

Public Hearing Comment Summary

I-66 / Route 15 Interchange Reconstruction
From: 0.301 Miles West of US Route 15
To: 0.537 Miles East of US Route 15

State Project - (FO) 0066-076-074, P101, R201, C501, B676, B677, B678, B679, B680
Federal Project – IM-066-1(341); UPC 100566

On March 20, 2013, a Location and Design Public Hearing was held at Battlefield High School, 15000 Graduation Drive, Haymarket, VA 20169, for the referenced road improvement project. Eighty-four citizens signed in on the attendance sheet, 26 written or emailed comments were received, and 10 verbal/phone comments were documented. Following is a summary of those comments.

Do you support the project, Yes or No?

- 15 – Supported project
- 11 – Did not specify (offered suggestions)
- 5 – Did not support full project (supported changed scope)
- 5 – Did not support project

General Design Comments

Ensure safe pedestrian and bike connections (1)

RESPONSE

The proposed design will construct a bike/ pedestrian shared use path (10 ft. wide) on the eastern side of Route 15 across I-66 that will tie to the bike lanes on Route 55 in Haymarket. The proposed design will also improve pedestrian crossing by adding a crosswalk on the eastern side of the Route 15/ Route 55 intersection. This new crosswalk will provide safe crossing from the commercial development on the north side of Route 55 to the commercial development on the south side.

Route 15 should be widened to two lanes in each directions south of Route 55 (6)

RESPONSE

Widening Route 15 to a four lane section south of Route 55 is a Prince William County priority consistent with County's comprehensive plan and the regional constrained long range plan (CLRP). VDOT is developing a planning level cost estimate to be used by the governing bodies should they elect to pursue funding for a potential future project.

The crossing of Route 15 and the CSX tracks should be grade separated (5)

RESPONSE

VDOT is developing a planning level cost estimate for grade separation of Route 15 with Norfolk Southern railroad to be used by the governing bodies should they elect to pursue funding for a potential future project.

The intersection of Route 15 and Heathcote will not support the Hospital (1)

RESPONSE

The design year peak hour traffic projections include the traffic generated by the Hospital at Heathcote. The analysis determined that the proposed design is adequate at this intersection.

The I-66 WB off ramp should not be signalized, as it will not handle the traffic (11)

RESPONSE

A signalized triple left turn and an un-signalized free right turn movement is proposed for the I-66 WB off ramp. An analysis of forecasted peak hour 2036 traffic volumes indicates that the proposed configuration will handle the forecasted demand.

Several other interchange configurations including a partial cloverleaf configuration were evaluated by the study team based on criteria such as traffic operations, environmental and right-of-way impacts, construction cost, and constructability before selecting the Semi-Directional Ramp (SDR) alternative as the preferred design. A citizen information meeting was held on March 22, 2012 at which the alternatives were presented for public input and comment. Comments received from the localities and public supported the SDR alternative.

The I-66 WB off ramp should be built as a Cloverleaf (3)

RESPONSE

Several other interchange configurations including a partial cloverleaf configuration were evaluated by the study team based on criteria such as traffic operations, environmental and right-of-way impacts, construction cost, and constructability before selecting the Semi-Directional Ramp (SDR) alternative as the preferred design. A citizen information meeting was held on March 22, 2012 at which the alternatives were presented for public input and comment. Comments received from the localities and public supported the SDR alternative.

Based on the screening, analysis and evaluation conducted by the study team and public input, the SDR alternative was determined to be the preferred alternative for construction.

The I-66 WB off ramp should ensure that the RT bay is long to ensure the LT queue does not block its access (1)

RESPONSE

Sufficient length has been provided for the right turn bay to ensure that the queues on I-66 WB left turn lanes do not block the right turn lane. The proposed length of the right-turn bay is 750 ft. The predicted queue on the left turn lanes for the design year forecasted PM peak hour traffic demand is about 665 ft.

The plan should consider the traffic from a future VRE station in the vicinity (1)

RESPONSE

Traffic volumes due to the proposed VRE line were considered at a regional level in the Prince William County travel demand model and were included in the analysis. Since the

exact location of the station is not finalized at this time, the impacts could not be analyzed in detail.

The Virginia Rail Express (VRE) completed the “Gainesville-Haymarket Extension study” which identified potential station locations adjacent to the interchange (http://www.vre.org/about/G-H/PDF/Final_AA_Report.pdf). VDOT will continue to coordinate with VRE, Prince William County and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) as the rail extension study moves forward.

The alternative will cause drivers to cut through the Food Lion Parking Lot (1)

RESPONSE

The potential for cut through traffic exists with the existing Route 15/Route 55 intersection and access conditions. The proposed project improves traffic operations at the Route 15/Route 55 intersection which is anticipated to reduce cut-through traffic.

VDOT conducted an access management study in collaboration with the Town of Haymarket and property owners located adjacent to the interchange to develop the proposed access presented in the design.

Due to safety concerns the speed limit on Route 15 should be lowered south of the Rail Road (1)

RESPONSE

Route 15 south of the railroad tracks is outside the project limits.

The project is not necessary due to lack of volume, funds should be moved elsewhere (1)

RESPONSE

Currently during the weekday peak hour conditions, the interchange experiences heavy congestion and delay. During the PM peak hour, queues on the westbound I-66 off-ramp extend onto the west bound I-66 mainline travel lanes and the shoulder lane. During the AM peak hour, queues on southbound Route 15 to EB I-66 extend well beyond the available storage of the left turn bay creating congestion and an unsafe condition. Based on the traffic projections, the daily traffic volumes are expected to increase by approximately 70% in 2036, therefore it was determined that the interchange be reconstructed to accommodate forecasted traffic volumes, reduce congestion, and improve safety.

Property acquisition should not remove people from their homes (1)

RESPONSE

Property acquisition is only proposed for those parcels which will lose complete access to Route 15. Current access locations are not in accordance with VDOT and FHWA criteria and will be unsafe once the interchange is reconstructed. VDOT has minimized property acquisition and relocation to the extent feasible.

There should be a dedicated right-turn lane on Route 15 NB to Route 55 (2)

RESPONSE

A dedicated northbound right-turn lane was considered at Route 55, but ultimately was not included in the design for several reasons. Operational analyses conducted for the Route 15/Route 55 intersection indicate that queues for the northbound through movement would obstruct entry into the right turn lane, substantially reducing the effectiveness of the turn lane. Analyses also revealed that the right turn lane is not needed to achieve acceptable traffic operations for the right turn movement or the intersection as a whole.

The plan takes too much land from the Quarles parking lot and makes its access inconvenient (1)

RESPONSE

Additional land is required to provide sufficient length for the right turning movement from westbound Route 55 to northbound Route 15. The affected property owner will be compensated for the loss of property and parking.

There is no need for the HOV lanes to extend to Route 15 (1)

RESPONSE

The proposed widening of I-66 that includes an HOV lane in each direction is part of a separate project.

The flyover will be underutilized in the PM peak period (1)

RESPONSE

The projected design year peak period demand volumes on the flyover ramp are 1,130 vehicles per hour during the AM peak period and 430 vehicles per hour during the PM peak period. Compared to the AM, the PM peak period demand volumes are low. However, the flyover ramp removes the above traffic volumes from the signalized intersections of the interchange and results in improving traffic operations by lowering queues and delays at these intersections in both the AM and PM peak periods.

A second access point should be added in the vicinity (Cartharpin Road) (2)

RESPONSE

An interchange access ramp at this location cannot be implemented due to proximity of the I-66/Route 29 interchange at Gainesville.