

# Front Royal

## Introduction

The Front Royal 2020 Area Transportation Plan was developed in a joint effort with the Virginia Department of Transportation, the Town of Front Royal, and Warren County. The study area for this plan includes the Town limits and the urbanizing portions of Warren County surrounding the Town. This plan was developed with involvement from local government officials, as well as input from the general public at key milestones in the development of the plan.

## Purpose and Scope of the Study

This study was initiated in response to a joint request from the Town of Front Royal and Warren County for VDOT to update the then-current area transportation plan. The primary two local concerns at project initiation were the desire for an interchange onto I-66 at Route 606 and modification of the future traffic forecasts. It was the responsibility of this study to evaluate transportation needs on arterial and collector roadways, as included in VDOT's functionally classified system.

Continued growth and development in the Front Royal area will result in increased demands on the area's transportation system. This study was initiated to develop a comprehensive set of transportation solutions that will accommodate projected travel demands to the year 2020. The study has reviewed roadway, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian transportation needs and addressed the interaction of the roadway system with truck, rail, and air travel.

## Table of Recommended Improvements

Route Name	Description	Limits	Length (Miles)	Year 2020 ADT	Proposed Typical Section*	Proposed ROW Width (feet)	Remarks	
340/522	Access Management Improvements	Consolidate median crossovers and install traffic signals, where needed	I-66 to Route 661	3.4	-	-	-	Per joint Warren County/VDOT study
340/522	Intersection Improvements	Realign Rockland Road and install traffic signal	At its intersection with Reliance Road	-	-	-	-	
340/522	North Fork Bridge	New 5-lane roadway structure (2 through lanes in each direction plus center turn lane)	Strasburg Road to 0.5 mile south of I-66	0.7	-	U5	-	Project in 6-year plan (completion 2005)
340/522 & 55	Intersection Improvements	Provide exclusive eastbound right-turn lane, southbound right-turn lane, and 2 through travel lanes on 340/522	At its intersection with Strasburg Road (Route 55)	-	-	-	-	Construct as part of the North Fork bridge project
340/522	South Fork Bridge	Widening of bridge to provide 5-lane section plus bike/pedestrian lanes	18 <sup>th</sup> Street to Strasburg Road	0.55	-	U5	-	
340/522	Intersection Improvements	Add 2 <sup>nd</sup> westbound right-turn lane and modify signal timing	At its intersection with 14 <sup>th</sup> Street	-	-	-	-	Consider long-term realignment to straighten out Route 340/522 travel path
340	North Royal Avenue	Add eastbound right-turn lane	At its intersection with 6 <sup>th</sup> Street	-	-	-	-	
522	Commerce Avenue	Add westbound left-turn lane	At its intersection with 6 <sup>th</sup> Street	-	-	-	-	
522	Commerce Avenue	Add northbound left-turn lane	At its intersections with 2 <sup>nd</sup> and 3 <sup>rd</sup> Streets	-	-	-	-	
55	Route 55 Widening	Widen Route 55 to a four-lane, divided roadway	Commerce Avenue to ECL Front Royal	1.8	-	U4D	110	Subject to further study
55	Route 55 Widening	Widen Route 55 to a four-lane, divided roadway	ECL Front Royal to Route 79	4.0	-	R4D	110	Subject to further study
55	Intersection Reconstruction	Realign intersection and install traffic signal.	At its intersection with Dismal Hollow Road	-	-	-	-	Improve intersection spacing - subject to further study.
79	Intersection Improvements	Lengthen southbound right-turn lane	At its intersection with Route 55	-	-	-	-	
I-66	Ramp Improvements	Construct westbound to southbound loop off-ramp	At its intersection with Route 79	-	6,500	-	-	Short-term improvement - change stop sign priority at ramp junction
647	Happy Creek Road	Widen Happy Creek Road and realign the Happy Creek Road/6 <sup>th</sup> Street intersection	6 <sup>th</sup> Street to Route 606	2.0	-	R2	-	Project in 6-year plan
	Western Bypass	Potential new two-lane roadway	Route 619 to Route 55	3.0	4,500	R2	60	Subject to further study
	New Local Connector Roadway	Potential new two-lane local road	Kerfoot Avenue to Massanutten Avenue	0.55	1,500	U2	60	New local street to provide alternative to Royal Avenue. Subject to further study
	Leach Run Parkway	Potential new four-lane, divided roadway	Route 55 to Route 606	1.8	5,000	U4D	110	Near-term improvement – construct Happy Creek Road interchange to eliminate at-grade RR crossing
I-66	Potential New Interchange	Construct a diamond interchange to connect with an improved Route 606	At the existing Route 606 overpass	-	-	-	-	Subject to FHWA interchange justification criteria

\*R2 - Rural two-lane roadway with standard shoulders and ditches.  
 U2 - Urban two-lane roadway with curb and gutter, with sidewalks on one or both sides of the street.  
 R4D - Rural four-lane divided highway with grass median, standard Shoulders, and ditches and protected turn lanes at crossovers.  
 U4D - Urban four-lane divided highway with raised median, curb and gutter, sidewalks, and protected left turns at selected intersections.  
 U5 - Urban five-lane, undivided roadway with center left-turn lane, curb and gutter, and sidewalks.

This transportation plan included the integration of existing and proposed transportation facilities, coordination of and consistency with land use plans adopted by the involved jurisdictions, identification of transportation deficiencies and needs, and recommendations to satisfy these deficiencies and needs. It is hoped that this study will assist local officials in planning for future transportation needs in the Front Royal area and lead to local actions to implement many of the recommendations included in this study.

## Recommended Roadway Improvements

The existing arterial and collector roadway system in the Front Royal study area does not have sufficient capacity to accommodate area travel demands in the year 2020. To address existing and future deficiencies, a range of potential improvements was developed for improving the quality and safety of traffic operations. These recommended improvements included capacity improvements to existing facilities, the reconstruction of existing facilities, and the construction of new facilities on new location. The roadway improvements recommended for the Front Royal area include:

1. Widening existing facilities;
2. Construction of new facilities; and
3. Modification of geometry and traffic control at key intersections.

The recommended improvements are shown on the map on the reverse side of this document. More detailed information on the recommendations is included in the Table of Recommended Improvements and in the technical report. It is important to note that not all of these improvements are necessary to address future 2020 transportation needs. The recommendations are presented in this study to identify potential solutions for consideration by the localities.

## Other Modes of Transportation

**Transit:** The Town of Front Royal currently has no transit service. Relatively low population densities in the study area even by 2020 would not result in economically viable transit service.

**Ridesharing:** Two park and ride facilities are located in the Front Royal urban area. A 262-space park and ride parking lot is located in Warren County on Route 340/522 just south of the Interstate 66 interchange. This lot is used for ridesharing and is also served by a private charter bus company. A smaller 130-space parking lot is located in the Linden area of Warren County on Dismal Hollow Road near its intersection with Route 55. This lot is more remote and less utilized than the Route 340/522 facility and has been prioritized for safety-related improvements to increase usage. The Lord Fairfax Planning District Commission operates the TRIPS Rideshare program within the Northern Shenandoah Valley region. This is a carpool matching service for trips into Northern Virginia and the Washington D.C. region.

**Bicycle Facilities:** The Town of Front Royal currently has a bicycle and trails plan. The incorporation of bicycle-friendly accommodations within transportation and utility improvements in both Front Royal and Warren County are recommended.

**Pedestrian Facilities:** Sidewalks are provided within downtown Front Royal on most arterial, collector, and local roadways. The extension and improvement to this sidewalk network should be considered when local roadway improvements and new local roadway connections are constructed.

**Truck, Rail, and Air Transportation:** The study roadway improvement recommendations will increase access and safety for goods movement by truck on the roadway system and will provide improved access and safety between the roadway system and regional rail,

interstate bus, and airport facilities. Many of the recommended improvements address current truck access needs and minimizes interactions with the anticipated increase in rail traffic on the Norfolk Southern railroad lines through this region.

**Rail/Vehicular Conflicts:** With the anticipated increase in rail service by the Norfolk Southern railroad, there is a need to consider the elimination of at-grade rail crossings with major circulation roadways within the region to help reduce the impact of increased rail service on local traffic patterns.

## Citizen Participation

An Advisory Committee was formed for this study. This committee was formed with representatives from the Town of Front Royal Planning Department, the Town of Front Royal Planning Commission, the Warren County Planning Department, the Warren County Planning Commission, the Front Royal-Warren County Economic Development Authority, VDOT's Luray Residency, and VDOT's Transportation Planning Division. The Advisory Committee was an important mechanism for local issue identification, for information exchange, and to bring local interests together to reach consensus. Four advisory committee meetings were held at major project milestones and provided the forum for direct local input. A public information meeting on the draft plan was held in order to solicit citizen comments.

## Local Government Actions

The Warren County Board of Supervisors approved the transportation plan by resolution on February 15, 2000. The Front Royal Town Council approved the transportation plan by resolution on February 28, 2000 with the following amendments:

- Add provision for bike lanes to the local connector road between Kerfoot and Massanutten Avenues. Note that a significant benefit of the local connector road is to accommodate future needs related to the redevelopment of the Avtex site.
- Re-evaluate options for the intersection of Commerce Avenue and North Royal Avenue to improve the flow of traffic between Commerce Avenue and the northern part of N. Royal Avenue.
- Incorporate an additional left turn lane at the following intersections to improve traffic flows through the intersections:
  - Southbound Commerce Avenue to eastbound John Marshall Highway
  - Northbound Remount Road (Route 522) onto westbound Criser Road
- Separate the Happy Creek Road overpass as an independent project from the Leach Run Parkway project.
- Include the complete realignment of the W. 14<sup>th</sup> Street/n. Shenandoah Avenue intersection as described in the technical report, deleting the short term improvement of two right hand turn lanes.

## Additional Information

More details on the development of the Front Royal 2020 Area Transportation Study and the study recommendations are included in the Front Royal Area Transportation Study Technical Report. This document is available in local government offices. It is also available in the Virginia Department of Transportation's Luray Residency and the Transportation Planning Division in Richmond, Virginia.

*This report is prepared in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and the Virginia Department of Transportation. The contents of this report reflect the views of the consultant who is responsible for the facts and the accuracy of the data presented herein. The contents do not necessarily reflect the official views or policies of the Federal Highway Administration or the Virginia Department of Transportation. This report does not constitute a standard, specification or regulation.*