The Long Road from Planning to Breaking Ground:

A Collaboration Between Roanoke County and VDOT

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VDOT Coordinating Transportation and Land Use Planning Forum
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Where is Roanoke County?
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 outdoor recreational opportunities and the Norfolk Southern railroad
  - Appalachian Trail
  - Blue Ridge Parkway
  - Near Smith Mountain Lake
The Comprehensive Plan

State Code Section 15.2-2223

“The local planning commission shall prepare and recommend a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the territory within its jurisdiction...”

Section B references the locality’s transportation plan:

“...Each locality shall develop a transportation plan that designates a system of transportation infrastructure needs and recommendations that include the designation of new and expanded transportation facilities and that support the planned development of the territory covered by the plan...”
The Comprehensive Plan

State Code Section 15.2-2223, Section B

The transportation plan shall:

• Include a map taking into account the current and future needs of residents in the locality and the locality’s planning district;

• Be consistent with the CTB’s Statewide Transportation Plan and the Six-Year Improvement Program;

• Be submitted to VDOT for review and comment; and

• Be submitted to VDOT as an adopted transportation plan.

Roanoke Valley TPO’s TIP, included in the Statewide TIP
Comprehensive Planning in Roanoke County

Corridor, Area and Community Plans adopted by the Board of Supervisors as part of the Roanoke County Comprehensive Plan

- Route 220 Corridor Study (2007)
- Mount Pleasant Community Plan (2008)
- Hollins Area Plan (2008)
- Route 221 Area Plan (2009)
- Vinton Area Corridors Plan (2010)
- Glenvar Community Plan (2012)
Hollins Area Plan: Goals

1. Improve upon the established commercial, industrial, residential and institutional foundations while balancing industrial and commercial pressures with the needs of the community;

2. Enhance the visual appearance of Williamson and Plantation Roads; and

3. Anticipate growth pressures and create standards for quality development.
Hollins Area Plan: Outreach

Two Community Meetings held in April and July 2008

Surveys Conducted in Spring 2008

• Community (mailed paper surveys)
• Hollins University Students, Faculty, Staff and Administration (emailed Survey Monkey link)
• 434 total responses
Hollins Area Plan: What We Heard

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

Multimodal transportation improvements are desired:
- Sidewalks
- Pedestrian crosswalks and lighting
- Bus service
- Bike lanes
Hollins Area Plan: Implementation Strategies

Implementation Strategies were based on:
- Community Meeting feedback
- Survey results
- Other regional planning efforts (2007 Conceptual Greenway Plan, 2005 MPO Bikeway Plan)
- Field research
- Existing conditions analysis

The Hollins Area Plan was adopted by the Board of Supervisors on November 11, 2008.
Hollins Area Plan: Implementing the Plan

Key Components

1. Lead Planner actively working towards completing implementation strategies
2. Reminding elected and appointed officials of the Plan language and goals
3. Keeping the community updated
   • Public presentations
   • Monthly e-newsletter
   • Plan webpage
4. Funding!
Where to Start?

Plantation Road 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 Road 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

Goals relate back to implementation strategies
Plantation Road Project: Getting Started

VDOT staff assisted with:

• Concept plan evaluation
• Estimate review
• Funding ideas
• Corridor study which identified areas of concern and led to concept refinement

Plantation Road Corridor Study (2012)
2009 – To build relationships, gauge interest in the project and to request letters of support for applications, Planning and Economic Development Staff met with:

- Plantation Road businesses
- Hollins University
- Roanoke County Commissions
- Business organizations

2011 and 2013 – County Staff met with the same groups again with project status updates and to request support

2013 – These contacts were extremely helpful when the consultants came on-board and we began meeting with area businesses to discuss the project and potential property impacts
Plantation Road Project: Phase 1 Funding

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Match (Federal or State/Local)</th>
<th>Applied</th>
<th>Funded</th>
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<td>SAFETEA-LU Transportation Enhancement (TE)</td>
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<td>MAP-21 Transportation Alternatives (TA)</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>VDOT Revenue Sharing</td>
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<td>VDOT Regional Surface Transportation (RSTP)</td>
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<td><strong>10</strong></td>
<td><strong>5</strong></td>
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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 2016.

**VDOT Staff were critical in assisting County Staff with overall guidance, changing program requirements and funding transfers.**
Plantation Road Project

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 Road)
- Orange: Bikeway Plan, Vision Alignments (Walrond Drive, Enon Drive)
- Future Traffic Signal at Lila Drive (conceptual/private entrance)
Plantation Road Project

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
Plantation Road Project

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 Road Project

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 Exelis 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
Plantation Road Project

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 Road Project

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!
Plantation Road Project: Phase 1 Groundbreaking

Erik Fox, Harris Vice President & General Manager

Brian Sass, BSC Ventures President & CEO
Plantation Road Project: Phase 1 Status

Williamson Road to Indian Road

shared use path base (laying and compacting stone), curb, gutter, retaining wall against rebuilt open ditch, fence on top, extensive underground utility relocation (street trees)
Plantation Road Project: Phase 1 Status

Indian Road to Hitech Road
shared use path base, curb, gutter, rebuilt open ditch, gateway sign base (street trees)
Plantation Road Project: Phase 1 Status

Hitech Road to Walrond Drive

shared use path base, curb, gutter, overhead utility relocation, entrance reconstruction (street trees)
Plantation Road Project: Phase 1 Status

Completion anticipated in June

Ribbon cutting will take place shortly thereafter at Double Envelope/BSC Ventures

Design Public Hearing Exhibit (2014)
Hollins Area Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Status

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

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

3. **Williamson Road/Peters Creek Road Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Improvements (HSIP)**
   - Preliminary Engineering Underway;
   - Construction 2019

4. **Lila Drive/Route 115 Intersection Safety Improvements (SMART SCALE)**
   - Preliminary Engineering Underway;
   - Construction FY 2021
Hollins Area Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Status

5. Williamson Road Pedestrian Improvements (TAP)
   Preliminary Engineering FY 2018;
   Construction FY 2021

6. Plantation Road Bicycle, Pedestrian and Streetscape Improvement Project, Phase 2 (SMART SCALE)
   Preliminary Engineering FY 2022;
   Construction FY 2024
Hollins Area Bicycle and Pedestrian Project Status

Each project has a different funding source, timeline, and VDOT Project Manager.
Related Transportation Projects: Greenways

Tinker Creek Greenway - Hollins Trailhead

• Public Access Agreement between Hollins University and Roanoke County (2011)
• Trail opened (2012)
Roanoke Valley Greenway Plan

- 2007 Plan: Tinker Creek Greenway identified as Priority 2
- 2018 Update underway with Tinker Creek Greenway identified as a Category 2 route (Greenfield in Botetourt County to Roanoke River Greenway in the City of Roanoke)
- County Board of Supervisors will consider adopting the Greenway Plan as a component of the Comprehensive Plan later this year
Gateway Corridor Improvements

Roanoke County Gateway Signs
Existing Gateway Proposed Gateway  Plantation Road Welcome Sign Under Construction
Gateway Corridor Improvements

VDOT Comprehensive Roadside Management Program Projects
Joint projects between Friendship Retirement Community and the Williamson Road Area Business Association approved in 2012

- Williamson Road and Plantation Road
- Williamson Road and Peters Creek Road
Hollins Area Plan Implementation Strategies

✓ Construct Hollins University segment of Tinker Creek Greenway, Phase II (I-81 to Carvins Cove)
✓ Ensure the maintenance of landscaping and other streetscape improvements throughout the study area
✓ Improve the pedestrian crosswalks at Plantation Road and Williamson Road
  • Construct and install streetscape improvements throughout the study area (under construction)
  • Improve the pedestrian crosswalks at Williamson Road and Peters Creek Road (in design)
• 5 of 17 strategies over ten years; 4 of these strategies involve VDOT
A Decade After the Adoption of the Hollins Area Plan...
Hollins Center Planning Study
Outreach Summary To-Date

• March Community Meeting Attendance: 100 (Saturday and Thursday)
• Survey (February 1 to April 7): 393 completed
• Stakeholder Interviews (including VDOT staff)
• Presentation to the Williamson Road Area Business Association
• Study Area Business Visits for March and May meetings
Major Themes

• Add sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes and/or shared-use paths to increase safety for all users in the study area

• Redevelop commercial areas into a mix of housing, locally-owned businesses and places to hang out

• Rebuild the library at a more central, connected location

• Protect, preserve and enhance natural resources and parks
Transportation Feedback

• Expand planned sidewalk and bicycle facilities

• Connect Walrond Park to the Tinker Creek Greenway and Carvins Cove

• Extend bus service to the area
Planning Study Next Steps

**May:** Open House Community Meetings at the Hollins Library
- Thursday, May 10 from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m.
- Saturday, May 19 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m.

**Summer:** Draft Planning Studies

**Fall:** Draft Plan Community Meetings

**Winter:** Public Hearings
Conclusion

1. Comprehensive Planning, Land Use and Transportation are intertwined – for better or for worse.

2. Roanoke County’s VDOT Salem District and Salem Residency Staff are absolutely critical to our success in planning for future growth and development.

3. 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. last Friday afternoon
Questions
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