



PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY REPORT

Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements On Idylwood Road (Route 695) & Chain Bridge Road (Route 123) Near I-495 in Fairfax County

State Project: I495-029-078, P101, R201, C501

Federal Project: CM-495-5 (091) UPC: 104005

On June 11, 2014, the Virginia Department of Transportation, in coordination with Fairfax County, held a Design Public Hearing (DPH) at Fairhill Elementary School in Fairfax, Virginia from 6:30-8:30 p.m., on a proposed project to improve bicycle and pedestrian facilities on Idylwood Road (Route 695) and Chain Bridge Road (Route 123), near I-495 in Fairfax County. This bike-pedestrian improvement project is intended to complete and enhance pedestrian and bicycle connections that were recently completed during the I-495 Express Lanes project.

The DPH provided an opportunity for citizens and organizations to give VDOT comments and/or suggestions on the proposed improvements. A court reporter was present at the DPH to record public comments, or citizens could handwrite comments and leave them in the comment box. Comments also were accepted by email or U.S. mail, but were due to VDOT by June 26, 2014 in order to be included in the design public hearing record.

Nearly 20 people attended the DPH, including Fairfax County Supervisor Linda Smyth (Providence District) and one media outlet (News Channel 4). VDOT received a total of 22 comments from citizens and/or organizations. A summary of comments and responses is enclosed below.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS FOR IDYLWOOD ROAD

PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN CROSSWALK:

Four respondents expressed concerns about the location of the proposed crosswalk connecting pedestrians from the existing sidewalk on the north side of Idylwood Road to the new proposed sidewalk on the south side of Idylwood Road. Travel speeds on Idylwood Road, a horizontal curve on the west side of the proposed crossing, the downgrade of the road, and trees/shrubs were all mentioned as concerns.

Three respondents suggested that VDOT consider constructing the sidewalk on the north side of Idylwood Road in lieu of the south side as currently planned. The method of constructing the sidewalk over the large drainage channel (Holmes Run) on the north side will need to be taken

into account. One respondent suggested that if it is not feasible to construct the sidewalk on the north side, then relocate the crosswalk further east to gain additional sight distance.

Response: VDOT will study the feasibility of other options such as constructing the sidewalk on the north side of Idylwood Road. If a pedestrian crossing does get approved, VDOT will ensure adequate sight distance for the crossing.

ACCESSIBILITY OF SIDEWALKS AND CROSSWALKS:

Two respondents expressed concerns with the width of the ramps at the entrances to the crosswalk; in particular the ability to accommodate two-way pedestrian and bicycle traffic. One respondent recommended flared curb ramp sides be used versus ramp sides with vertical curbs immediately adjacent to the detectable warning surface.

Response: The width of the ramps will be in accordance with VDOT standards, which require ramps to be at least the same width as the sidewalk. The proposed ramps will be ADA-accessible. Curbs will be tapered adjacent to detectable warning surfaces.

CONNECTIVITY OF SIDEWALK:

Three respondents expressed concerns with constructing the sidewalk without further connectivity to the east, or to the W&OD trail to the west. Additionally, concerns were expressed as to whether or not the proposed sidewalk would see any usage.

Response: The scope, including the proposed location, of the project was developed in conjunction with Fairfax County in accordance with the Fairfax County Master Bike/Pedestrian Plan. VDOT will coordinate with Fairfax County to re-study the feasibility of constructing the proposed sidewalk along Idylwood Road. It should be noted that Fairfax County does have future plans to extend the sidewalk further east along Idylwood Road beyond Whitestone Court.

OTHER IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED ALONG IDYLWOOD ROAD:

Two respondents suggested adding a traffic light at the intersection of Idylwood Road and Virginia Lane, along with a suggestion to realign the intersection towards the north for improved sight distance.

Response: VDOT and Fairfax County are evaluating the feasibility of other options for the sidewalk on Idylwood Road. If the proposed project moves forward, VDOT in conjunction with Fairfax County will determine if a traffic light at the Idylwood Road/Virginia Lane intersection is warranted and whether it will be included as part of this project or a subsequent project.

TREE REMOVAL:

Five respondents expressed concerns with potential removal of the trees, shrubs, and other plantings as a result of the sidewalk construction. It was indicated that the plantings currently

provide a level of noise abatement and aesthetic appeal. Questions were asked whether or not VDOT would pay for replacement trees should the project go forward.

Response: VDOT and Fairfax County are evaluating the feasibility of other options for the sidewalk on Idylwood Road; however, if the proposed project moves forward as currently planned, VDOT will study the feasibility of minimizing impacts to the sidewalk and nearby trees, shrubs, and other plantings.

PROPERTY IMPACTS:

Two respondents expressed concerns with private property impacts as a result of the planned sidewalk construction. Suggestions were made to move the sidewalk to the north side, or to provide a 2-foot buffer in lieu of the proposed 4-foot buffer.

Response: VDOT and Fairfax County are evaluating the feasibility of other options for the sidewalk on Idylwood Road; however, if the proposed project moves forward as currently planned, VDOT will study the feasibility of minimizing impacts to the sidewalk on the south side of Idylwood Road.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT:

Two respondents expressed concerns with stormwater management. Gentler grading as opposed to open ditches/pipe outlets in front yards was suggested.

Response: VDOT will study to possibility of modifying the drainage design in order to help minimize disturbance. VDOT will evaluate the feasibility to modify the drainage structure adjacent to Virginia Lane, in order to minimize impacts to the front yard.

SUMMARY OF COMMENTS FOR CHAIN BRIDGE ROAD (ROUTE 123)

MULTI-USE TRAIL AT-GRADE CROSSINGS:

Most respondents realized the need to provide a bicycle/pedestrian connection from the east side of the Beltway to Tyson's Corner on the west side of the Beltway; however, eight respondents expressed concerns with providing multi-use trail at-grade crossings of the Beltway ramps. Grade-separated structures were suggested. If grade-separated structures are not adopted, then flashing signage to warn motorists of upcoming crossings should be installed. Ensure adequate outreach to citizens is conducted to obtain input on issues and alternatives prior to selecting a preferred plan.

Response: VDOT is evaluating the feasibility of grade-separated structures at the Beltway ramp crossings, in coordination with Fairfax County. If at-grade crossings across I-495 are incorporated, sufficient advance warnings for drivers will be integrated. These warnings may include flashing signs, static signs, and/or rumble strips. Additional outreach to the bicycle and local community is planned prior to selecting a preferred plan.

WIDE OUTSIDE LANES ON CHAIN BRIDGE ROAD:

Four respondents expressed non-support for the wide outside lanes on Chain Bridge Road, due to high travel speeds and potential conflicts with merging traffic.

Response: VDOT, in coordination with Fairfax County, has determined they will **not** move forward with the proposed 14-foot outside lanes on Chain Bridge Road, based on comments received.

LIGHTING UNDER I-495 OVERPASS:

One respondent questioned if lighting could be provided for the shared-use path underneath the I-495 overpass.

Response: VDOT will study the need for lighting underneath the I-495 overpass.

FURTHER IMPROVEMENTS:

Two respondents suggested making full trail connections to the Tyson's Corner Center development and Metro station.

Response: The scope, including the location, of the proposed improvements, was developed in conjunction with Fairfax County in accordance to the Fairfax County Master Bike/Pedestrian Plan. As part of the current shared-use path plan, a new pedestrian crossing is proposed across Route 123, just east of the Tysons's Boulevard Intersection. Any other enhancements would need to be coordinated with Fairfax County.