



# ROUTE 220 CORRIDOR STUDY



ROANOKE COUNTY  
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
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# Acknowledgements

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A special thanks to Mr. Al Thomason, who passed prior to the formal adoption of this plan by the Board of Supervisors; his participation in this plan and his contributions to the County of Roanoke were so meaningful.

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# 1. Introduction

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Pursuant to Section 15.2 of the *Code of Virginia*, Chapter 22, Article 3, the Comprehensive Plan, Roanoke County is required to “prepare and recommend a comprehensive plan for the physical development of the territory within its jurisdiction.” The Roanoke County Comprehensive Plan states:

The Roanoke County Community Plan is a blueprint for the future growth and development of the County over the next 10 – 15 years. It provides direction and guidance, for both the public and private sectors, in making decisions about land development, public services and resource protection. The Plan allows decision makers to study the long-term consequences of current decisions and recognize that today’s actions will impact the County for many years to come.

This study, as is proposed to be adopted into the Roanoke County Comprehensive Plan, will aid decision-making for future development resulting from the planned waterline extension along the Route 220 Corridor.

## 1.1. Purpose of Study

U.S. Route 220 is a major arterial highway which runs through the middle of Roanoke County and serves as a thoroughfare for those traveling north and south through Virginia. As it exists currently, the corridor is dotted by a majority of single family homes with a mix of a few scattered commercial and office uses. The landscape becomes increasingly rural traveling southbound along Route 220 to the southern boundary with Franklin County. Public water and sewer service currently stops at Suncrest Heights and is not available in the study area.

On April 16<sup>th</sup>, 2007, the Roanoke County and Franklin County Boards of Supervisors and the Western Virginia Water Authority (WVWA), approved a resolution to construct a twelve-mile waterline extension into Franklin County (see Resolution in Appendix B). The resolution concludes that it is in the best interests of the citizens of Roanoke and Franklin Counties to extend the Western Virginia Water Authority’s water distribution system from the Suncrest Heights subdivision in Roanoke County to Wirtz Plaza in Franklin County.

The project is estimated to cost \$5.5 million, \$2.3 million of which will be paid by Roanoke County to extend water service along Route 220 within the county limits. The construction of the water line, paired with extension of sewer to parts of the corridor, will spur new development, therefore the Board of Supervisors directed county staff to address transportation and growth issues along this corridor. As the water line is extended, the land along the corridor will become prime real estate, yet challenges to development along the corridor exist. Issues such as transportation limitations, the presence of floodplain and steep sloping land will create obstacles for context-sensitive development. In order to ensure that growth is complimentary to the corridor, the County is creating a plan to identify areas which are most appropriate for development.

## 1.2. Study Area

The study area for this plan begins at the southern limits of the Suncrest Heights subdivision and runs southwest along Route 220 to Franklin County (See Figure 1, Study Area). The study area extends a minimum of 1,000 feet on each side of Route 220. In areas where the limits of the future land use designations of Transition, Rural Village and Village Center extend beyond the 1,000-foot

wide limit, the future land use boundary is used (see Map 1 in Appendix A).

The study area consists of 1,384 acres of land, which includes 78 acres of floodplain and 41 acres of floodway from Back Creek. Due to rolling topography, the study area crosses through portions of several watersheds. There are currently 22 historic structures and 10 cemeteries in the study area. The study area is rural, predominately with single-family dwellings, some commercial and business properties and several churches. Access to the Blue Ridge Parkway is located 1.5 miles to the north of the study area.

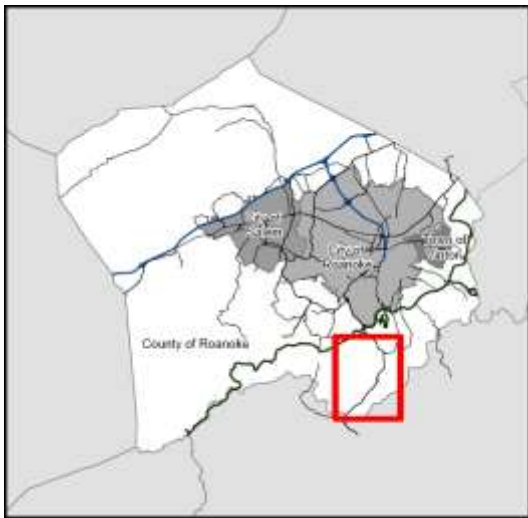


Figure 1. Study Area

### 1.3. Planning Process

At the request of the Board of Supervisors, county staff initiated the study by performing field surveys and GIS (Geographic Information Systems) analysis to gain an understanding of the many different features of the study corridor. In addition, staff consulted with Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) officials regarding past and future road improvements and with the WVWA. As Franklin County is preparing a similar study, staff met with Franklin County staff on several occasions to present portions of the plan and to give and receive feedback.

Staff presented the concept of the plan to the Planning Commission on June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2007. On July 17<sup>th</sup>, members of staff along with the Planning Commission conducted a drive-through of the corridor. Several stops were made along the corridor as staff explained the constraints and benefits of development at various locations. At the August 21<sup>st</sup> Planning Commission work session, staff presented draft scenarios for amendments to the Future Land Use map as well as draft guidelines for rezoning applications submitted within the corridor.

Public input is vital to the success of any long-range plan. Staff posted drafts of the plan on the Roanoke County Community Development webpage. Staff also conducted a community meeting on September 17<sup>th</sup>. Approximately 450 residents within and around the study corridor were notified of the community meeting.



Figure 2. September 17<sup>th</sup> Community Meeting

Over forty citizens attended the meeting at Clearbrook Elementary School. Staff presented an overview of the study, detailing the purpose, the development opportunity selection criteria, the future land use scenarios and the draft themes and rezoning guidelines. Staff then took questions from citizens. While some inquiries were specific to the waterline itself, many questions addressed commercial growth and future land use planning. Upon conclusion of the meeting, staff invited citizens to attend the upcoming work sessions and public hearings for the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. At the work session on

September 18<sup>th</sup>, staff provided the Planning Commission with an overview of the community meeting, including the comments and questions from the citizens at the meeting (See Appendix B).

Because the plan will be included as an update to the 2005 Comprehensive Plan, local planning legislation requires public hearings be held before the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors. The first public hearing for the Planning Commission was held on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. One citizen attended but no one spoke in favor of or in opposition to the draft plan.

At the November 13<sup>th</sup> public hearing, the Board of Supervisors passed a resolution to adopt the Route 220 Corridor Study into the Roanoke County Community Plan. With the resolution, the Board chose the third Future Land Use scenario as recommended by the Planning Commission.



Figure 3. September 17<sup>th</sup> Community Meeting

On October 16<sup>th</sup>, staff presented the plan to the Board of Supervisors and the Planning Commission during a work session. The discussion resulted in modifications to the plan which addressed the Board's concerns regarding Future Land Use Classifications and rezoning guidelines. Following the discussion, the Planning Commission unanimously passed a resolution recommending the Board of Supervisors amend the Comprehensive Plan to include the Route 220 Corridor Study. The resolution forwarded the document to the Board of Supervisors for its review at the November 13<sup>th</sup> public hearing. The Planning Commission also recommended Future Land Use Scenario 3 as an update to the Future Land Use Map. Map 13, Future Land Use Scenario 3, is found in Appendix A.