

## IMPLEMENTATION OF GOALS, OBJECTIVES & STRATEGIES

At the August 3, 2017 community workshop, approximately 70 attendees participated in an exercise to formulate goals, objectives and strategies. Participants were assigned to random work tables and asked to identify the 5 most important issues facing Route 5 and Marion Hill. Numerous ideas were shared; staff transcribed them, and participants were asked to ‘vote’ on those they most agreed with. The top 7 issues/concerns that garnered the most votes (# of votes are shown next to the topics) were the following:

Character (rural, agricultural, historic)	67	Marion Hill visual inventory	12
Town Center	40	Cut through traffic from Tree Hill	11
Overlay District	19	Widen/Don’t widen Route 5	10
Responsible Growth	13		

Based on the comments received, planning staff drafted an initial set of goals and objectives. They were presented at the October 19, 2017 community meeting where over 110 participants used keypad technology to share their thoughts. Many of the goals and objectives were overwhelmingly agreed upon, while others were thought to be “vague” or “leading”. The town center concept was particularly discussed at length.

In response to the feedback and as an effort to simplify, clarify, and streamline the goals and objectives, staff reviewed all the comments received throughout the public participation process. This included the 59 exit surveys, 118 online survey responses, 30 public input map comments and 3 letters, plus the original worksheets (13) from the August goals/objectives/ strategies brainstorming exercise. The five issues below were identified as the most frequently commented upon.

Character (rural, agricultural, historic)	Land Use	Tourism
Transportation (Route 5 & Capital Trail)	Recreation	

Using these topics and feedback, staff revised the goals and objectives, and identified corresponding strategies. It is important to note that some of the strategies (create design guidelines, review the zoning ordinance, encourage river access) are meant to be implemented by the County, as they may ultimately require decision-making by the Planning Commission and/or Board of Supervisors. Others are meant to be driven by the private sector.

For example, the objective “encourage agricultural enterprises along the corridor” could be achieved by the strategy “support efforts such as the Virginia Tech Virginia Beginning Farmers and Ranchers Coalition”. Owners/farmers will determine which enterprises would be successful on individual properties based on soils, business plans, crop production, etc. Staff will facilitate a review of the zoning ordinance to make sure such enterprises (cideries/wineries, pick your own fruits/vegetables, bed and breakfasts, fee/lease pond fishing, etc.,) aren’t in conflict with the

code. Ultimately, it will be up to the farmer/entrepreneur to plan, market and launch such efforts. There are multiple state and national resources available (Extension Service, Farm Bureau, Office of Farmland Preservation, Agricultural Marketing Resource Center) to lend assistance.

Likewise, county staff could facilitate the creation of a town center if, and when, a mixed-use project is submitted for development. Should a residential development with a commercial component be proposed for the corridor, staff will encourage the developer to design the retail portion to function as a gathering space for the community. The specific location will be driven by private sector and market forces. Alternately, the department could study ways to encourage more cohesive development between Gregg and Strath Roads, as this was the area most participants identified as a potential gathering space/town center because of its existing services, location and character.

Finally, because Route 5 is a VDOT controlled road, future widening of the road and/or redesign of intersections, or enhancements to the Capital Trail, are the purview of the state. As growth occurs, the county will coordinate with VDOT to implement necessary improvements.