

Route 7 Corridor Study – Route 28 to Fairfax County Line

Summary of Public Meeting Questions and Comments

Q1. What will the zoning laws require?	
A:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The proposed improvements will not require any changes to the zoning in the area.
Q2. Is there a plan to fix pedestrian safety in the area especially around Potomac View? Currently, Potomac View Road and Harry Byrd Highway is the second-worst intersection in the county. There is a lot of foot traffic in the area now.	
A:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bicycle and pedestrian safety are among the primary concerns of this study. The proposed improvements will include shared use paths along both sides of Route 7. Most signalized intersections will include full pedestrian crossings with crosswalks and pedestrian countdown signals. Locations where a crosswalk across Route 7 is not feasible, pedestrian overpasses are being considered nearby for pedestrian/bicycle connectivity.
Comment1. I strongly support Option 3, the Frontage Road solution, for Route 7 between Rt 28 and the FFX county line. I live near Claude Moore Park, Potomac View Rd and Sterling Blvd. and adding traffic lights or adding lanes would be wasted money on a short-sighted band-aid solution. Previous improvements to the Sterling Route 7 corridor have yielded negligible effects on traffic. I can guarantee that traffic by 2040 will certainly not be any lighter, and long-term solutions must be considered, similar to what was done thru Ashburn and Leesburg. While I recognize that businesses along Route 7 would be impacted by construction and frontage road configuration, I think safety and commute times of the citizens take precedence over Sterling's many strip malls.	
A:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Response: The study team reviewed four Alternatives. The Frontage Road solution suggested has merit, but it was found to be overly impactful through the entire corridor. For this reason, the team undertook the study of Alternative 4, which incorporated the frontage road concept to the west of Cascades Parkway but implemented an at-grade solution with selected overpass movements to the east of Cascades Parkway – allowing access to the commercial properties fronting Route 7 in that area. In addition, accommodations for pedestrians and bicyclists were considered and added throughout the corridor.
Comment2. I am very concerned about the impacts of Alternative 1 for local traffic to get around Sterling. I live north of Route 7 near the Countryside Blvd signal, and if I understand Alternative 1 correctly, to access eastbound Route 7 or to go across Route 7, I will need to double back to Palisade	

Pkwy or Davenport Drive to get on Route 7 westbound, then go back toward my home to make a U-Turn or a left turn to go eastbound on Route 7 or southbound across it. This will greatly increase my travel time for any eastbound or southbound trip right within town and will turn short trips to places like Potomac Run Plaza or Nokes Blvd into much longer ones. For the minimal benefits that Alternative 1 would have for through traffic, I do not see this as a good tradeoff for local travel being greatly constrained, and all of the cost of construction. I would like to see an Alternative 2 developed where more left turn lanes are added wherever possible, and merge lanes replace right turn lanes.

A:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Response: Alternative 1 is the “Superstreet” option. This alternative was evaluated, and the Team decided to drop the option from consideration, for two reasons: 1. The operations of the corridor were not improved to the point of warranting the change; 2. Citizen’s concern over the turning movements required for certain movements were noted. Three other alternatives were considered to improve traffic flow but did not consider additional left-turn lanes or merge lanes.
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Comment3. Comments from Northern Virginia Community College, on behalf of Virginia Community College System Office.

- Removal of accessibility via Rt 7 driveway at Campus Drive is a serious detriment to the college.
- Elevated roadway decreases visibility of the only marquis road signage currently installed on Rt 7.
- Potomac View elevated roadway width ROW potentially impacts LC Parking lot. State granting of ROW is lengthy process; DOT should quantify ROW alterations soon.
- Removal of convenience of Rt 7 driveway at Campus Drive may potentially decrease enrollment.
- Potomac View elevated roadway ROW width may impact trees, aesthetics, and lighting at LC parking lot.
- Potomac View elevated roadway width may relocate utilities adversely close to LC parking lot.
- NOVA requests that the utilities be placed underground to mitigate aesthetic challenges. Also, will need new landscaping to offset removed trees.
- NOVA very concerned about impact of all DOT proposed projects upon campus trees and utilities.
- Making Potomac View the primary method of accessing the campus will increase traffic to drive all the way across campus to get to the largest lot which is next to the Campus Drive (proposed to be inaccessible from Rt. 7.
- Removal of Campus Drive access at Rt 7 significantly decreases convenience of access to LC and HEC buildings which are newest, and focal point of campus.
- Intent of Masterplan update currently in design is that the campus will remain “facing” Rt 7.

A:	Response: After meeting with Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC) on June 30, 2021, the Team has undertaken additional study of the access to the campus. This includes:
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An origin/destination study to determine where trips to NVCC begin and end; • Evaluation of an alternative to preserve the eastbound left-turn traffic into the campus and the westbound right-in/right-out of the campus. Eastbound traffic from the campus will still need to use Potomac View Road. • The Team believes that the improvements along Potomac View Road can be installed without impacting the LC parking lot. • It is understood that acquiring right of way from state property is a lengthy process and ample time will be included in the project schedule to account for such acquisitions. • The Team does not have the ability to evaluate the impact of these improvements on campus enrollment. • Impacts to trees, aesthetics and lighting will be addressed as designs progress, including the potential for new landscaping. • The concern about increasing internal circulation in the campus is acknowledged; the Team is investigating alternatives to closing the Campus Drive access completely to address this concern. • The concern about convenience of access is acknowledged. • The intent to keep the campus “facing” Route 7 is acknowledged.
<p>Comment4. The real problem with Rt 7 is the improper timed lights. There are numerous times that I can hit every light between Dransville Road and Rt 28. I see cars running lights quite frequently because of this. If you run them, you just might not hit the other lights. Also, Sterling Blvd and Potomac View should be overpasses or at least have long right turn lanes. Because of Potomac View being on top of a hill there is a line-of-sight problem for the right turn lanes on either side of the street. Long turn lanes or any turn lanes on that street would solve that. How you allowed a sopping development to come in and not put a turn lane in is just stupid. I have lived off Augusta for over 20 years. I have had lots of time to study this problem and the above are my suggestions to fix the problems. My suggestions are certainly a cheaper and a quicker solution than trying the 3 alternative solutions you have suggested.</p>	
<p>A:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response: The concern over traffic signal timing is acknowledged. VDOT regularly conducts a study of the corridor and adjusts signal timings in response to changing traffic characteristics. As noted in the study, it is anticipated that traffic growth in the corridor will exceed 20 percent in the next 20 years and will further strain the capacity of the road. Therefore, improvement to the corridor is deemed to be warranted.
<p>Comment5. My concern is with pedestrian crossings across Rt 7. Overpasses or tunnels are needed as pedestrians can't get a break in traffic to cross safely.</p>	
<p>A:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response: Bicycle and pedestrian safety are among the primary concerns of this study. The proposed improvements will include shared use paths along both sides of Route 7. Most signalized intersections will include full pedestrian crossings with crosswalks and pedestrian countdown signals. Locations where a crosswalk across Route 7 is not feasible, pedestrian overpasses are being considered nearby for pedestrian/bicycle connectivity.

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