



Roanoke Valley-Alleghany

REGIONAL commission

REGIONAL REVIEW **JAN 2026**



Driving Regional Progress Together

Regional Advocacy for ROA Investment



✦ Leaders and organizations throughout the region - in local government and business community - are coming together to advocate for investment in Roanoke-Blacksburg Airport.

In a January 15th, [Cardinal News Op-Ed](#), local legislators **Chris Head and Terry Austin** make a compelling case on why investing in ROA means more jobs, better connectivity, and a stronger regional economy for all of us. Read the article [here](#).

Head and Austin plan to introduce and support funding critical investments in ROA in the upcoming General Assembly: **\$40 million for terminal enhancements and \$7 million for an airfield study that will determine the feasibility and cost of a potential runway extension at the airport.**

Everyone can help strengthen our regional economy and enhance our region's air service opportunities by choosing to fly ROA and influencing others to do so as well. The Roanoke-Blacksburg Airport has a ["Fly for the Future" campaign webpage with a ready-to-use digital toolkit](#) for websites and social media channels to help spread the word.

[Access the toolkit HERE](#)

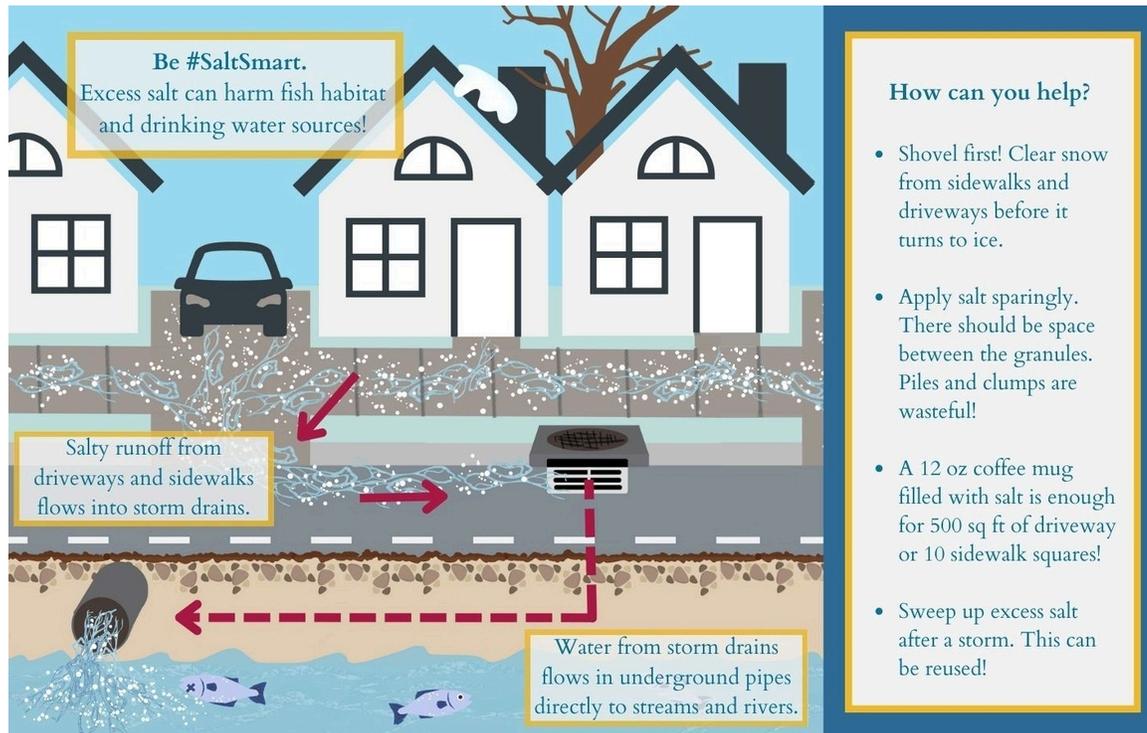
[Check out this Fly for the Future video featuring local business leaders and regional partners.](#)



On January 23, RVARC Executive Director Jeremy Holmes and Roanoke Regional Chamber CEO & President Eric Sichau traveled to the Raleigh, NC region for the 24th Annual Meeting of the [Regional Transportation Alliance \(RTA\)](#). The RTA is the voice of the regional

business community on transportation. Learning best practices from other regions can help us better mobilize and strengthen collaborative advocacy around transportation.

Raise Awareness through Winter Salt Week January 26 - 30



How can you help?

- Shovel first! Clear snow from sidewalks and driveways before it turns to ice.
- Apply salt sparingly. There should be space between the granules. Piles and clumps are wasteful!
- A 12 oz coffee mug filled with salt is enough for 500 sq ft of driveway or 10 sidewalk squares!
- Sweep up excess salt after a storm. This can be reused!

🚗 Road safety matters—and so does our water. 💧

When winter salt washes into our waterways, it can damage infrastructure, stress wildlife, and affect drinking water.

*Smart salting tips:

- Shovel early and often to prevent ice from forming.
- Only spot-treat remaining icy patches—more salt doesn't mean more melt.
- If the sun is out, give it time to help before applying salt.
- After the storm, sweep up excess salt or traction material for reuse.
- Keep salt and traction materials at least 10 feet from storm drains and streambanks.
- Store bags/containers under cover so they don't wash into the street.

*Learn more and find resources:

1. Daily webinars for Winter Salt Week from January 26-30 at wintersaltweek.org
2. [Virginia tips and tools from Northern Virginia Regional Commission.](#)

Save the Date

Recovery Ecosystems Conference



March 5-6, 2026

Hotel Roanoke &
Conference Center

Bridging Thriving Recovery Systems Across Appalachia

Join the Roanoke Valley Collective Response **March 5–6 at Hotel Roanoke** for two powerful days of learning, connection, and collaboration.

This year's theme, ***Compassion, Connection, and Community: Bridging Thriving Recovery Ecosystems Across Appalachia***, will bring together diverse organizations working in areas from crisis to community support of recovery within our Roanoke area, across Virginia, and in the broader Appalachian region. This conference is co-hosted by the **Virginia Tech Roanoke Center**.

Who should be there:

- Recovery ecosystem specialists; EMS; law enforcement; courts and the judicial system
- Healthcare and behavioral health professionals; researchers; educators
- Local and state government; community support organizations; housing developers
- Faith community; workforce and business leaders

Early bird pricing ends Feb. 26, don't miss out!

Reserve your spot today: <https://bit.ly/RecoveryEcosystem2026>



Blue Ridge Innovation Corridor (BRIC) Presents at RVTPO

Advocating for Investment in Route 220

- Rt. 220 is the economic artery of Southern Virginia, the vital conduit for commerce, industrial growth, and workforce mobility that connects businesses to markets and people to opportunities.
- For decades, transportation planners and local leaders have debated how best to modernize this road:
 1. Build a new Southern Connector bypass – a limited access highway
 2. Invest in improvements along the existing Rt. 220 road – “Fix The Road” approach.
- Today, everyone (state leaders, the Sec. of Transportation, VDOT, and the BRIC Board) agrees the “Fix-the-Road” strategy is best.



Rachel Yost, Executive Director of the [Blue Ridge Innovation Corridor \(BRIC\)](#), shared an update on regional efforts to strengthen Southwest Virginia’s economy at the January 22nd Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization (RVTPO) meeting.

BRIC’s goal is to position the region as Virginia’s “fourth economic engine” by advancing strategic infrastructure investments—**especially improvements along Route 220, a critical corridor for commerce and workforce mobility**. A return-on-investment analysis suggests Route 220 improvements could generate an estimated \$3.43 to \$6.87 for every \$1 invested.

Rachel Yost also introduced Vision 2050, BRIC’s emerging strategic plan focused on growing advanced manufacturing, life sciences, and defense-sector opportunities. A steering committee is now forming and will include representation from the RVTPO region.

A recording of the presentation at the January RVTPO meeting can be [watched online here on YouTube](#).

Upcoming Meetings



Roanoke Valley TPO

[February 26, 2026 @ 1 PM](#)

313 Luck Ave SW

Roanoke, VA 24016

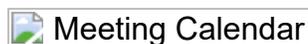


Regional Commission

[February 26, 2026 @3 PM](#)

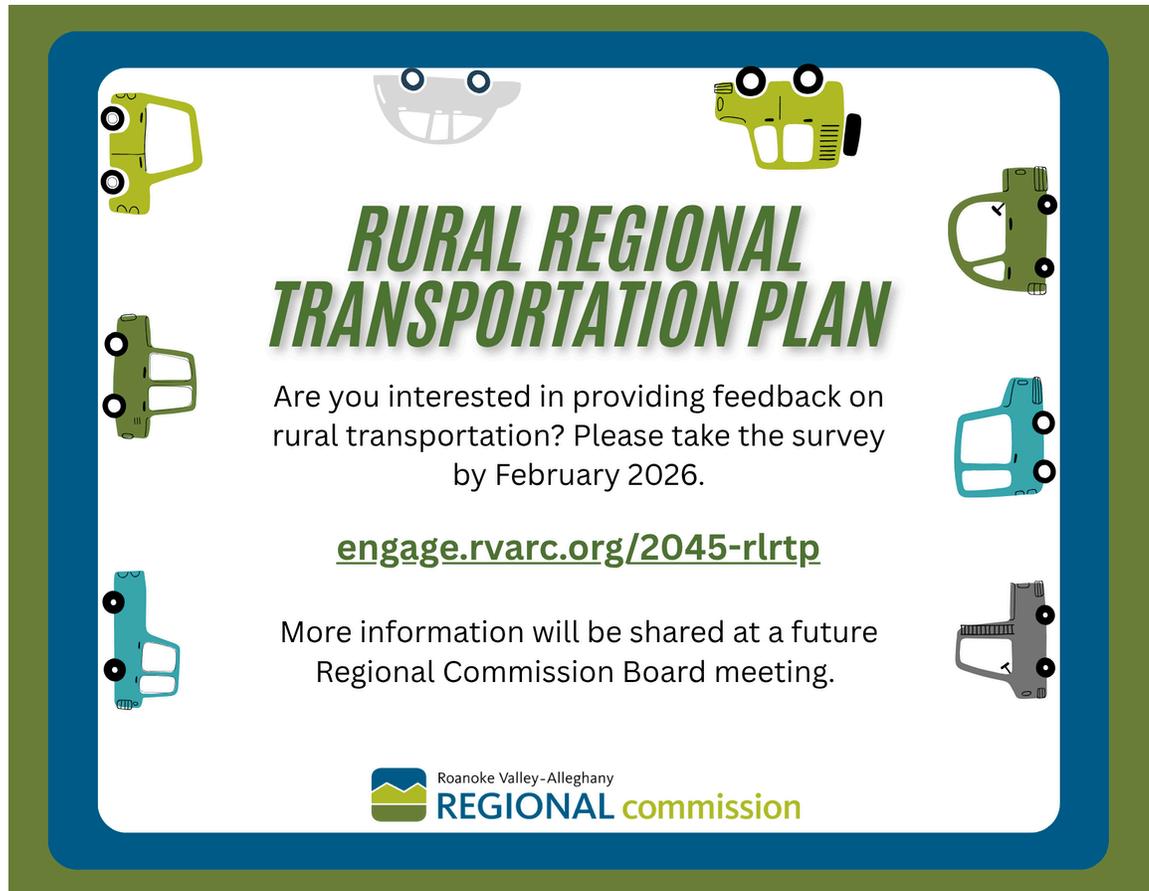
313 Luck Ave SW

Roanoke, VA 24016



Public participation is encouraged in these meetings, with a designated time for public comments.

Tune in virtually: Regional Commission and RVTPO meetings are available to watch later on our [YouTube](#) page.



***RURAL REGIONAL
TRANSPORTATION PLAN***

Are you interested in providing feedback on rural transportation? Please take the survey by February 2026.

engage.rvarc.org/2045-rlrtp

More information will be shared at a future Regional Commission Board meeting.

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The Regional Commission transportation staff started the first public comment period for the development of the new **Rural Roanoke Valley Transportation Plan**. Please provide comments on the survey **to help identify community needs** to guide the development of the plan.

 [Take the Survey!](#)



Join us in celebrating Transit Equity Day on February 4 🇺🇸

On February 4, Transit Equity Day honors Rosa Parks' legacy to remind us that fair, accessible transit strengthens civic life.

From benches at bus stops to safe, reliable service, equity means every rider—especially communities of color, low-income neighborhoods, people with disabilities, and rural residents

—can get to work, school, healthcare, and the ballot box with dignity.

RIDE Solutions and the Roanoke Valley Transportation Planning Organization (RVTPO) invites you to join Transit Equity Day community events organized by the [Bus Riders of Roanoke Advocacy Group \(BRRAG\)](#) at Melrose Plaza and the Third Street Transit Station. The event will also honor Roanoke Civil Rights hero Margie Jumper.

[Follow the event on Facebook for updates!](#)



NEW DATE!
**Clifton
Forge
Brand
Unveiling**
#ForgedHere

When: February 11th 5-6pm
Where: Historic Masonic Theatre (510 Main St.)
Brief presentation in Main Auditorium at 5pm
followed by a celebration in the Underground.

*This project was funded by a grant to Clifton Forge Main Street from the Department of Housing and Community Development, with match support from the Town of Clifton Forge.

(Photos: Quilt by Sue Leitch, CFSOTA brushes, Five Sides mural, Clifton Forge Love Sculpture, photo by Chuck Almarez.)

Clifton Forge Brand Unveiling

February 11, 5-6 PM at Historic Masonic Theatre

The Town of Clifton Forge invites the community to join them for a special evening to unveil the new Clifton Forge Brand. **The event was rescheduled to Wednesday, February 11 at the Historic Masonic Theatre.** There will be a brief presentation in the main auditorium at 5 PM, unveiling the town's new brand and the story behind it. Guests are then invited to continue the celebration in the Underground.



WBDJ News Coverage: NC & VA Counties work together to fund repairs for Blue Ridge Parkway

"The boards of county commissioners and county supervisors in 17 North Carolina and 12 Virginia counties have passed resolutions to support funding to repair the Blue Ridge Parkway, known as the [Blue Ridge Rising Action Plan](#), according to [Blue Ridge Parkway Foundation](#)."

 [See News Coverage](#)



The Regional Commission is a leader in driving collaboration and strategy within our communities on issues that are critical to the economic growth, quality of life, and sustainability of this region.

Connect with Us!



www.RVARC.ORG

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission

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