



## Citizen Concerns, Goals and Community Values



Above: Public officials and citizens at work on planning issues. Right: View of downtown with Mill Mountain in the background.

Citizen concerns expressed through the public participation events in the planning process helped shape a common vision of the kind of community Roanokers would like their city to be. The results of the Roanoke Vision Survey, Forum and Planning Workshops as well as civic and neighborhood meetings directed the development of the Plan. Specifically, the Planning Team investigated the issues, conditions and potential planning or development actions identified by citizens. Two companion reports, *Building the Roanoke Vision: A Summary of Citizen Response at the Roanoke Vision Forum* and *Public Opinion Survey: A Summary of Citizen Response to the Roanoke Vision Survey 1985*, provide more complete discussion of these issues.

### GOALS

Citizens also participated in the development of a statement of goals for the Comprehensive Development Plan. These general goals are:

- Provide orderly growth and revitalization for the city.
- Encourage preservation of environmental and cultural resources.
- Ensure pleasant, safe and suitable living environments in each neighborhood.
- Promote a balanced economy to ensure sufficient employment and economic base.

- Provide public services, facilities and infrastructure to meet the varied needs of all city residents.
- Encourage active citizen involvement in the planning and development actions that affect the city's quality of life.

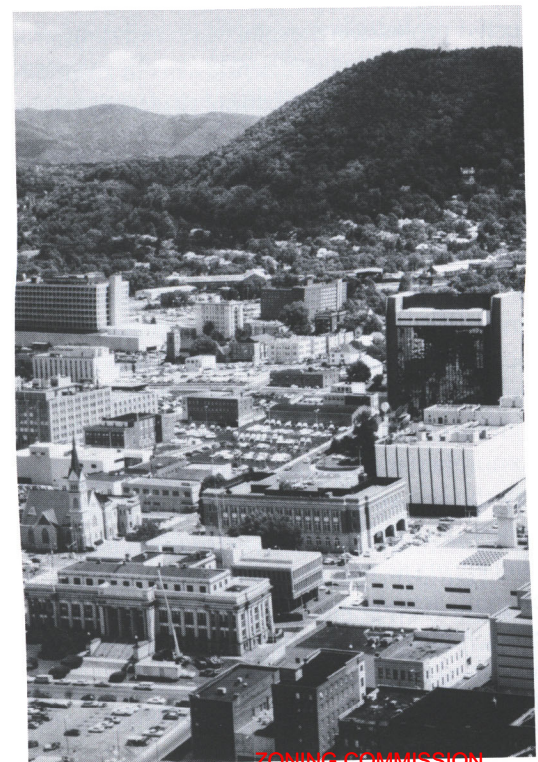
### COMMUNITY VALUES

In addition, citizens helped develop a set of community values reflecting major concerns in four issue areas:

- neighborhood enhancement, preservation and development
- economic development
- human development and public safety
- city services and facilities

The values in each of these areas reflect the combined citizens' responses and highlight the following common themes:

- the importance of neighborhoods, includ-



ZONING COMMISSION  
District of Columbia  
CASE NO.86-26  
EXHIBIT NO.527A2



ing preservation of existing buildings and quality new development;

- the desire to maintain Roanoke's convenient, comfortable pace and appreciation for its friendly neighborly spirit;
- a concern for the city's image and appearance;
- the expansion of Roanoke's role as an economically and culturally vibrant regional center;
- the desire for quality public services and

facilities;

- the importance of quality educational opportunities;
- the importance of self-sufficiency as a goal in human services; and
- the need for increased regional cooperation among local governments in the Roanoke Valley.

The complete set of community values which guided the Roanoke Vision Planning process follows.

## COMMUNITY VALUES

### ***Neighborhoods: Enhancement, Preservation and Development***

1. Neighborhoods are an essential element in Roanoke's quality of life. Neighborhood enhancement, preservation, improvement, and development should be encouraged through public, private and voluntary action.
2. Neighborhood character and environmental quality should be protected. Possible changes in land use or new public and private development in or near residential areas should be carefully evaluated and designed to conserve and enhance neighborhood quality.
3. Preservation of archaeological sites, historic districts, landmark features, and historic structures should be supported and significant structures should be preserved.
4. Priority should be given to maintenance and rehabilitation of sound, usable structures rather than demolition. Traditional and historical features should be preserved to the extent practical.
5. Better public and private property maintenance should be encouraged through public policy, including stronger controls over unsightly property, as well as through the efforts of citizens, the private sector and voluntary organizations.
6. Building, housing maintenance and zoning codes should be strengthened and effectively enforced to ensure improved housing quality and community appearance.
7. New housing and housing types (townhouses, condominiums, etc.) should be encouraged to respond to current needs and trends including changing family structures, household composition and economic conditions. However, new housing development in existing residential areas should be carefully designed to relate well to the existing neighborhood character.
8. Development of housing in downtown should be encouraged with both public and private initiatives.
9. Programs that support affordable housing for all economic groups in



Right: At work in a Vision workshop.



the city should be continued and expanded. These programs should emphasize public/private partnerships that support home ownership, especially for financially disadvantaged groups where possible.

10. Development or reuse of small neighborhood shopping areas to serve the needs of area residents should be encouraged through public policy and private actions. Priority should be given to areas where needed commercial services are not currently provided. Regulations should ensure that neighborhood commercial uses are in keeping with the neighborhood's character.
11. The development of neighborhood self-help organizations in all areas of the city should be encouraged, through efforts such as the Roanoke Neighborhood Partnership.
12. Environmental and design amenities that enhance neighborhood livability should be encouraged in all neighborhoods. These important neighborhood amenities should be protected.

## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

1. Commercial, industrial and residential growth and development should be encouraged through public and private actions to ensure a strong and diversified economic base and employment opportunities for all of Roanoke's citizens.
2. Roanoke's downtown should continue to evolve as the region's "central business district" for office, financial, supporting retail, cultural, entertainment and government services.
3. Development of new or existing commercial and industrial areas in the city should be carefully planned and designed to promote quality development and good land use.
4. Roanoke should encourage the continued development of commercial, health, transportation-related businesses and other service facilities that serve the larger Valley region.
5. Development of facilities and activities which would enhance Roanoke's role as a convention and tourism site should be encouraged.
6. Controls to help ensure that new or expanded industrial and commercial developments are good neighbors for residential or other adjacent areas should be carefully evaluated and strengthened where necessary.
7. Cooperation of Valley governments in planning and creation of common economic development and supporting infrastructure policies should be encouraged, through public policy and private actions.
9. Improved job training, placement and adult education should be continued



and expanded as part of the City's program.

10. Expanded higher education opportunities should be continued and expanded as part of the City's program.
11. Improved transportation systems — highways, rail lines, air travel, and public transit — are extremely important to Roanoke's economic development and should be carefully planned.



12. The physical facilities and operations of Roanoke's airport should be expanded and maintained to be competitive with other metropolitan areas.
13. Because of the limited amount of existing industrially zoned land in Roanoke, the comprehensive plan and related ordinances should protect these areas by restricting uses to only industrial categories.

## **HUMAN DEVELOPMENT AND PUBLIC SAFETY**

### ***Education and Youth***

1. High quality educational facilities and programs at all levels should be supported and maintained as a major investment in Roanoke's human and economic future.
2. Through a variety of public and pri-

vate efforts, Roanoke should provide programs and activities for young people to become productive adults so that they can take advantage of opportunities to remain in or return to the city.

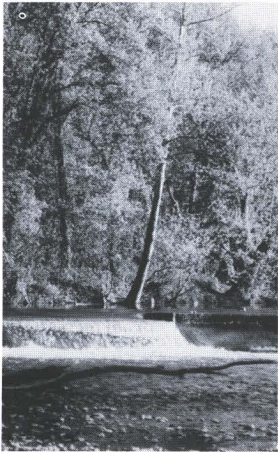
### ***Human Services***

3. Self-sufficiency should be a goal for human service programs for Roanoke's citizens.
4. Quality public and private child care services, including before and after school care, should be available and affordable for all working parents. Creative approaches and settings should be encouraged to offer choices to meet a variety of family needs. Coordination with schools and other existing institutions and organizations should also be emphasized where appropriate.
5. Human services should provide for the health, welfare, and safety of all citizens through public and private efforts.
6. Appropriate housing services for individuals with special needs should be available in neighborhood settings through public and private efforts.
7. Through a variety of public and private efforts, services should be made available to allow Roanoke's elderly and disabled citizens to remain in their own homes or neighborhoods as long as possible.
8. Through public and private efforts, employment training opportunities should be available to serve Roanoke's youth and economically disadvantaged citizens.
9. Supporting and strengthening the family should be a goal of public and private human services in Roanoke.



Left: A new shop in the restored, historic City Market. Above: Public improvements have helped bring the market area back to life.





Above: Roanoke River scene along Wiley Drive. Right: The main library and new addition in downtown.

### ***Public Safety***

10. Crime prevention efforts should be supported through strengthened law enforcement activities and citizen involvement.

### ***Regional Cooperation***

11. Cooperation of Valley governments in addressing human development and public safety issues which impact the larger region should be encouraged.

## **CITY SERVICES AND FACILITIES**

### ***Environmental Quality***

1. Promoting, encouraging, maintaining or enhancing environmental quality and the appearance of the city should be a key objective of public services and private initiatives in Roanoke.
2. Public area landscaping and beautification should be encouraged and supported through public and private actions.

### ***Parks and Recreation***

3. Enhancement and maintenance of existing parks and recreation facilities should be continued and supported.
4. When new community facilities and parks are developed, they should be provided in currently unserved areas where need and demand for services are highest.

### ***Infrastructure: Transportation***

5. Roanoke's transportation system and utilities should focus primarily on

maintenance and completion of existing systems. Expansion of these systems should be carefully coordinated with the future land use goals adopted in the comprehensive plan.

6. The review of the City's traffic management system should be an ongoing process.
7. Regional accessibility should be strengthened through the enhancement of transportation facilities, including buses, and airport services.
8. Improved downtown accessibility through better traffic flow, locational and directional signs, parking and pedestrian amenities should be developed.

### ***Regional Cooperation***

9. Cooperation of Valley governments in addressing issues which impact the larger region should be encouraged.
10. Regional facilities which serve the metropolitan community or provide joint services to areas in need should be encouraged and supported.





### 3 ROANOKE YESTERDAY



Left: Downtown was thriving when Roanoke's second Comprehensive Plan was being developed in 1928.





## Planning and Development Legacy

**R**oanoke celebrated its centennial in 1982 — 100 years of development from a small crossroads village to a railroad center, then from a growing industrial city to the diversified regional industrial, service and financial center of western Virginia that it is today.

### FROM VILLAGE OF BIG LICK TO RAILROAD “BOOM TOWN”

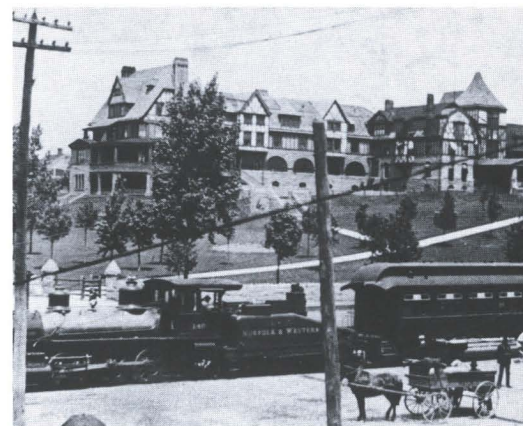
Settlement in the Roanoke area began in the 1850s when the first railroad lines located in the Village of Big Lick. However, the city’s rapid growth came between 1874 and 1889 after Roanoke became the headquarters of the Norfolk and Western Railway.

The legacy of development patterns begun in these early boom years is still evident. The original settlement along Big Lick Creek was located in the areas where downtown Roanoke and the Gainsboro neighborhood stand today. Industrial development grew along the rail lines and the Roanoke River. Much of the housing in the city’s oldest neighborhoods was built rapidly by speculative land companies. By the early 1900s, Roanoke had established itself as a growing industrial city and the desire for home ownership spurred more substantial residential development.

### 1907 PLAN: REMODELING ROANOKE

General concern about the city’s development was expressed in 1907 when Roanoke’s first comprehensive plan, entitled *Remodeling Roanoke*, was commissioned by a group of citizens called the Civic Betterment League. This plan, one of the first such efforts in the nation, established the foundation for the city by coordinating the location of the downtown buildings along Jefferson Street and at the site of the City Market, establishing an orderly street system and proposing a network of parks.

*“The problem that confronts the people of Roanoke . . . is no less than the remodeling of the existing city and the remoulding of the large area around it so that both may better serve present and future generations. The task is not an easy one. It involves an intimate knowledge of the evolution of the present City of Roanoke and as wise as possible a forecasting of its future; a firm hold upon fundamental principles of city-making generally; an acquaintance with the experience and actual achievement of other cities; and a capacity to discriminate — to select from a number of possible courses of action one that is, all things considered, unquestionably the best. Moreover, it demands imagination, courage and public spirit.”*  
(Remodeling Roanoke, 1907)



### 1928 PLAN: GROWING CITY OF BUSINESS AND INDUSTRY

By 1928, Roanoke’s citizens and City Hall recognized the need for a new plan to direct development in the growing city. Key results of the 1928 comprehensive plan can be seen throughout Roanoke today. Road and park systems were developed. Schools were located. The sites for Victory Stadium, the city’s first airport, and the present municipal buildings were chosen. The plan included the city’s first zoning ordinance which controlled how land in the city could be used.

*“The plan of 1928 has been prepared for a still greater Roanoke, for a city of splendid appearance as well as a strong industrial and commercial center. It contemplates the growth of the city and region for a generation ahead; for the meeting of the modern trends in transportation; for the best use of lands; the preser-*

Right: An early view of the Hotel Roanoke.