

**ROUTE 7 WIDENING PROJECT**  
RESTON AVENUE TO JARRETT VALLEY DRIVE **WORKING GROUP**

**MEETING SUMMARY**  
**Route 7 Widening Project**  
**Working Group Meeting #4**

**ATTENDEES:**

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**SUBJECT:** Route 7 Widening Project– Highway Safety Manual Corridor Safety Study Alternatives to HOV Lanes

**MEETING DATE:** August 1, 2012

**MEETING LOCATION:** VDOT-NoVA District Office, Potomac Conference Room (1<sup>st</sup> Floor)

**REFERENCE:** Route 7 Widening Project  
Project Number 0007-029-128 UPC 52328  
Fairfax County, Virginia

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Working Group Meeting #4 on the above referenced project was held on Wednesday, August 1, 2012 at the VDOT-NoVA District Office, Potomac Conference Room (1st Floor)

Specific items discussed:

- Activity since the previous meeting
- Highway Safety Manual (HSM) Corridor Safety Study
- High Occupancy Vehicle Roadway Section Alternatives

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## WORKING GROUP

### Activity Since the Previous Meeting

- The Dulles Group will be present in the working group in the December/January timeframe to discuss the inclusion of bicycles and the pedestrian network at the Route 7 crossing of the Dulles Toll Road.

### Highway Safety Manual (HSM) Corridor Safety Study

- Phase 1 safety review focused on assessing existing crash and injury performance and identifying short-term & low cost countermeasures (focus on reducing severity).
- From 2006-2010 (5 years) 1,022 crashes occurred along the limits of this project on Route 7.
  - 528 injured (2 pedestrians)
  - 3 deaths (1 pedestrian)
  - Societal Cost – \$56.9 million
  - Property Damage – \$5.7 million
- References/bibliography was requested for Highway Safety Manual.
- A question was asked regarding bicycles since the collision data did not have any bicycle crash data. Zero crashes were reported. However the Health Department may have information regarding community bicycle crashes.
- Collisions were separated by intersection crashes and segment crashes. Approximately 600 crashes of the 1,022 were reported as intersection crashes.
- It was mentioned to examine crash data before and after at Prosperity & Woodburn to determine whether improvements increased safety.
  - Another location mentioned was Route 50 at Chantilly, but that project is still under construction.
- Instead of “Collision Types” the charts will be subcategorized as “Manner of Collision”. (e.g. in the case of a rear-end crash involving a pedestrian)
- A question arose regarding why fix object crashes happened. Icy conditions? Or avoiding deer? Or other reasons?
- How many of the rear end crashes are happening at Georgetown Pike? (Answer: 62- about 10% of rear end crashes along corridor). Georgetown Pike is beyond the limits of construction, but was included in the crash analysis because of its proximity to Reston Avenue.
- Human factors: In judging gaps, a vehicle traveling at 40 mph or greater, humans are generally not capable in making an errorless decision. Protected left turn only increase safety, but have operational tradeoffs.
- On eight (8) of the intersections drivers are having trouble judging gaps for turning movements.
- Restraint use is 5.3% in the following corridor between the study limits. Much lower than the average on other VA roads
  - 1 out of 4 motorcyclists wore a helmet (correction from slides).
  - There were accident reports that did not have D.O.B, or pedestrian and bicyclist collisions were not reported.
- Restricting permissive lefts decreases angles crashes, but may increase rear ends. Could permit lefts during non-peak hours, but this may lead to driver confusion. The flashing yellow arrow is currently being evaluated by VDOT. With protected lefts, the left turn bays will need to be longer (could lead to increase fuel consumptions, emissions).

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## WORKING GROUP

- Has the team looked at left turns at unsignalized intersections with median present? (Will be addressed in report). Concerned with several intersections that take left turn out of communities onto Route 7.
- Would pedestrian signals ever be placed on a roadway like Route 7? Operationally, it may add high-severity rear end crashes and change the level of service on Route 7.
  - Signal progression has been modeled for speed limit of 55 mph; any pedestrian crossing time would increase queues at intersection and decrease the LOS.
- Question whether lowering the speed limit is a consideration?
  - The response was it is very difficult due to the process and involvement dealing with the National Highway System (NHS). Federal approvals and speed studies must be conducted to justify.
- The project website will be live on August 10, 2012.

### High Occupancy Vehicle Roadway Section Alternatives

- Presentation of 3 alternatives for the roadway section of Route 7.
  - At-Grade HOV Lane – Inside
  - At-Grade HOV Lane – Outside
  - Elevated HOV Lane at Intersections
- At-grade HOV was discounted / eliminated because of the difficulty to enforce HOV usage due to constant weaving near intersections.
- It was noted that the grade separated HOV would occur at select intersections and traffic would be integrated with general purpose lanes before and after those intersections.
  - Need to determine which intersections justify a flyover access versus at-grade intersection where U-turns may be utilized to access intersections.
  - Further studies need to be performed to determine how right and left turns will be accommodated at the grade separated intersections.
- The Fairfax County Comprehensive Plan depicts a partial interchange at Baron Cameron and a full interchange at Reston Parkway.
- The alternatives presented provided for 3 lanes in each direction along Route 7 in addition to a 2 lane HOV facility in the median.
- A high-level cost will be developed for the next working group in October.
  - Cost will be for grade separated HOV.
- A comment was made questioning the need for HOV lanes because the HOV lanes effectively move patrons out of Loudoun County to Tyson's Corner.
- Colvin Run Mill/Park Authority is not in favor of a grade separated HOV structure (in order to maintain full access at Carpers Farm Way) as it will impede in their view shed of the historic habitat.
- A suggestion was mentioned to the consideration of another mode (bus/rail transit).
  - Light Rail
  - Cost for a rail system was a concern.

### Next Steps

- Additional working group meetings will be held to gather more information while preparing the design of the project.
- Next working group meeting is scheduled for Oct 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2012 at Reston Regional Library

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- A Citizen Information Meeting will be held for the project in the Fall of 2012.

These notes represent the general context and content of items discussed during the referenced meeting. Please forward any and all concerns or comments you may have to Amit Patel via telephone at (410) 316-2292 or via email at [apatel@jmt.com](mailto:apatel@jmt.com). If the comments are not received within ten (10) business days of this draft, we will assume that these notes reflect the intent and content of the meeting and will be the final meeting notes for your file.

Distribution: Attendees