

- PS A7. Provide code enforcement information to residents and inspectors in satellite service centers.
- PS A8. Provide ongoing training for boards and commissions related to zoning, property maintenance, and development codes through certified training programs.
- PS A9. Revise zoning and other ordinances to address new development patterns and land uses.
- PS A10. Coordinate regulations, where feasible, with neighboring jurisdictions for consistency.
- PS A11. Increase the use of information technology to improve services.

Solid Waste Management

- PS A12. Develop and expand recycling and educational programs that promote its use.
- PS A13. Consider developing a staffed recycling center with a household hazardous waste component.

City Administration and Service Delivery

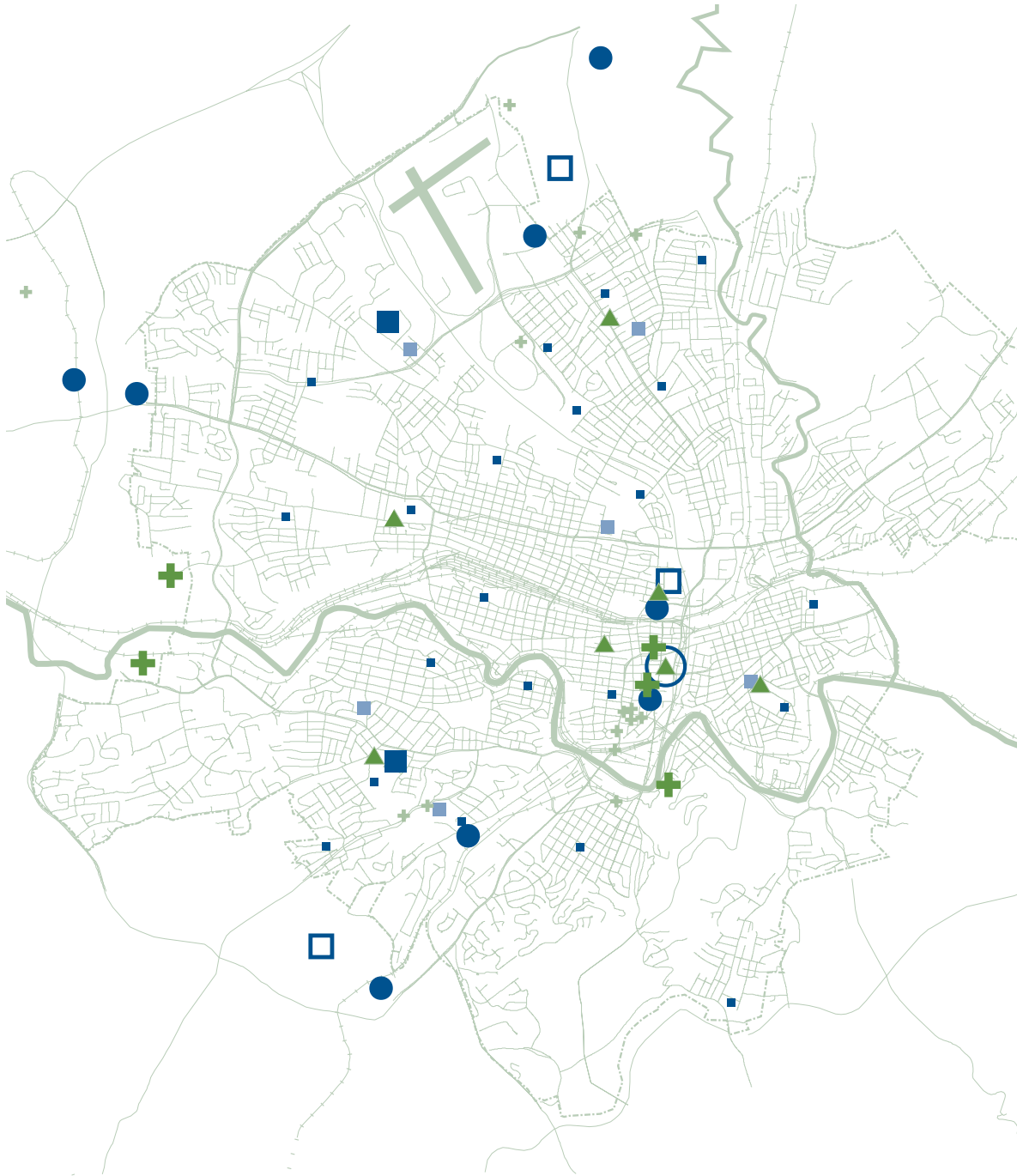
- PS A14. Pursue innovative service-delivery strategies that improve customer service. Increase the use of computers and information technology to reduce reliance on paper and provide greater access and sharing of information.
- PS A15. Ensure that all public schools and City-owned facilities are located, designed, and maintained to complement neighboring land uses.
- PS A16. Pursue regional efforts for solid waste management and recycling.
- PS A17. Consider development of community service centers to provide direct services and serve as information and referral centers.
 - Identify community service needs for two pilot locations (north and south) for centers.
 - Develop an administrative plan that provides services and management of the centers.
 - Involve private and non-profit sector organizations such as the Council of Community Services in planning for the facilities.

3.6 PEOPLE: EDUCATION AND LIFELONG LEARNING, HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES, LIBRARIES

BACKGROUND

Public Schools

The Roanoke Public School System consists of 2 high schools, 6 middle schools, 21 elementary schools, and 2 alternative schools (see map 3.6.1). The schools offer a number of special programs, including the Magnet School program, CITY School, the Noel C. Taylor Learning Academy, and the Blue Ridge Technical Academy. Enrollment in 2000 totaled 13,867 students.



3.6.1 People and Human Development

- Elementary School
- College/Higher Education
- Middle School
- + Hospital
- High School
- + Medical Clinic
- Private School
- ▲ Library

Renovations

Roanoke has completed major renovations of seven elementary schools and four middle schools, and has made substantial improvements to six elementary schools. A new school will be constructed in the Melrose Rugby neighborhood to replace the existing school. Studies are underway for improvements to both of the City's high schools.

Magnet Schools

The Magnet School program was initiated in 1988. It is the largest magnet program in Virginia and has programs in 13 schools for students in grades K-12. Magnet Schools feature special programs and resources that draw students from around the region. Each Magnet School develops programs ranging from dance, computers, and aviation to piano, architecture, languages, and the prestigious International Baccalaureate Diploma Programme. Roanoke's newest Magnet School, Round Hill Montessori School, offers the first public Montessori program in this part of the state.

After-school programs

Roanoke schools have an extensive after-school activity program offering a mix of academics, cultural enrichment, community service activities, and sports. A third of the City's high school students and more than half of the middle school students participate in these programs. Nearly 800 middle and high school students are participating in a dozen tutorial programs, which are designed to improve grades, boost SOL test scores, and reduce dropout rates.

Governor's School of Science and Technology

The City of Roanoke is home to the Roanoke Valley Governor's School for Science and Technology, which serves students from regional high schools. Bedford, Craig, Franklin, and Roanoke Counties and the Cities of Roanoke and Salem participate in the program. The Governor's School is located on the Patrick Henry High School campus in southwest Roanoke.

Libraries

The City library system includes a downtown main library, five branch libraries (see map 3.6.1), and a bookmobile. A consortium has been formed with the library systems of Roanoke and Botetourt Counties and Salem City to operate an integrated automated library system. The consortium provides greater flexibility for patrons to take advantage of the collections and services located at any of the partner facilities. The main library houses the Virginia Room, a nationally-renowned collection of genealogy and history resources. The library is in the process of assessing whether the main library should be relocated to a larger, more central site that would provide greater flexibility for expanded services and improved parking.



Higher Education Center

Roanoke has expanded educational and training opportunities for adults in the region. The opening of the Roanoke Higher Education Center fulfilled a ten-year effort by local businesses and education leaders to expand post-secondary education opportunities. Virginia Tech, University of Virginia, and 17 other educational institutions offer graduate and undergraduate degree programs. Virginia Western Community College offers a wide range of programs leading to Associate Degrees or technical certifications.

Regional Colleges

Four colleges and universities are located within close proximity of Roanoke: Hollins University, Roanoke College, Virginia Tech, and Radford University. Partnerships with these colleges and universities are increasing, especially with respect to student internships, special projects, and technical assistance on governmental and environmental issues.

Virginia Western Community College

Virginia Western Community College's Workforce Development Services provides continuing education, up-to-date training information, resources, and support services to existing and potential business, industry, government, and the community.

Fifth District Employment and Training Consortium

Fifth District Employment and Training Consortium (FDETC) serves the Cities of Roanoke, Clifton Forge, Covington, and Salem and the Counties of Roanoke, Alleghany, Botetourt, and Craig. The FDETC assists employers and job seekers by assessing employer needs as well as job-seeker skills and abilities; developing customized service strategies; and providing employment counseling, education, and specific occupational skills training. The FDETC receives its primary funding from the resources of the federal Job Training Partnership Act (JTPA), through the Governor's Employment and Training Department. Locally, the FDETC receives its policy guidance and oversight through the partnership of the Policy Board and Private Industry Council.

Health and Human Services

City of Roanoke: The Medical Center of Southwestern Virginia

Roanoke is the medical center for southwestern Virginia providing significant medical services and employment for the region. Carilion Roanoke Memorial Hospital and Carilion Community Hospital have undergone major renovations and restructuring during the past few years. Carilion Health System is the region's largest employer and includes both Roanoke Memorial and Community Hospitals.

Public Mental Health Services

Public mental health services are provided by Blue Ridge Behavioral Healthcare of the Roanoke Valley, which offers programs for mental health, retardation, illness, and substance abuse. City of Roanoke Health Department provides a range of health and mental health programs. The Health Department also provides environmental health services, communicable disease programs, and programs for children and families.

Social Services

Roanoke's Department of Social Services provides assistance in three areas: protective services, support services, and temporary financial assistance programs. Most recipients are experiencing a financial or medical crisis, unexpected unemployment, natural disaster or fire, family violence, hardship caring for aging parents, or a life-altering disability. These programs directly impact and enhance a citizen's ability to obtain and maintain self-sufficiency, care for dependent family members, and experience a safe and satisfying quality of life. The City is reimbursed from state and federal sources for approximately 87% of these services. The department also serves citizens interested in becoming foster parents, providing day-care services, or adopting a child.

POLICY APPROACH

Education and Lifelong Learning

The perceived quality of a school education is strongly linked to the City's long-range revitalization goals. The perceived negative image of City schools has been one of the major stumbling blocks in attracting and retaining young families in City neighborhoods. Continued efforts are needed to improve the image of the schools and to promote the wide range of quality educational opportunities available through the City of Roanoke Public Schools.

Children are encouraged to actively take advantage of Roanoke's existing excellent resources to receive a well-rounded education that prepares them for ongoing study or to enter the workforce. National studies indicate that successful after-school programs create a positive learning environment and actively engage students. These programs should be expanded into community learning centers that are available to students, parents, and the community in all areas of the City – possibly as part of larger dispersed multi-service facilities.

Workforce development is an important element of Roanoke's overall economic development strategy. Continuing education opportunities, as well as job training and lifelong learning, are important components of supporting a learning environment. The Roanoke Higher Education Center is poised to expand the current range of degree and non-degree programs to provide even greater opportunities for residents to pursue career interests.

Libraries



The future for a strong library system must include broadening the vision of what a library provides. In a celebration of Library Week 2001, First Lady Laura Bush called libraries "Palaces of People." She said that libraries are more than warehouses for books; they are gathering places, literally community centers. At the same time, as Roanoke plans for the future, libraries must become vital resources for lifelong learning.

Health and Human Services

A healthy city is one that is continually creating and improving those physical and social environments, and expanding those community resources that enable people to support each other in performing all functions of life and in developing themselves to their maximum potential. A healthy community is built on a foundation of multiple assets: economic, social, environmental, and human. To achieve the goal of being a healthy community, the City should adopt principles of sustainability that guide policymaking and enhance and sustain a high quality of life.

POLICIES

Education and Lifelong Learning

PE P1. **Quality education.** Roanoke's school system will be known for its quality education that prepares students for the workplace or with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in higher education. Roanoke will maintain and improve its high-quality public education facilities and programs at all levels.

- PE P2. **School facilities.** School facilities are important community facilities. The location of new school facilities will be carefully planned to enhance the surrounding community and adhere to the City Design principles recommended.
- PE P3. **Lifelong learning.** Roanoke will support schools, libraries, continuing and higher education programs, community-based education, and recreation programs that foster a positive learning environment for persons of all ages.
- PE P4. **Community learning centers.** Roanoke will encourage the efficient use of public schools by co-location of education, lifelong learning, and recreation programs in school facilities, making them community learning centers.
- PE P5. **After-school and evening programs.** Roanoke will encourage parents to participate with students in innovative school programs beyond the school curriculum during after-school, evenings, and weekends.
- PE P6. **Workforce development.** Roanoke will strive to provide the necessary education and training for a well-qualified workforce to meet the demands of business and industry. Accordingly, Roanoke will support Roanoke City Schools, the Roanoke Higher Education Center, Workforce Development Services at Virginia Western Community College, Fifth District Employment and Training Consortium, and other regional facilities.

Libraries

- PE P7. **Libraries.** Roanoke will support its libraries as a fundamental part of its lifelong learning system. They will function as informational and social centers that provide places for community gathering, business research, and educational activities. The library will establish strong links with schools and higher-education facilities.

Health and Human Services

- PE P8. **Health care programs.** Roanoke will support health care programs that encourage healthier living to improve community health.
- PE P9. **Health and human service agencies.** Roanoke will support a range of health and human services to meet the needs of Roanoke’s citizens.
- PE P10. **Local and regional collaboration.** Roanoke will support efforts for local and regional collaboration and cost-sharing measures to assist health and human service agencies.

ACTIONS

Education and Lifelong Learning

- PE A1. Develop and expand strategies that encourage parents and children to make the commitment for children to attend and participate in school every day.
- PE A2. Create programs that provide opportunities for education and coaching in local institutions such as churches, neighborhood groups, and businesses to increase awareness and value of education.

- PE A3. Develop plans for constructive alternatives for students in in-school suspension.
- PE A4. Create ways to encourage churches and civic groups to adopt a school and provide programs/activities to build youth interest and provide role models for success.

Libraries

- PE A5. Improve the downtown main library to provide greater accessibility, better service delivery, and access to technology. Consider building improvements, a new building, or relocation of the library.
- PE A6. Continue to support the Virginia Room as the premier resource center for genealogy and history.
- PE A7. Explore inclusion of business development services at the main library.
- PE A8. Develop a plan that identifies branch library facilities that have become outdated or cannot be expanded; consider relocation to sites that have facilities to provide access to bus service and provide adequate and safe parking.

Health and Human Services

- PE A9. Promote programs that educate citizens regarding public and private programs to make health care more accessible.
- PE A10. Develop a strategy that addresses duplication of inter-related services in health and human service programs.
- PE A11. Promote health care programs related to pre-natal care, immunization, dental and vision care, and health screening by using the Internet, television, and other forms of media.
- PE A12. Inventory existing day care facilities; develop a plan aimed at increasing the availability of affordable day and evening care for children, elderly, and the handicapped.
- PE A13. Develop special needs programs that are accessible and connected to housing and support networks.
- PE A14. Provide accessible information in satellite service facilities.
- PE A15. Promote development of a regional cost-sharing program for health and human services.
- PE A16. Establish new regional public transportation routes in the Valley to provide better access to health care and support services.
- PE A17. Develop strategies that support greater use of recreational and exercise programs in schools, parks, and greenways.



ROANOKE VISION COMPREHENSIVE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 1985-2005

Roanoke Vision provided the City of Roanoke with a new approach to future development, revitalization, and growth. The plan recommended that Roanoke should be a city of neighborhoods. Preservation and enhancement of the city's existing neighborhood fabric – attractive homes, tree-lined streets, neighborhood commercial districts, and local employment sites – were established as key components for success in the future. The plan was recognized nationally for its grass roots citizen participation effort and for its inclusion of historic preservation principles for revitalization. The plan and the public process won a National Planning Award from the American Planning Association in 1987. Roanoke also received an All America City Award for this project.