



## Route 7 Shared Use Path – Campus Drive to Lakeland Drive

### Summary of Public Meeting Questions and Comments

<p><b>Q 1. Fairfax County has completed roadway improvements that include a shared use path on the north side of Route 7 in the Great Falls area to the east of the project limits. Will Loudoun’s shared use path directly connect with Fairfax’s shared use path?</b></p>	
<p><b>A:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The limits of this shared use path project extend from Campus Drive (Route 391) to Lakeland Drive (Route 821). The shared use path would be constructed on the north side of Route 7. The Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP) calls for a continuous shared use path on both the north and south sides of Route 7, but funding is available for only this segment at this time. There are many trails and sidewalks identified in the CTP, and they are being implemented incrementally based on both need and availability of funding.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Q 2. When will this connect to the Fairfax shared use path?</b></p>	
<p><b>A:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Currently there is no timeline for when the connection will be made. It is in the long-term county transportation plan, but it is not currently funded within the 6-year capital improvement program. Regarding the last few hundred feet from Lakeland Drive to the Fairfax County line, there are existing commercial land uses along that entire segment of westbound Route 7 abutting the existing highway. Land acquisition and possible relocation of businesses would be a real possibility by the extension of the shared use path. The reasoning to get the greatest length of shared use path within logical destinations would get the greatest use out of the funds allocated to the project.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Q 3. Why is the path not being extended all the way to the Fairfax County Parkway, where it could connect to their trail network?</b></p>	
<p><b>A:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Fairfax County Parkway lies beyond the Loudoun County and Fairfax County line. Extension of the shared use path to the Fairfax County line east of this project is included in the Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP); however, funding for this extension is currently not included in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP). The county has a sidewalk and trails program that was initiated this fiscal year that includes many different trail and sidewalk segment plans, and these will be constructed incrementally based on both need and availability of funding.</li> </ul>

**Q 4. Where can I find out more about the county trail program that you mentioned in answering the previous question? I would like to know what trails are under consideration, and how citizens can make suggestions concerning future trail improvements?**

**A:**

- The sidewalk and trail plans are part of the Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP), which is part of the County Comprehensive Plan. These documents can be found on the County's website (<https://www.loudoun.gov/4957/Loudoun-County-2019-Comprehensive-Plan>). In the CTP are written descriptions and a specific map showing pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Additionally, on the Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure (DTCI) page of the County website are links to projects like this one that are in development or currently under construction. A project that is currently under construction is the addition of sidewalks and a shared use path (pedestrian and bicycle) from the center of the Town of Round Hill to Franklin Park in western Loudoun County (<https://www.loudoun.gov/2996/Round-Hill-to-Franklin-Park-Trail>). Another project currently in design and being developed in cooperation with NOVA Parks will construct an overpass that will carry the Washington and Old Dominion (W&OD) Railroad Trail over Sterling Boulevard (<https://lfportal.loudoun.gov/LFPortalInternet/0/edoc/370771/Sterling%20Blvd.%20-%20WOD%20Overpass.pdf>). Those are just a couple of examples of projects within the County's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that will implement bicycle and pedestrian connections and improvements throughout the County.
- Citizens may access the project website to submit additional comments for the Route 7 Shared Use Path project during the comment period which is open until November 12, 2021 (<https://www.loudoun.gov/rt7sharedusepath>). For additional information and requests concerning future trail improvements, contact the Department of Planning and Zoning through the Countywide Transportation Plan website (<https://www.loudoun.gov/1068/Countywide-Transportation-Plan>).

**Q 5. I would like to better understand the purpose of this path, including why it is 10 feet wide rather than the 8 feet most commonly used.**

**A:**

- As discussed during the presentation, the purpose of the shared use path is to add safe pedestrian and bicycle access through the area. Ten feet is the current standard width identified in the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Road Design Manual for a two-directional shared used path because it is intended for use by both pedestrians and bicyclists. The 10-foot width allows for users to pass one another safely with minimal restrictions and provides for optimal level of service along the path. Eight-foot-wide paths are oftentimes used in areas where bicycle and pedestrian traffic volumes are low; frequent passing and rest areas would be required if used in heavily trafficked locations like this one. The 8-foot reduced width would also require



a design waiver as it would not meet the current standard width of 10 feet. A design waiver will be requested from VDOT for a reduced buffer width in order to minimize impacts to right of way, existing utilities, and other infrastructure; however, waivers are typically avoided wherever standards can be reasonably attained.

**Q 6. Why is just a piece of this path being constructed rather than waiting until you have the funding and the arrangement to do an entire pathway? I’ve seen this happen before where a piece of a pathway is put in and nothing further progresses. I don’t want to see trees taken down. We’ve lost almost all the trees in eastern Loudoun now. We don’t need any more taken down to put a piece of something in that’s not going to have any real beginning or ending. What are the plans for getting this path further than the Loudoun campus of the Northern Virginia Community College (NVCC)?**

**A:**

- The proposed shared use path is 1.3 miles long, which is substantial in length, and serves many destination points along the way. County staff recommended that this particular section of trail be constructed given the significant amount of foot traffic between NVCC and the surrounding neighborhoods and commercial areas. The County and many other jurisdictions use a “pay as you go” funding method, utilizing funding as it becomes available. Construction value reduces over time due to inflation and higher construction cost, thereby reducing the amount of trail you can build in the future, so building in segments is more cost-effective than waiting until funding is available for an entire pathway.

**Q 7. What will separate traffic along Route 7 from the shared use path? Are there plans for any type of construction similar to the wall along the south side of Route 7, from approximately Christ the King Church to the business park?**

**A:**

- Physical separation between vehicular traffic on Route 7 and the shared use path would be provided by the existing curb and gutter and the 8-foot-wide buffer along the majority of the project limits. The buffer also serves as a visual divider between the two facilities.

**Q 8. What is the timeline and schedule for the Route 7 pedestrian improvements?**

**A:**

- As shown in the project schedule during the presentation, the conceptual design and environmental review is currently ongoing. Final design completion is expected in the Fall of 2022. The project will require land acquisition and relocation of utilities, and this process will extend from 2023 through 2025. Contract award is expected in the Summer of 2025, with construction beginning in the Fall of 2025.



<b>Q 9. Will the land acquisition include the eminent domain process?</b>	
<b>A:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>That has not been determined at this point as land acquisition has not yet begun. It is always the County’s intent to acquire land through cooperative agreement with landowners. Only after exhausting all negotiation options with landowners would County staff and the Board of Supervisors consider the option of eminent domain.</li> </ul>
<b>Q 10. Other than the three pedestrian crossings, what changes may take place at the other intersections along the 1.3-mile path? Will traffic signal controls be modified?</b>	
<b>A:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Route 7 is a dynamic corridor and is the subject of several different projects and studies. A presentation was given at the Board of Supervisors meeting on October 19<sup>th</sup> about a Route 7 corridor study between Route 28 and the Fairfax County line. Based on that study, some recommendations have been presented to the Board for both short- and long-term improvements at several intersections. The Board took action at that meeting to move forward with further study and development of a plan for trying to implement some of those improvements. Outside of this particular project, there are other ongoing studies and potential future projects that would involve additional improvements at some of these intersections.</li> <li>Regarding traffic signal modifications, there are four intersections within this project’s limits that would require either modifications to existing traffic signals or new traffic signals to accommodate new pedestrian signals: Potomac View Road, Cardinal Glen Circle, Augusta Drive, and Lakeland Drive. Traffic signal work is being avoided as much as possible, but modifications are required where pedestrian signals will be added. To further clarify, pedestrian signals are the signals at crosswalks which signal for pedestrians or bicyclists to cross and include a countdown for how much time is left to complete the crossing. Currently, pedestrian signals are not provided at these four intersections.</li> </ul>
<b>Q 11. Within the 10-foot-wide lane, what width is allocated to bicycle use and for walking? Will the lanes be signed and labeled?</b>	
<b>A:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The shared use path is 10 feet wide as the question notes, but it is not signed, nor will the pavement be marked to allocate specific locations for bicycle use or walking. It will be one 10-foot-wide asphalt path that will be shared by bicyclists and pedestrians.</li> </ul>
<b>Q 12. Will there be center median improvements for pedestrians and cyclists who may not be able to completely cross Route 7 when crossing south to north or vice versa? Basically, a center median.</b>	
<b>A:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Route 7 Pedestrian Improvements Project is another project within this corridor that includes three crossings of Route 7 at Campus Drive / Bartholomew Fair Drive (the entrance to the Loudoun County campus of the Northern Virginia Community College),</li> </ul>



	<p>Potomac View Road, and Lakeland Drive. All three of these crossings will include pathways in the center median and provide refuge areas for anyone crossing north to south, or south to north, and allow them to safely perform a two-phase crossing if needed. There will be some median improvements at these three crossings as well. The design is complete for that project and the County is currently in the process of acquiring easements and relocating utilities prior to construction.</p>
<p><b>Comment 1. Thank you for all this hard work on this project! This shared use path will be tremendously useful. Route 7 can be so dangerous for pedestrians, which makes it hard for those without a car - especially NVCC students and staff without cars - as well as children and the elderly and others who cannot drive. While the download of the meeting materials did not work on my device, in general I see very few downsides to building more shared use paths in Loudoun, and tremendously compelling upsides. Paths like this make my life so much better.</b></p>	
<p><b>A:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comment acknowledged.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Comment 2. Thank you. The session was informative and helpful.</b></p>	
<p><b>A:</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comment acknowledged.</li> </ul>