Real World Lessons Learned
- We Did It and You Can Too
Breakout Session #1 D
Shaw Street / Meadow Street Project

Keith Barker, City Manager
City of Galax
Galax, Virginia
History of Galax

• Incorporated as a town in 1906; became a City in 1953
• Population: 7,042 (2010 US Census)
• Independent City with full services and our own school system
• Economy –
  – Typical small town with wood based manufacturing, textiles, railroad, etc.
  – Regionally – heavy in textiles and manufacturing
Why the Galax Bottom Area Project?

- Gateway Entrance to Main Street and Downtown
- Prone to Flooding (40+ year issue)
- Substandard housing
- Mix of commercial/industrial/housing
- Large area – envisioned as 3 to 4 separate applications

Always envisioned as the next housing project to undertake, but the storm drainage system (due to costs) was the main deterrent.
Galax Bottom Area Project
Galax Bottom Area Project

Project envisioned as a DHCD CDBG Comprehensive Project (maximum funding). Elements considered:

- Housing
  - substandard housing / blight
- Commercial – Facade Program
  - neglected buildings, economic investment.
- Infrastructure (stormwater)
  - catastrophic events impeding these residents, the neighborhood, and businesses.
Galax Bottom Area Project
Establishing Our Team

- Community Planning Partners (Project Consultant)
- City Manager (Team Chair and Façade Design)
- Finance Director (Financial)
- City Council representative (Board Member)
- Director of Social Services (Applications/ Income Verification)
- Chief of Police Department (Applications)
- Galax Police Officer (Community Rep and Interpretation)
- Building Official (Rehabilitation Specialist)
- Building Inspector (Inspections)
- City Engineer (Stormwater)
- Public Works Director (Stormwater & Roadway)
- Asst. Public Works Director (Stormwater & Utilities)
- Grants Administer (Tracking, CAMS Reporting, Grants)
- Galax CERT Team (Housing maintenance training)

All Hands on Deck!
Galax Bottom Area Project

• Bottom Area Housing Project, DHCD CDBG
  ▫ Awarded $1,400,000
  ▫ Local/Private Funds $961,030
  ▫ Total Funding $2,361,030

• Mixed use residential, commercial, and industrial

• 24 residences, 10 commercial/industrial structures, infrastructure
  ◆ We have constructed 7 new houses.

• Local Private Funds
  ◆ VDOT 6-year Funds
  ◆ Galax VDOT Allocation
  ◆ Match funds from owners

Goal – Improve living conditions for our residents & improve neighborhood conditions for our community
Galax Bottom Area Project

Work Priorities

- Housing element – away from storm system
- Commercial element – away from storm system
- Begin Stormwater Project
  - Hire Engineering Firm
  - Sign Documentation with VDOT as a Locally Administered Project (LAP)

Issues

- Bidding on Stormwater
- Utility Conflicts/ Change Order
Galax Bottom Area Project

Stormwater Bidding Issues

- VDOT Disadvantaged Business Enterprise (DBE) Goal
  - Contractor formally appealed ruling
  - Low bid rejected by panel

- Next bid was more than 10% over engineers estimate / rejected by VDOT
  - City appealed to VDOT

*Construction began – Progress at last!!*
Galax Bottom Area Project

Stormwater Construction Issues

- Signed contract with DLB Construction, local utility and heavy highway contractor, for $1.6M
- Began work at Chestnut Creek
- Discovered a severe utility conflict within 60 days!!
Galax Bottom Area Project

Stormwater Construction Issues

- CenturyLink utility conflict
- $200,000 to $300,000 from CenturyLink to move their lines (“hundreds of thousands”)
- Unable to resolve with regional contacts

How to proceed with this additional cost?
Galax Bottom Area Project

Stormwater Construction – CenturyLink Issues

- Per the VDOT ROW Division – Any utility older than 5 years must be moved at utility company expense for a VDOT project unless franchise agreement says otherwise
  
  - Galax franchise agreement expired, no copy available from CenturyLink

- Stormwater Project was a VDOT LAP Project

- Negotiated an $80,000 contribution from CenturyLink to our Bottom Area Project

(I still will not sign a franchise agreement.)
Galax Bottom Area Project

Stormwater Construction – Budget Increase

Where can we secure additional funding?

- Moved additional VDOT 6-year funding to project as a placeholder
- Applied to VDOT for a Revenue Sharing (matching) Program Project (DHCD CDBG funds used as the match). Awarded $380,000
- Total project increase approximately $70,000, utilized VDOT 6-year funds for project shortfall
Galax Bottom Area Project
Stormwater Construction
Galax Bottom Area Project
Stormwater Construction
Galax Bottom Area Project
Stormwater Construction
Galax Bottom Area Project
Stormwater Construction
Galax Bottom Area Project
Commercial Element

Façade Improvement Program Funding
– $15,000 façade work
– $10,000 site work (paving, landscaping, etc.)
– $20,000 maximum
– 1:1 match on funds spent
Galax Bottom Area Project
Commercial Element
Galax Bottom Area Project
Commercial Element
Galax Bottom Area Project

Commercial Element
Galax Bottom Area Project
Commercial Element
Galax Bottom Area Project
Commercial Element
Façade Improvement Program
Galax Bottom Area Project

Commercial Element

Façade Improvement Program
Galax Bottom Area Project
Commercial Element
Façade Improvement Program
Galax Bottom Area Project
Commercial Element
Façade Improvement Program
Galax Bottom Area Project
Commercial Element
Façade Improvement Program
Galax Bottom Area Project
Commercial Element
Façade Improvement Program
Galax Bottom Area Project
Housing Program Element

- The grant goals - 22 renovations, 2 new houses, address blight abatement
- Due to poor condition of a number of houses, renovated 11 houses, constructed 7 new houses
  - 2 bedroom – (avg.) $59,100
  - 3 bedroom – (avg.) $60,100
  - 4 bedroom – (1) $53,600
- City waived permit fees, license fees and utility connection fees for all projects
- Worked with regional landfill authority on cleanup
Galax Bottom Area Project
Housing Program Element

Challenges

– Multi-cultural neighborhood
– Residents didn’t want to leave neighborhood
– Making homeowners
Galax Bottom Area Project
Housing Program Element
Spanish Language Forms
Galax Bottom Area Project
Housing Program Element

– Efforts made to keep residents in house
– Rented another property in neighborhood
Galax Bottom Area Project
Housing Program Element

Making Homeowners

– Resident #1
  • Rent to own, no contract, no recorded agreement
  • Property tied to a non-adjoining parcel

– Resident #2
  • Predatory Mortgage
  • High % Rate
  • Unable to secure a second lien

– Used Program Income to buy out other loans
Galax Bottom Area Project
Housing Program Element
Galax Bottom Area Project
Housing Program Element
Galax Bottom Area Project
Housing Program Element
Galax Bottom Area Project
Housing Program Element
Galax Bottom Area Project
Housing Program Element
Galax Bottom Area Project
Housing Program Element
Galax Bottom Area Project

Accomplishments

- 11 renovated homes and 7 new homes
  - 2 new homeowners
- 10 commercial projects completed
- A major stormwater project completed and NO FLOODING since its completion
- Improvements to the neighborhood, living conditions, and overall community
- Excitement from adjoining neighborhood and businesses about Phase 3 as a possible project

Awarded Bottom Area – Eastview St.
in September 2017
‘Bottom’ residents say city project keeping property dry

Despite heavy rains last week, residents of Galax’s flood-prone neighborhood and more evacuations, many improvements are evident.

“Bottom residents say city project is making the area safer and more flood-proof.”

“I probably have been here longer and seen more flooding than anybody else here, and I see a major improvement.”

… LOCAL RESIDENT...
Galax Bottom Area Project

2016 Governors Housing Conference
Best Housing Preservation/Revitalization Effort
Thank You

Keith Barker, City Manager
City of Galax
Plantation Road Bicycle, Pedestrian and Streetscape Improvement Project

Megan Cronise, AICP
Roanoke County Principal Planner
Roanoke County Profile

- 250 square miles
- 93,730 population (2017 estimate)
  - Includes the Town of Vinton
- 308,707 MSA population (2010)
  - City of Roanoke, City of Salem
  - Roanoke County, Botetourt County (part)
- Region is known for:
  - Appalachian Trail
  - Blue Ridge Parkway
  - Virginia Tech Carilion School of Medicine and Research Institute
  - IMBA Silver-Level Ride Center for Mountain Biking
The Hollins Area Plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 2008 as part of the Roanoke County Comprehensive Plan.

The Hollins community told us…

- Aesthetic improvements are needed:
  - Street trees
  - Landscaped medians
  - Underground utilities

- Multimodal transportation improvements are desired:
  - Sidewalks
  - Pedestrian crosswalks
  - Pedestrian lighting
  - Bus service
  - Bike lanes
Plantation Project Overview

This location was selected for many reasons:

- Largest County employment base (4,000 jobs) ITT/Exelis/Harris Crosswalk Request
- 400 hotel rooms
- Many commercial and industrial development opportunities (new and redevelopment)
- Recreational resources (Walrond Park, Carvins Cove trails, proposed Tinker Creek Greenway segments)
- Hollins University (900 students)
- Interstate 81 access
Plantation Project Goals

- Provide pedestrian accommodations
- Provide bicycle accommodations
- Consider mass transit opportunities
- Connect existing and planned recreational facilities
- Improve streetscape
- Enhance gateways and nodes
- Improve access management
Lessons Learned

1. Keep an ear out for any and all possible funding sources.
Plantation Project Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Match (Federal or State/Local)</th>
<th>Applied</th>
<th>Funded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SAFETEA-LU Transportation Enhancement (TE)</td>
<td>80/20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAP-21 Transportation Alternatives (TA)</td>
<td>80/20</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VDOT Revenue Sharing</td>
<td>50/50</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VDOT Regional Surface Transportation (RSTP)</td>
<td>100/0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Roanoke County Capital Improvement (CIP)</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Totals</strong></td>
<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Revenue Sharing and RSTP transfers were also completed in order to fund the $4.2 million project balance.

Project applications began in 2009 and the project was fully funded in 2017.

**VDOT Staff were critical in assisting County Staff with overall guidance, changing program requirements and funding transfers.**
Lessons Learned

1. Keep an ear out for any and all possible funding sources.


3. Listen carefully and you will learn a lot.

4. Be flexible. Changes will occur at all stages of the project.
Plantation Project Refinement

2013: Concept when Consultants Started

- Red: Sidewalks
- Yellow: Shared Use Paths
- Yellow Dashed: Future Shared Use Paths
- Orange Dashed: Future Tinker Creek Greenway
- Dark Red: Bikeway Plan, Priority Alignments (Plantation Rd)
- Orange: Bikeway Plan, Vision Alignments (Walrond Dr, Enon Dr)
- Future Traffic Signal at Lila Drive (conceptual/private entrance)
Plantation Project Refinement

*Evolution as Feedback Received during Fall Outreach and Analysis*

- Roanoke County Parks, Recreation and Tourism will construct internal trails if the Shared Use Path would connect to Walrond Park
- Walrond Drive and Hitech Road intersections need work due to high tractor-trailer volumes
- Shared Use Path across Interstate 81 is cost-prohibitive and can be considered if/when FHWA/VDOT expands the bridge
**Consultant Ideas**

- Formalize an existing path to connect to proposed ped crosswalks at Gander/Friendship intersection
- Connect Hitech Rd. and Walrond Dr. shared use paths (SUP) using Enon Dr. to provide side street bicycle accommodations
- Avoid multiple industrial entrances by providing a SUP behind Enon Dr. businesses
- Provide side street bicycle facility with a McConnell Dr. SUP
- Connect the McConnell Dr. and Hitech Rd. SUPs with a Plantation Rd. connection

*Plan provides continuous bicycle and pedestrian accommodations from Williamson Road to Walrond Park and to the proposed Tinker Creek Greenway*
Plantation Project Refinement

**Citizen Information Meeting**
- Friendship Lane reconstruction and SUP needs to be a separate project
- Remove Enon Drive alternative

**VDOT Determination**
- Lila Drive traffic signal, 400' road construction and expense of Harris entrance relocation can be paid for with this project as part of Access Management improvements

**Bicycle Advisory Committee Meeting**
- Recommendation to replace sidewalk with SUP to Lila Drive to allow bicycle commuters to safely access the three major businesses at a traffic signal with pedestrian crosswalks

**Additional Considerations**
- Discussed SUP extension to Lila Drive and possibly beyond to Walrond Drive with BSC Ventures/Double Envelope

**Other Conclusions**
- Center medians (landscaped or concrete) will not fit without blocking business entrances
- McConnell Dr. SUP more expensive than locating SUP along Plantation Road
2014: Phase 1 Consultant Recommendation

- (West Side) Shared Use Path, curb and gutter from Williamson Rd. to Walrond Dr.
- (West Side) Sidewalk, curb and gutter from Walrond Dr. to Gander Way
- (East Side) Sidewalk, curb and gutter from Milk-A-Way Dr. to Friendship Ln.
- Signalized pedestrian crossing at Gander Way/Friendship Ln.
- Pedestrian lighting, landscaping, “Welcome to Hollins” sign, Broadband conduit
- Intersection improvements and entrance improvements
- (Option to add $200,000 for sidewalk to Walrond Park)
Plantation Project Refinement

What did we end up with?

• (West Side) Shared Use Path, curb and gutter from Williamson Rd. to Walrond Dr.
• (West Side) Sidewalk, curb and gutter from Walrond Dr. to Gander Way
• (East Side) Sidewalk, curb and gutter from Milk-A-Way Dr. to Friendship Ln.
• Signalized pedestrian crossing at Gander Way/Friendship Ln.
• Pedestrian lighting, landscaping, “Welcome to Hollins” sign, Broadband conduit
• Intersection improvements and entrance improvements
• (Option to add $200,000 for sidewalk to Walrond Park)
• **Utility Relocations!**
Lessons Learned

1. Keep an ear out for any and all possible funding sources.
3. Listen carefully and you will learn a lot.
4. Be flexible. Changes will occur at all stages of the project.
5. Celebrate project milestones!
Plantation Road Phase 1
Groundbreaking March 8, 2017

Erik Fox, Harris Vice President & General Manager
Brian Sass, BSC Ventures President & CEO
Lessons Learned

1. Keep an ear out for any and all possible funding sources.
3. Listen carefully and you will learn a lot.
4. Be flexible. Changes will occur at all stages of the project.
5. Celebrate project milestones!
Plantation Project Challenges

Right-of-Way:

- Exelis was bought out by Harris, changing land ownership and the parties we coordinated with.
- Country Inn and Suites was foreclosed upon and entered receivership; we had to wait for new owners before negotiating an easement.
- Verizon went on strike during utility relocation.
Lessons Learned

1. Keep an ear out for any and all possible funding sources.
3. Listen carefully and you will learn a lot.
4. Be flexible. Changes will occur at all stages of the project.
5. Celebrate project milestones!
6. The devil is in the details.
Plantation Project Challenges

Construction:
We staked the gateway sign in the field to verify its planned location, and then adjusted the location before the foundation was poured.
Plantation Project Challenges

Construction:
Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) interpretation changed after the start of construction, resulting in curb ramp reconstruction.
Plantation Project Challenges

**Construction:**

The VDOT Locally Administered Projects Manual was updated ten times since the project first obtained funding in 2011.
Lessons Learned

1. Keep an ear out for any and all possible funding sources.
3. Listen carefully and you will learn a lot.
4. Be flexible. Changes will occur at all stages of the project.
5. Celebrate project milestones!
6. The devil is in the details.
7. Communication is critical and will pay dividends.
8. Have dedicated staff members involved throughout the project to make sure the original goals and community expectations are met.
Plantation Project Communication

**Organizations/Governmental Boards**
- Commonwealth Transportation Board Member
- Virginia Department of Transportation
- Roanoke County Board of Supervisors
- Roanoke County Planning Commission
- Roanoke County Economic Development Authority
- Roanoke County Parks, Recreation and Tourism Advisory Commission
- Roanoke County Capital Improvements Program Committee
- Roanoke Valley Alleghany Transportation Planning Organization (RVTPO)
- RVTPO Transportation Technical Committee
- Roanoke Valley Greenway Commission

**Roanoke County Staff**
- Community Development
- Economic Development
- Parks, Recreation and Tourism
- Communications and Information Technology
- Finance
- Police
- General Services
- Schools

**Businesses/Institutions**
- Hollins University
- Williamson Road Area Business Association (WRABA)
- Friendship Retirement Community
- ITT/Exelis/Harris
- BSC Ventures/Double Envelope
- Wells Fargo
- Gander Mountain
- Camping World
- Carpetland USA
- Fairfield Inn and Suites
- Country Inn and Suites
- Hampton Inn and Suites
- Comfort Suites (future)
- Honeytree Learning Center
- Custom Tool & Machine
- William Scotsman
- HB Rehab Services, Inc.
- Virginia Air Distributors, Inc.
- Keltech
- RDS Recycling & Disposal Solutions
- Pilkington
- Hollins Communications Research Institute
- Blue Ridge Color Company
- Hannabass & Rowe
- El Rodeo
- Sunnybrook Garage
- BP
- McDonald’s
- Tractor Supply
- Days Inn
- JFC Equipment Corporation
- Straight Ahead, Inc.
- Water Technologies
- Emtech Laboratories
- APEX
- Building Integrity
- Blue Ridge Realty Company
- Community School
- Hollins Car Care Center
- Morton Buildings

**Residents**
- Huffman Family
- Side Streets
- In the vicinity of the corridor
Plantation Project Communication

1. Plantation Road Bicycle, Pedestrian and Streetscape Improvement Project webpage
2. Roanoke County Planning Services Facebook page
3. E-Newsletters:
   • Plantation Project Update E-Newsletter
   • Community Developments E-Newsletter
4. Regular meetings:
   • Hollins University
   • Williamson Road Area Business Association
   • Wells Fargo, Harris, BSC Ventures
5. Citizen Information Meeting (January 2014) about 100 attendees
6. Design Public Hearing (November 2014) about 50 attendees
7. Hollins Center Plan Community Meetings (March & May 2018) about 150 attendees
Accomplishing Original Goals

In the 2008 Hollins Area Plan, the community told us…

• Aesthetic improvements are needed:
  ✓ • Street trees
  ✓ • Landscaped medians
  ✓ • Underground utilities

• Multimodal transportation improvements are desired:
  ✓ • Sidewalks
  ✓ • Pedestrian crosswalks
  ✓ • Pedestrian lighting
  ✓ • Bus service
  ✓ • Bike lanes (shared use path)
Hollins Area Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Status

1. Plantation Road Bicycle, Pedestrian and Streetscape Improvement Project, Phase 1
   Construction Underway; Completion September 2018

2. Lila Drive Turnaround (County CIP Funding)
   Construction Complete

3. Lila Drive/Route 115 Intersection Safety Improvements (SMART SCALE)
   Preliminary Engineering Underway; Construction FY 2020

4. Williamson Road/Peters Creek Road Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Improvements (HSIP)
   Preliminary Engineering Underway; Construction FY 2021
Building Momentum

Hollins Area Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Status

5 Plantation Road Bicycle, Pedestrian and Streetscape Improvement Project, Phase 2 (SMART SCALE)
Preliminary Engineering FY 2019; Construction FY 2021

Williamson Road Pedestrian Improvements (TAP)
Requested additional SMART Scale funds

Each project has a different funding source, timeline, and VDOT Project Manager.
A decade after the adoption of the Hollins Area Plan…
Hollins Center Plan

Transportation Feedback

1. Expand planned sidewalk and bicycle facilities
2. Connect Walrond Park to the Tinker Creek Greenway and Carvins Cove
3. Extend bus service to the area
9. If you don’t know your local VDOT staff, get to know them as they are an invaluable resource.

Scoping a new SMART SCALE project with several VDOT and County Staff in 90+ degree heat at 4:35 p.m. on a Friday afternoon in May
Questions

Megan G. Cronise, AICP
Principal Planner
mcronise@roanokecountyva.gov
(540) 772-2106