

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

MEETING SUMMARY
Route 7 Widening Project
Working Group Meeting #2

ATTENDEES:

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SUBJECT: Route 7 Widening Project – Working Group Meeting #2

MEETING DATE: April 4, 2012

MEETING LOCATION: McLean Community Center

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

Working Group Meeting # 2 on the above referenced project was held on Wednesday, April 4, 2012 at the McLean Community Center.

Specific items discussed:

Activity since the February 1st Meeting

- A meeting was held with the Fairfax County Transit Representatives on March 12, 2012.
- A meeting was held with the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) and VDOT on March 28, 2012 to review the project and gather input from the FCPA representatives for the project moving forward.

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Environmental Overview

- Helen Ross (Cultural Resource Manager for VDOT) gave an overview of what is required for the environmental process for the project concerning the historical properties:
 - The project will follow the Section 106 process for federally funded projects
 - Updated Architectural and Archeological surveys will be performed looking for “significant” properties over the age of 50 years, which may include historic districts and historic objects. The current cutoff year is 1962. The survey results will be coordinated with the Department of Historic Resources and consulting parties.
 - If the project has any effects on historic properties, the design team will develop mitigation strategies to address and minimize those impacts.
 - A map depicting an overview of the historic properties was requested by the members of the Working Group once the cultural resources survey is complete.
- John Muse (Environmental Manager for the VDOT NOVA district) gave an overview of the environmental process and implications for the project:
 - The project will follow the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that is required for all federal funded projects. The Federal Highway Administration is the lead federal agency.
 - An Environmental Assessment (EA) will be prepared to comply with FHWA’s NEPA regulations (23 CFR 771). As part of the EA preparation process, the design team will need to consider viable alternatives to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the environment. The goal is to get a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) decision for the project. If there are significant impacts then preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement will be required for the project.
 - Noise studies will be conducted as part of the process to assess impacts and abatement measures. The construction of noise walls near historic properties could be a view shed issue. It is difficult to balance the need for noise walls and not compromise view sheds of historic properties.
 - The typical timeline for completing an EA is 12 months. The project will not be able to advance to final design activities until there is a FONSI decision by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).
 - The EA will be re-evaluated 2 times per FHWA guidelines prior to the Right of Way Authorization submission and the final PS&E Authorization submission.
 - The goal of the process overall is to minimize impacts from the roadway construction to the extent possible.

Transit Overview

- Randy White (Senior Transportation Planner, Fairfax County Department of Transportation, FCDOT) gave an overview of transit for the project corridor.
 - FCDOT has 10 year Transit Development Plan (TDP) for the county. The plan breaks down ridership per acre to determine the transit demand for areas within the county. For the project corridor the demand is on average 1 to 3 households per acre which is a relatively low demand in comparison to other areas in the plan.
 - The TDP recommended that some new stops be added to support new park and ride facilities for access to the Metro and some service on the Dulles Toll Rd to West of Falls Church.
 - Route checks are performed regularly which monitor the number of people getting on and off buses to ensure quality statistical data.

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- Loudoun County does not have any current or planned transit along Route 7 beyond the Loudoun County line. Currently most of their regional transit services travel along the Dulles Toll Road.
- There is one Fairfax Connector bus route (Route 574) along Route 7 corridor east of Baron Cameron Ave. This route experiences very low ridership. Headway (time between arriving buses) is currently one hour.
- The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transit (DRPT) is currently working on the Super NoVa study of current and projected commuter patterns throughout the region. The study will focus on transit improvements and transportation demand management (TDM) enhancements in the Northern Virginia area, including the impact of commuters traveling from Maryland, West Virginia and Washington, D.C. into the area.

Questions Asked by the Group

Question: How accurate is the historical ridership data collected for the TDP.

Answer: The data for the last 5 years is available possibly up to 10 years. The ridership is tracked on a regular basis.

Question: Does Loudoun County have plans to provide transit along the Route 7 Corridor?

Answer: No, currently Loudoun County is not focused on transit along Route 7 outside of Loudoun County. Loudoun County may evaluate future regional service along Route 7 in Fairfax County should managed lanes be in place.

Question: Can the existing bus stops be improved with benches and/or shelters to promote ridership?

Answer: Facilities are provided based on need. For a stop showing 25 boardings per day a bench would be provided. For a stop showing 50 boardings per day a bus shelter would be provided. Currently the ridership numbers along the corridor are low. Prioritization of funds is based on need.

Question: Would it be possible to increase the frequency of buses along the corridor from 30 minutes to 20 minutes?

Answer: Not without an increase in ridership to justify the need.

Question: When will the Route 7 widening between Reston Avenue and Jarrett Valley Drive be completed?

Answer: At this time only the funds for engineering are available. The total project estimate is \$300 million. It is possible that the project could be broken into segments based on funding. Part of the study process will be to determine how the project could be broken down into segments.

Question: Will this project be coordinated with the expansion of the Dulles Toll Rd Bridge.

Answer: Yes, the projects are being coordinated.

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Question: Will multi-modal concepts like HOV lanes or rapid transit be considered for the project?

Answer: The design team is charged with investigating multi-modal improvements.

Question: Will the project address ADA accessibility for the existing bus stops?

Answer: It is anticipated that shared use paths will be provided adjacent to both the eastbound and westbound lanes that will meet the current ADA standards.

Question: What type of pedestrian facilities will there be on the proposed Dulles Toll Road Bridge? Will the design provide pedestrian connectivity on both sides of the bridge?

Answer:

It is anticipated that shared use paths will be provided adjacent to both the eastbound and westbound lanes across the bridge, which will connect to existing shared use paths on both sides of the bridge.

Question: Can a meeting be arranged with Loudoun County regarding transit and development?

Answer:

Further coordination with Loudoun County is warranted and it will be addressed at a future meeting.

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 Jeff Cronin via telephone at (804) 267-1262 or via email at jcronin@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