



## APPLICATION FORM

All applications must include the following information. Separate applications must be submitted for each eligible program. **Deadline: June 1, 2018.** Please include this application form with electronic entry. If you do not receive an email confirming receipt of your entry within 3 days of submission, please contact [Gage Harter](#).

### PROGRAM INFORMATION

County: Roanoke

Program Title: 419 Town Center Plan

Program Category: Community/Economic Development

### CONTACT INFORMATION

Name: Jill Loope

Title: Economic Development Director

Department: Economic Development

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### SIGNATURE OF COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR OR DEPUTY/ASSISTANT COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR

Name: Thomas C. Gates

Title: County Administrator

Signature: 

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY / BRIEF OVERVIEW**

Roanoke County’s Department of Economic Development and Department of Community Development worked together to launch a [419 Town Center](#) visioning process in the fall of 2016. The Route 419 corridor is the heart of commerce in Roanoke County, and a key economic driver for the community.

This corridor has long served as a premiere shopping and business destination for a diverse mix of retail, commercial and residential opportunities desired by citizens and visitors. Roanoke County’s vision is to revitalize this corridor through Placemaking, a multi-faceted approach that capitalizes on the community’s assets to “reimagine” this area. The [419 Town Center Plan](#) is an investment in Roanoke County’s economic future, and will result in a market-based master plan that incorporates community input and collaboration to create an exceptional place for all to enjoy.

Roanoke County staff has copied the same strategy of promotion, community meetings, stakeholder input, and planning resources to advance current studies for the [Oak Grove](#) and [Hollins](#) areas of Roanoke County under the [“Reimagine”](#) umbrella campaign.

**DESCRIPTION OF SITUATION/HOW PROGRAM WAS EXECUTED/FINANCING/  
STAFFING/RESULTS**

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In partnership with Stantec consultants, the unique 419 Town Center campaign was developed to draw public attention to the redevelopment plan. A distinct web portal served as the central hub for a variety of resources used to promote the site and to gather citizen and stakeholder input for the plan.

Through the use of an [interactive Esri Story Map](#), visitors could learn about the evolution of the area since 1969, view the study area as it exists today as well as present-day traffic counts and land use proposals. An [online community survey](#) was used to gain an understanding of what

residents thought about the study area; over 350 responses were received. A [public service announcement](#) was produced to help promote the initiative, and staff devoted time and resources to canvass stakeholders in the study area with postcard mailings, flyers, counter cards, and posters displayed at businesses. The upcoming campaign was also heavily promoted on the County's social media channels.

A collection of maps, studies and reports were made available before and during the planning process to educate stakeholders and citizens on the potential for redevelopment. Staff also developed an email subscription for updates about the project.

In addition to the traditional community meetings held, staff hosted an Open House at Barrel Chest Wine and Beer, a popular business located within the corridor, to review ideas for the study area, fill out the survey and support a local business. Staff also spoke with nearly 90 employees at Roanoke County's Administration Center, also located within the study area, about how it could be improved.

During the planning process, clear objectives emerged for the [419 Town Center Plan](#) that were mutually beneficial to the business and economic development communities, as well as to the community as a whole:

- Harness the power of the location and market strengths to enhance the Town Center's livability.
- Improve connectivity.

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419 Town Center Plan

- Promote a sense of community and inclusivity.
- Celebrate the Town Center’s nature and the corridor’s natural setting.
- Create an authentic place.

The County’s Community Development and Economic Development staff spent countless hours planning, working with Stantec consultants, holding community meetings, gaining input from stakeholders and business leaders along the corridor, developing and maintaining a web portal, and talking with media. The campaign lasted for more than a year. The final draft plan was presented to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors in June 2017 for approval to begin moving forward with the objectives.

The total cost for the 419 Town Center project, which included utilizing the services of Stantec consultants, and a traffic analysis at the intersection of Rt. 419 and Rt. 220 along the corridor was approximately \$318,000. Other costs, to include meeting room locations, mailers, advertising, and office supplies were about \$10,000.

As defined in the draft Vision Statement, the 419 Town Center will create a vibrant new center for community life, embraced by the spectacular beauty of the area. The town center will mix diverse new housing options; job opportunities; shopping, dining, and entertainment choices; chances to enjoy art and music—all within a short walk. The town center will offer people opportunities to live healthier lifestyles, reinforce our commitment to environmental responsibility, and advance the town center’s emergence as a center of knowledge and innovation.

Additional benefits to launching a comprehensive planning area study for the 419 corridor include strengthening citizen interest in the community, and building public trust in the County to follow up on its commitments made in the previous year's [Community Strategic Plan](#), which identified this corridor as an economic driver in need of revitalization. The community strategic planning process involved all Roanoke County departments, as well as close to 400 citizens and stakeholders from Roanoke County and surrounding communities.

The heightened sense of community engagement also lent support to additional planning studies in the County. Using the same methodology and approach developed in the 419 Town Center Study, staff adapted the [“reimagine”](#) initiative to explore opportunities for higher density, mixed-use activity areas in existing commercial corridors. Each study will examine future commercial and residential development, multi-modal transportation, infrastructure improvements and redevelopment design standards based on each community's needs and desires.

In addition, two planned transportation projects currently in the design phase will improve capacity during peak hours along the busy corridor while providing numerous benefits to surrounding neighborhoods. The [Route 419 Widening, Safety, and Multimodal Improvements project](#) will add an additional travel lane, plus bicycle and pedestrian accommodations. The Fallowater Lane Extension project will improve connectivity in the study area by creating a more gridded street network, adding new intersections along Route 419 and allowing appropriate access to future multi-family development.

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To help keep the community engaged during the planning study, staff committed to posting all materials from community meetings on the website in a timely manner, along with meeting notes and comments from attendees. Staff also developed quarterly updates and distributed this information to all attendees via email and posted to the website, including: [419 Fact Sheet Summer 2016](#), [Fall 2016 Update](#) and [Spring 2017 Update](#).

The project has received extensive [local media coverage](#) of the planning process and was shared on social media networks. To help sustain public interest and curiosity about the project, staff published and promoted [photographs](#) of meeting attendees and the meeting process. An email list built from the meeting attendees list was used to promote each of the publications and meeting reviews above, further helping to retain interest and citizen support for the multi-month study.

The 419 Town Center campaign's scheduled promotions, public meetings, open house events, and community-focused design workshops can be easily repeated in other localities. All resources used in the campaign, including a comprehensive schedule of meetings and public meeting notes can be found at [www.roanokecountyva.gov/419](http://www.roanokecountyva.gov/419).

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