

Comments Received for the Draft Oak Grove Center Plan

January 8, 2021 – March 2, 2021

Comments received via Survey Monkey

With a Starbucks finally coming to the Oak Grove/Keagy Village area, we now need more than ever a new grocery store, such as Publix, Trader Joe's, Aldi or Sprouts. That new grocery store will be the catalyst for making happen many of the planners' and residents' wishes and suggestions that are reported in the Plan.

Please let food lion continue to be here.

Thinking about this makes me sick, as I live on Grandin Road Ext. Things you are not considering or just don't care about, because it doesn't affect you. Trails- this brings more strangers through our area, allowing access to our kids who are outside. It also gives places for illegal activity and hiding. I can't tell you how many times things have gone on with the trail that is beside Oak Grove Elementary.

You expose the area to others which causes increased traffic and crime. We have recently had a bunch of break ins. It will get worse if you do this. At my biggest pain point is the traffic. Yes, you will upgrade 419, but what about the neighborhoods they use to cut through? Our road is constant speeders and passing on residential road. We can't turn into our driveway without someone almost hitting us because we aren't going fast enough. During this process, we will also have dump trucks speeding down our street and making a mess with dirt, which we have to drive through to get out of the neighborhood. You don't understand what you are bringing here. We live it every day!!! My husband has lived here for 40 plus years. Sad that we will be forced to move. Trust me, more crime is coming. I can't even cross the road for mail without almost getting hit. I'm truly sick and outraged by this plan. Do something to the miserable Tanglewood Mall and leave our area alone!!! We bought our house because Oak Grove is a quiet area (at least it used to be).

If you all have all of this money to spend, try taking care of our schools and roads. I used to think Roanoke County was great, not anymore! FYI, we also need jobs that people can support a family on. You just keep bringing jobs that pay minimum wage or a little over. We need much better than that. People will not be able to support your shops and restaurants on these poor paying jobs!

Second comment, later:

I just gave my opinion and addressed speeding and traffic on our road. Here I am a few minutes later calling 911 because there is a wreck at the intersection of Grandin Road Ext and Sugar Loaf. It's already too dangerous. PLEASE do not add to this problem. There has been many issues there. Again, you all don't have to live here. It's not your kids safety!

This may seem a bit out of left-field however; due to the success of Aldi's in it's location...Has the planning commission considered a Trader Joe's. My children and I are all huge fans and they are at an age where I would like them to work there as well. This is just my random two-cents during a 100-year pandemic so for all I know they're completely insane...like many of the thoughts expressed on the internet during the stated time period.

August of 2019, developers out of North Carolina eyeballed land around Lick Run & Best Buy. City Council opened the plans for public comment. There was tons of push back and rightly so, as these jokers proposed highway development through an historically Black neighborhood & proposed building on land that protects City residents from floodwater. Oak Grove is already a commercial area. I think it could easily host some of the businesses and apartment plans proposed by said North Carolinians. I'd love to see something in this area that supports local farmers and feeds into part-time job availability like a Trader Joe's or a Farm Fresh or even another Roanoke Co-op location. I also think this area needs something fun for adults and families, like a Top Golf or something akin to Blacksburg's Cinebowl. This would also be a great place for a mix of local boutiques and possibly a gardening shop. The proposal looks excellent so far!

Congratulations to the entire County/City team for its work on this plan, and to the many citizens who took the time to provide thoughtful input. Very well done. While I am a forty-year resident of Roanoke, I only moved into this particular area about one year ago and have had the opportunity over the past year to get a better feel for its neighborhoods, businesses and travel patterns as I drove, biked and walked much of the area myself. I suggest the following tweaks to the plan:

1. Extend the recommended Route 419 sidewalk improvements a few hundred feet further south to the intersection of Bower Road. This will tap into the enormous neighborhood area bounded by Route 419, Grandin Road and Garst Mill Road. While that neighborhood itself does not have sidewalks, I have found it to be very walkable and bicycle-friendly.
2. Similarly, extend the proposed Grandin Road sidewalk improvements (City) farther east to the intersection with Wynmere Drive to connect with another entry point to that same neighborhood. In full disclosure, my new residence on Maple Leaf Drive in the City (opposite Wynmere Drive's intersection with Grandin Road) would stand to benefit from such a sidewalk improvement along Grandin Road.

Thank you all for your time and consideration.

As a resident of the Townes at Hidden Valley, I'm most concerned as to what specifically you have planned for the field behind our development and behind Keagy Village. We so enjoy the views from there and walking across the field to Keagy Village.

I hope what gets planned there will not block the views or create more congestion. I'm opposed to an apartment complex there if that is what is planned.

The plan is easy to understand and provides a nice outline of what the county and city hope to achieve in the area in the next 20 years. The summary plan has ideal future photos that display a lively area similar to something that Roanokers and our kids typically would travel to in Charlottesville, Richmond, DC area, or Raleigh. It would be wonderful to get commercial tenants unique to this side of town in Oak Grove that are family-friendly. We enjoy that the city and county are trying to make Oak Grove feel like a neighborhood with unique signage, sidewalks, and greenery like other popular areas in the city such as Wasena, South Roanoke, and Grandin Village. We would like to see outdoor spaces to sit and eat takeout, ice cream, coffee from the tenants in Oak Grove and Southwest Plazas similar to what is found in Keagy Village, Wasena, South Roanoke, and Grandin Village. Overall, great plan by the county and city and we hope this helps this area become more active during the evening/early night hours for the teenagers, young adults, and families living here.

The plan looks good and we had lots of opportunities to join in and give our thoughts which it seemed like most folks appreciated. I hope there are short term goals to help make this area exciting again with new shops, offices, and restaurants as our neighborhood population seems to only get older and older.

The park land behind the Oak Grove school seems like a great opportunity to create a mini adventure area bringing some new fun amenities like at Explore Park and the greenway parks into the suburbs. Also it's not in Oak Grove, but I hope Hidden Valley Middle School gets a remodel ASAP like Green Valley Elementary, Cave Spring Elementary, Cave Spring Middle, and Cave Spring High.

It would be great to somehow get a new grocery store besides Kroger and Food Lion in this part of Roanoke. Target needs a second store in Roanoke too, so perhaps they could build here or in the Tanglewood Mall plan area.

It will be fun to see parts of these plans in the coming years, but in the short term it would be nice to freshen up the McDonalds shopping mall to be on par with Keagy Village and Southwest Plaza.

I feel that getting easier foot and bike traffic to Oak Grove Center from the Windsor West and Crest Hill Subdivisions is important. That population base is already there. Grandin Rd between Glen Heather and Electric is too dangerous for foot traffic and there is no good way to cross Electric back towards Cordell. Some sort of cross walk at Bower could at least get foot and bike traffic across Electric where Bridle and other streets are. I feel getting the current population to Oak Grove Center is a key to future growth. I think this will show quicker results.

The plan looks great! Love to see improvement coming to this area of Roanoke. Excited to see more dining options but also an opportunity for more local businesses to open.

Plan is exciting for the future of the area. I'm happy to see the county and city working together on our neighborhoods bringing in local establishments and chains rather than only focusing on regional industrial facilities.

The area has potential to become a town center like Daleville for casual summer concerts and events. I like the area having a name/logo and signs similar to Daleville too. Please consider a paved or gravel walking trail from Oak Grove Plaza to OGES to Keagy Village for exercising without having to walk on the streets... this path could be like the county Library trail.

I like the plan and think this would be great for the schools and neighborhoods in the area. I like that the park might get a remodel and it would be cool to see Keagy Village fill up like the Roanoke City Ivy Market shopping center, Blacksburg First and Main shopping center, or the new Christiansburg Market Place shopping center. There is no hotel on 419 or Brambleton from Lewis Gale to Tanglewood... perhaps Oak Grove (or Cave Spring Corners) could finally attract a hotel if development takes off in this area? It could have a event/conference rental space and restaurant too.

Comments received via Email (Before the Roanoke County Planning Commission Public Hearing)

Helen Sublette, Resident

My remarks and concerns are directed to the Planning Commission and the Board of Supervisors concerning future plans to develop 173 acres in the Oak Grove/Keagy Village area of Roanoke County.

I would like to know what is planned to improve and control water run off and future flood damage in this area and to mitigate flood risks through storm water management. Displacement of land through construction of 173 acres is sure to affect residential homes in the area.

What are the flood risk management strategies in place to mitigate and protect the area from future flooding? How will property values be affected? Has there been a flood risk analysis, levee improvement planned or in place to protect current homeowners and property values? If so, how can we find out what these strategies are and are they in writing?

Roanoke County has a responsibility to respect citizens and residents and to make sure flood risks are reduced, not increased. Flood Insurance is not the answer when property

is destroyed. It never covers the whole costs, time to recover damages, or improve property values. Please take our concerns to heart.

Thank you for your consideration.

Steve Grammer, Advocate for people with disabilities

The city and county has to work together to put a crosswalk at the intersection of Electric Road and Grandin Road. Also, you need to enforce speeding at the intersection between Farrington apartments and Food Lion.

Second comment, later date:

You must enforce the speed limit at the crosswalk between Fairington Apartments and Food Lion, you must build a crosswalk at the intersection of Electric and Grandin, before someone is killed by a vehicle. You must give safer, age appropriate, and accessible housing options, to people with disabilities who are on supplemental income.

Carl Benjamin

I'm concerned with biking and walking along Rt 419 in the Oak Grove area – now and in the future.

It is a busy road and will most likely only get busier.

Haven't I heard of plans to expand Rt 419 to six lanes along some part of the road?

And don't you think eventually that will happen in the Oak Grove area also? This would make a bike lane a scary place to be.

How about a bike path from Oak Grove Park through the county owned undeveloped land over towards Sugar Loaf Mt Road behind Metis Plaza?

Then cross Keagy Road going behind Keagy Village down toward Barnhardt Creek and Hidden Valley Middle.

This would provide some connection to neighborhoods as well as connection to business via Grandin Road Ext and Keagy Road.

Joyce Waugh, President/CEO Roanoke Regional Chamber

Chairman Bower and Members of the Roanoke County Planning Commission,

Good evening.

I'm unable to attend this evening's hearing yet wanted to thank you for Roanoke County's work on this and the other Relimagine study plans.

One of the unique factors of this particular plan is the joint work with Roanoke City. The City and County are to be commended for working together to make this area and our broader Virginia's Blue Ridge a better place to live, which starts with making a plan and

then following through to completion. This joint effort highlights several already going concerns and ways to better connect and improve livability in this area.

This is no small task when considering the nearly 200 acres and almost 100 residential and commercial properties involved in the study area. The additional landscaping, streetscaping, lighting and more to better tie together this area of the community will only serve to make it better, as with the Hollins Center Plan and 419 Town Center Plan.

On behalf of the Roanoke Regional Chamber, I commend the work of you, your staff and the community, for creating a plan from which all may benefit for years to come.

Comments received via Email (During the Roanoke County Planning Commission Public Hearing)

Judy LaPrade

Is there a proposal in this project for a light at Glen Heather coming out onto 419? Trying to get across 419 from there is very dangerous with the increased traffic the Oak Grove area has.

Comments received before the Roanoke County Board of Supervisors Public Hearing

Stephen (Steve) Rosenthal

As a constituent and a homeowner in the area, I wish to state that I don't want any of it. Period.

Stephen (Steve) Rosenthal (separate comment)

I imagine Oak Grove the way it is now. NO to this "reimagining!" NO to high density housing here!

Steve Grammer, Advocate for people with disabilities

1. There should be a crosswalk at the intersection of Electric Road and Grandin Rd.
2. Something has to be done about the speeding at the crosswalk between Farrington apartments and Food Lion.
3. Also, even though these projects come from a different source of funding I don't understand why the county will not improve the quality of life for people with disabilities, such as housing and transportation.