

entertainment industries). That could generate another \$2 – 3 million of restaurant and hotel tax revenues annually for the City.

The IMPLAN economic model for the City of Roanoke indicates that an additional 2000 jobs in lodging and restaurants will also lead to another 600 jobs elsewhere in the economy due to additional orders from suppliers in the City and additional worker spending in the City. Together, that would create roughly \$50 million of additional worker income annually.

## ❖ 2.7 Overall Impacts & Related Development Issues

**Opportunities to Maximize Overall Economic Growth.** The overall impacts discussed in the preceding pages do indicate significant differences associated with the alternative alignments for I-73. However, the total magnitude of those impacts are relatively modest. That reflects findings from the case studies of experiences elsewhere, discussed in Appendix D, which indicate that bypass freeways can have negative impacts on a central city, but those impacts tend to be smaller than originally feared. Three important findings from the case studies are that:

- Areas which have already adjusted to reliance on a more specialized visitor and service-based economy are less likely to experience much loss of business if a new bypass route opens up competing areas.
- Locational shifts in traffic do cause some existing businesses to close up or relocate, but they also tend to create some new business opportunities – reducing the net economic change for the city as a whole.
- Highway-related new development, whether in the central city or outlying areas, does not automatically occur -- it requires not only highway interchanges, but also utility services, local access roads and land use regulations that permit it. Cities can take significant actions to encourage, discourage or otherwise shape the nature of those impacts.

The overall impacts also will depend on whether the City of Roanoke can take advantage of highway-related economic growth opportunities, by: (1) strategically expanding its investment in revitalization of neighborhoods and older industrial areas, (2) focusing investment priorities for public transit and roads to maximize access for its residents and business activities, and (3) adopting land use plans and incentives to guide development to where it is most beneficial to the city and its residents. Such actions can affect not only the city's future economic base, but also its future quality of life. In fact, those issues need to be confronted in planning for the future, regardless of the I-73 option that is adopted.

**Land Use and Environment.** A related issue is whether or not any or all of the I-73 alternatives will promote sprawled development and degradation of the quality of life. In the long run, both the public costs of growth and the quality of environment can