

Best practices for engaging your community

CITY OF ROANOKE, VA
MAYOR SHERMAN P. LEA



What does Roanoke's Office of Citizen Engagement do?

The Citizen Engagement Officer is a communications and marketing professional who focuses on building trusting relationships between our government and our community.

The Officer represents the City Manager's Office and leads the city's efforts in many areas, including social media management, digital marketing, graphic design, web development, videography, research, strategic communications, issues management, crisis communications, event planning, and campaign development.

Communicating proactively and transparently accomplishes three things:

Develops trust and builds mutually beneficial relationships with stakeholders

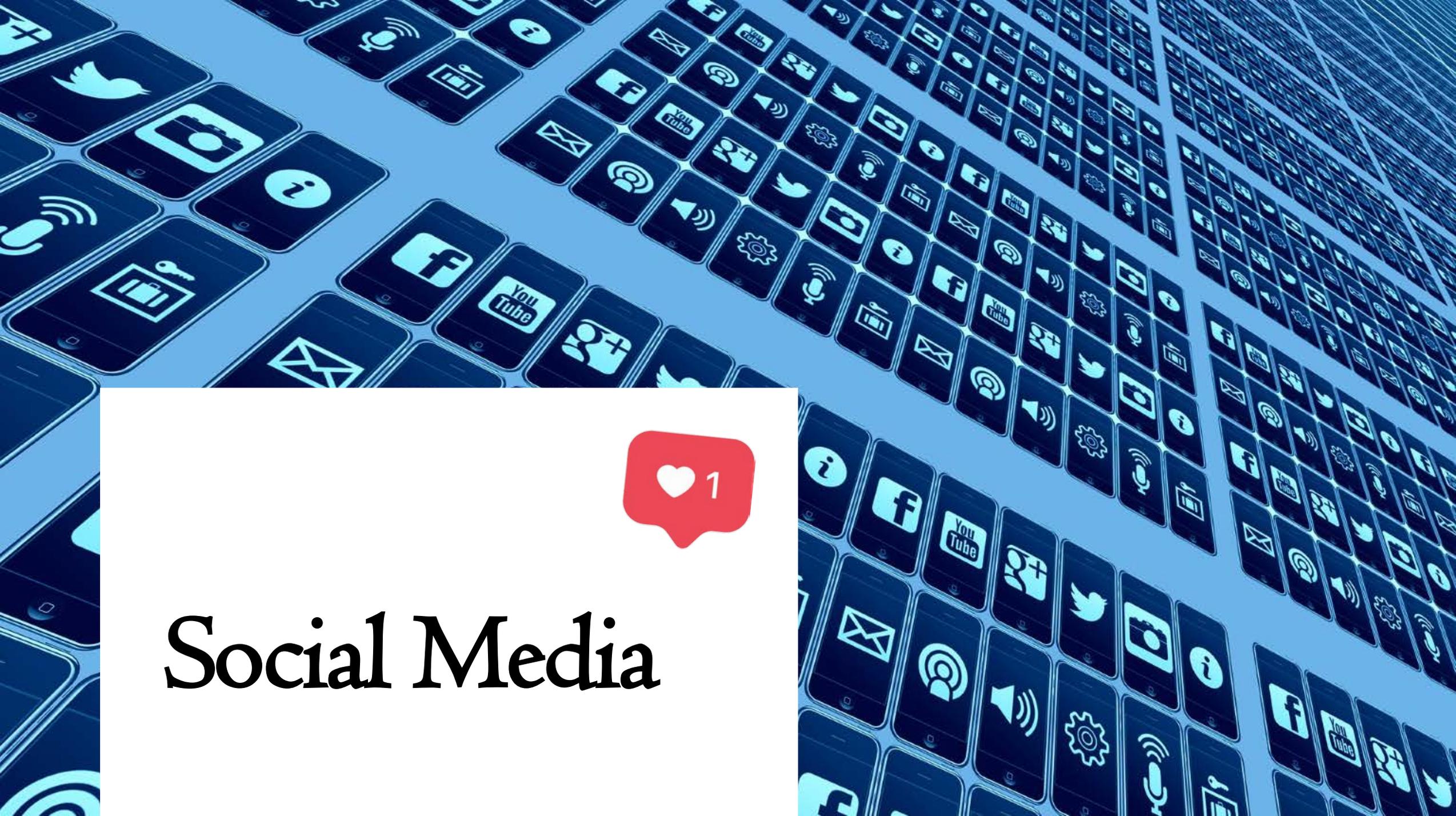
Engages citizens in decision-making

Allows governments to proactively anticipate questions and manage issues (*before* they become issues)

4 Ways to Engage:

1. Social Media Engagement
2. Events and Special Campaigns
3. Public Consultation
4. Community-Based Projects





Social Media

How did Roanoke build a digital audience of **218,000+** followers in a just few years?

We create new content every day.

In FY18, we posted 7,240 times on the City of Roanoke's 53 profiles (roughly 22 unique posts per day)

In FY18, City content reached 17.9 million people, resulting in 1.3 million interactions and engagements with the City through social media alone

The City's top profiles are on: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, Nextdoor, and LinkedIn

We stream City Council Meetings, Ribbon Cuttings, and more events on Facebook Live to keep our community informed

We listen and are responsive.

The City maintains high responsiveness to messages and comments – even on nights, weekends, and holidays

In addition to social media, we offer digital service request forms and the iRoanoke app to automatically generate service tickets for our team

We frequently ask citizens to provide input and ideas – whether it's a simple poll, or a question. The key is to empower citizens to use their voice and share their ideas

If you invest in your social media strategy, you will have a captive audience in the event of emergency.

During Hurricane Florence, we distributed more than 200 social media safety messages in multiple languages to help prepare our community.

These emergency alerts reached hundreds of thousands social media users, resulting in thousands of content engagements, and helped prepare our community for the storm.

City of Roanoke, Virginia - Government Like Page

Published by Rowan Oke [?] · September 16 at 9:40 AM ·

The latest weather forecast from US National Weather Service Blacksburg VA:

Life-threatening, Significant flash flooding and prolonged significant river flooding are likely over much of the region into Mid-Week

- ✓ Life-threatening flash flooding arrives this afternoon and continues into early Monday afternoon. Additional rainfall totals through Tuesday could range from 3 to 10 inches
- ✓ Impacts are likely to include major river flooding and landslides. River flooding could last into mid-week. This may lead to numerous road closures, road/bridge washouts, some communities cut-off, and some structures near streams and rivers inundated.
- ✓ Wind gusts of 25 to 40 mph along the higher mountain ridges of NW NC and SW VA and neighboring Piedmont region today could cause downed trees and scattered power outages.
- ✓ There is a small threat for isolated tornadoes by this afternoon and Monday.

Today	Monday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Heavier rains arrive, life-threatening flash flood threat increases • 20-40 MPH winds SW VA/NC NC • Isolated tornadoes NC Piedmont/VA Southside 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life-threatening/Major River Flooding • Flash Flooding threat subsides in the afternoon/evening • Isolated tornadoes

Today

Tonight

Monday

Tuesday/Wed.

Impact Legend

- Little to no impact
- Minor impacts
- Moderate impacts

	Tonight	Tuesday-Wednesday
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Life-threatening flash flood threat continues • Landslides possible • River Flooding begins • Isolated tornadoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Major River Flooding Continues • Scattered showers and storms Tuesday, non-zero threat of flash flooding. 	

Performance for Your Post

50,151 People Reached

426 Reactions, Comments & Shares

101 Like	38 On Post	63 On Shares
6 Love	0 On Post	6 On Shares
47 Wow	12 On Post	35 On Shares
14 Sad	3 On Post	11 On Shares
84 Comments	13 On Post	71 On Shares
175 Shares	175 On Post	0 On Shares

3,660 Post Clicks

2,505 Photo Views	1 Link Clicks	1,154 Other Clicks
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NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

8 Hide Post	1 Hide All Posts
0 Report as Spam	0 Unlike Page

It also gives you the opportunity to share positive stories that highlight your talented staff.

Our PD's lip sync video was watched more than 2.5 million times worldwide and won a national contest.

— Your video contains content claimed by someone else
🔒 Only you can see this.

Roanoke Police Department - VA Like Page ⋮
Published by Jason Holt (?) · July 13 · 🌐

We're uplifted by community spirit and good vibes here in Roanoke!
#LipSyncChallenge

Watch on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VZVi6AfJevk&feature=youtu.be>

*While we loved dancing and lip syncing to this song, the City of Roanoke Police Department does not own the rights to this song. ... See More



City of Roanoke #LipSyncChallenge
04:51

✔ **Get More Likes, Comments and Shares**
When you boost this post, you'll show it to more people.

📍 Your video is popular in [Virginia](#) Boost Post

👍❤️👎 59K 5.3K Comments 60K Shares

Performance for Your Post

4,217,980 People Reached		
2,054,030 Video Views		
268,198 Reactions, Comments & Shares 🗨️		
135,830 👍 Like	43,856 👍 On Post	91,974 👍 On Shares
38,637 ❤️ Love	15,991 👍 On Post	22,646 👍 On Shares
3,962 😂 Haha	1,774 👍 On Post	2,188 👍 On Shares
662 😲 Wow	151 👍 On Post	511 👍 On Shares
62 😞 Sad	22 👍 On Post	40 👍 On Shares
124 😡 Angry	42 👍 On Post	82 👍 On Shares
27,116 💬 Comments	6,112 👍 On Post	21,004 👍 On Shares
62,240 👍 Shares	60,855 👍 On Post	1,385 👍 On Shares
1,004,436 Post Clicks		
233,670 🎮 Clicks to Play 🗨️	8,025 🔗 Link Clicks	762,741 👍 Other Clicks 🗨️



Special Events and Campaigns

Welcoming everyone in our community.

In 2018, we hosted our first Welcoming Week campaign. More than 400 people participated in a week of events – ranging from a DJ soccer party, to Arabic classes and a community discussion about immigration cases with Senator Kaine’s Office.

After distributing 1,000 buttons, stickers, flyers, and storefront “Welcomer” posters, the grassroots campaign earned dozens of positive PR stories, including coverage on NPR.



Roanoke awarded research grant and immigration integration plan assistance.

Through Welcoming Week, the City strengthened new relationships with seven local non-profits who serve immigrants and refugees.

As a group, we were awarded the Gateways for Growth research grant and technical assistance through Welcoming America and New American Economy to help us continue to support our city's growing international community.



The annual Lea Youth Outdoor Basketball League

For three summers, we've played basketball twice a week on Tuesday and Thursday nights with the community in Melrose Park.

The PD provides a cookout for the community, we listen to music, and we play basketball. Before each game, we invite a special guest speaker to tell our youth an inspiring story about their lives.

The program has built trusting relationships with community members and our police department, and reduces criminal activity around the park every year.



Cleaning up our neighborhoods.

In our current HUD Target Areas, we introduced a new event this summer: a Clean Sweep.

Fifty-eight staff members from nearly every department and 35 volunteers from the community worked hard on a Saturday to help target and clean up a specific neighborhood.

Our Solid Waste team collected **38 tons** of unlimited bulk, brush, and trash items at no cost.



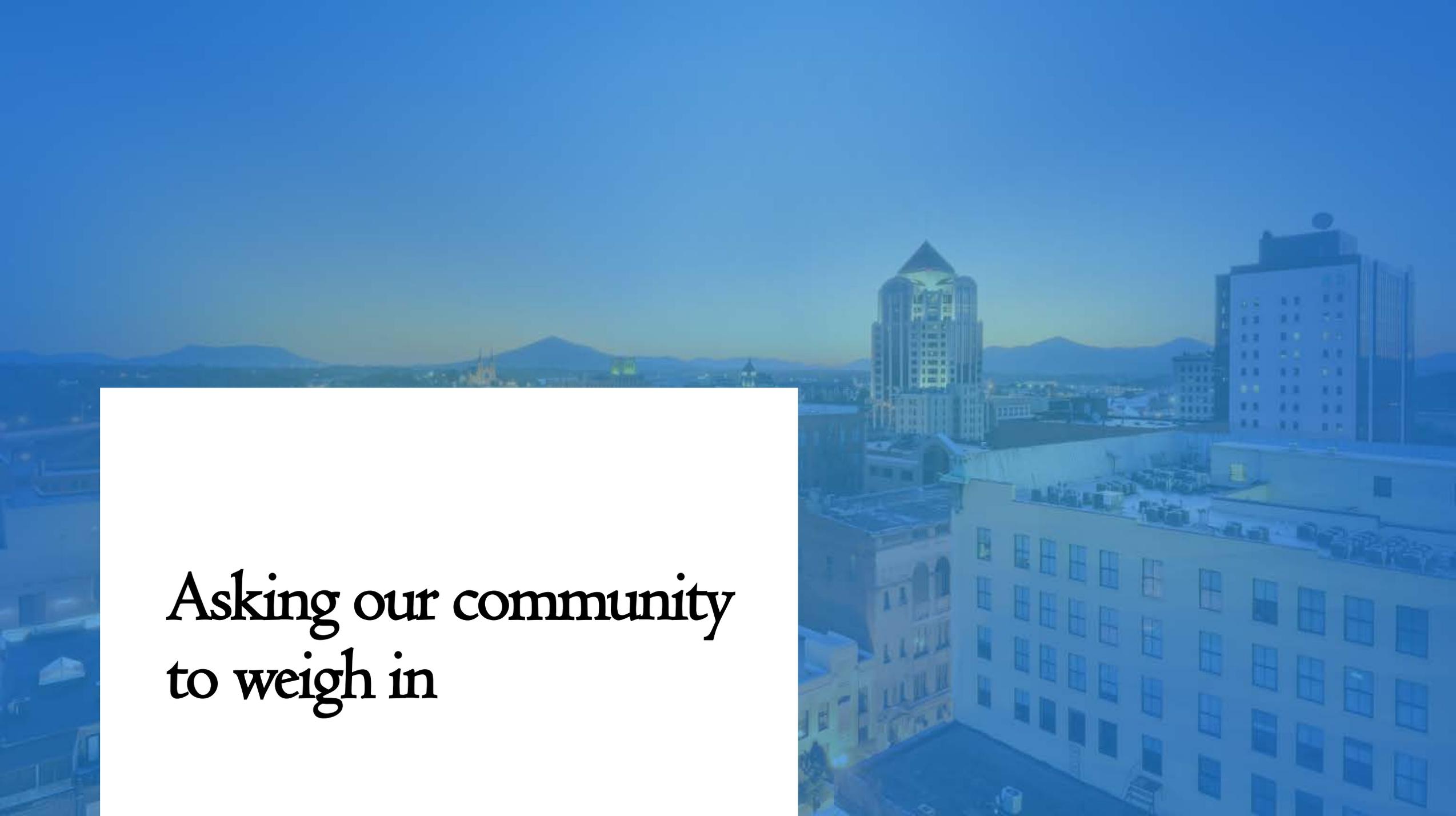
Improving the livable built environment with local artists.

In 2018, the Arts Commission selected six artists to create stormdrain inlet artwork that had an environmentally-conscious message.

The most popular artist through a Facebook contest won a cash prize.

The campaign digitally reached 51,000+ people through social media in one week and the City now has public art on seven inlets throughout the city.





*Asking our community
to weigh in*

Plan Roanoke 2020 – 2040 Comprehensive Plan

In July we launched a homegrown Public Consultation platform: www.planroanoke.org to help engage our community in the development of our next 20-year comprehensive plan.

Since the summer, thousands of community members have filled out city surveys for various infrastructure and planning projects through the Plan Roanoke portal.



A screenshot of the Plan Roanoke website's 'Current Projects' page. The page has a blue header with navigation links for Home, About, 2040 Comp Plan, Projects, and Contact Us. A search bar is located in the top right corner. The main content area is titled 'Current Projects' and includes an introductory paragraph: 'We are currently seeking community feedback for the following projects. Please take a minute and share your ideas!'. Below this, there are six project cards arranged in a 3x2 grid. Each card features a representative image, a title, and a brief description of the project and the type of feedback being sought. The projects listed are: Roanoke's Strategic Plan, Melrose-Orange Target Area (MOTA), City Website Redesign Feedback, Wasena Bridge Replacement, Comprehensive Plan (2020-2040), and Main St. Striping Project.

Projects

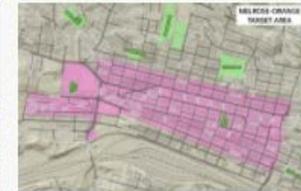
Current Projects

We are currently seeking community feedback for the following projects. Please take a minute and share your ideas!



Roanoke's Strategic Plan

Roanoke's Current Strategic Plan is Dec 2018. City Council and the community were presented with a Strategic Plan to help guide the future. The City would like to welcome community feedback on the [...]



Melrose-Orange Target Area (MOTA)

What is the Melrose-Orange Target Area (MOTA)? In 2015, the City began allocating HUD funds in the Melrose-Orange Target Area. The MOTA boundaries encompass portions of the Loudon, Melrose and Melrose Slaby neighborhoods and [...]



City Website Redesign Feedback

How can we do things better to help you? In the next couple of years, the City's website will be redesigned and we want feedback from community. What are some ways that you think [...]



Wasena Bridge Replacement

Wasena Bridge Replacement Project: The City of Roanoke is planning to replace Wasena Bridge. Construction will not begin until 2022, but we want your feedback and for you to be involved in the [...]



Comprehensive Plan (2020-2040)

What should Roanoke look like in 20 years? Every 20 years or so, City planners gather ideas and feedback from the community and develop a new Comprehensive Plan. This document [...]



Main St. Striping Project

Main St. is being repaved in 2019. Main Street between the Main St. Bridge and Howard Ave. Intersection will be paved in 2019 as part of the City's annual paving program. When the [...]



Something we're working on
in 2019:
a new Tactical Urbanism
program

Photo: Andrea from our Transportation Division
testing a floating crosswalk concept.

Empowering Citizens to Take Action and Solve Small Problems

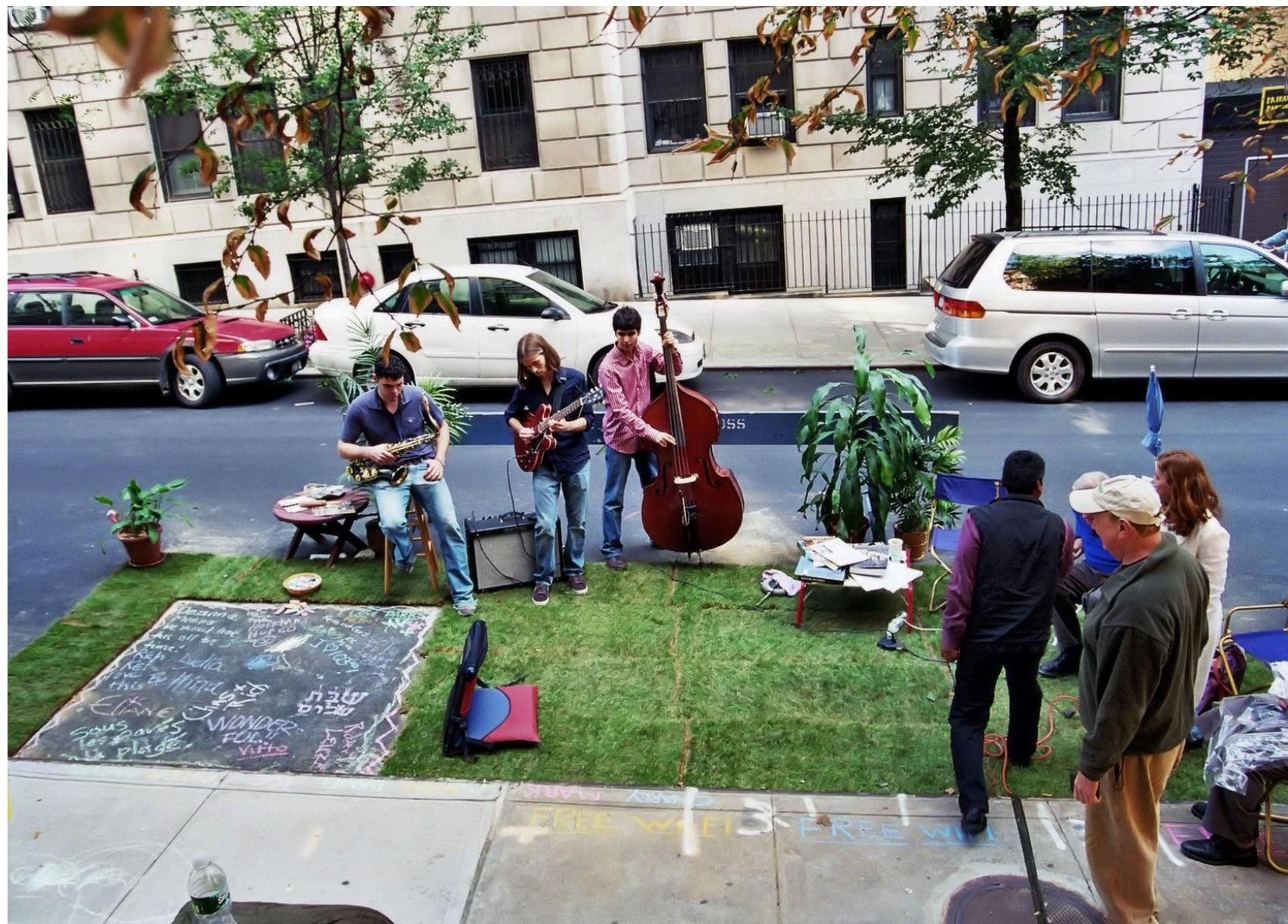
Tactical Urbanism, also known as DIY Urbanism, refers to when a locality, non-profit, or community member approaches a problem with a short-term, low-cost, and scalable solution.

Our Office of Citizen Engagement is currently working with staff from different departments to develop a permitting system to launch this program in 2019.

Example of
tactical urbanism:
painting temporary
bike lanes in
Snellville, GA



Example of tactical urbanism:
temporary parklet
in Franklin, TN



Example of
tactical
urbanism:
temporary
greenway ramp

“Whoopdeedoo” public
art in Vancouver, Canada.



Thank you!

Mayor Sherman P. Lea

540-853-2444

sherman.lea@roanokeva.gov

