

Dear Regional Partners and Participants,

Thank you for your "courageous collaboration" and the energy you brought to our recent Regional Forum. As part of the Roanoke Collaboration Project (RCP), we are committed to ensuring that every voice heard in our forums contributes to a greater understanding of the challenges and opportunities facing our region.

We have now finished processing the feedback from over 70 forum participants. Whether you submitted a handwritten form or shared your thoughts in the Zoom chat, your input has been woven into a collective vision for the future of the Roanoke Valley.

Where We Are: Appreciating the Best of "What Is"

Based on what you said, our community treasures the "Radical Connectivity" of our region. We often described the Roanoke Valley as being **"large enough to matter, but small enough to impact."**

The Top Treasures Participants Identified:

- **The "Convenience" Factor:** The ability to enjoy the symphony, a mountain hike, and a museum all in a single day.
- **Collaborative Resilience:** A history of coming together during crises, from the regional housing networks of the 90s to the recent Medical Reserve Corps.
- **Educational Pride:** The transformative impact of Career and Technical Education (ROTEC/DAYTEC) and the growing biomedical research sector.

Where We Are Going: Dreaming "What Might Be" (2030)

The most powerful theme of our forum was a desire for **Regional Unity**. By 2030, we envision a valley that has embraced a single, thriving identity.

The Vision for 2030:

- **A "Common Name":** A future where we no longer identify only by our specific town or county, but proudly say, "I am from the Roanoke Valley."
- **Economic Vitality:** A region so cohesive and workforce-ready that businesses are eager to relocate here, keeping our talented students local.
- **Neighborhood Equity:** A valley where the "life expectancy gap" is closed, and everyone—regardless of zip code—is housed, fed, and thriving.

Word Patterns: Our Community in Focus

Based on your feedback, these are the concepts that appeared most frequently and passionately. You can visualize these as the pillars of our shared goal:

Treasures Noted: Nature, Green-spaces, Connectivity, Convenience, ROTEC, Inclusion, Small-town-feel, Ease-of-Living, Collaboration.

Vision 2030 Key Words: Regional-Unity, Vibrant-Economy, Financial-Health, Housing-Equity, Youth-Retention, Common-Name, Biomedical-Hub, Accessible.

Call to Action: The Path Forward

1. This feedback is now a core part of the RCP's 2026 Strategic Roadmap. We are using these insights to advocate for "Bridge Leadership"—bringing together government, business, and community leaders to solve the fiscal and social challenges that stand between us and this 2030 vision. The next community forum in our 2026 series is currently planned for the end of summer.

2. Remember Dr. Learman's second slide. "RCP convenes. Participants execute." We are planning a next forum, but don't wait for us. Start taking your own steps now. Follow-up with people you met to build relationships. Develop concrete steps that you and others can take to achieve the Vision for 2030. Let us know what you are doing, send us an email: info@roanokecollaboration.org

3. Sign our [Pledge for Constructive Dialogue](#)

Thank you for being the "best salesmen" for our region. We look forward to building this future with you.

Warm Regards,
Roanoke Collaboration Project
<https://roanokecollaboration.org/>

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