

classified roadway network. Recommendations for improvements to roadways are presented on the boards for your review. A more detailed discussion of all deficiencies and recommendations is located in the Plan and Technical Report.

Public Transportation

The Coordinated Human Services Mobility Plan for the WPPD identified the needs and deficiencies of the region and also formulated strategies and projects to address these needs. These are summarized on the presentation boards.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Facilities

The sources of recommendations are the West Piedmont Regional Bicycle Plan and the individual jurisdictions' comprehensive and parks and recreation plans. The Regional Plan divides the facilities into three tiers of cost and has multiple strategies for implementation and development. A detailed list of recommended bicycle and pedestrian facilities appears in the Plan document.

Airports

The *Virginia Air Transportation System Plan Update (2003)* contains future forecasts (2020) of operations and aircraft based at the airports ranging from growth of 0.5% annually at Danville Regional to no growth projected at Blue Ridge Airport. Future growth in based aircraft at these airports is not expected to have long-term effects on the existing transportation network.

Travel Demand Management

The programs and services of RIDE Solutions in the Roanoke Valley will continue to be important

tools for decreasing single-occupant vehicle trips, particularly during the peak hour. In the recent assessment by the WPPDC of park and ride lots throughout the region, locations of ten potential future lots were identified. Additional lots could further decrease single-occupant vehicle trips on the roadway network. Park and ride lots in the region are therefore expected to continue to be of importance to the commuting population.

Goods Movement

The transfer of some goods shipments from roadway to rail has the potential to strengthen rail freight services offered, while also reducing the number of long-haul tractor-trailers trips. Because there is existing access to the rail network in the West Piedmont region, these type of transfers may occur in the future.

There are currently improvements proposed for the Norfolk Southern rail corridors in the region. Added capacity along the Crescent Corridor, which generally parallels US 29 through the region, is expected to transfer more truck shipments from I-81 to this rail corridor. The Coal Corridor of Norfolk Southern also traverses the region and there are plans to expand capacity along the route.

PLAN ADOPTION

The 2035 Rural Long Range Transportation Plan for West Piedmont will be adopted by the Planning District Commission in 2011. This Plan will serve as a long term strategy for the transportation network of the region and as a component of the 2035 Surface Transportation Plan. Projects can be prioritized for funding based on the identified recommendations.

WEST PIEDMONT PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

2035 RURAL LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

WHAT IS THIS STUDY?

The Transportation and Mobility Planning Division (TMPD) of the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has worked with other transportation agencies to develop the 2035 Surface Transportation Plan, which is a part of VTrans 2035, the Commonwealth's long range plan for all modes of transportation. The highway element of the 2035 Surface Transportation Plan includes proposed improvements on Virginia's federal functionally classified roadways. The Rural Long Range Transportation Plan that you are looking at today is just one piece of the 2035 Plan. VDOT, Virginia's Planning District Commissions (PDCs), and your local governments are partners in the development of this new initiative to create regional transportation plans in rural areas that complement those in Virginia's metropolitan and small urban areas.

The transportation system within West Piedmont was evaluated, and a range of transportation improvements for all modes are recommended. This plan looks at improvements that can be made in the near-term and in the future, as far as the year 2035, in order to assess the effects of population and employment growth upon the transportation system.

Each rural plan was developed as a blueprint, or vision plan to address all of the needs of the transportation system, regardless of anticipated funding availability. This regional plan can then be used by local, regional, and state agencies to identify transportation funding priorities. The Plan document for this region has more details on all of the analysis and recommendations.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

WEST PIEDMONT PLANNING DISTRICT COMMISSION

The West Piedmont Planning District Commission serves the Counties of Franklin, Henry, Patrick, and Pittsylvania, the Cities of Danville and Martinsville, and the Towns of Boones Mill, Chatham, Gretna, Hurt, Ridgeway, Rocky Mount, and Stuart. Located in south-central Virginia, the West Piedmont region has a current estimated population of almost 248,000 people (Weldon, 2009). The region is a predominantly rural area with some denser development around the towns and dense urban development occurring around the Cities of Danville and Martinsville. The region is bounded by the Blue Ridge Mountains in the west transitioning to smaller ridge and valley systems and rolling topography in the east.

The Danville Metropolitan Planning Organization (DMPO) conducts the transportation planning for the City of Danville and urbanized portions of Pittsylvania County. The transportation needs of this area are analyzed in its 2035 Fiscally Constrained Long Range Transportation Plan, which is a separate component of the 2035 Surface Transportation Plan. For the purposes of this Plan, only the transportation network outside of the MPO is analyzed and addressed.

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

We would like to hear your comments on the information you have seen here today: in particular, the proposed recommendations. Please fill out the accompanying comment form and leave it with the study team.

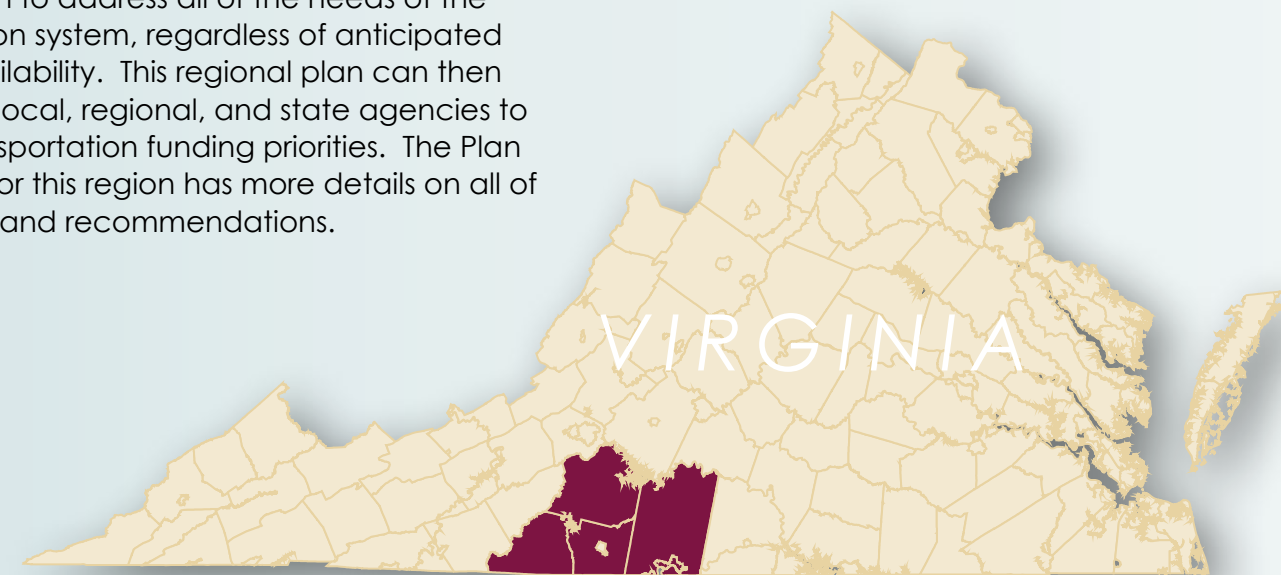
For more information on this and other studies, browse to the following web sites:

www.vdot.virginia.gov

www.vtrans.org

www.viriniadot.org/projects/2035_state_highway_plan.asp

www.vdot.virginia.gov/projects





STUDY APPROACH

A standard study approach was developed to formulate the rural regional long range plans for each PDC in the Commonwealth. Each PDC developed transportation goals and objectives that were used to guide the development of the Rural Long Range Transportation Plan for their area (please see the display boards).

These local goals and objectives were a part of the entire plan development process. The study team then reviewed existing transportation inventories and planning documents. The team also identified the needs and deficiencies in the regional transportation network. A previous public meeting was held to present these deficiencies for review and to have the public identify any additional issues or concerns in the network.

The study team then analyzed the entire rural network including the deficiencies that were identified. Recommendations for these deficiencies are presented at this meeting for your review. In addition, the team compiled recommendations from previous studies and projects and existing traffic impact analyses from private developers in order to provide as comprehensive a list as possible.

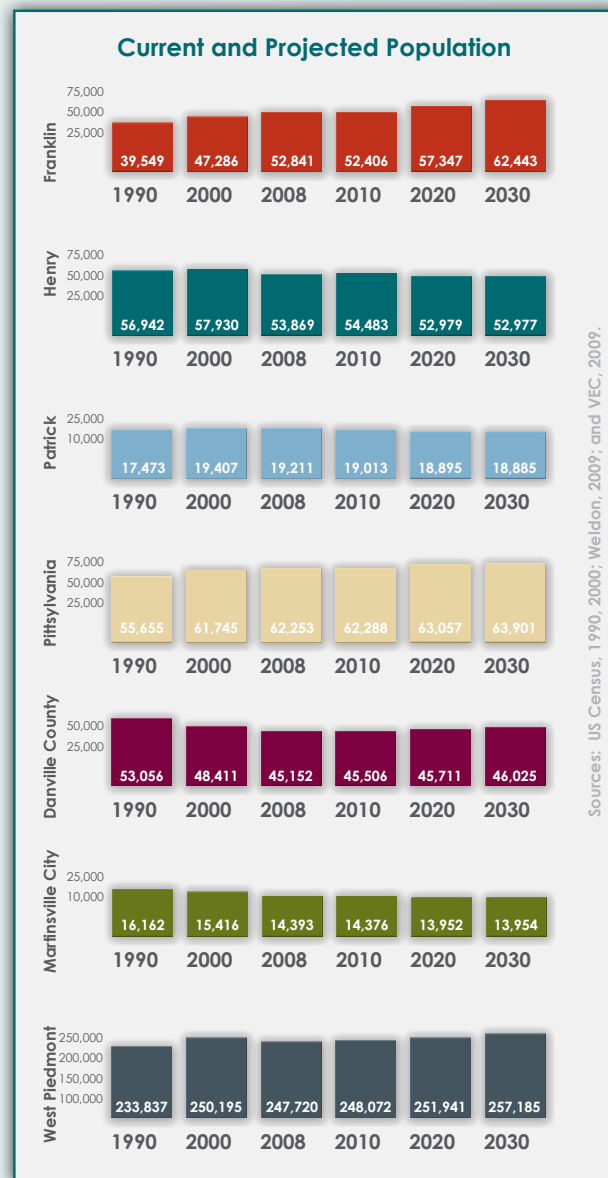
RELATIONSHIP OF LAND USE AND DEVELOPMENT TO TRANSPORTATION

Rural counties throughout the Commonwealth are working either to seek new economic growth and diversification or to balance growth while striving to preserve the rural character of the landscape. Land use and development changes that particularly affect transportation in rural areas include, but are not limited to, school consolidation, loss or gain of a major employer, movement of younger sectors of the population to more urban areas, retirement community development, and growth of bedroom-community type developments for nearby urban areas.

Several factors have affected land use in the West Piedmont Planning District (WPPD) including changes in population within the region itself, population growth in the Roanoke Valley, and the location of two state-wide roadway corridors that traverse the region, US 29 and US 58. Franklin County has experienced the most growth in the region, which is projected to continue. In addition, Franklin County is adjacent to the Roanoke Valley, which is influencing the population growth and additional residential and commercial development in the county.

Population Trends

The West Piedmont region has experienced increasing growth in population, but not equally across the jurisdictions. The region itself experienced a slight decrease in population between 2000 and 2008. Total population in the region was estimated in 2008 at 247,720.



Henry County and the cities each experienced decreases in population while Franklin County population increased. The regional population is projected to increase by just over 4% by 2030.

Population trends have implications for the transportation network of any geographic area. As the population and traffic increase, mobility and safety can suffer.

Land Use and Future Growth

A review of the jurisdictions' comprehensive plans, zoning, and proposed future land use determined the areas of future growth. These are the locations where the individual jurisdictions wish to direct future growth in order to best serve the needs of the public. Freight generators, major employers, and other sources of travel demand were also identified to help determine traffic patterns.

REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

Each mode of travel – roadways, public transportation, rail, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and airports – has been independently analyzed for both current and future conditions. Each mode is described briefly below, with additional information presented on the display boards.

For the **roadway network**, all proposed improvements are for federal functionally classified roadways. 279 recommendations have been compiled for the WPPD including large and small scale projects.

Public transportation includes: public transit, specialized services, volunteer transportation, and private providers, including taxi and medical transport companies. Danville Transit operates within the DMPO. Fixed-route service in and around Martinsville is currently contracted through Roanoke-Area-Dial-A-Ride (RADAR), based in Roanoke, and includes routes between Martinsville and Collinsville. The Ferrum Express, operated by Valley Metro in Roanoke, provides connections between Ferrum College, Rocky Mount, and Roanoke.

Demand-responsive service is provided by social service organizations that serve the transportation needs of their clients or specific disadvantaged groups. These include PARC Workshop Inc. in Patrick County, Southern Area Agency on Ag-



ing (SAAA), Piedmont Community Services, and Logisticare throughout the WPPD. The SAAA sub-contracts with six agencies to provide service to its clients.

Designated **bicycle routes and pedestrian facilities** are currently located in each of the counties. In addition, the Blue Ridge Parkway runs across the entire western portion of the region. Plans to expand the bicycle network are underway throughout the region.

Norfolk Southern owns the **freight rail lines** extending throughout the region.

There are two **general aviation airports** located in the WPPD.

Travel demand management (TDM) is a technique used by transportation planners to manage or plan for the demand that drivers place on the road network. Strategies to reduce vehicular demand include carpooling and vanpooling programs, expanded peak hour public transit, commuter buses, park and ride lots, as well as better coordination between services to facilitate transfers between modes. TDM measures, with other improvements, have been shown to greatly aid in reducing single-occupant vehicle trips.

RIDE Solutions, based in the Roanoke Valley, provides rideshare and vanpool matching services for residents of the region, in addition to other TDM-related assistance. There are also three official park and ride lots throughout the region and twenty unofficial lots. There is one Amtrak station in the region, in the City of Danville, that serves the Amtrak Crescent route. The Crescent is a daily service that runs from New York to New Orleans.

TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM PERFORMANCE AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Roadways

Roadway analysis focused on safety, geometry and structure, and congestion for the functionally