

ROUTE 15



Route 15 Safety and Operational Study: Stakeholder Meeting 1

Loudoun County Government Center

Dulles Conference Room

August 1, 2017, 6:30 – 8:30 PM

Summary of Comments and Questions

All questions and comments were answered at the stakeholder meeting unless otherwise specified.

Introductions

1. *Comment:* It would be helpful to have some prospective dates within the PowerPoint presentation to provide perspective to the public

Response: A schedule of the project timeline was created and will be shared with the stakeholder group (Susan Glass emailed this to the stakeholders on 8/8/17).

2. *Question:* Regarding the Fall 2017 data collection in September, is it possible to identify state of origin of vehicles/trips? Virginia residents versus Maryland residents?

Response: Counts being collected just south of the Potomac River crossing will reflect number of trips coming from out of state.

Stakeholder Charter

3. *Comment:* Is there enough inclusion? Many residents near/in Lucketts are not a part of an HOA and do not feel included in the stakeholder panel.

Response: Stakeholders were selected by reaching out to different HOAs and community organizations in the area. The process was designed to be as inclusive as possible. Public input is still welcome and individuals and groups can meet with Supervisors to voice their input.

4. *Comment:* Phrasing in charter makes it seem like it's bound from Whites Ferry Road to Maryland. Was the intent to include the entire corridor from Battlefield Parkway to Maryland?

Response: The intent of the charter is to include the entire corridor, not just the portion north of Whites Ferry Road. It was revised and provided to the committee prior to the end of the meeting.

Congestion Report Summary

5. *Question:* What AM/PM peak hours were evaluated?

Response: AM peak hour was 8:00 – 9:00 am and the PM peak hour was 4:00 – 5:00 pm (reference page 21 of Route 15 Congestion Report). Peak hours were calculated by

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determining the hour during which the greatest volume of vehicles traveled through the study intersections (total of all intersections)

6. *Question:* Would a roundabout at Whites Ferry Road without widening improve the corridor?

Response: A roundabout with no capacity improvements would not improve congestion on Route 15 corridor (reference page 42 of Route 15 Congestion Report).

7. *Comment:* Peak hour seems unrealistic – Traffic backs up earlier than that.

Response: The peak hour is defined as the hour within the overall peak period with the highest total volume of traffic for the study area (combination of all study intersections). It should be noted that the peak hour time may not reflect the time when the traffic backup is the longest.

8. *Question:* Does a traffic signal really work at the Route 15/King Street intersection?

Response: When coupled with capacity improvements, the traffic signal at King Street performs well (reference page 59 of Route 15 Congestion Report).

9. *Comment:* Providing volumes from the roundabout at Gilberts Corner would ease comparison to the Route 15/King Street roundabout. It would also be helpful to reference other comparable roundabouts.

Response: Volumes for Gilberts Corner roundabout will be provided in the near future (Susan Glass emailed this to the stakeholders on 8/8/17).

10. *Question:* Is there a big cost difference between the roundabout and a flyover at King Street?

Response: Although a detailed cost estimate has not been done, they are both of the same magnitude. Costs will be made clearer during detailed design.

11. *Question:* Do any other scenarios besides a T-intersection at Route 15/King Street and traffic signal at Route 15/Whites Ferry Road work through 2040?

Response: The T-intersection at Route 15/King Street and a roundabout at Route 15/Whites Ferry Road scenario operates similarly if corridor-wide capacity improvements are incorporated (reference page 62 of Route 15 Congestion Report).

12. *Question:* Have volumes been taken into consideration when evaluating roundabout operation? Do models take into account changes in behavior/technology/demographics?

Response: Roundabouts have been evaluated in VISSIM, a detailed simulation tool, using forecasted volumes. Traffic volume forecasts reflect changes in behavior/demographics/changes in technology as has been reflected and updated through the County's travel demand model.

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13. *Comment:* Demographics for Frederick County should be taken into consideration, as well as other parts of Maryland.

Response: The Loudoun County travel demand model which utilizes socioeconomic and population forecasts based on the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government (MWCOG) travel demand model incorporates Frederick County as well as other parts of Maryland and West Virginia. Traffic counts are planned to be collected just south of the Potomac River crossing to provide more information on the volume of Maryland traffic.

14. *Question:* Is a new bridge crossing being considered within the Congestion Report? Would drivers reroute as a result of another crossing?

Response: A new bridge crossing was not considered in the Congestion Report since it is not currently part of the Countywide Transportation Plan.

15. *Comment:* A map with the locations of exits/driveways and percentage of exiting drivers would be helpful.

Response: Traffic data collection will be performed in Fall 2017 and traffic counts information will be available in future.

16. *Question:* How do 25 cars all at once (getting off the Ferry) impact the proposed roundabout at Whites Ferry Road?

Response: The ferry volumes were taken into account during the modification of roadway link network (reference page 26 of the Route 15 Congestion Report) and as part of the simulation analyses.

17. *Comment:* For the Bowtie Roundabout option, it would be helpful to label the removal of the traffic signal on the map.

Response: Noted, future graphics will include this clarification.

18. *Comment:* It was not specified that signal and roundabout operate similarly during the public meetings. It would be useful to provide some information on performance to aid the public in deciding between alternatives.

Response: The technical analysis results are contained in the report available on the project website (Susan Glass emailed specific references to the stakeholders on 8/8/17).

Congestion Report Question and Answer

19. *Question:* Could stakeholders have data to support concepts? Would lead to evidence-based decisions.

Response: Reference pages to Route 15 Congestion Report will be provided (Susan Glass emailed references to the stakeholders on 8/8/17).

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The traffic analysis on the scenarios that were not in the Congestion Report (i.e. bowtie roundabout and flyover) are ongoing.

20. *Comment:* Remove “depending on funding constraints” from presentation.

Response: Noted, this will be updated in future presentations and materials.

21. *Question:* Could funding from NVTa to widen Route 15? The current NVTa proposal suggests widening to Tutt Lane, but it could be modified to say “widen past Whites Ferry.”

Response: The Draft NVTa TransAction Plan Project List contains a project to widen US 15 to 4 lanes from Battlefield Parkway to VA 740 (Tutt Lane). Loudoun County DTCl has already requested that NVTa revise the limit of the widening to Montresor Road.

Additionally, it is noted that the NVTa Draft TransAction Plan also has two other projects that could potentially provide funding for Route 15: Route 15 Congestion Mitigation Improvements and US 15 "hot spot" and safety improvements.

22. *Question:* Has an analysis been done on the entryway for Tutt Lane related to larger vehicles (including horse trailers)? Does that play into the design?

Response: Access to Tutt Lane, especially regarding larger vehicles, is being considered and will be accounted for in future preliminary engineering.

23. *Comment:* Cut-through traffic through Morven/Old Waterford Road should be considered.

Response: This item will be addressed in Safety and Operations Study (Whites Ferry Road to Maryland State Line).

24. *Question:* Has the geography been taken into consideration? Limestone locations?

Response: A geotechnical evaluation will be performed during detailed design.

Safety and Operational Study Vision

25. *Comment:* Route 15 should have a consistent design throughout the corridor, you don't want to have different designs along the segments the corridor.

Response: Design concepts will be taken further into consideration in the winter.

26. *Comment:* “congestion relief” should be inserted in the vision statement at the end of the first sentence. Current vision statement does not emphasize congestion relief enough

Response: Draft vision statement has been revised (Susan Glass emailed revised Vision to the stakeholders on 8/8/17).

27. *Comment:* Vision statement should be revised to read “corridor improvements.” (“The Route 15 corridor improvements from Leesburg to Maryland will emphasize safety and congestion relief.”)

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Response: Draft vision statement has been revised (Susan Glass emailed revised Vision to the stakeholders on 8/8/17).

Assignments for Next Meeting

28. **Question:** Can we characterize the performance of each of the Congestion Report intersection modification concepts?

Response: A reference to information will be provided (Susan Glass emailed a reference to the Congestion Report to the stakeholders on 8/8/17).

Final Questions:

29. **Question:** Will the public input from recent data collection be available before going back to communities/organizations?

Response: Some information is provided in presentation, but the data is still being synthesized. More information will be provided once the summary is complete.

30. **Question:** When will Route 15 get widened?

Response: The County's Adopted CIP has funding in a future fiscal year for this project. Several steps need to occur to move forward with widening construction including the CTP amendment, obtaining the full project funding, engineering design process, and right-of-way acquisition and utility relocations. Typically, projects are constructed approximately 3.5-4 years after funding is received.

31. **Question:** Why does traffic seem worse in the PM?

Response: Traffic tends to be worse in the PM in the Congestion Study area (Battlefield Parkway to Whites Ferry Road), AM traffic congestion occurs north of the Whites Ferry Road intersection where it is "metered".

32. **Comment:** Widening to 4 lanes would complicate left-turn movements for residents living off Route 15. It's important not to destroy access.

Response: Access will not be eliminated (concept designs in Appendix D of Route 15 Congestion Report show potential access). Details on access will be addressed during concept development and preliminary engineering.