff will work to maintain materials, calibrate data, and expand count locations as needed. Staff will provide other assistance for greenways if feasible.

*Strategic Priorities* I.B, III.A, VI.A  
*Deliverables* Trail counts, mapping, and other data will be used to support grant applications and justify expenditures on greenways and trails  
*Localities Served* Cities of Roanoke and Salem, Counties of Botetourt and Roanoke, and the Town of Vinton

MEMBER GOVERNMENTS: Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke; Cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount, and Vinton. [www.rvarc.org](http://www.rvarc.org)

*Project Leader* Amanda McGee  
*Funding and Hours* Local - 200 hours

### *Regional Greenway Economic Impact*

Staff will coordinate with the Greenway Commission to provide an Economic Impact of the Greenways report.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	I.A, III.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Economic impact report, economic impact dashboard on website, update to the CEDS
<i>Localities Served</i>	Cities of Roanoke and Salem, Counties of Botetourt and Roanoke, and the Town of Vinton
<i>Project Leader</i>	Amanda McGee
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Local - XXX hours; EDA – XXX hours

### *Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update*

The project proposed is the update of the 2019 Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan. The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission will conduct a comprehensive update of the existing hazard mitigation plan to assure region-wide safety and adequate preparation for the protection of the life and property of the citizens of the region. The proposed revision and update will meet the FEMA requirements and will ensure that the changes in hazards and vulnerabilities within the region are identified and addressed by appropriate mitigation strategies.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	II.A, III.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Updated Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Eddie Wells
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	VDEM - 839 hours

### *Regional Leadership Trip*

In partnership with the Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce and other regional business and government leaders, the Executive Director will develop and schedule a leadership trip to a nearby community to explore what the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Region can learn from their economic and community development successes.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	I.B, III.A, VI.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Several-day trip, agenda, and all associated logistical elements
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Jeremy Holmes
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Local - 25 hours; ARC – 10 hours; EDA – 10 hours

MEMBER GOVERNMENTS: Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke; Cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount, and Vinton. [www.rvarc.org](http://www.rvarc.org)



*Regional Stormwater Management Technical Assistance*

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Staff will assist Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) localities in developing regional stormwater branding, education, and public outreach and continue coordination of the Regional Stormwater Advisory Committee.

- Strategic Priorities* III.A, VI.A
- Deliverables* Quarterly meetings, and technical assistance to localities.
- Localities Served* Cities of Roanoke and Salem, Counties of Botetourt, Franklin, and Roanoke, and the Towns of Vinton and Rocky Mount
- Project Leader* Gabriel Irigaray.
- Funding and Hours* Local - 75 hours.

*Roanoke River Blueway Committee Coordination*

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Staff will continue the development and promotion of the Roanoke River Blueway through the Roanoke River Blueway Committee. In FY24 the Blueway Committee will work towards kiosk signage in the City of Salem and the update of the Roanoke River Blueway website and marketing materials as appropriate. Other priorities may be identified throughout the year by the committee.

- Strategic Priorities* III.A, IV.A, VI.A
- Deliverables* Marketing, grant writing, and mapping
- Localities Served* Cities of Roanoke and Salem, Counties of Franklin and Roanoke, and the Town of Vinton
- Project Leader* Amanda McGee
- Funding and Hours* Local - 120 hours., EDA – 100 hours.

*Regional Leadership Collaboration*

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Staff will coordinate and facilitate regular meetings of the Mayors and Chairs, as well as Chief Administrative Officials in the region.

- Strategic Priorities* VI.A
- Deliverables* Organize and attend meetings
- Localities Served* All member localities
- Project Leader* Jeremy Holmes
- Funding and Hours* ARC – 75 hours EDA – 50 hours Local – 110 hours

*Roanoke Valley Broadband Authority Support*

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Staff will assist the regional broadband authority by providing technical assistance for mapping and planning activities.

- Strategic Priorities* I.A

<i>Deliverables</i>	Provide data for required FCC filings
<i>Localities Served</i>	Cities of Roanoke and Salem, Counties of Botetourt, and Roanoke
<i>Project Leader</i>	TBD
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Roanoke Valley Broadband Authority – 20 hours

*Roanoke Valley Urban Forestry Council and Arbor Day Grants*

Staff will continue to serve on the Roanoke Valley Urban Forestry Council and conduct or assist with other urban forestry activities as requested, including the Annual Roanoke Urban Tree Health Care Workshop.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	III.A, VI.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Technical assistance, grant writing
<i>Localities Served</i>	Cities of Roanoke and Salem, Roanoke County, and the Town of Vinton
<i>Project Leader</i>	Amanda McGee
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Local – 60 hours

*SolSmart Designation Maintenance and Improvement*

The Commission will pursue and achieve a Silver level designation in the national SolSmart program, which will improve our capacity to provide solar energy-related technical support to our member localities and promote the region as friendly to, and ready for, investments in solar renewable energy.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	III.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Website maintenance and solar impact dashboard, regional training opportunities
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Amanda McGee
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Local - 90 hours; EDA – 60 hours; ARC – 20 hours

*Triple Crown Visitor Use Management Plan Technical Assistance*

The proposed plan will address issues relating to the management of the recreational assets associated with the Appalachian Trail, McAfee Knob, Dragons Tooth, and Tinker Cliffs to promote sustainability and responsible use. The project will be coordinated by the Appalachian Trail Conservancy in partnership with local governments, RVARC, the Roanoke Valley Greenway Commission, the National Park Service, Virginia's Blue Ridge, Virginia Tech, the US Forest Service, and other key stakeholders.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	I.A, III.A, IV.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Technical Assistance to a Visitor Use Management Plan
<i>Localities Served</i>	City of Roanoke and Counties of Botetourt and Roanoke
<i>Project Leader</i>	Amanda McGee
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Local – 25 hours; ARC – 25 hours

MEMBER GOVERNMENTS: Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke; Cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount, and Vinton. [www.rvarc.org](http://www.rvarc.org)

### *Western Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority Support*

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Provide staff assistance for meetings, financial management, and operations of the Western Virginia Regional Industrial Facility Authority.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	I.A, II.B
<i>Deliverables</i>	Staff support
<i>Localities Served</i>	Cities of Roanoke and Salem, Counties of Botetourt, Franklin, and Roanoke; and the Town of Vinton
<i>Project Leader</i>	Sherry Dean
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	WVRIFA - 363 hours

### *White Paper Development*

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Staff will identify, research, and public technical reports on a variety of issues that affect the region. White papers will provide general but region-specific context for local, statewide, or national issues, such as questions surrounding census analysis, funding opportunities, the impact of pending federal legislation, etc. White papers will be developed as needed as determined by staff or requested by localities.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	IV.B, IV.C, VI.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	White paper technical reports.
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Jeremy Holmes
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Local - 50 hours., ARC - 50 hours., EDA - 50 hours

### *Workshops*

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The staff will continue to participate in various required workshops related to funding agencies, continuing education, and outreach.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	IV.C, V.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Workshop attendance and action report submitted to Executive Director
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Staff
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Local - 200 hours, ARC – 93 hours

## General Local Projects

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Local projects are non-transportation programs that support a single locality. Projects listed in this section are generally funded by local dollars, contributions from the locality in question, or a specific grant. Local projects funded entirely by EDA or ARC funds are listed in those program areas. Transportation projects are contained in the Unified Planning Work Program of the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization.

MEMBER GOVERNMENTS: Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke; Cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount, and Vinton. [www.rvarc.org](http://www.rvarc.org)

### Neighborhood Data Profiles

The Commission will work with the City of Roanoke to provide neighborhood data profiles to include demographic, housing, transportation, environmental, and economic data; interpretation and analysis of data to guide policy formulation; utilize comparative data over time to identify trends; and develop projections on selected data as appropriate.

This will build from the data sheets created for the City of Roanoke in 2017, and potentially be expanded to cover other jurisdictions as requested.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	VI.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Datasheet for each Roanoke City neighborhood
<i>Localities Served</i>	City of Roanoke
<i>Project Leader</i>	Bryan Hill
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	PL – XXX; EDA – XXX; ARC - XXX

### Franklin County Trail Counters

Staff will be responsible for data collection from trail counters on Franklin County trails and assist county staff with data provision and analysis.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	I.B, III.A, VI.A
<i>Deliverables</i>	Trail counts and reporting
<i>Localities Served</i>	Franklin County
<i>Project Leader</i>	Amanda McGee
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Local - 60 hours

## Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission Operations and Development

To better support our local government members, the Regional Commission undertakes several projects focused on increasing the capacity, effectiveness, and financial efficiency of our organization. We also pursue professional development opportunities for Commission staff to bring new and enhanced skill sets to existing or future projects.

### Green Initiative

The Regional Commission will undertake several internal sustainability efforts focused on reducing its carbon footprint while showing a positive ROI on its utility bills and related building performance expenses. The Green Initiative will also include internalizing programs of the RIDE Solutions program to serve as examples for other business outreach efforts. Commission staff will communicate impacts to stakeholders and the public.

*Strategic Priorities* III.A, IV.B, V.A

MEMBER GOVERNMENTS: Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke; Cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount, and Vinton. [www.rvarc.org](http://www.rvarc.org)

<i>Deliverables</i>	Reduction in utility bills, capital improvement plan, greenhouse gas emission reduction
<i>Localities Served</i>	Commission operations
<i>Project Leader</i>	Amanda McGee
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Local – 20 hours

### *Public Engagement and Communications*

The staff will continue with the publication of brochures, newsletters, website updates, social media, and other outreach activities to promote activities and programs of the Commission. Staff will research and build a new website for RVARC and RVTPO. Staff will continue implementing the Public Relations and Communications Plan.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	IV.A, IV.B, IV.C
<i>Deliverables</i>	Various newsletters, documents, news releases, and digital media products.
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Elizabeth Elmore
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Local - 265 hours; EDA – 75 hours

### *Regional Liaison Program*

Commission staff will commit to visiting each of our member localities at least twice a year to present on projects completed or advanced throughout the year relevant to each member locality.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	IV.A, IV.C
<i>Deliverables</i>	Presentations on project status to boards and councils
<i>Localities Served</i>	All member localities
<i>Project Leader</i>	Jeremy Holmes
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Per project

### *RVARC Strategic Plan Update*

Building from the FY24 SERDI Organizational Assessment, RVARC will update its five-year strategic plan, guided by a Strategic Planning Committee and developed internally with existing Commission resources.

<i>Strategic Priorities</i>	IV.A, IV.B, IV.C
<i>Deliverables</i>	Five-year strategic plan and implementation guidelines
<i>Localities Served</i>	Commission operations
<i>Project Leader</i>	Jeremy Holmes
<i>Funding and Hours</i>	Local - 200 hours

## Boards, Associations, and Workgroups

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Staff will promote and assist with regional planning initiatives by participating in the following local, regional, state, and national organizations.

### National

- American Planning Association
- Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations
- Development District Association of Appalachia and Network Appalachia
- National Association of Development Organizations Board of Directors
- Southeastern Regional Directors Institute

### State

- Virginia Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations
- Virginia Association of Planning District Commissions
- Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association
- Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association Legislative Affairs Committee

### Regional

- Alleghany Highlands Outdoor Recreation Stakeholders
- Blue Ridge Interagency Council of Homelessness
- Blue Ridge Transportation Safety Board
- Greater Roanoke Workforce Development Board
- Healthy Roanoke Valley Steering Committee
- I-81 Corridor Coalition
- Regional Stormwater Management Committee
- Resilient Virginia Collaborative Alliance
- RADAR Advisory Committee
- Roanoke City Parks Foundation
- Roanoke Foodshed Network
- Roanoke Outside Advisory Board
- Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce Board
- Roanoke Regional Chamber of Commerce – Transportation Advocacy Committee
- Roanoke Regional Housing Network
- Roanoke Valley Greenway Commission
- Roanoke Valley Urban Forestry Council
- United Way Community Investment Council
- Upper Roanoke River Roundtable Advisory Committee
- Upper and Middle James Riparian Consortium
- Upper James River Resource Conservation and Development District (RC&D)
- Valley Metro Advisory Committee
- Virginia Western Community College-Integrated Environmental Studies Advisory Group

Local

- Clifton Forge Parks and Trails Committee

## Appendix A: Regional Commission Staff

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### Leadership

Jeremy Holmes, *Executive Director*  
 Sherry Dean, *Director of Finance*  
 Andrea Garland, *Director of RIDE Solutions*  
 Robert Natt, *Director of the Roanoke Valley Collective Response*  
 Eddie Wells, AICP, *Director of Community Development Programs*  
 Tori Williams, *Director of Transportation*

### Planning and Program Staff

VACANT, *Regional Planner II*  
 Elizabeth Elmore, *Public Engagement Manager*  
 Bailey Helgeson, *Peer Recovery Specialist Coordinator*  
 Bryan Hill, AICP, CZA, *Regional Planner III*  
 Gabriel Irigaray, *Regional Planner I*  
 Amanda McGee, AICP, *Senior Planner*  
 Virginia Mullen, *Office Manager*  
 Joseph Rosenberg, *Program and Grant Administrator*  
 Jonathan Stanton, *Transportation Planner II*  
 Alison Stinnette, *Transportation Planner I*

### Certifications:

AICP	American Institute of Certified Planners
CZA	Certified Zoning Administrator
LEED AP	Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design Accredited Professional
LEED GA	Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design Green Associate

## Appendix B: Regional Commission Service Area



MEMBER GOVERNMENTS: Counties of Alleghany, Botetourt, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke; Cities of Covington, Roanoke, and Salem; Towns of Clifton Forge, Rocky Mount, and Vinton. [www.rvarc.org](http://www.rvarc.org)





Roanoke Valley-Alleghany  
**REGIONAL**  
**commission**

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission  
Strategic Assessment  
Complete Record Report



Conducted By:  
The Southeast Regional Directors Institute  
Winter 2024



The Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC)  
Complete Record Report  
Conducted by  
The Southeast Regional Directors Institute  
Winter 2024

*About the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission*

*Since 1969, the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission has connected communities across Virginia's 5th Planning District. The commission of elected officials and citizens focuses on regional priorities like economic growth, transportation, and legislative action. By providing services in planning, grants, and project implementation, the Commission empowers its member local governments to make positive change. With a spotlight on development and cooperation, the Commission has spent 30+ years strengthening localities and enhancing quality of life. The Commission's efforts foster partnerships while addressing issues that span municipal borders. The Commission believes that when communities work together, the region thrives.*

*About the Southeast Regional Directors Institute*

*The Southeast Regional Directors Institute (SERDI) is a voluntary professional development association for regional council executive directors, and where appropriate, their councils and state associations in the states of Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, Tennessee, Virginia, and West Virginia*

**Overview**

At the request of the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC), the Southeast Regional Directors Institute (SERDI) conducted a strategic assessment of the Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission during the winter of 2024.

The strategic assessment consisted of five segments (1) Online Surveys of the RVARC Board of Directors and of Regional Leaders not on the Board, (2) six focus group sessions of (a) Alleghany, Covington, Clifton Forge (b) Botetourt County (c) City of Roanoke (d) City of Salem (e) Franklin County and Rocky Mount and (f) Roanoke County & Vinton; (3) seven one-on-one interviews with regional leaders identified by the Executive Director; (4) the RVARC Board of Directors work session, and (5) the submission of the Assessment Complete Record Report. The responses and summaries of the online surveys and focus groups appear in the Appendix of this complete record report. The recommendations that follow were based on the surveys, focus groups, and one-on-one interviews of regional leaders. The latter is a separate document provided to the RVARC Executive Director. The raw working papers of the focus group sessions have also been provided to the RVARC Executive Director. The recommendations that were made by the SERDI staff based on the input from the assessment were presented at the RVARC Executive Committee meeting on February 22, 2024, in Roanoke, Virginia.

## Recommendations

A comprehensive orientation program should be developed for the RVARC Commission Members on an annual basis.

### Strategy

Numerous short and long-term Commission Members that participated in the SERDI Assessment stated that they do not recall or have not gone through a comprehensive orientation program about RVARC or the role of them being a Commission Member when they began their service to the organization. They noted that they knew about some of the initiatives/programs but not all and really did not know about all the RVARC should/could do to support the local governments in the region and the region as a whole. To strengthen the relevance and importance of the Commission and RVARC a comprehensive revision to the orientation program is needed.

### Action Steps

- The program should be developed for ALL Commission Members and be held annually. Numerous participants in the focus groups in the SERDI assessment noted that a detailed orientation program was needed for ALL Commission Members.
- The program should be held in lieu of one of the monthly Commission Meetings.
- The program should include an overview of the Virginia Planning District Commissions creation through state legislation, the abilities of the RVARC, the current programs, etc.
- The orientation should be available online after the presentation so that relevant information is always available to Commission Members and interested parties.

### Responsible Parties

- Executive Director and Commission Chair

### Timetable

- Begin in Fiscal Year 2025 (July 1, 2024) at a regularly scheduled Commission Members Meeting

## The RVARC should hold an Annual Local Government Briefing and Work Session

### Strategy

Each year, the RVARC Chair and Executive Director will invite municipal, and county elected leaders to an event to highlight the accomplishments of the past year, and to gather information from the officials on what they see as the opportunities and challenges that they would like the RVARC to address in the coming year. Implementing this effort will enhance the communication and understanding of the RVARC, especially to municipal and county elected officials that do not serve as RVARC Commission Members.

### Action Steps

- Each of the counties and cities will host an annual RVARC Local Government Briefing and Work Session for its local Members.
- The Briefing and Work Session will contain three parts:
  - a) RVARC will provide an orientation overview of the RVARC, its overall programs, and specific projects that have been worked on during the past year in the county and its municipalities. Following the presentation time will be given for the participants to ask questions and provide input.
  - b) Specific County/Municipal summaries of service provided, and financial impact will be provided to attendees to reinforce leveraging of local funds.
  - c) The RVARC will facilitate a session in which the local government officials will identify the opportunities, challenges, and issues facing their communities they would like for the RVARC to help address. The opportunities, challenges and issues identified may be applicable to individual jurisdictions, but some may be found in the other counties and those can become a regional focus for RVARC.

### Responsible Parties

- RVARC Executive Director, Department Heads, and staff
- RVARC Commission Chair and possibly Standing Committee Chairs

### Timetable

- The Briefing and Work Session in each county should be held in late winter and early spring before the budget and work program are developed for the upcoming fiscal year.

## **Increase communication with local governments by routinely being visible at Member Jurisdiction Meetings and functions.**

### Strategy

It is particularly important for the staff of RVARC to be in communication with its member governments whether it be through website, newsletter, or other telecommunications. It is imperative however that communication goes beyond those means. Numerous comments were made that members wish the staff would visit their communities more frequently and attend county supervisor and city council meetings to be visible and bring updates of interest and relevance to their government. It is important to provide personal contact when Member staff is requesting assistance. There were several instances where the local member asked for assistance and were told that the answer to their request was no. If assistance is beyond the scope of RVARC staff, contact information for another organization or firm that can assist with their issue should be provided to the local government.

### Action Steps

- At least once a year, RVARC staff should attend at least one meeting of each Member's jurisdiction in the region.
- Each Member jurisdiction should be assigned an RVARC staff point of contact (POC). The POC should routinely, through telecommunications, phone, and personal visits, communicate with the elected officials and key staff Members in the jurisdiction.
- It should be the responsibility of the POC to make sure their assigned jurisdiction is aware of upcoming events, grants, and other funding opportunities, as well as other pertinent information.
- Additionally, the Executive Director should make sure they visit each Member jurisdiction at least once annually, whether it be a regular Meeting or personal visit.
- The Executive Director should continue with the County/Municipal Administrators' CAO meetings to brainstorm ways in which jurisdictions may work more regionally together. These meetings are very well received throughout the region.
- RVARC should explore offering other CAO-type meetings within other service areas. This would be useful for groups such as regional planners, transportation planners, finance staff, etc.
- Current Commission Board Members should routinely report back to colleagues and staff within their home Jurisdiction on RVARC meeting topics and activities.

### Responsible Parties

- Executive Director, Department Heads
- Staff Member
- Commission Members

### Timetable

- Ongoing beginning as soon as possible.

## Plan for Future Leadership Changes Through Succession Planning

### Strategy

When SERDI provided an assessment in 2017 a major concern was how the exit of the long-term Executive Director would affect the continuity within the organization. Subsequently, a succession plan was developed and assisted in a smooth transition when the change did occur. In the future it would be helpful to continue this succession planning proactively in anticipation of a future Executive Director vacancy as well as other leadership positions within RVARC.

### Action Steps

- Update the RVARC Strategic Plan to identify key leadership roles within the organization.
- The Executive Director will identify potential candidates for key leadership positions from current staff.
- On-going training of potential leadership staff will be geared towards leadership essentials and core department-wide requirements.
- Upon need, the succession plan will be incorporated into the approved Employee Search Policy.

### Responsible Parties

- Executive Director, Department Heads

### Timetable

- July 1, 2024



Increase staff interaction with the Rural Counties to insure a feeling of inclusion with the total RVARC.

### Strategy

Concern was voiced in the Rural areas that they do not feel as if they are equal partners with the Urban Center in the region. While not intentional by Commission Members or local governments the perception exists because of lack of understanding of how RVARC may be of value to their localities.

### Action Steps

- The Executive Director should continue to provide annual updates of how RVARC is succeeding across the region and how local dues are being leveraged with project dollars to provide service to their locality.
- If possible, imbed staff into localities on a routine basis to provide a scheduled presence in the outlying localities.
- Explore how RVARC may be able to assist localities by being a part of their staff in areas where lack of local resources prevents the member to staff the need. Depending on staff and funding resources, policy might be developed to offer these services on a fee-for-service basis. Also, if staff is limited an "on-call" model for additional staffing could be utilized.
- RVARC should organize an annual gathering of local non-profit service agencies and local government entities to share information and learn more about missions, services, capabilities, and agency needs and proactively seek opportunities for collaboration that would result in more efficient, effective service to the community.
- Explore the possibility of periodically rotating Commission Meetings to localities outside of Roanoke and the RVARC office.

### Responsible Parties

- Executive Director, Department Heads
- Staff Members

### Timetable

- Ongoing beginning as soon as possible

# Appendix

# Online Survey Results

# Online Survey Results

## Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission

### Board of Directors Survey

Winter 2024

**1. Do you represent a municipality or county on the Board of Directors? Are you an officer of the Board of Directors?**

- Yes, No.
- No.
- County Supervisor & Vice Chair of the Commission.
- Yes.
- County.
- YES, and Yes.

**2. What is good about the Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC)?**

- The RVARC has a long history of promoting regional cooperation to address areas within its purview of common interest. It also provides local technical assistance to smaller members who do not have dedicated staff to address those areas of need. The RVARC can speak as one voice for a number of jurisdictions on issues of common concern. The staff of the RVARC also serves as the support staff for the Roanoke Valley Metropolitan Planning Organization, also known as the TPO.
- We are presented good community information to share.
- The commission is a tremendous multi-jurisdictional asset with diverse resources. The collective responses are extremely beneficial!
- Positive relationship and eagerness to assist where applicable.
- Coordination role.
- Regional participation.

**3. What concerns do you have about the RVARC?**

- Too many members from individual organizations; too many members in general. ("What are. all those people doing there?") This duplication of membership dilutes the sense of responsibility that individual members feel toward the Council and significantly detracts from the Council's effectiveness. Too little continuity of agenda

subject matter from one meeting to the next. Lack of clarity of mission and purpose. I know that several years ago we studied. and revised the frequency of meetings, but I believe there are still WAY too many Council meetings and TPO meetings.

- The primary concern of the RVARC is and always has been to be and remain relevant to its member governments. The staff and leadership are aware of this need and work to provide meaningful support services, to be proactive in addressing regional concerns, and to provide support for the TPO (and other regional organizations from time to time) within the scope of its mission.
- Board seems to be "clique-y".
- I have no current concerns. Funding is always a concern.
- None at this time
- I am not sure we see all that is available from the Commission. I suspect there are other things that the Commission could do but we may not know what they are.
- Not enough money from Federal for projects use.

**4. From a Board members perspective, what do you see as the major roles that RVARC plays on behalf of the region's local governments?**

- This is not as easy to answer as it should be. I guess I would say "information sharing."
- Fostering cooperative across the region, not just focusing on the bigger localities.
- To encourage and facilitate local government cooperation with respect to regional problems. An important asset is the district planning work to move localities into their futures.
- Supplement with various local planning tasks and meeting regional and state planning obligations.
- The coordination role is important. And the discussion opportunity from local leaders is worth the effort.
- Studies and transportation advocacy.

**5. What is the perceived level of commitment of the RVARC to the work and interests of the local governments and other public organizations in the region, and what form(s) does that commitment take?**

- The RVARC staff is genuinely and demonstrably committed to the local governments as evidenced by its help on items like grant applications and by its consistent readiness to advise and assist local governments.
- Not being directly involved in local government (I am a citizen member not an elected official), I am not privy to what Roanoke County's perceived level of commitment is. What I perceive as the RVARC's level of commitment to local governments and other

public organizations in the region is a substantial commitment to community services and planning priorities having a significant local or regional impact. The commitment involves transportation planning at a variety of levels, support for the Greenways and the Greenway Commission, support to local governments that do not have dedicated planning staff for the work required, serving as a voice for legislative change and planning issues and opportunities of regional significance, and anticipating regulatory and functional needs and requirements for member localities and working to address those needs and requirements as a planning organization.

- I believe the RVARC is highly committed to serving the localities and other organizations and show that through programming and access to RVARC staff.
- I see RVARC as highly committed to serving its member localities within the regional footprint.
- Strong.
- I am not sure the Commission is recognized enough for the efforts you provide
- Strong.

**6. What is the perceived level of commitment of the local governments in the region to the RVARC?**

- Weak; regional council rarely comes up in county business or reports, Elected officials feel very little kinship with the regional council
- This is harder for me to assess, but based on the level and quality of participation of the local governments in the work of the RVARC I think this demonstrates a high level of commitment and perceived value.
- I feel that the bigger local governments feel they have it figured out and the smaller localities don't feel they are big enough to benefit from RVARC's offerings.
- I believe the localities are grateful for regional participation to leverage dollars and work on shared problems/concerns.
- Strong.
- Marginal.
- Strong.

**7. Are there program areas, projects, or initiatives that you/your local government feel that RVARC should not insert itself into, or should not be involved in? What are they? Why?**

- Without a list of current key programs to look at, I am unable to answer, (This speaks to the afore-mentioned "lack of continuity.")
- Not that I can identify.

- N/A.
- No.
- None at this time. Excess influence in transportation planning over local government desires was once a minor concern, although that has seemed to be corrected.
- Obviously, Transportation, Economic Development (more) such as funding for site improvements etc. I could see how the commission could assist with a revolving loan program and other innovative ways to move the region forward. Maybe host a VBR, Regional Partnership, Water Authority, Broadband Authority, Regional Industrial Authority, Community College, Roanoke Outdoor, RBTC meeting to see what the larger group needed from the Commission?

**8. Are there program areas that RVARC should insert itself into that it isn't? What are the barriers you perceive in the RVARC taking on that work?**

- I know of none.
- I am not aware of any at this time.
- Food and childcare deserts.
- Rural oriented challenges. I have not yet developed thinking about the barriers, per se'.
- P.E. planning assistance is a need and has been recently added by RVARC.
- Trail enhancement might be an area that the Commission could get more involved. Number of staff and dollars are the barriers.

**9. What are the key challenges and opportunities facing the region? What role if any, should the RVARC play in addressing these?**

- This question goes well beyond the remit of a survey like this. It cannot be realistically answered absent frank two-way discussion and objective criteria-setting.
- Historically, the basic challenge facing the RVARC has been promoting intergovernmental cooperation within the region. I think localities are more attuned to the benefits of regional cooperation and, in some cases, the need to do so. The RVARC is well positioned to assist in these efforts due to its history of focusing on a regional approach to solving problems and assistance in identifying areas of regional need or cultivating and supporting organizations or projects that help to address regional problems and support regional goals.
- Homelessness, mental health issues, lack of resources.
- Lack of VDOT secondary road funding, SMART Scale formula and transportation.
- Transportation funding. Advocate, seek additional grant funding on behalf of the TPO.
- Needing more talent, needing more housing, needing more good jobs, needing more entrepreneurial opportunities etc.

**10.If you could change one thing about the RVARC what would it be?**

- This is not "one thing," but for me it would be (1) downsize membership; (2) reduce meeting frequency; (3) enhance continuity between meetings; and (4) and clarify mission.
- I still think it is hard to communicate to the public who the RVARC is, what we do and why we exist. I wish we could find a way to address that.
- N/A
- Enhanced relationship between staff and the Commission.
- None.
- The passive attitude.

**11.If you could design a focus and direction for the RVARC to be the most relevant and effective Commission for its local governments and the region as a whole in the future months and years to come, what would RVARC look like?**

- This is a huge, far-reaching issue that I am not prepared to answer, and frankly I do not think that any single person can answer.
- More of the same, and more for less. The strength of the RVARC is to see regional trends and planning needs and to move the region in the right direction to address those trends and needs. We need to continue to be an efficient and economical way for our region to address transportation planning and other aspects of community service or resource development.
- Create a mechanism to interface directly with localities with respect to understanding priorities and how the Commission could perhaps service them. There also needs to be an enhanced level of rural interface, planning and working to alter Commission staff work, where needed to accommodate those priorities. As a rural member locality, the Commission seems to be Roanoke centric.
- I'm honestly pleased with current direction.
- An organizational shift is needed it seems. Stuck in a rut comes to mind.



# Online Survey Results

## Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission

# Regional Leaders

Winter 2024

### 1. When you hear the words Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission (RVARC) what comes to mind?

- Facilitator of regional projects and/or projects that benefit the region.
- Local governments studying at regional data, planning, and acting together on the most important issues.
- Regionalism.
- Planning for growth in the region; Resource to local government with demographic info; Makes recommendations for site development of industry.
- A regional planning organization.
- The organization that plans infrastructure projects that affects the entire region.
- Regional Collaboration.
- Why isn't there a hyphen between Roanoke Valley and Alleghany?

### 2. What do you think is the role/purpose of the RVARC?

- Manage projects/initiatives that are regional in nature or cannot be managed by local government.
- Support local governments in the region in understanding infrastructure needs, providing a place to address them collectively.
- Promote regionalism. And I think, in today's environment, education of elected officials might be a key tactic. With the complexity of local government and the many regional partners, it would be bewildering to any local elected official to understand the role of regionalism and the benefit of regionalism in any given area. There is a tremendous level of ground that can be covered in that regard. Regional organizations like VBR, RRP, GRWDB, and others who work directly with government would, I think, be eager to plug in and cooperate in this regard.
- An economic development engine
- To assist member localities in coordinating regional projects.
- Planning leader organization for the region.
- Bringing local governments/municipalities together for sustainable living.
- To bring coordination and common purpose to the regions plans.

### **3. What do you know about the RVARC and its services and programs?**

- Regional programs/initiatives related to transportation, economy, and environment.
- RVARC produces reports on each locality in the region giving its leaders and residents, a better understanding of the make-up of the community, economic impact, infrastructure needs, etc. RVARC is the fiscal agent for Collective Response, In both instances, RVARC is able to rally leaders to advocate for state legislation that would impact these issues.
- RVARC is involved in transportation, land use, and economic strategic planning in addition to providing local tech assistance. Promoting regionalism cannot be understated.
- Our agency has utilized their services many times: To perform an economic impact study & to provide us with workforce demographics to share with our college and university partners
- I'm familiar with the RVARC's services and programs based on 29 years of interaction with the organization.
- The TPO is a major part of your mission, along with communication between governments.
- More than most residents but limited in scope.
- Most of my experience with RVARC is on the transportation side of things. I know that RVARC is involved in quite a few broader, regional efforts, but I am less than familiar with those.

### **4. What does the RVARC do well?**

- Excellent convener of regional thought leaders and they run meetings effectively.
- RVARC's work around data, mapping and reporting is excellent (demographic data, employment, transportation, etc.). They have built strong trusting relationships with local government leaders and are a go-to resource.
- Current and relevant data collection; reliable to respond to requests; excellent resource to government agencies.
- Regional coordination and convenes regional leadership.
- It does a good job showing all the local governments that they need each other and should plan projects together.
- Convener, transportation issues, commuter resource, alternative commuter (biking) advocate, some housing advocacy.
- RVARC has an engaged staff that invests time and energy in understanding issues.

## 5. What concerns you about the RVARC?

- Don't become complacent; continue to be progressive and push local governments with thought leadership.
- As with any organization, only those closest to it truly understand the depth and breadth of its work.
- It is difficult to prove value for rural localities. Regional Commission might find ways to be relevant to rural localities in particular. Communication of benefit of regionalism and the benefit of the association of local elected officials with one another is key.
- Can this region continue to fund this agency?
- It is important to give our government and community leaders the opportunity to see how other region's plan initiatives.
- Lack of resources
- I would like to see RVARC grow into a stronger leadership role.

## 6. How would you gauge the interest level of the local governments in the region towards the RVARC?

- I do not know.
- I would say the leadership is very interested. However, I'm not sure how the planning departments in each locality intersect with this work or if there are opportunities to leverage such a partnership.
- Board members are engaged. Citizens and other elected officials likely may not understand role.
- Not working in local government, this question is difficult to answer.
- Medium-high.
- For governmental stakeholders, the agency communicates its mission well ... not sure if this is the case with community stakeholders.
- Very High
- I think the elected officials rely on RVARC's leadership. I think locality staff is unsure of the role.

**7. If you are an elected or appointed official of one of the RVARC member governments, but not a member of the RVARC Board, what could the Board and staff of the RVARC do to enhance their working relationship with you and your local government?**

- N/A
- E-newsletters; reports at each Chamber of Commerce Bd. of Directors meeting; online Q and A when questions arise within individual organizations.
- n/a
- Not part of government.
- N/A
- N/A

**8. If you are an appointed official or one of the RVARC's regional partners, whether a staff or policy person, what could the RVARC staff or policy officials do to enhance their working relationship with you and your organization?**

- Be proactive. The organization seems to primarily be reactive to the requests of local government. In addition, bring ideas to the community as well.
- Proactively identify regional policy priorities that impact all localities, and advocate for them together.
- I see no issue there.
- As an academic institution, responding to our needs as you are currently doing.
- n/a
- Not part of government.
- N/A
- I am not always clear as to how the workplan and staff time relates to project deliverables. My goal is always what are the outputs, not necessarily did we spend time in the right category.

**9. Do you see the RVARC as the facilitator for local governments and other public entities to come together to discuss issues, challenges, and opportunities that face the region? If not, could it or should it be?**

- Yes.
- Yes - they already are playing this role on several issues mentioned above.
- I think so. There could be other opportunities there for this outside of board meetings.
- Similar to the Roanoke Regional Commission, could RVARC hold quarterly informational meetings?
- Yes.
- Yes
- Definitely
- I see that as the role, and I'd like to see RVARC get stronger in that role.

**10. What is/are the primary challenges/opportunities facing the region that you feel that RVARC should play a major role in addressing?**

- Vision. The region has made great strides the past 10 years however I feel everyone is letting off the gas as they feel we've "arrived", whereas in reality we need to double down. RVARC could local governments look 10-20 years down the road.
- Transportation, regional housing availability/accessibility.
- There is a trend towards retrenchment. Local officials need to understand regionalism benefits in all areas. Cooperation is not universally understood.
- Sharing best practices from other planning commissions throughout VA and the nation: strategies for recruiting a talented workforce; how have other planning commissions addressed recruitment challenges; are their frequent changes in acceptable sites for new bus/industry?
- Transportation (vehicular and air).
- Infrastructure needs to be the primary challenge to overcome.
- Broadband, I-81 improvements, affordable housing, economic development
- Development is seen as local economic competition, and not as something that should be regionally planned for.

**11.If you could change one thing about the RVARC, what would it be?**

- To the general public, the name doesn't tell you what it does.
- RVARC may need to evaluate whether there are regional approaches and solutions in other areas that are needed. Strategic planning to identify regional needs and best practices could be a useful exercise.
- From my lens, I cannot offer any suggestions.
- The RVARC should communicate more frequently about its operations. It works too much in the background.
- It is time for a leadership trip to Northern Virginia.
- Aggregator for indexes that track health outcomes.
- To answer this would make my responses no longer anonymous

**12.Do you understand how RVARC is distinct from other regional organizations such as the Roanoke Regional partnership, Roanoke Regional Chamber, and others?**

- Yes.
- I think so - they each have their niche issues, and audiences that they engage
- Yes, although maybe I am in a unique position. I am confident not all understand.
- There are probably overlaps in service. Can the three agencies combine efforts to avoid duplication of services? Do other planning districts in the Commonwealth have memorandums of agreement to outline roles and responsibilities.
- Yes.
- Yes
- Not so much
- Yes. But in some ways, closer coordination between those groups would create a stronger region.

# FOCUS GROUP EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

**Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission**  
**SERDI Assessment**  
**FOCUS GROUP EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**  
Winter 2024

1. When you hear the words Roanoke Valley Alleghany Regional Commission what comes to mind?

**Alleghany Highlands – Alleghany; Covington; Clifton Forge**

- It's gotten better over the years; presence here and willingness to be here; much better than it was before
- Technical Assistance/Project-based Assistance; Support; Knowledge; Guidance
- Grant Writers; Trusted partner to discuss economic development needs and shortfalls
- Gathering data, lodging assessment, studies, reviewing the history, rewrite of the comp plan
- In a learning curve? For a lot of years – we didn't play nice together and that was absolutely true – now that all of the counties are working much closer together and trying to build off each other, it's a regional focus, not a county-by-county focus. Don't want to offend anyone. Is relatively new within the last few years.
- This area is a "HUB" - Outdoor rec and kids programs are 'regional' – Jackson-river trail going all the way into Bath County – push it from a rec/tourism
- Planning Commission is represented on the outdoor rec group and tourism, etc. – they keep a finger on the pulse

**Botetourt County**

- Technical staff
- Conveners
- Opaque
- Confusing core mission
- The Counties often do not know what RVARC does or can do.

**City of Roanoke**

- Regional Transportation
- Regional local government support



### City of Salem

- Really bad name – long – like 5th PDC better
- Service entity that can help local governments in areas they are short-handed in (example: smaller communities that don't have engineers)
- Resource
- Limited experience – immediately goes to Transportation
- They hold a Planners lunch every quarter; not that familiar with them
- Transportation – Region embraced the greenways – Now have a better understanding

### Franklin County & Rocky Mount

- Transportation
- Partner
- Networking
- Regional Assistance
- Collaboration
- Wide spectrum of issues and services
- Resource

### Roanoke County & Vinton

- Transportation
- Regional Collaboration
- Collective Response – more important in the last year or so
- Regional approach to area issues
- Well-intentioned
- Do the regional planning, are important, don't have as much execution on their plans that the localities can;
- Good and bad history – mainly bad – Jeremy is trying to improve (relationships with localities);
- Roanoke-centric; jurisdictions weren't the focus; funding, staff members and programs are more urban in nature – they are reaching out and having a better relationship with the jurisdictions.
- Can often be a place for advocacy that could occur, which would otherwise be inappropriate for just a single local government can do on their own.
- Tends to align more with the Central City/Roanoke than it does for the outlying areas. Fills the gaps that local government can't/don't naturally fill. Good when there are gaps we want to be filled – but sometimes they're a solution looking for a problem, as opposed to the other way around.
- Quasi-academic (some approaches or recommendations are more for a term paper than actually usable by the local governments);

- Smaller-jurisdiction planning
- Resistance to be helpful to the locality in the way they need it
- Question: does it provide service to its member localities and also cast a wider vision for the region that individually the localities couldn't do on their own
- RVARC is different than the new river valley in how it operates
- Not many people know what RVARC is – what is it, where is it – could be the name
- Is it too large of a footprint? They have an intention of trying to represent everyone and be equitable in providing value to their members – how effective are they/can they be at that, being that it is such a large footprint

## 2. What does the RVARC do well?

### **Alleghany Highlands – Alleghany; Covington; Clifton Forge**

- Providing data; developing surveys (tourism, economic impact of outdoor rec, economic impact of arts in the community; lodging study)
- Used Housing Study to apply for \$1.3 million grant
- Resource to them; Data collection; grant writing support
- Interpretation and guidance – especially on the comprehensive plan – their knowledge of how to keep the communities/plans in line with responsibilities to funders and agencies.
- Transportation seems to be very strong- bicycle and vehicular

### **Botetourt County**

- Convening the regional partners to address common issues and opportunities.
- Very accomplished with data collection.
- Very accommodating when asked for assistance.
- TPO- Transportation
- CAO Meetings are well received and needed.
- Roanoke-Valley Greenway Plan and mapping
- Ride Share program.

### **City of Roanoke**

- Convening the regional partners to address common issues and opportunities
- Thinking innovatively and outside of the box
- Good job at balancing the political positions/aspects and the technical aspects of the 'work' – on a variety of topics – not just transportation.
- Staff-level committees they participate on and move issues for as a region; without the regional commission, not sure how well that would work otherwise.

### City of Salem

- Good place for everyone to get around the table – met a lot of colleagues, built relationships
- Matt Miller – works there – initially working on GIS in the regional sense
  - Early on – did a lot to help to develop and bring GIS into the community – coordinating those efforts across city/village lines – standardized for the region
- Good/instrumental in bringing folks to the table/talking
- Big on ‘project impact’
  - FEMA study – brought flood mitigation/preparedness and public safety side into the same room
- Convening
- Great ability to be a convener – ability to take more of a leadership role is important
- Data in general
- Sent him to a GIS conference

### Franklin County & Rocky Mount

- Communication – not leaving anyone out – everyone gets invited to things and asked about things
- Planning (traditionally) they’ve been good at – not sure it is as good as it used to be (land use; assistance with ordinances and comp plans, transportation planning – they used to do it well and not sure they do it as well as they used to)
- Transportation – smart scale in general – VDOT program – some have fought for some of their projects for them to submit – competition with Roanoke County and City – and one of the staff makes sure the rural communities have a spot at the table and projects included.
- Last year – planners quarterly luncheon – go and sit around with a bunch of planners in the region and talk about issues and issues you’re having trouble with – gets everyone at the table – that’s a new great idea – the county staff try to make time to drive there and go.
- Getting localities together/convening: Managers; Board Meetings; Annual Meeting. A lot of the localities would never talk to or see each other but for RVARC.
- Legislative luncheon each year – invites state elected officials to a luncheon to meet with people from the localities – if they didn’t do that, there wouldn’t be a lot of interaction between the towns and other state officials.

### Roanoke County & Vinton

- Attempt to put together a regional plan – but by the time they get to some of the things, they’re out of hours and the project doesn’t get started or completed because they get pulled in other directions

- TPO – side – tends to be more effective in responding to the needs/goals of its member localities – 5 localities instead of 12 – and the TPO has money
- Since/With the TMA/funding (\$4-\$5 million per year they get funding through that) there is a lot more interest in RVARC.
- Collective Response – they have been instrumental and helpful in applying for opioid abatement grants – wouldn't be able to navigate that on their own – extremely helpful – it's one of the board's priorities to make sure the grants get spent
- Economic Development – can sometimes just work within their own localities – RVARC does a great job bringing folks together as a region – to see where the 'bleed is' and where they can work together/what is going on in the region
  - Local members on the TPC help push that forward
- CEDS document – opens up funding through the federal EDA – by their very nature, they're powerful
- Good convener – can get the right people at the table to have the conversation
- Certain federally-required documents – they do a good job putting those together – but sometimes they're just a 'checkbox' – there is no room for creativity and there is no execution on the back end – so it becomes useless at the end of the day- unless you're applying for a grant that needs that box checked
- Civility – at the regional commission meetings, the appointed members are the local governments. The citizen members are interesting – why are they at the table? It's good for them to hear the discussions so they can make better decisions in their home community – because a lot of the issues are broader than just their home base.

### 3. What concerns you about the RVARC?

#### Alleghany Highlands – Alleghany; Covington; Clifton Forge

- Communication – needs to be better
- Lack of participation by local governments at the Commission meeting; difficult to justify travel for an hour and a half meeting; would be nice to do them via Zoom; would be helpful to rotate board meetings; maybe a day trip/fam tour
- Not sure the Commission is aware of the other service providers serving their members and communities. (example: Community Services Board – works with the homeless council in Roanoke but the council didn't know about it. When they're doing regional visits, they're missing out on not inviting and meeting with all of the folks doing business in the region/providing services)
- Some didn't know what RVARC was and thought they should know.

#### Botetourt County

- Sustainable funding of the organization; get as much as they can from the localities to participate – very dependent on federal and state grants.
- Sometimes resistant to change.
- CEDS committee meets but has very little substance.

### City of Roanoke

- Sustainable funding of the organization; get as much as they can from the localities to participate – very dependent on federal and state grants.
- There are some significant regional opportunities and challenges that aren't talked about or brought up – that need to be.
  - Regional response to homelessness – political pressure for that NOT to come up
  - Regional response to transit – political pressure for that NOT to come up – Usually brought up by the individual jurisdictions but not generally at the commission level; or conversations occur outside (with social service providers, but not with the commission)
    - TTC level - talk about transit – county doesn't want to play – so the staff don't have any conversations with it – staff can't do a lot to drive that conversation – but an assessment around regional challenges and opportunities (transit will appear in that) - and then what are the solutions to those?
  - The Commission could initiate those topics under the work plan – as opposed to just using what Wayne had in the work plan and keep working on those.
  - A locality can ask for something to the work plan – but it's always a reactive type of thing as opposed to a proactive thing.
- Some of the committees are GREAT conversations – it's good to have folks around the table that we have around the table – but sometimes there is only conversation and no actual results/tasks to come out of those conversations.
- Bike/Walk Friendly communities and how can the region push forward with that. City is moving on with that, county is less engaged, so they don't.
- Stormwater – city, and county are doing different things – how can the commission bridge the gap there? Hasn't been addressed in a regional context.

### City of Salem

- Harder to coordinate the work with the agendas at play with the staff (example: what the staff felt needed to be done 'valley' wide and what the local governments wanted to happen were different)
- 90% is very little involvement with the PDC; works with VDOT, others – don't use them at all

- More effort to use them, than to rely on the resources we already have – became Grant Writers
- Not getting a lot of results from the staff – staffers shouldn't be seeking agendas
- Is urban focused – tended to be – certain issues you couldn't talk about? Funding for Valley Metro, etc.?
- Smaller localities funding the operating budget of something larger.
- Was more engaged when we had Ben on the staff; now we just don't. Would take advantage of it if we felt it would benefit the city.
- Missing a lot of opportunities and relationship-building
- Roanoke city dominates the discussion to the detriment of regional planning
- If it doesn't matter to the City of Roanoke, it's dead in the water
- Beltway for the Roanoke Region? City should push for that so it stays top of mind
  - Doing Comprehensive Planning efforts now – they're an important organization to be at the table
  - PDC doesn't need to be involved until the city needs something
  - No need for them to be involved on the front end
- Helped with the Strategic Plan – sat with Eddy Wells.
- RVARC is the CEDS Committee
  - This is the organization you need to help get federal grant funding
  - CEDS Committee gets involved more with transportation-heavy projects and they say 'this will help Economic Development'
  - We need other topics that will help Economic Development.
- Regional Quarterly meetings
  - Not a lot of folks show up
  - All they do is agree on a spreadsheet that lists projects
- Is it the same footprint as the Partnership?
  - Hope that there is some synergy
  - Missed opportunities there
- Planning on EV Charging Stations
  - The plan will be the extent of that
  - What happens AFTER the planning study?
- Ability to administer a large project – cross-jurisdictional?
  - Do they have the expertise to do that any longer?
- Smart Scale?
  - Never seen them do anything beyond conceptual planning?
  - Never seen them get involved at the PE level?
  - Might not have the staffing or the budgets to do that
  - Can be effective on regional scoping?
  - Get everyone in the room – convening and facilitators

- Need an updated Housing Study – since COVID

### Franklin County & Rocky Mount

- Don't know what they want to be (known for, what's their strong suit,) – since they're members of both (Regional Commissions), if they know what they can lean on RVARC for/what they want to do, they can use them both for what they're good at.
- Localities don't know RVARC's mission or focus and what they want to be for their localities.
- Used to be really focused on planning and transportation – what they used them a lot for – but maybe they've gotten away from some of that. Is it following the money or is it following the needs of the localities?
- What is the focus? They want to know so they can tap them for what they need.
- Pay to two PDCs – use a lot of West Piedmont. West Piedmont never tells them No. They actually pay a larger percentage to RVARC and sometimes wonder if they're getting enough service back for what the county actually pays them. County has asked for assistance – but are having trouble getting product from one of their staff members. It is time to be seeing some deliverables and they're not seeing that. The dues for both organizations come out of the planning budget – sometimes they wish they could pay West Piedmont more and RVARC less because West Piedmont does much more for them.
- Have a lot of projects they work on with West Piedmont – has not worked with anyone from the RVARC.
- CEDS and Bike Path – with West Piedmont – the geographies don't align – challenge is with some things you gravitate toward one and other things you gravitate toward the other – traffic and commuting – come from Roanoke – so they stay connected for transportation.
- DEFINE WHO AND WHAT THEY DO/ARE – Responsiveness – do a work program every year – could be those work items don't come to fruition – Changed how they've done that recently? How do they do the work program?
- What do they want to be? Who are they?
- Is their focus always on Roanoke centric – not the rural areas – do they spend most of their time working on the urban/city stuff and less time on the outer regions – everyone is understaffed and busy – so don't have the time to follow up. We probably don't have time to reach out and follow up – what is their capacity and what are their strengths. Have been strong in transit planning in the past, but are they really strong now? Can they/are they equipped?
- New Transportation Planning Director – not much interaction yet – not a voting member of the Transp Tech Committee – allowed to sit on it as a nonvoting member –

Seemed to pick up immediately – he didn't seem to take too much time to get up to speed.

- When did they join the RVARC – Joe @ west piedmont is always contacting them and seeking input – more proactive in contact/responsiveness, etc. – More communication, etc.
- Dichotomy of localities – everyone is so different – Does RVARC have enough people to have all of that in their brains? Do they have enough people to give the amount of attention that Joe gives (not just Joe – but all at West Piedmont).
- Find a way to address some of the Roanoke-centric issues
- More communication from RVARC to the rural localities – what can they do to help - more consistent outreach.
- Staff turnover in the localities- need more education at the staff level from RVARC – elected officials have a different idea of what needs to be happening vs. the staff – can't just put it on the elected official.

### Roanoke County & Vinton

- RVARC on the TPO side – there are road and transportation projects that have been built because of money that has funneled through RVARC – and no one knows that – they've supplemented a lot of stuff and they don't get a lot of credit for it
  - The Roanoke Greenway wouldn't be where it is without the Regional Commission
  - They have an identity problem they definitely need to solve
- Economic Development: Tension between the goals of the Regional Partnership and the RVARC – they get projects, make deals, etc.
  - RVARC has some role to play in that, but what is it?
- Lack of communication – there are times you'll submit a project to the work plan and you don't know its approved and don't know who the staff member is who runs point – needs better communication
- Understanding of localities needs
- Taking the lead – Safe streets for all grant – with Vinton and Botetourt County – the city is doing one as well – tried to approach the regional commission about that, but they whiffed on that
  - They could be more proactive, reaching out to see if they'll be interested in certain things
  - Doesn't make sense that the county and the city are both doing those
- Staff was pushing a regional project the communities didn't really want to do



- Push/ask if there is a need – some things really NEED to come from the regional commission and they either don't have the hours available or the interest to do those things
- Disconnect between senior leadership & staff – Senior Leadership will say, yes, we can help you with that – and staff will say they don't have the capacity and can't help – Especially the federal grants, they want a regional approach
- Localities should understand better the budget and how the funds are allocated (manage expectations)
- Want them to 'finish' something instead of phasing it out – want something done in 1 year vs. 3 years and 3 phases because they want to 'please' everyone. Sometimes it's better to have 1 impactful thing finished than it is to have 5 things started.
- In the past, they found money for other things that were close to what the region wanted, but the region didn't actually get that – they got what the funding was designated for.
- Communication – if localities understood the staff capacity and what RVARC needs to do to get funding, the locality could direct something to the workplan that RVARC could do, instead of proposing something unrealistic/can't be completed

**4. Share with us <insert your town/your community> relationship to RVARC (ex. Manager/Administrator, elected official, economic developer/planner, human services, non-profit, etc.)**

**Allegheny Highlands – Allegheny; Covington; Clifton Forge**

- They have participated in or assisted with lodging study, outdoor recreation economic impact, arts study, housing study and moving forward transportation study.
- Allegheny Highlands Community Services- CSB for the region. Unfamiliar with other relationships
- Good support to Administrators for Allegheny County, Town of Clinton, City of Covington and Chamber of Commerce.
- We have good communication about needs, grant opportunities and the Highlands working together for the good of all.

**Botetourt County**

- RVARC will react when approached. Often when asked for assistance the answer is often, No, we do not do this,

### City of Roanoke

- Relationships from the Top down – Mayor knows Jeremy by name – same with the board members, county members, front line planners – the working relationship is strong and engaged.
- Dozens of folks engage with the Commission
- Opioid response through housing, economic development, transportation

### City of Salem

- Not as experienced - needs to be a role for everyone – there should be people you interact with at the Commission – depending on what the problem is – it should be accessible to everyone.

### Franklin County & Rocky Mount

- RVARC acts like a consulting firm – but you can't depend on them because you have to pay them anyway; don't have the money or the structure of a consulting firm.
- Peers; adjacent colleagues; friendly; paying for something but not getting a product
- If you're paying for something – need timelines, deliverables and accountability if you don't deliver. Never get to those specifics. Nothing is concrete. Not any certain department or field.
- Have a few projects that are lingering. Haven't gotten the deliverable. If it's a consultant type of role, they should manage the project-by-project process better, get it done, and communicate with them.
- Set a realistic timeline and communicate that – comp plan; update? Not getting any of the product. Structure? Turnover? This isn't new – there may have been a disconnect. Communication needs to be better.
- List of priorities are with Western Piedmont – are they trying to do some of the 'project by project' work, and look at more regional initiatives? If so, that's fine. If not, what are they doing?
- Western Piedmont have on-demand consultants – any locality can tap into those and use them as they need them. Where did that go with RVARC? Were they looking at that? Have to pay extra, but it saves time. Needed cost estimates and plans – very quickly – didn't have to RFP – Western Piedmont had someone that had that expertise – the consultant billed the PDC and then Franklin paid the PDC. Daniel says a lot of the PDCs have that type of relationship with consultants.
- Communicate re: what the services are and what they can help them with.
- If they are going to take advantage of their services (comp plan update or grant application) – thought they would assign a person to help but they didn't. Be clear about

what the deliverables are – their responsibilities and our responsibilities. Letting you know what they can do and they can't do.

- Internal communication isn't always good between staff. Seem siloed. One person doesn't know what someone else is working on.
- Localities need to know who the person is to reach out to for certain topics.
  - Have a lane and be there
- Are contact people switching – communicating the areas of focus of the staff. If they don't have the staff for that any longer, just communicate that as well.

### **Roanoke County & Vinton**

- Vinton Mayor served twice as Chair of the Regional Commission – has set a tone for the town of regional participation – town punches above its weight because they have such good support for participating regionally.
- Board members have become more engaged (on the transportation side) with the regional commission and the TPO – a lot due to Mr. North and others paying a lot more interest. The transportation funding has made RVARC a lot more relevant.
- The agency has become more relevant. Especially the legislative agenda.
- Relevancy ties back to identity – visibility and tying into meaningful impacts can help grow that relevancy – money they get for projects helps build that relevancy – how can RVARC side of the house build that in? They can cast a great vision and be on the cutting edge of what is going on – but what does that mean? How do we implement that, operationalize that – or does it just sit on a shelf? They can do a lot to sell themselves/their ideas.
- Know when not to push an issue – some issues for certain localities are non-starters because of where the political players and the communities lie – having the RVARC bash communities over the head with 'this is what you're supposed to be doing' doesn't help – you only do that if you know those communities/areas.

## **5. What are the key opportunities, issues, and challenges that your organization is facing that might be addressed on a regional basis? Is there a role that RVARC should play in assisting in addressing?**

### **Alleghany Highlands – Alleghany; Covington; Clifton Forge**

- Virginia Governor has put forth initiatives for health and mental health – rural communities are not getting recognized - the needs are just as big in the rural areas as the urban areas – need those services in rural areas as well as urban areas.
- Community Services boards are independent – no regional organization covers those rural areas of the region – health and human services at the regional level – RVARC be the convener of those groups serving the region.
- Also housing; employee hiring/workforce development

- Would be nice to have grants for transportation to have local amenities (instead of Roanoke, Rockbridge, other)
- Their DSS meets frequently with and works with Craig, Botetourt, Bath and Highland, often sharing resources. It has been very beneficial to agencies as a group. But RVARC isn't doing that/pulling them together. They're doing it on their own.
- Recognize that providing transportation alternatives in rural communities looks very different than in rural areas.
- Broadband – will be a small population of folks that don't have access to broadband – need more of that.
- Cell coverage is an issue; a lot of middle mile issues and last mile issues; Greenbank quiet zones - play a role in the cell and broadband
- ARC standpoint – partner with those across the river – (Allegheny + Greenbrier county) could be very beneficial
- Tobacco settlement and coalfield reclamation
- Could do more data analysis/capture more data on substance use/abuse issues;
- It would be nice if we had an Alleghany-Highlands grant writer some day – one person, that's all they do all the time is research and write (RVARC has advertised for that position – putting on a bench of grant writers – the commission is going to hire them; looking forward to the bench of grant writers)

#### **Botetourt County**

- Affordable Housing
- Public Safety (Hazard mitigation, grant assistance)
- Homelessness
- Micro Transit
- Go Virginia leadership.
- The Roanoke area is often siloed with issues and solutions kept close to the vest.
- City of Roanoke

#### **City of Roanoke**

- Affordable Housing
- Stormwater
- Homelessness
- Transit
- Economic Mobility (not a lot of attention at a regional level on how we move people of lower incomes up through training and other opportunities to connect them to jobs we're trying to grow in the community)

- Workforce program was done by the City – but they don't do it now. The regional organization - they do a good job regionally connecting people to unemployment benefits, but not really workforce development.
- Climate Change – economic resiliency
- Active Transportation – city is more aggressive than the county
- Transit – bike and ped – how to address that regionally
- Regional bike master plan – updated before COVID – it is time for an update on that
- EV charging stations – regional
- Greenways
- Blue Ways – 60 miles of river – jointly pay for a staff position at the commission that focuses on Blue Ways (City of Roanoke, Salem, Town of Vinton, County)
- Public Safety is led out of Roanoke – a lot of rural communities have it being led out of the regional commission – regional response is housed within the city – Most of the collaborative work is the city, Vinton County, Salem, not much further beyond that – then there's agreements among public safety/municipalities in those areas. The regional Commission's footprint is larger than those agreements.

### City of Salem

- Economic Development
- Are there value-added services/gaps/holes – how can they help the City of Salem?
- Commission to facilitate the hot-topics
  - Housing; code enforcement;
  - Talk to the town of Vinton
    - What they have going on and how do we solve them together
    - They try to do that with planners luncheon
      - Its nice and helpful for those of us with smaller staffs to find out what the topics are and do research across the region – need more facilitating of those types of conversations and those responsible staff
- Bring folks together – we can't/are not the first one to have this problem
- Building officials get together – but 'who' are getting together? Maybe it should be expanded? And maybe its not impactful to everyone?
- Stuff happens in the bigger cities/bigger locales – could hear about it sooner/be proactive, understand the consequences of doing it or not doing it
- Stormwater – they're trying – will be hard to get 'one size fits all' – Roanoke City does all of that – Salem doesn't do any of that – its' hard to be at the table with them (we've got a \$50k project and Roanoke City has a \$1 million project)
- Facilitating is great – but when you don't accomplish anything, I'm going to spend that hour talking about something else.

- Utility Fee is going to be something more localities are going to be looking at; Regional Commission has done good as a convener – getting people together – storm water fee – for localities – lead a regional study to show the value of that would be helpful to the localities.
- Homelessness from a regional perspective – Roanoke City ends up with most of those issues – but it's still a regional problem. Have seen a great increase in Homelessness in the City of Salem.
  - When the City of Roanoke enforces their policies, it becomes a problem for outlying communities.

### Franklin County & Rocky Mount

- Housing – biggest thing. Regional Housing plan completed 3 years ago – is there a time to look at that again? What comes next? Every PDC got some money – and they were supposed to develop a plan to use that money. What is RVARC doing? It's on the PDCs to set up a program/how they would work to address the issue.
- Do you have a regional housing plan? And how does that affect Rocky Mount and Franklin County? Communication about what the plan is and what is our focus on housing. Is it only Section 8 in Roanoke City, or other things?
- Workforce – solutions – ideas, and plans – new resources to train people – funding to create programs – how are those communicated to the people 'down here', etc. Do they have a role in that? If so, what is that role?
- Housing – might not be the expert, but know who the people are that can provide best practices, how to fund, and facilitate getting the experts in the room so we can all ask questions. Franklin County had a housing summit – was kind of interesting – can't the regional commission do the zoning ordinance? What role can they play?
- Helping with community input/meetings – come alongside staff and support the local staff – with the survey, running the meeting, explaining what 'zoning' is – and providing that type of support to the localities, figuring out who needs it/could be that facilitator/convener for some of those things.
- Housing Summit in the Counties – gathering the input from the areas – not just having one at Hotel Roanoke.
- A lot of issues can be addressed with Better communication. What is it that you do good and what is it that you want do.

### Roanoke County & Vinton

- Transportation funding – competing with Northern VA, Richmond, etc. – puts us at a disadvantage – want to put money towards projects to help pay them down (smart scale) to get them funded – do we need a Regional Transportation Authority/funder or we will be cut out of funding at the state level?

- I-81 – southbound section – trying to find funding for that
- Transit – people want to see that – the current metro system has to go back downtown – is there a different system that can be put into play?
- Grants are much more competitive when there is a regional approach – better for the residents to receive benefits at the regional level – opportunity to be the convener and apply for the right grants for the longevity of it
- Invest in the Collective Response program – be committed to that long-term – if we’re going to be effective at being able to abate some of the opioid addiction that impacts the region – need a strategic commitment to that program
- Leverage resources of the localities (i.e. Roanoke County comp plan list serves, using the member's resources to their benefit, put out newsletters from their departments, etc.- try to advertise that)
- Might need their own PIO
- Federal guidelines require public participation standards they have to meet – easy win to activate the localities to get that broader – ask locality to send it out broadly
  - Would help with ‘brand recognition’
- Stormwater management/issues – services they provide to each locality – or planning that could be done around that – what do the staff at RVARC do in that area? No one knows.
- Environmental Issues (stormwater is one); water supply planning; hazard mitigation planning.
- Speak out more – Regional Commission won’t ‘make waves’ in a community – it just ‘gets by’ – it needs to speak out more.
- Regional Tech Center?
- Where does RVRAC fit in the puzzle of all of the other regional entities? Define who they are.
- Any issues they shouldn’t get involved in? Not sure. Only get to that by building relationships with the communities, knowing your audience, continuous conversation, etc. Stay away from Housing & Land Use – did a regional housing study years ago – hired a consulting firm to do an overlay with topos and such
- Speak up more. Talk about the good/regional things.
- Housing, Housing issues, study, demographic trends/analysis, understanding what the issues are regarding housing, it is a regional issue
- Could be a regional clearinghouse/needs analysis, etc.
- How successful was the \$2 million housing grant they gave to housing developers to build housing? Was proactive and different than anything they ever did before but no one knows the outcome.

6. How can the RVARC maximize its relevancy to Allegheny County, Covington, and Clifton Forge/your organization's relationship with RVARC and, other regional partners?

**Allegheny Highlands – Allegheny; Covington; Clifton Forge**

- Don't have the opportunity to build rapport and relationship; maybe RVARC could use a room at the town hall buildings and have someone come over a couple days a month (like Rep Griffin's (sp?) office) to talk to staff?
- Franklin-Roanoke – Working together for the best interests of the region – need more visits, involve those -local journalists/media to cover what they talked about with the town supervisors – so they're not the red-headed stepchild of the commission
- Pull other service-based organizations together overlap geographies to share what folks are working on and seek opportunities for collaboration.

**Botetourt County**

- Convening and also the openness to non-traditional partnerships
- Overcoming the tendency to work with communities on unique opportunities rather than saying "no"
- Participate in micro loan and revolving loan funding.

**City of Roanoke**

- They're willingness and effort to convene partners around regional opportunities and issues.
  - Opioids – RVARC was an early adopter of helping to staff the response. The positions are housed at the regional commission – ultimately will be using the litigation funds to pay for those positions for the region.
  - Incubated the broadband authority, and the Regional Commission on greenways.
- Convening and also the openness to non-traditional partnerships - they've been very receptive to that
- Bring up/lead conversations around those regional issues/topics of importance that perhaps politically no one wants to talk about – that would help relevancy.
- Committees – reviewing their purpose and mission – and determine what they're meeting for, what's their purpose – and develop outcomes to move the needle on whatever the topic is – but they need to know where the needle is in order to move it.
- Aid some the smaller jurisdictions in grant management, pursuing grants, etc.
  - The City benefits greatly from grant money - but he doesn't know how many of the others look at the Commission as a partner in that.



## City of Salem

- Visit localities once in a while – tell new staff what they do/how they can help
- Follow up with localities
- Dealing with connectivity – knowing more about what they can do for us – what areas we need help in and how can the Commission help in
- Leverage more communication with the PDC
- Don't let past issues with the PDC/with the City of Salem cloud current uses of the PDC for the City of Salem
- There are people at the PDC you can directly call – sharing information is not a bad thing
- Comp Plan process - having a hard time reaching out and getting feedback
- Pretty Good with regional outreach and surveys
- Safe streets for all grant – public outreach – can they help us with that
- Are you only involved in regional projects or are you involved in local projects?

## Franklin County & Rocky Mount

- Tell us what you can do, what you want to do, and how can you help us.
- Have changed since the 1990s – what is the new thing.
- How are other regions doing things – across the country/in other states?
- Getting out into the communities more – office hours
- Physical presence – need an RVARC contact person in town.
  - Joe and Kathleen(?) from Western Piedmont come to everything.
  - It is Night and Day as far as communication, involvement between western piedmont and RVARC.
  - Joe will help with a Smart Scale project.
    - Franklin County – worked on RAISE grant – West Piedmont did the application, submitted it, etc. – didn't get it, but West Piedmont did all of it – submitted, follow up, review, etc.
    - The Town worked on a RAISE grant – RVARC didn't do much of the work – the town had to do most of it.
    - West Piedmont – administers the CDBG and get admin.
      - Eddy used to do that for RVARC – but not any longer.
- If they're focused more on the 'regional' issues – that's fine – just tell us. If you're that technical assistance partner they've been used to over the years, that's great too. But tell us what you are/how to utilize your services.
- Doing more of the advocacy role – advocating with legislators, for the region. Might advocate a lot for I-81 and I-81 improvements?

## Roanoke County & Vinton

- Continue to communicate
- Refine what their commission is and their scope – actively communicate that out – be VERY good at LESS things.
- Admit you have a problem
- Acknowledge and be aware of what the issues are
- Process can be more challenging and difficult than the ask itself – the process takes a lot of effort
  - Lesson the bureaucracy of it – localities may shy away from bringing things to the Commission because they will find problems that don't exist
  - It's black or white – help me find the gray area that can really help me get it done
  - DHCD in Richmond – by the time you get through it is 3-5 times more expensive and they find more problems than they're fixing - They don't mean harm, it's how they're wired – Trail plan became much more complex than it needed to be
- Not always been a solution-oriented organization – or the solution has been one of their design.
- CEDS meetings are a great way to catch up on what's going on in other localities – and that's helpful – but then they don't meet again for two months - it doesn't feel like a strategy – perhaps more meetings locally; bring folks to the areas to talk about what they're doing locally and more often.
- Can they provide safety information/traffic information they can use to apply for a grant or something along those lines? If it's a long-range planning study, we're doing it in-house. If it's something that could help us get funding from a grant perspective, and they could provide information that would be helpful, that would be most beneficial
- Educate County and City Managers on how the funding works and what they do.
- Assigned Amanda to work on the Blueway committee – that made a difference in tying it together that they wouldn't have had
- Collective response stakeholder meeting monthly – list is really long – localities, health care system, free clinic, anything involved in opioid, workforce housing, opioid abatement – that got started with the collective response.
- More understanding of local governments – how they operate on the ground. More understanding by the local governments on how the commission works as well.
- If you don't have a community input session on a plan, that plan won't be adopted by that community.
- Look at vacancies that come about within the organization as an opportunity to hire staff that can provide specific services that are needed by member governments
  - Has any locality sat on an interview for an RVARC staff person/regional planner?

## 7. If you could change one thing about the RVARC, what would it be?

### Alleghany Highlands – Alleghany; Covington; Clifton Forge

- More visibility/more press
- More knowledge about the area – what’s going on
- Knowing more about state and federal/regional funding sources and what fits with the local and regional strategies
- If staffing is available, helping with grant writing and grant management
- Jeremy is doing a good job about sending out information and sending out training opportunities.
- Need succession planning in some of the municipal governments
- Build a culture of employees from throughout the region
- Homelessness council is in Roanoke – haven’t done a point in time survey since 2018?

### Botetourt County

- Provide more communication as to capabilities of the organization.
- Educate the region of what the organization has the ability and resources to accomplish.
- Provide update on relevant regional programs to busy county staff.
- The NVARC staff needs to be more visible.

### City of Roanoke

- Outcome-based committee approach - some are very much that way – some are not – there is a lot of conversation, which is great, but there isn’t a lot of outcome-based organization
- It’s a great organization, with exception of the building.
- Jeremy and his team really have covered a full spectrum between the planning/ transportation and the grant work – they do a good job of that. Board has done a good job of governing.
- Jeremy has a done a great job – seamless – carried everything Wayne did and managed to add some things of relevancy.

### City of Salem

- More Parking
- More Flexibility in the work planning – 5-year plan update – had to go back and change the plan
- Less bureaucracy – need to be more nimble

- Realize you're a convener- have the leadership capacity in the organization and take ownership of that – and Have Agendas – where you're pulling and creating topics – good dialogue – that's not happening in the CEDS meetings
- More proactive in their role as a convener – planner lunches – never really an agenda – maybe make those more concrete/topic driven – send out topics ahead of time/or a survey – to maximize that hour – idly chit chat with no real direction
- Communication and Outreach go both ways – been passive participants in the most recent history – be more proactive in sharing what they need – in her experience they just go their own way – more trouble than they're worth.
- Re-evaluate on an on-going basis
- Maximize their use to us – they're charged with analysis and studies – they come up with really big plans that have a lot of value but they sit on the shelf
- Regular engagement – where there are metrics in their plans, where they can help with the updated dialogue of where they're at – but did anything happen?
- Condense the plans – into something usable?

#### **Franklin County & Rocky Mount**

- Communication between localities and RVARC
  - 80% of what we've talked about today fits into that
- Make more of a conscious effort to have Jeremy come and tell the board what RVARC does for them
- Communicate back to the elected officials and the community at large
- Maintain a focus on the rural areas – there are more regional groups – (Salem, Roanoke city, Roanoke county) and the TPO – which is urban focused – make sure they keep them in their sights and the needs of the rural areas.

#### **Roanoke County & Vinton**

- Better communication and interaction with staff
- Don't overpromise and under-deliver (or under-promise and over-deliver)
- Someone with traffic engineering knowledge on staff to look at the SPG applications before they come in or help manage projects – to help them with preliminary engineering phases of all of those transportation projects they're dealing with – might turn that entire TPC process around
- Find how to strike the balance between the needs of the localities and regional needs/goals – are they allocating resources towards regional goals or localities needs