

# Appendix C – Transportation Infrastructure & Economic Development

Kingsport 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan

Kingsport Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization

May 2021

**Prepared for:**

Kingsport Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization



**Prepared by:**

AECOM

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# Memorandum

**Date**  
05/17/21

**Project name**  
Kingsport MTPO 2045  
LRTP

**To**  
**Kingsport MTPO**  
Michael Thompson  
Bill Albright  
Lesley Phillips

**From**  
**AECOM**  
Jim Meyer  
Suraiya Motsinger

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## Transportation Infrastructure & Economic Development

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In the Kingsport MTPO metropolitan planning area, opportunities for economic development abound. Early in the development of the Kingsport MTPO 2045 LRTP, it was identified that there is a keen interest in identifying how transportation infrastructure improvements (and other associated recommendations in the 2045 LRTP) could support and enhance economic development in the region. Towards that end, the project team has conducted multiple data analyses, documented interviews, and hosted a stakeholder-based economic development workshop towards identifying appropriate recommendations. These efforts included:

- Geographic Analysis of Industrial Sector Activity
- Geographic Analysis of Retail Sector Activity
- Geographic Analysis of Service Sector Activity
- Conversations with Kingsport MTPO Staff
- Interviews with key economic development leaders including representatives from Eastman and the Tri-Cities Airport
- Conducting an Economic Development Workshop on April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021

This memorandum reflects discussions and initial analysis towards identifying how recommendations in the Kingsport MTPO 2045 LRTP can positively impact economic development in the region through an overview of national and regional economic trends impacting the Kingsport MTPO planning area, an analysis of areas where we can focus transportation solutions to best support economic development, and finally, a synopsis of opportunities for the Kingsport MTPO 2045 LRTP to include recommendations that positively impact economic development in the region.

### Overview of National and Regional Economic Trends Impacting the Kingsport MTPO Planning Area

In terms of economic development, transportation infrastructure can be seen as both an asset and a challenge. At its best, a transportation system has the potential to support or induce economic activity. At its worst, poorly maintained roadways and bridges, incompatible land uses and freight connections, and/or unsafe travel conditions have the potential to hinder economic activity. Indeed, particularly in some of the more rural parts of the Kingsport MTPO planning area, the transportation infrastructure issues are not ones related to access or connectivity but related to maintenance of facilities and safety issues.

In order to identify when and how to program appropriate transportation solutions, we investigated national and regional economic trends. Below we've outlined the key national trends that are having significant impacts on the local Kingsport MTPO market:

- COVID Impacts
- Online Retail
- Global Supply Chains
- Complete Streets Movement

In 2020 and 2021, a global pandemic has had significant impacts to the economy that reach the local market. The global pandemic has severely impacted commuting patterns with a large proportion of the population transitioning to working/studying remotely. Economists predict that some degree of remote work will continue into the future, which will have both direct and indirect impacts on local commuting patterns. Adjustments consumers made during the global pandemic with regards to accelerating the shift of retail sales to online sources will also have far-reaching continuing impacts after the pandemic is over, including reduced traffic to and expenditures at local brick & mortar retail locations and additional network transportation trips to deliver retail goods (McKinsey Global Institute, 2021). The pandemic has also had significant impacts on the global supply chains. On a different note, a national movement towards “complete streets”, which prioritizes the provision of a diversity in transportation options to include bicycle, pedestrian and transit, has seen greater emphasis as the global pandemic has increased outdoor recreational activities. The focus on complete streets is also an important consideration in the context of freight movements. Regions and communities need to ensure that truck routes are designated and designed to facilitate the efficient and safe movement of goods while at the same time providing safe travel conditions for area residents and visitors.

In addition to investigating how national trends impact local markets, discussions with local stakeholders and input from the public have revealed several regional economic themes. The Kingsport MTPO planning area’s transportation network and economy are both very closely tied with that of Bristol and Johnson City, Tennessee (referred to as the Tri-Cities region). The larger region coordinates well amongst population centers, but there are always ongoing changes so increased coordination was noted as an opportunity. At times the three market hubs of the Tri-Cities function competitively, particularly for retail dollars. It was also noted that the Kingsport region had historically been heavily reliant on a few large industries which made the local economy vulnerable to market disruptions. However, manufacturing was and continues to be a backbone for jobs and the local economy and must be protected and enhanced while addressing the need for economic diversification. The need to balance supporting critical industries is particularly challenging due to the location of a key industrial node in the downtown area. For now, industrial and retail/service activities function for the large part in a harmonious fashion, but pressures with increased growth could introduce challenges. In terms of new growth markets, the region has seen a marked growth in tourism, eco-tourism, and tourist spending. Finally, the heavy activity noted along interstate corridors for both access to land uses and for through-traffic represents untapped opportunity for economic development at interchanges.

Based on this input on local economic trends, we have identified several economic opportunity themes key to this region’s development to include:

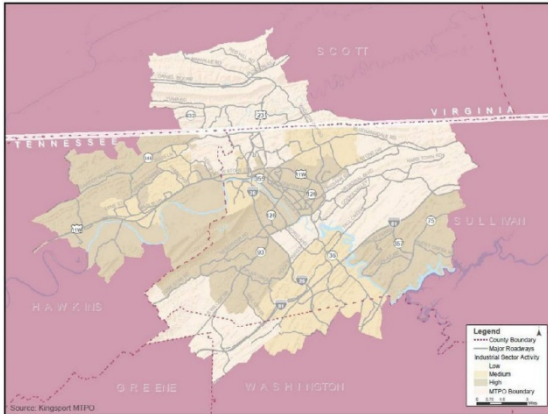
- Strengthening Regional Connectivity
- Diversifying Jobs
- Enhancing Manufacturing Strengths
- Combatting Retail Leakage
- Growing Tourism
- Increasing Local Workforce Housing
- Capitalizing on Development Opportunities at Interchanges
- Capitalizing on Local Synergies of Downtown Activity and Heavy Industry

### **Where to Focus Transportation Solutions for Economic Impacts in the Kingsport MTPO Planning Area**

Based on the Kingsport MTPO’s development of Socioeconomic projections by Traffic Analysis Zone (TAZ), we analyzed where different types of economic activity in the region are occurring, and where potential growth nodes exist. This analysis is outlined below grouped by industrial sector employment (including manufacturing and agricultural employment), retail sector employment (including regional employment), and service sector employment (including office, service, and government sector employment).

## Industrial Sector Analysis

Employment in the industrial sector is heavily concentrated in the central, western, and southern portions of the MTPO planning area with particular existing and future growth opportunities along West Stone Drive, near the Eastman campus, and in proximity to the Tri-Cities Airport.



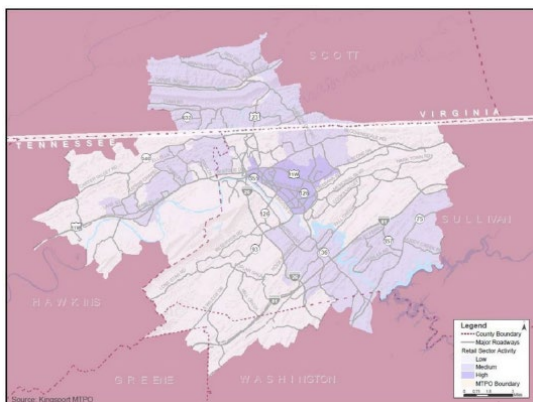
Identified key industrial sector growth nodes in the region include:

- US-23 Industrial Parks
- Church Hill
- SR-357 Corridor
- Eastman Campus
- Tri-Cities Aerospace Park

Figure 1: see p. 21 of Attachment 2 for a full-sized version of this figure

## Retail Sector Analysis

Employment in the retail sector is disbursed amongst key nodes in proximity to residential growth in the MTPO planning area, with pockets of emphasis in downtown Kingsport, north of Stone Drive, south of I-81, and in the Colonial Heights area.



Identified key retail sector growth nodes in the region include:

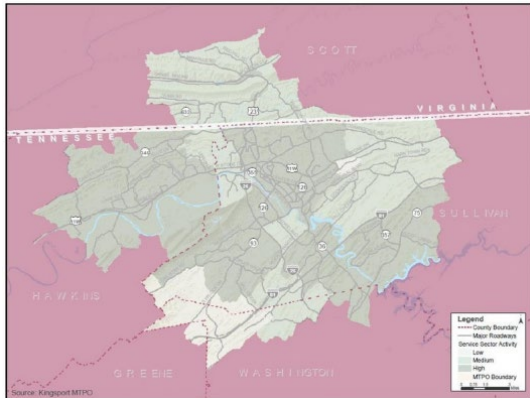
- East Stone Drive
- Church Hill/ Mount Carmel/ Allandale Area
- Lynn Garden Drive
- Bloomingdale Road
- North John B. Dennis Highway
- South John B. Dennis Highway
- Downtown Kingsport
- Eastman Road
- Meadowview Area

Figure 2: see p. 22 of Attachment 2 for a full-sized version of this figure



## Service Sector Analysis

Employment in the service sector is the fastest growing in the region. These employment opportunities include government, service, and office jobs and they are disbursed throughout the region.



Identified key service sector growth nodes in the region include:

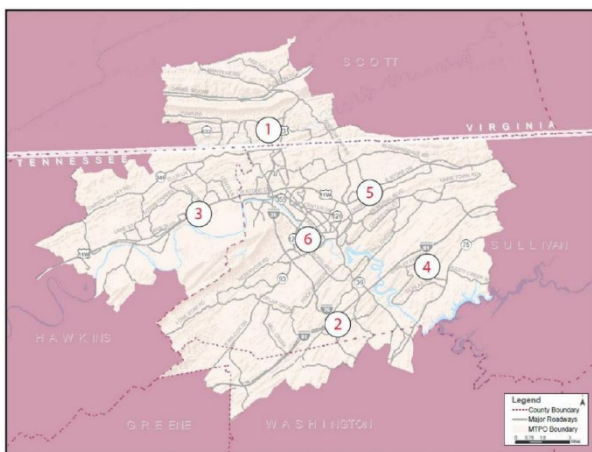
- Stone Drive
- John B. Dennis Highway
- Downtown Kingsport
- Eastman Road

Figure 3: see p. 23 of Attachment 2 for a full-sized version of this figure

## Sub-Area Analysis

The Kingsport 2045 LRTP presents an opportunity to identify transportation solutions that can allow the region to harness the economic opportunity themes identified in this memorandum. However, it must be clearly stated that while transportation solutions can support, induce, or overcome hinderances to economic activity, transportation solutions are not a silver bullet that will guarantee economic growth or activity. Therefore, the decision to employ potentially expensive and/or disruptive transportation solutions for economic gain should be focused on key nodes where activity is most likely to be impacted in support of the community's values, and to support the MTPO's LRTP goals and objectives.

Many additional/more specific potential nodes for growth were identified to include Allandale/West Stone Drive, Phipps Bend Industrial Park, Bloomingdale Road, Spurgeon/Gray, Meadowview and other areas noted in the industrial sector analysis, retail sector analysis, and service sector analysis above. However, the subareas below were chosen for either their unique needs/potential impact or the applicability of the solutions from these nodes to address the needs identified at other nodes of interest.



The following sub-areas were chosen by the Kingsport MTPO for focused investigation in this report:

- Subarea 1: US-23 Industrial Parks
- Subarea 2: I-81/I-26 Interchange
- Subarea 3: Church Hill/Mount Carmel Industrial
- Subarea 4: SR-357 Corridor
- Subarea 5: East Stone Drive
- Subarea 6: Eastman Campus

Figure 4: see p. 24 of Attachment 2 for a full-sized version of this figure

### Subarea 1: US-23 Industrial Parks



Located in Scott County, VA, this subarea was identified as an industrial and service sector node along the US-23 corridor. Recently, industrial parks along this corridor have experienced growth in industry and jobs. Safety and access improvements in particular have the potential to support this growth. Some considerations include signaling intersections to provide controlled access to industrial sites and to focus on enhancing safety along this corridor which is ranked highly for “Potential for Safety Improvements” by VDOT’s Bristol District. Located along one of two main arteries connecting Scott County to the rest of the MTPO, it was also recognized that this node serves multiple trip purposes and pedestrian safety was of critical consideration in any proposed solutions.

#### Key Issues/Challenges:

- **Safety** – According to VDOT, the US-23 corridor is one of the District’s highest safety priorities. In particular, the need for improved access management and improved pedestrian safety were noted of top priority. At one time VDOT identified this corridor as a funded HSIP project but it is no longer being considered for HSIP funding. There are other potential avenues, such as SMART SCALE, through which this project may be funded.
- **Direct Access** – Direct access is needed to industrial sites from this congested corridor. The corridor frequently experiences traffic congestions during peak-hour conditions, and during shift changes. Enhancing access is important to improving traffic flow, supporting the efficient movement of freight/goods, and improving the overall safety of the traveling public.

#### Opportunities:

- **Improve Traffic Signal Coordination** – Improving traffic signal coordination could help improve travel flow during peak-hours and during shift changes when traffic often backs-up.
- **Intersection Geometry** - Intersection geometric improvements can enhance travel flow and safety. VDOT has identified intersection improvements in the area that would enhance travel flow, support more efficient movement of goods, and would help improve overall access to the US-23 industrial park area.
- **Pedestrian Enhancements** – Enhanced pedestrian and multimodal facilities along the corridor would increase safety for those walking to jobs in the corridor. Sidewalk improvements would further support individuals using the US-23 businesses and for residents living near the corridor. This area is also considered for a future park-n-ride facility which would further benefit from enhanced pedestrian connectivity.

### Subarea 2: I-81/I-26 Interchange



Many stakeholders in the region believe that the I-81/I-26 interchange area is the most critical from an economic development perspective. Serving as the crossroads for arguably the two most important roadways in the Kingsport MTPO planning area, this subarea was identified as having tremendous potential for facilitating increased economic activity. However, this area is considered a challenge as it is frequently identified as one of the top safety concerns within the MTPO planning area. In addition to serving freight and commuting traffic as the intersection of major arterials, the land uses served at this node could enhance retail and service sector growth. However, safety issues including heavy “merge and weave” patterns potentially limit or constrain growth opportunities.

#### Key Issues/Challenges:

- **Safety** – Stakeholders identified the interchange as a high priority safety concern. An older interstate/interchange design consists of clover-leaf ramps that contribute to truck rollovers. In addition, this interchange configuration results in short

merge/weaving areas which creates safety concerns, including the potential for sideswipe crashes. These concerns have the potential to create traffic back-ups during an incident which leads to potentially unsafe conditions for the traveling public and emergency responders.

- Access – Conflicts between through travel movements and merging/weaving traffic makes it difficult to safely access businesses within the interchange area. Heavy truck traffic on the interstates, in particular I-81, also present problems given the slow acceleration and weaving activities.
- Substandard Regional Connectivity – An outdated interstate system-to-system interchange configuration restricts critical regional and interstate commerce. This interchange also impacts adjacent interchange operations and connections to the local area transportation network.

*Opportunities:*

- Interchange Upgrade/Redesign – Improvements to the I-81/I-26 have long been identified as a priority for the Kingsport, and Tri-Cities, region. Various alternatives to improve the interchange include a complete overhaul of the I-81/I-26 interchange which is estimated at over \$200 million. However, a full reconstruction would have significant challenges and as such the most feasible alternative involves expanding the clover leaf ramps to better accommodate the ramp movements and adding a collector-distributor (C-D) roadway system to reduce/eliminate weaving.
- Coordinated Site Development Plans, Land Use Subarea Master Plans – Stakeholders agree that the I-81/I-26 interchange and surrounding area is ripe for future economic development. However, providing adequate and safe access to the surrounding areas is critical. Given the vacant land in the area, it is critically important for future development to be part of a coordinated site development and land use subarea master planning process. In doing so, it will be important to identify a local and regional supporting roadway network that accommodates freight activity while safely accommodating local and regional travel movements of the traveling public.

***Subarea 3: Church Hill/Mount Carmel Industrial***



Located in the western portion of the MTPO planning area, SR-1/US11W near Church Hill and Mount Carmel includes a key site for potential industrial development at the Holston US Army Ammunition Plant. This site includes approximately 170 acres of land controlled by the US Army and available for approved development on a long-term lease basis. Because the development of this site is so restricted and the desired growth types are unknown, the site remains underutilized. Adjacent to this site, significant growth from BAE Systems has benefitted the region, but was noted by stakeholders as needing improved secondary connector roadways and enhanced internal circulation.

*Key Issues/Challenges:*

- Safety and Capacity Concerns – Stakeholders identified numerous safety and capacity (congestion) concerns along this corridor. From a safety standpoint, most of the concerns were related to poor access control internal to the site. Closely related to this issue, the corridor experiences traffic congestion during peak travel periods. One example was the difficulty for left-turning vehicles, both turning onto the corridor from side streets, or business, and for vehicles turning into business.
- Coordination with the US Army for Land Development – Stakeholders agree that this corridor holds great potential for future economic development. However, the ability to plan for and construct new businesses, light industry, and residential development hinges on the ability to coordinate with the US Army to agree on what can and cannot be done within this corridor.

*Opportunities:*

- Multi-Organizational Coordination Towards a Campus-Style Industrial Site Plan Development – While identified as a primary challenge, this corridor holds significant potential for economic development if a long-term vision for the corridor and surrounding area can be developed. Without a comprehensive vision, developers will likely be hesitant to invest in



this corridor. As such, regional entities should work together to advance communication with the US Army representatives, and ultimately explore the potential to develop a master plan for this area.

- Encourage the Development of Frontage roads – The vast amount of land potentially available for development in this area also provides the opportunity to establish an appropriately designed roadway network. Specifically, any planning that occurs for this area should consider the use of a frontage road system as a way to limit direct highway access and direct traffic to key access points to improve safety and preserve roadway capacity.

#### **Subarea 4: SR-357 Corridor**



SR-357 provides the primary connection between I-81 and the Tri-Cities Airport campus. This four-lane divided highway provides fast and convenient access for diverse transportation trip purposes. While the portion of SR-357 south of I-81 is a regional transportation asset, the area north of I-81 is considered an untapped opportunity for future residential growth and economic development.

#### **Key Issues/Challenges:**

- Connectivity – The area north of the I-81 interchange, in proximity to SR-357, lacks sufficient roadway infrastructure to accommodate, or attract, economic development activity. Furthermore, the lack of a SR-357 extension north of I-81 hinders a much-needed north-south regional travel connection.
- Potential for Future Safety Concerns – In this general vicinity, there is a new high school scheduled to open in the fall of 2021 that is replacing three schools across the county. With no north-south connector leading to the school, inexperienced drivers will be forced to drive along the interstate or small local routes that are in poor condition. Given the mix of heavy freight traffic on and potential for other types of future development in proximity to I-81, the potential for conflicts amongst types of traffic generated raises potential safety concerns for the traveling public.

#### **Opportunities:**

- Support the Extension of SR-357 – In Fall 2020, TDOT conducted a study to explore a SR-357 extension. TDOT's technical report explores two alternatives that would extend SR-357 to SR-126 (Memorial Boulevard). As part of the economic development workshop, some participants indicated a desire to extend this facility further north to connect to US-11W. This new connection would open up a very desirable area of land for future economic development. Additionally, this facility would provide a much-needed north-south connection extending toward Stone Drive.
- Support the Region's Housing Demand – As part of this discussion, this area was identified as an area that could support future residential development, assuming the transportation infrastructure was in place to accommodate it. It was further mentioned that providing affordable, accessible housing is also a critical component of supporting a broader economic development initiative.

### *Subarea 5: East Stone Drive*



Located in eastern Kingsport, this node has experienced significant retail development in addition to nearby residential growth. The retail growth has been positive; however, safety concerns could potentially hinder future growth and multimodal accessibility. In discussions with stakeholders, an opportunity was revealed to better interconnect land uses through internal networks to improve the congestion on Stone Drive. Stakeholders also discussed the residential growth that accompanied the retail growth along this corridor, bringing with it a demand for enhanced multimodal access. Multimodal access is partially provided through a developing trail network, but, as planned, this network does not provide complete access to retail nodes.

#### *Key Issues/Challenges:*

- **Safety** – Stakeholders identified safety as a primary concern in this corridor. Speeding was mentioned as a concern and the center turn lane doesn't always work well, likely due in part to numerous access points along the corridor. A specific area of concern is where the six-lane road drops a lane which can cause traffic congestion during certain times of the day.
- **Access and Connectivity** – Directly related to safety, overall access management is a concern within the corridor. One of the contributing factors is that several retail uses are often not interconnected and, as a result, traffic is forced back onto Stone Drive. Enhanced land use coordination and interconnected developments could reduce some traffic from using the arterial roadway to access a nearby business.

#### *Opportunities:*

- **Increased Access Management and Connectivity** - This corridor is an area that could benefit from increased access management. It was mentioned that portions of this corridor previously had grass medians and there has been some discussion of potentially restoring them. Additionally, a number of businesses along this corridor do not have internal connections between properties, therefore a person wanting to visit a business next door needs to pull out onto the main road to access. The use of frontage/backage roads could improve access management and enhance traffic flow and overall safety for the traveling public. A backage road is a similar concept to a frontage road; however, access to the land parcel is on the back side of the property. While some potential challenges exist with existing land uses, there was a study that explored this option completed a few years ago.
- **Enhancing Bicycle/Pedestrian Connectivity** –Enhancing bicycle and pedestrian access in this corridor is important as it supports environmental justice populations who access this area for shopping, or job opportunities. A developing trail network will enhance the existing bicycle and pedestrian access to retail nodes, however, the trail will only provide access along one side of the street and limited opportunities to cross Stone Drive.

### ***Subarea 6: Eastman Campus***



Located near downtown Kingsport, the Eastman campus serves as a critical industrial lifeblood for the community and the Tri-Cities. Eastman is well-served by existing transportation facilities, but continued investments can help this company to continue to grow and succeed. Of note, roadway relocations to improve railyard storage are underway. From a roadway perspective, access and mobility for truck traffic is critical to the Eastman operations. While current industrial operations are functioning largely harmoniously with retail/service sector economic activities in Kingsport's downtown, available land for growth is limited which could limit future expansion. Additional improvements outside this node can also positively impact the economic activity at the Eastman campus, and will be discussed fully in the Kingsport 2045 LRTP.

#### ***Key Issues/Challenges:***

- Continued Need for On-Going Maintenance – Heavy truck traffic traveling to/from Eastman on a daily basis places a great need to maintain critical roadway connections in a state of good repair. This is important both from a freight perspective and in order to maintain safe travel conditions for the traveling public.
- Balancing Downtown Retail/Service Sector Activities with Needs of Industrial Uses –Currently, large industry and downtown uses harmoniously exist side-by-side in the greater Kingsport downtown area. However, with growth pressures on all types of economic activity, potential challenges could loom ahead to include those related to balancing the needs of heavy truck traffic, limited land use, and multimodal activities along with growing retail, residential, service sector and industrial needs.

#### ***Opportunities:***

- Continued Coordination – Industrial, retail, and service sector nodes are all functioning relatively harmoniously in and around downtown Kingsport. In order to continue to maintain balance, close coordination between industries and local government should continue to avert potential future challenges.
- Truck Climbing Lane on I-26 – The I-26/Wilcox Drive (SR-126)/John B. Dennis (SR-93) interchange is a heavily used regional access point for truck traffic. Plans for the construction of a truck climbing lane in proximity to this interchange would greatly enhance the movement of freight/goods within the Kingsport MTPO planning area.
- On-Going Evaluation of Intermodal Facility – The regional rail system that support Eastman provides the potential for the development of an intermodal facility. While discussions with Eastman representatives indicate that truck traffic will continue to dominate shipping of goods in the next few years, there is always the potential that future economic trends could shift back toward a greater focus on the use of rail. Furthermore, as Eastman may not be a primary user of an intermodal facility, it might be worth exploring if a facility might support other local businesses/industries.

### **Opportunities to Support Economic Development through the Kingsport MTPO 2045 LRTP**

The Economic Development workshop, along with additional discussions with industry leaders and technical analysis, provides insight into how the Kingsport 2045 MTPO LRTP could potentially support local and regional economic development activities. The following summarizes key takeaways and potential opportunities that will be incorporated into the update of the Kingsport MTPO 2045 LRTP.

#### ***Provide for Safety and Maintenance First***

While new facilities can be key drivers to encourage economic activity, stakeholder feedback and public comments repeatedly affirmed that enhancing safety and maintenance on key portions of existing infrastructure was the most critical transportation investment to be made to support economic development.

Several areas were consistently identified as having safety concerns that negatively impact industry/business with the region. These include:

- I-81/ I-26 Interchange

- US11W/Stone Drive
- US-23 in Scott County

Stakeholders, including representatives of the freight and industrial community, noted that maintenance of existing infrastructure could have the potential to have a positive impact on business decisions and enhance safety and connectivity along key freight routes. These include:

- I-81 Corridor
- I-26 Corridor
- SR-36
- SR-75

In sum, there is strong support for safe and well-maintained infrastructure as a way to provide for a reliable transportation network to protect and support existing industry while potentially attracting new economic investments through the Kingsport region.

#### ***Balance Access and Mobility to Address Conflicts Amongst Modes***

Another recurring theme, from key stakeholders and the public, was a need/opportunity to service multiple types of economic activities (and thus support varying needs based on transportation trip purposes) within the same nodes or along the same corridors. This need/opportunity also introduces challenges in serving competing needs within the same land area. In order to better address these diverse needs, a careful investigation of all users serviced can allow transportation professionals to introduce nuanced, context-sensitive solutions that place the right infrastructure solutions in the right locations. Oftentimes, this calls for key deployment of separating trip purposes and types through techniques such as:

- Special interchange configurations
- Signage and other visual cues that clearly identify space for different trip purposes and users
- Frontage roads that interconnect land uses for access in proximity to but outside of major through corridors
- Clear, delineated, safe, and comfortable accommodations for pedestrians, transit, and multimodal access

#### ***Provide Additional North-South Regional Connectivity***

Additional north-south connectivity was identified as an opportunity of critical importance to connect various communities within the Kingsport MTPO and the Tri-Cities. Residents of the Kingsport region have indicated that they often take circuitous routes to travel relatively short distances due to the lack of interconnectivity amongst major transportation corridors, particularly along the north-south axis. Similarly, important industries such as Eastman and the Tri-Cities Airport have expressed the desire for additional north-south connectivity which would open additional areas for economic development opportunities and help provide additional system redundancy for freight transportation. Finally, from a regional perspective, better north-south connectivity would allow markets to operate in a more cohesive fashion amongst the communities of the Kingsport region and the Tri-Cities region.

#### ***Target Truck Related Investments***

Finally, the historically strong industrial sector activity in the Kingsport region means that the area serves as a critical hub as an origin and a destination for a large volume of freight. This includes a large amount of rail and truck freight, in fact the region was previously served by an intermodal terminal that was decommissioned in the 1980s. While multiple rail lines service multiple rail moves into and out of the region each week, truck traffic has grown in importance over the last few decades. For example, east of I-26, I-81 carries over 36,500 vehicles per day with approximately 26% truck traffic. South of I-81, I-26 carries over 51,300 vehicles per day with approximately 8% truck traffic. In order to continue to support the ever-growing freight-generating industry, critical improvements must be made to the transportation networks, particularly to support truck traffic. These include:

- Adding truck climbing lanes along the interstate facilities

- Developing truck parking along the interstates and near origin and destination nodes
- Prioritizing interchange improvements, including complete interchange redesigns, to safely and efficiently accommodate truck movements that facilitate regional through freight movements and access to local industries/businesses
- Prioritizing roadway and intersection geometric modifications to accommodate the larger radii of truck turning movements to improve key freight ingress/egress points



**Attachment 1:**  
**Kingsport MTPO 2045 LRTP**  
**April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Economic Development**  
**Workshop Invitation/Attendance List**

## **April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Economic Development Workshop**

### **Invitation List:**

- John Kilgore – Scott County Economic Development
- John Rose – City of Kingsport
- Lynn Tully – TN Department of Economic and Community Development
- Clay Walker – NETWORKS Sullivan Partnership
- CeeGee McCord – Eastman
- Danny Duncan
- James Phillips – City of Kingsport
- Richard Venable – Sullivan County
- Ronda Sawyer – TDOT
- Ken Weems – City of Kingsport
- Nathan Woods – TN Department of Economic and Community Development
- Bob Feagins – Kingsport Chamber
- Michael Parker – Networks Sullivan Partnership
- Jimmy Adkins - LENOWISCO
- Blake Ailor – VDOT
- Lesley Phillips – Kingsport MTPO
- Bill Albright – Kingsport MTPO
- Michael Thompson – City of Kingsport
- Jim Meyer - AECOM
- Suraiya Motsinger - AECOM

### **Attendance List:**

- Richard Venable – Sullivan County
- Ronda Sawyer – TDOT
- Ken Weems – City of Kingsport
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- Bob Feagins – Kingsport Chamber
- Michael Parker – NETWORKS Sullivan Partnership
- Jimmy Adkins - LENOWISCO
- Blake Ailor – VDOT
- Lesley Phillips – Kingsport MTPO
- Bill Albright – Kingsport MTPO
- Michael Thompson – City of Kingsport

## Attachment

- Jim Meyer - AECOM
- Suraiya Motsinger - AECOM

**Attachment 2:**  
**Kingsport MTPO 2045 LRTP**  
**April 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021 Economic Development**  
**Workshop Menti Results**



Mentimeter

# Kingsport MTPO 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan

**Economic Development Workshop**

Tuesday, April 6, 2021

**AECOM**



# What is the best karaoke song?

 Mentimeter

Friends in low places

Fishin in the dark (Nitty Gritty Dirt Band)

Ice Ice Baby

Baby Got Back

Friends in Low Places

Friends in Low Places - Garth

Piano man

Ruff Ryders Anthem

Sweet Caroline

13



# What is the best karaoke song?

 Mentimeter

Livin' on a Prayer

Brick House

Brick house

Albright's rendition of Daffy Duck's  
What's up Doc?

13



# Transportation and Economic Activity



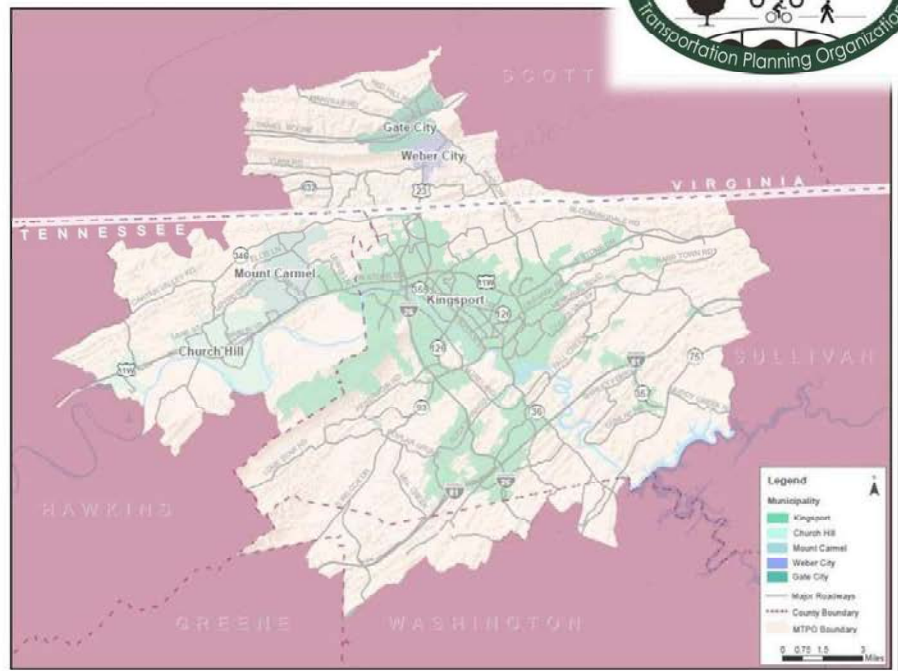
Transportation Infrastructure ...



an asset and a challenge.

# Agenda

1. Introductions
2. Project Overview
3. Break (Optional)
4. Opportunity Area Identification
5. Next Steps



# We want to develop the transportation network to best support economic vitality and opportunity - what does this mean to you?

Easy access

If a transportation network is not operationally sound and safe, you will drive prospective businesses and customers to other locations.

Protectng against retail leakage

Business friendly

creating framework to facilitate right-sizing of streets to accommodate planned land uses

Provide ease of access for residents and corporations alike. Build infrastructure that is forward thinking and will accommodate future growth.

A safe transportation system that supports the intended growth in an area, or along a corridor.





 Mentimeter

# Project Overview:

## Economic Development and Transportation Solutions

**AECOM**

### What is an LRTP?

*A 25-year infrastructure blueprint*

- Multimodal Outlook
- Local Demographics
- Coordinated
- Fiscally-Constrained
- Environmentally Aware
- Rooted in Community Input



### Transportation Infrastructure can ...

- 1) Support Economic Activity
- 2) Induce Economic Activity
- 3) Hinder Economic Activity

### Transportation Infrastructure can ...

- 1) Support Economic Activity
- 2) Induce Economic Activity
- 3) Hinder Economic Activity

**Transportation Infrastructure cannot make \$\$**

### Transportation Infrastructure can ...

- 1) Support Economic Activity
- 2) Induce Economic Activity
- 3) Hinder Economic Activity

**Transportation Infrastructure cannot make \$\$**

**How do transportation safety issues affect economic activity? What about maintenance issues?**



## Regional and National Economic Development Trends

Mentimeter



### National Economic Trends/Factors

- Online Retail
- COVID Impacts
- Global Supply Chains
- Complete Streets Movements

## Regional and National Economic Development Trends

Mentimeter



### National Economic Trends/Factors

- Online Retail
- COVID Impacts
- Global Supply Chains
- Complete Streets Movements

## Regional and National Economic Development Trends

Mentimeter

Strengthening  
Regional  
Connectivity

Combatting  
Retail Leakage




### National Economic Trends/Factors

- Online Retail
- COVID Impacts
- Global Supply Chains
- Complete Streets Movements


## Regional and National Economic Development Trends



Strengthening  
Regional  
Connectivity



Combatting  
Retail Leakage



Diversification



### National Economic Trends/Factors

- Online Retail
- COVID Impacts
- Global Supply Chains
- Complete Streets Movements

## Regional and National Economic Development Trends



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## Regional and National Economic Development Trends



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## Regional and National Economic Development Trends

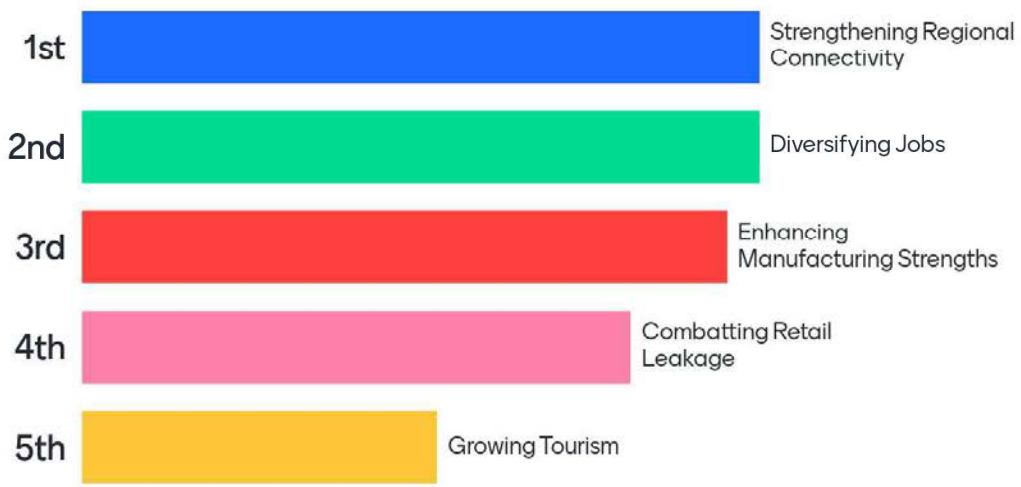


### National Economic Trends/Factors

- Online Retail
- COVID Impacts
- Global Supply Chains
- Complete Streets Movements



Rank the importance of these economic focuses in the region:



# What other themes can characterize opportunities and challenges for economic development for the Kingsport region?

Housing Market as a whole

Heavy industry in downtown setting creates a unique transportation challenge most communities do not deal with.

Competing with other markets

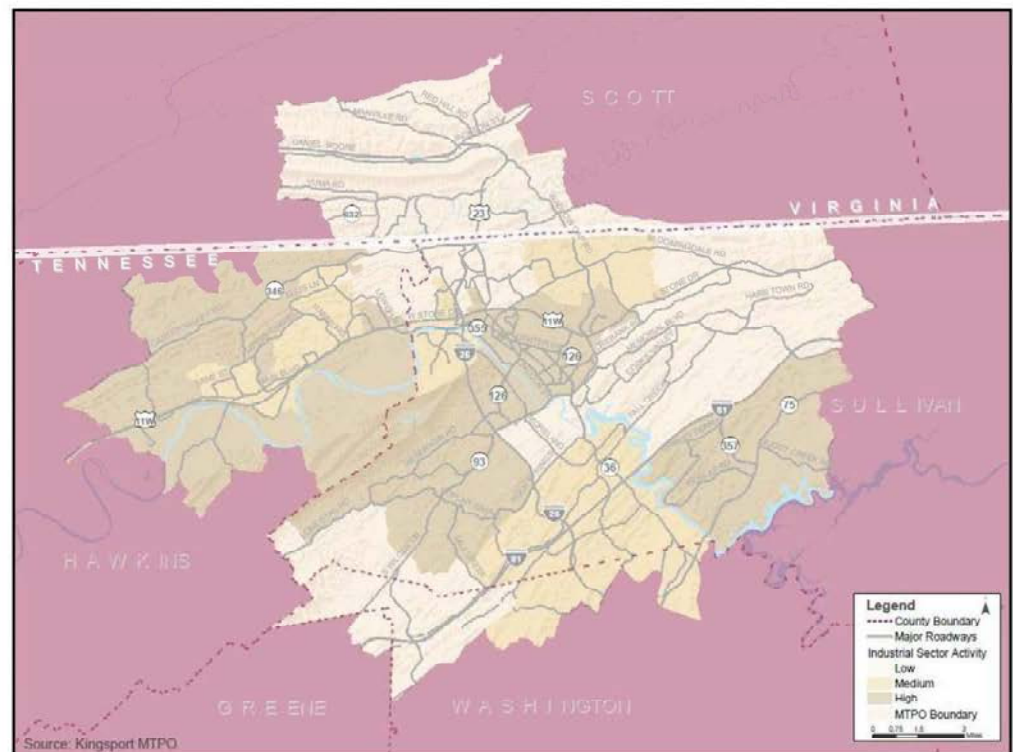
increasing opportunities to work from home

Interstates offer opportunities

## Mentimeter

- Industrial Sector Activity

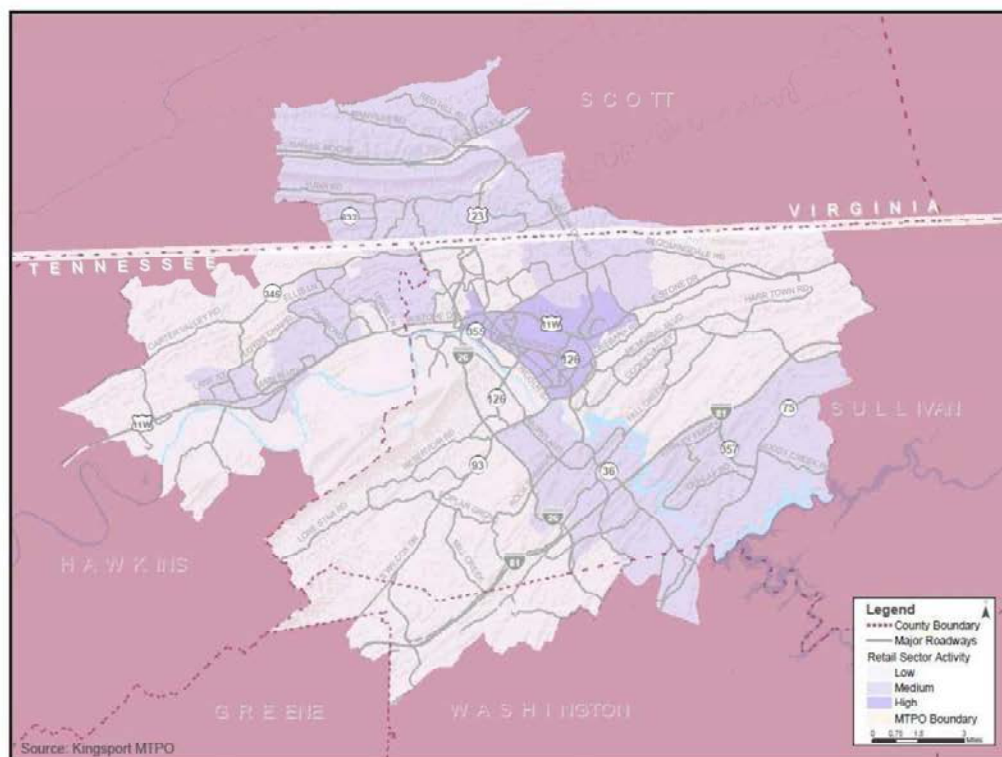
- US23 Industrial Parks
- Church Hill
- 357 Corridor
- Eastman Campus
- Tri-Cities Aerospace Park



## Current Conditions: Identified Nodes of Economic Activity ventimeter

- Retail Sector Activity/  
Opportunity

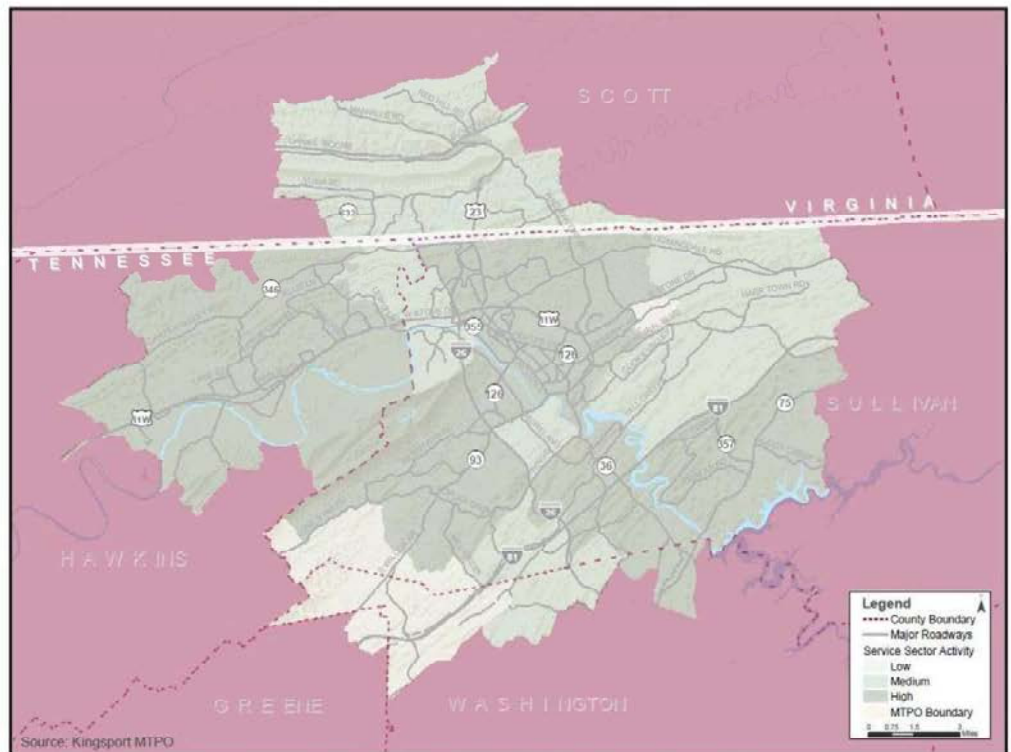
- Stone Drive
- Mt Carmel
- Lynn Garden Drive
- Bloomingdale Road
- John B Dennis Hwy
- Downtown Kingsport
- Eastman Road



## Current Conditions: Identified Nodes of Economic Activity

- Service Sector Activity

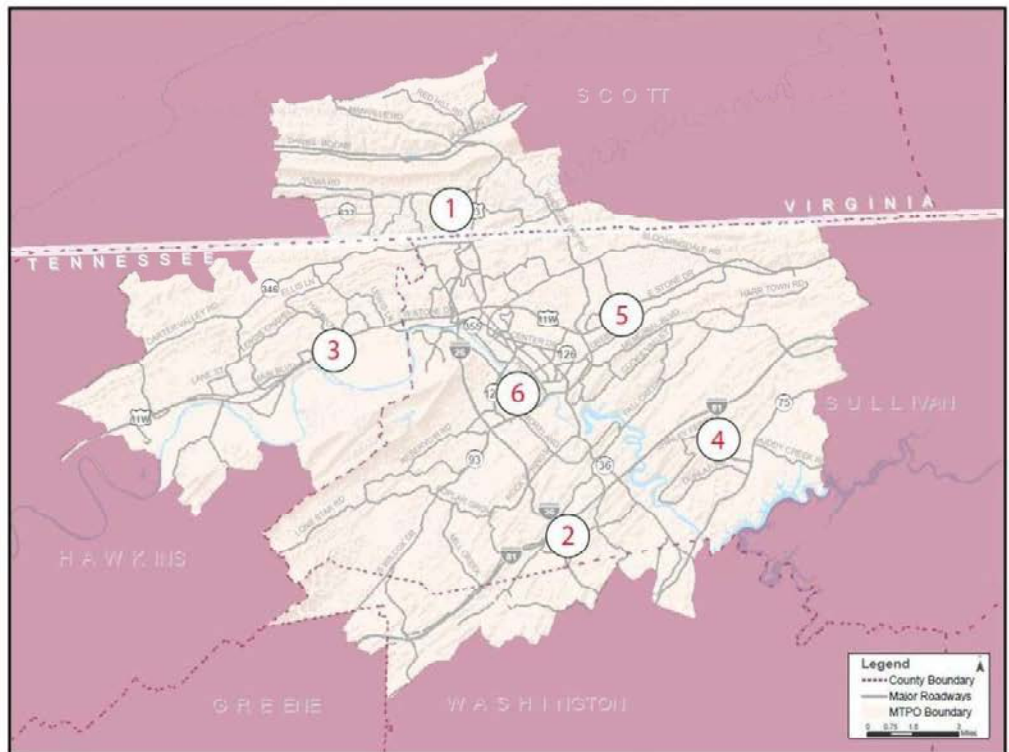
- Stone Drive
- John B Dennis Hwy
- Downtown Kingsport
- Eastman Road



## Current Conditions: Identified Nodes of Economic Activity mentimeter

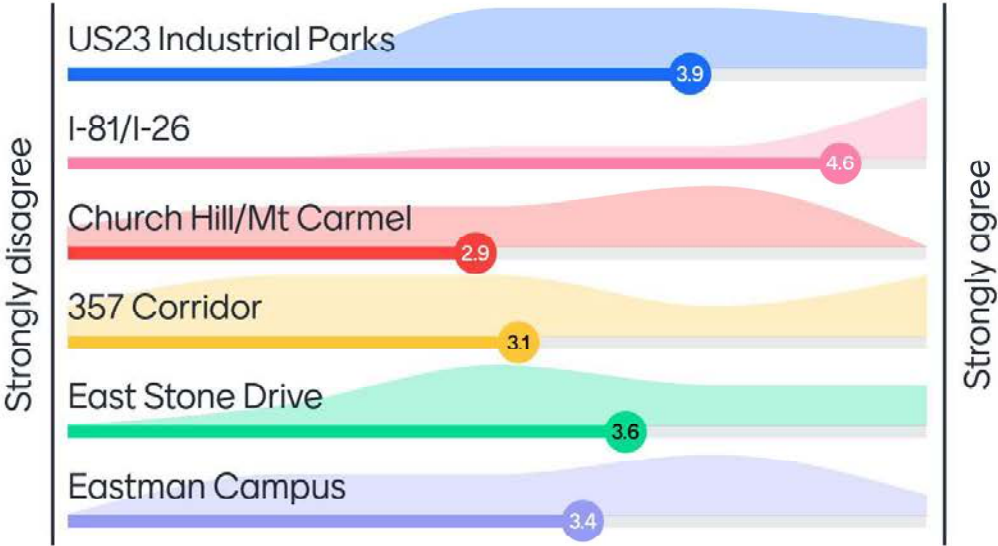
### Nodes of Economic Activity /Opportunity (Subset)

- 1) US23 Industrial Parks
- 2) I-81/I-26
- 3) Church Hill/Mt Carmel Industrial/Retail
- 4) 357 Corridor
- 5) East Stone Drive
- 6) Eastman Campus





Do you agree that these are critical economic opportunity locations in the region?







 Mentimeter

# Break

**AECOM**



Mentimeter

# Opportunity Area Identification

**AECOM**

Transportation Infrastructure can ...

- 1) Support Economic Activity
- 2) Induce Economic Activity
- 3) Hinder Economic Activity

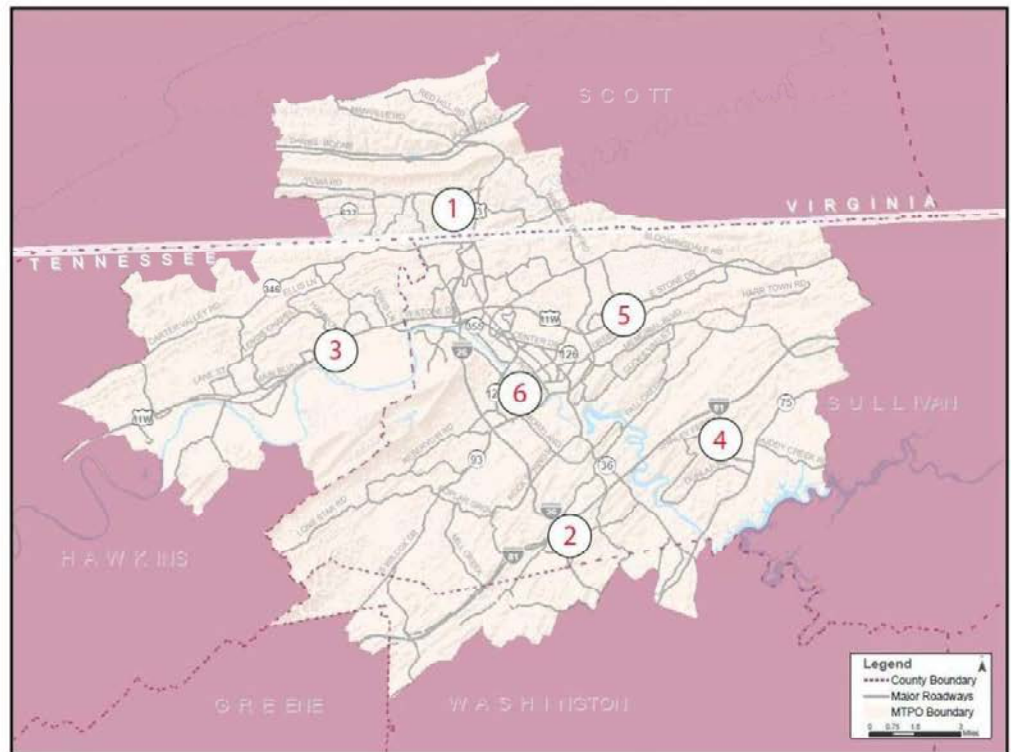
**To support or induce economic activity, we have to identify where and what to do.**

# Location of Economic Opportunity Nodes

## Nodes of Economic Activity /Opportunity (Subset)

- *Just the start – please send us more!!*
- Email locations and transportation ideas:

[Suraiya.Motsinger@aecom.com](mailto:Suraiya.Motsinger@aecom.com)



**Name one critical economic opportunity location that we missed in the region:**

 Mentimeter

Allandale (West Stone Drive)

Anything in Bloomingdale that can benefit from traffic on Wadlow Gap/224.

Meadowview

11W heading to Surgoinsville - Kpt owns part of Phipps Bend Industrial Park.

Spurgeon/Gray

## Strategies to Support Economic Opportunity Nodes

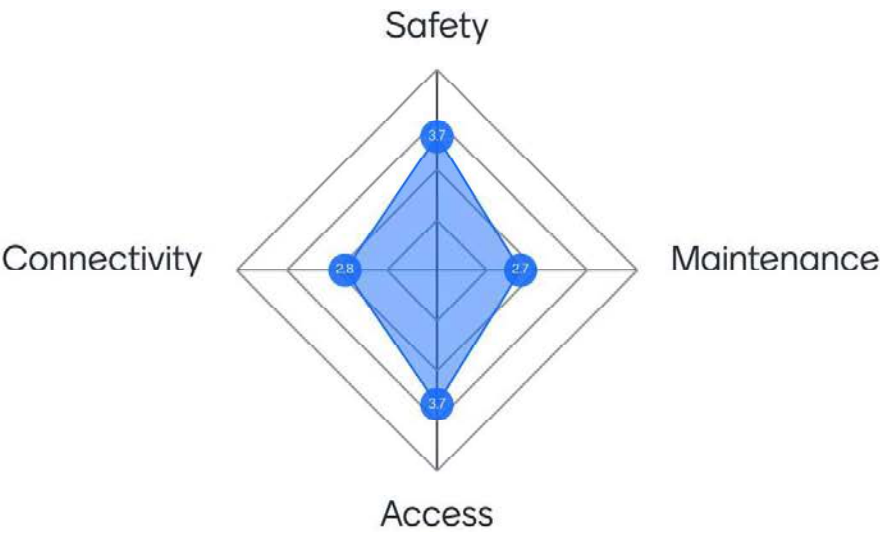
### Transportation Strategies

	Remove Hinderance	Support	Induce
Safety	X		
Maintenance	X		
Access		X	
Connectivity		X	X



# What transportation strategies will improve opportunities at #1 - US23 Industrial Park?

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# How can transportation be improved for #1 - US23 Industrial Park?

 Mentimeter

Signalized intersection

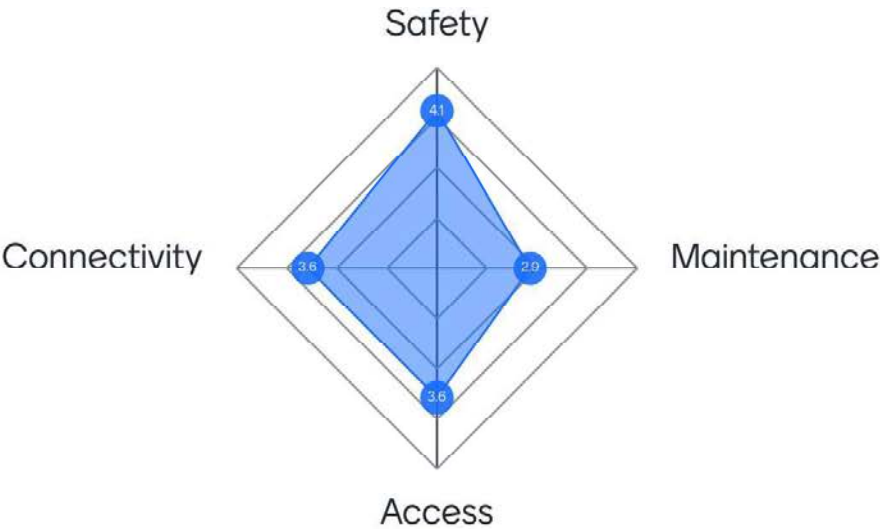
This region is one of the highest ranked "Potential for Safety Improvements" within the Bristol District of VDOT. Access management is greatly needed. Pedestrian connectivity is needed as well.

2



# What transportation strategies will improve opportunities at #2 - I-81 & I-26 Interchange?

Mentimeter



# How can transportation be improved for #2 - I-81 & I-26 Interchange?

Most dangerous interchange in the region. Merge and Weave are HUGE issues here.

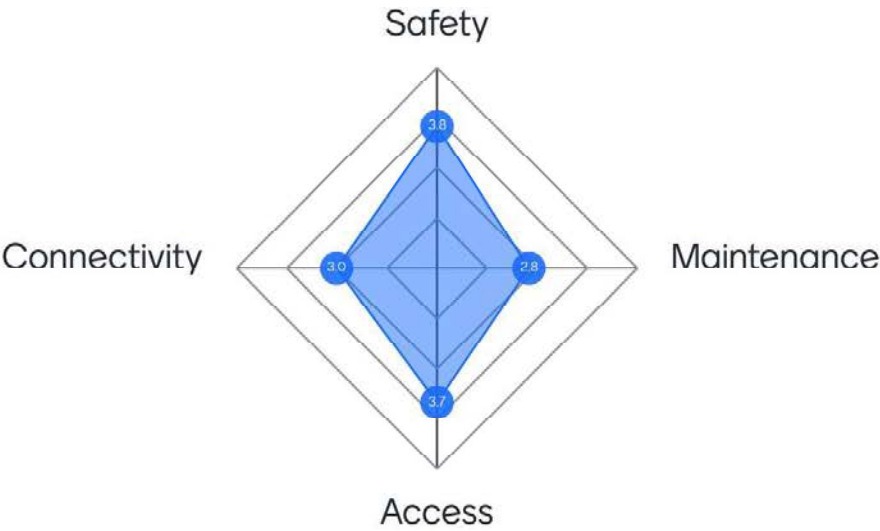
Needs upgraded to a full Interstate to interstate interchange.

Frontage roads

Exit 56 lacks ease of access and safety features for future economic growth

# What transportation strategies will improve opportunities at #3 -Church Hill/Mount Carmel?

Mentimeter



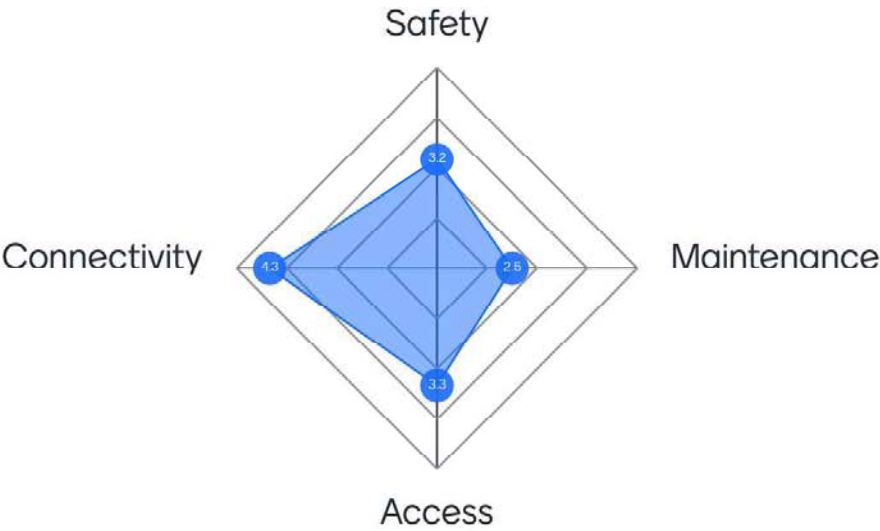
# How can transportation be improved for #3 -Church Hill/Mount Carmel?

Frontage road !



# What transportation strategies will improve opportunities at #4 - SR357 Corridor?

Mentimeter



# How can transportation be improved for #4 - SR357 Corridor?

 Mentimeter

Connector from SR-126 and North Kingsport/Virginia

Linking surrounding roadways

Extend North to Stone Drive (SR 1) and South to 11E

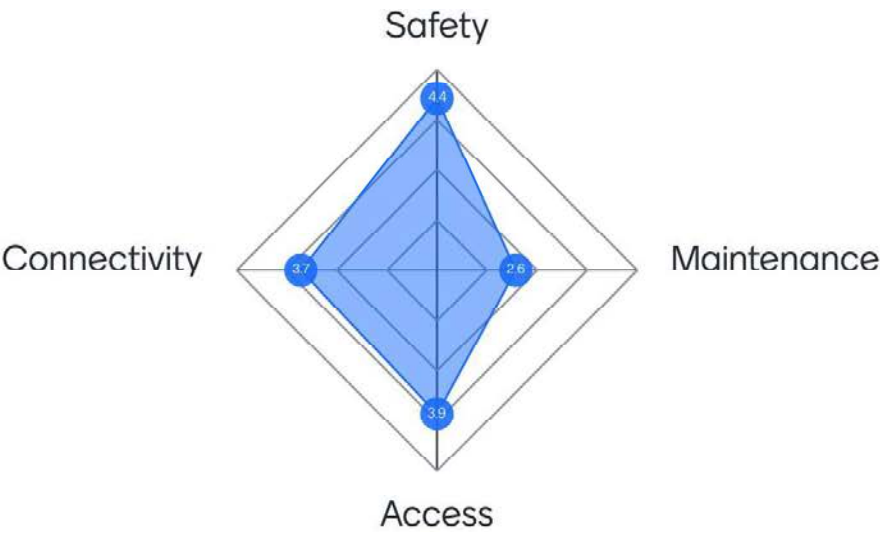
Extend North to Kingsport and South to Bluff City

4





# What transportation strategies will improve opportunities at #5 - East Stone Drive?



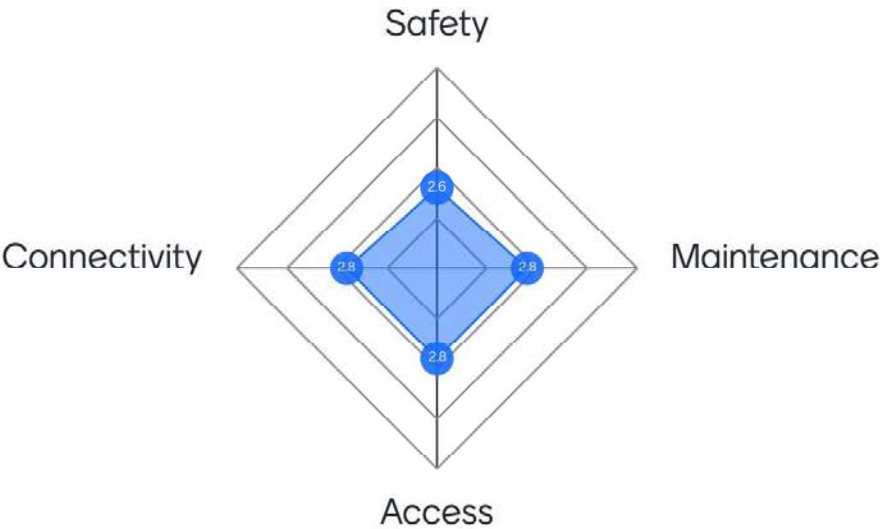
# How can transportation be improved for #5 - East Stone Drive?

Connect frontage and backage roads

Access Management is directly related to the safety issues. Also, speeding and turn lane issues.

# What transportation strategies will improve opportunities at #6 - Eastman Campus?

Mentimeter



# How can transportation be improved for #6 - Eastman Campus?

Relocation of Jared Drive to allow increase in  
railyard storage.

Domtar will have a significant increase in truck  
traffic coming into the downtown area in the next  
few years. Stone to Lynn Garden to Center St. 200  
tucks a day

Improve riverport road

Truck climbing lane on I-26



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# Next Steps/Upcoming Items

**AECOM**

# Schedule

