



Roanoke Valley-Alleghany
REGIONAL
commission

Connect

Collaborate

Cooperate

COVID-19 Dashboard

Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission staff has prepared a COVID-19 dashboard to track regional cases and also includes demographics and mapping of vulnerable populations.

Included in the dashboard are unemployment claims, nursing home locations, and zip code COVID-19 data. COVID-19 cases and deaths are updated hourly from Johns Hopkins. To access the dashboard, click [HERE](#).

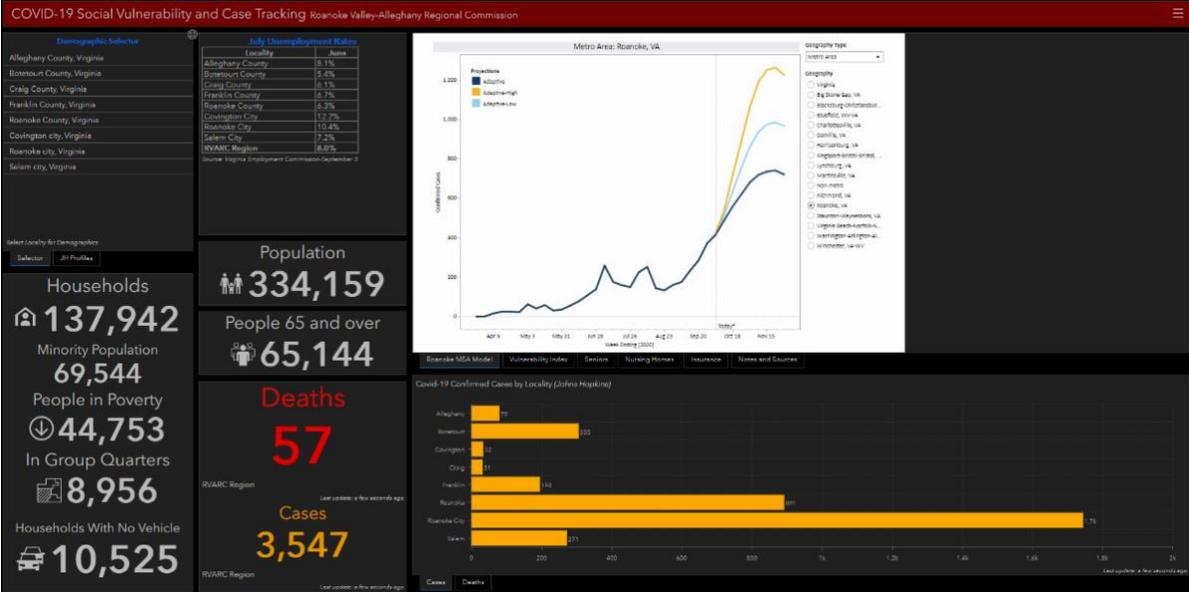


Image captured 09/30/2020 at 9:30am

RVTPO and RVARC Approve I-81 Lighting Request Resolution



The RVTPO and RVARC approved a resolution requesting that VDOT add lighting to the six I-81 interchanges in the Roanoke Valley. Public input on the matter was sought with over 70% of respondents in favor of more light at the interchanges. The hope is that the additional lighting will encourage more nighttime travelers to stop and patron Roanoke Valley businesses. The lighting will cost approximately \$12M to install plus yearly operational expenses.

Farm and Float Event Pushes Talks About Conservation Practices

Regional Commission staff attended the Farm and Float event hosted by the Mountain Castles SWCD on September 24th. The event was not only a chance to enjoy a stretch of the James River that is designated as a [Scenic River of Virginia](#), but it also educated attendees on the benefits of agricultural conservation practices and how land use impacts

water quality. Representatives from Mountain Castles SWCD, [Virginia Cooperative Extension](#), [Virginia Department of Forestry](#), and the [Valley Conservation Council](#) all contributed to the discussion, highlighting different ways each group is promoting conservation practices in the Upper James River and Roanoke River watersheds.

For more information about Virginia's Agricultural Incentives Programs, visit <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/soil-and-water/costshare>.



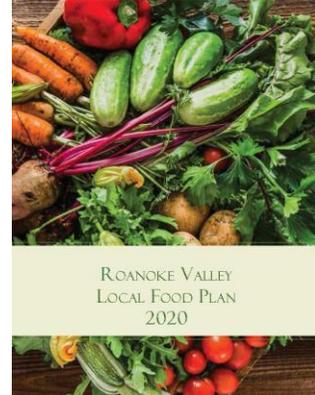
Roanoke Valley Local Food Plan Approved

In FY2019 staff began work on a Roanoke Valley Local Food Plan as part of an effort to address food system planning gaps in the Roanoke Valley foodshed. In the September meeting of the Regional Commission this plan was officially approved.

Food system planning is complex and impacts multiple sectors. Agriculture remains an important part of the character and economy of the Roanoke Valley, and also has direct impacts upon and is impacted by environmental factors such as water quality and climate. Food access continues to be a challenge in many census tracts within the Roanoke Valley, and can have direct impacts on health. This is the first Valley-wide document to address all of these food system aspects.

Recommendations include further study of Roanoke Valley's agriculture resources, continued support of and potential expansion of existing food access and education programs, and exploration of alternative methods of food distribution and food waste processing.

The full plan is available for review at: <https://rvarc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Local-Food-Plan-2020-FINAL-9.16.20.pdf>.



2020 Rural Bikeway Plan Update Approved



The 2020 Rural Bikeway Plan update was approved by the Regional Commission in September.

In addition to being a transportation option, cycling has been shown to be a tourism driver in the Roanoke Valley – Allegheny region, with events such as the Agony in the Alleghenies Gran Fondo drawing hundreds of visitors. In developing this plan, staff consulted with locality staff, as well as staff of local businesses and economic development agencies, and the public.

Significant changes in the 2020 Rural Bikeway Plan include the use of statewide VDOT planning data now available for individual roadways in the study area. Combined with VDOT Complete Streets guidance, this planning data enabled more in-depth analysis and suggestions for appropriate infrastructure improvements. The 2020 Rural Bikeway Plan also incorporates the five E's of bicycle planning.

The full plan is available for review at: <https://rvarc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/2020-Rural-Bikeway-Plan-FINAL-9.9.2020.pdf>.

Route 220 Corridor Intersection Improvements Citizen Comment Opportunity

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is seeking public comment about a project that is under development to improve signalized intersections along Route 220 in the City of Roanoke and the counties of Roanoke, Franklin and Henry. The proposed project will reduce congestion and provide safety improvements at seven intersections along this important corridor.



In lieu of attending a public meeting in person, citizens are invited to learn more by viewing information online at <https://www.virginiadot.org/route220Intersections/> and to submit comments or ask questions remotely. Public comments will be received **September 22 - October 2, 2020** by completing an on-line comment form.

If there are concerns that cannot be satisfied through this on-line process, VDOT is willing to hold a public hearing. You may request a public hearing be held by sending a written request to Mr. Brett Elledge, Project Manager, Virginia Department of Transportation, 731 Harrison Avenue, Salem, VA 24153 on or prior to **October 7, 2020**. If a request for a public hearing is received, notice of date, time and place of hearing or virtual opportunity will be posted.

Should you have additional questions concerning this project, please call 540-387-5353.

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation and Its Partners Sue EPA



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION
Saving a National Treasure

CBF and its partners filed a claim in September against the EPA, claiming the agency has not required Pennsylvania and New York to implement adequate restoration plans for the two states' Chesapeake Bay cleanup efforts. Each of the Chesapeake Bay jurisdictions, which include Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, New York, West Virginia, and

the District of Columbia, have created Watershed Implementation Plans (WIPs) that identify how each party will address pollution in their area and plans to reach the 2025 Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) goals that were established in 2010.

Click [here](#) for more information about the litigation.

Ongoing Projects

The Roanoke Valley-Alleghany Regional Commission is always working with localities on projects that benefit the region. Some of these projects are listed below.

- Alleghany Highlands Economic Impact of the Arts
- Alleghany Highlands Gap Analysis
- Rural Long-Range Transportation Plan
- City of Covington Downtown Revitalization Planning Grant Assistance
- City of Roanoke Neighborhood Walk Project
- City of Roanoke Pedestrian Safety Campaign
- Regional Housing Study: Franklin and Roanoke Counties, and the Cities of Roanoke and Salem
- Rural Bikeway Plan
- Local Food Plan
- Promotion and access improvements for the Roanoke River Blueway

For more information on ongoing projects contact [Tim Pohlad-Thomas](#) or visit [RVARC.org](#).

Visit our website

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