

Coalition for Smarter Growth, Piedmont Environmental Council, Southern Environmental Law Center, National Parks Conservation Association, and National Trust for Historic Preservation

UPDATED COMPOSITE ALTERNATIVE

January 7, 2013

Expanded List of Components of a Composite Set of Transportation Solutions for the Tri-County Parkway and Manassas Battlefield Bypass

At the Section 106 Consulting Parties meetings, Virginia Department of Transportation officials have asked for more details on the north-south components of a "low build" or "composite" alternative to the VDOT proposal for the Tri-County/Bi-County Parkway. The following includes additional local north-south connections, reorganization of the recommendations, and recommendations for alternative growth estimates, land use and other factors that should be included.

The traffic modeling and associated land use forecasting for this alternative should not assume the construction of any of the major new north-south highways in this area that are currently components of local Comprehensive Plans and/or state plans that are called the Tri-County Parkway, the Bi-County Parkway, the 234 Bypass Extension, the N-S Corridor of Statewide Significance or other named road co-located with this facility.

Our alternative is designed to address the much greater need for east-west commuter movement and to provide for dispersed, local north-south movement for current and future traffic. Access to Dulles is provided by the completion of upgrades to Route 28 from I-66 north, improvements to the I-66 corridor, and upgrades to the Route 234/Route 28 connection and Route 28 on the east side of the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park. The composite set of connections is designed to improve traffic movement throughout the area, benefitting more travelers and trip types than would the single large north-south highway proposal.

Note: We assume closure of Routes 29 and Route 234 within the boundaries of Manassas National Battlefield Park.

East-West:

- Co-location of Route 29 onto Interstate 66
- Focus on I-66 corridor upgrades including extension of VRE to Gainesville and Haymarket, Metrorail to Centreville, and express bus/HOV-3 between Fauquier and Arlington
- Complete the Gainesville Interchange in order to allow traffic to flow more smoothly to and from I-66
- Upgrade the existing east-west road at the southern boundary of the Battlefield between the Park Headquarters and Groveton Road if necessary for local movement

- For the Route 50 corridor -- install dedicated bus lane and complete proposed parallel roads (maintain the undivided two lane rural arterial west of the proposed Lenah Loop Road)
- Use the Route 50 northern parallel connector as a truck connector from Route 28 to Route 606, providing access to future Dulles Airport facilities
- Utilize the east-west local connector known as Cedar Ridge Boulevard to connect to an upgraded Bull Run Post Office Road

North-South:

- Finish the Route 28 interchanges between I-66 and Route 7 and improve the connection from I-66 east to Route 28 north to improve access from the I-66 corridor to the major job concentrations east of Dulles Airport
- Provide a bus rapid transit or light rail connection from the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park up to the Dulles Corridor along Route 28
- Recognize the existing upgrade of Route 15 in Prince William and install roundabouts at Route 15 and Route 234 (Sudley Road)
- Utilize roundabouts to ease the flow of N-S traffic in the Gum Springs/Pageland Road N-S corridors, with roundabouts located at Route 659 (Gum Springs Road) and Route 234 (Sudley Road); at Sudley Road and Pageland Lane; and at Pageland Lane and Route 29.
- Do targeted upgrades for safety and install roundabouts where necessary for Catharpin Road, Bull Run Post Office Road and Pleasant Valley Road. Roundabout locations include Catharpin and Sudley Rd; Bull Run Post Office Road and Route 29; Bull Run Post Office Road and Braddock Road; Pleasant Valley Road and Braddock Road.
- In Loudoun, between Braddock Road and Route 50, implement N-S connections for local traffic; and between Route 50 and Route 7, complete upgrade of Route 606 and Route 659 to four-lane divided roadways

Improving Area Traffic Flow South of I-66

- Evaluate additional road connection improvements south of I-66 including Wellington Road, Balls Ford Road, Sudley Manor Drive and Godwin Drive (Godwin would also meet north-south movement needs and was part of one of the TCP alternatives -- use Mr. Robert Moler's connection recommendation for connecting to Route 28 and I-66)
- Install Route 234 to Route 28 interconnection improvements and Route 28 upgrades on the east side of the Cities of Manassas and Manassas Park up to I-66

Growth Projections, Land Use and other Factors:

- Recognize and address the significantly greater east-west travel demand as compared to north-south movement in the area west of Route 28 in the I-66 and Route 50 corridors
- Incorporate the more likely scenario that the vast majority of job attractors will remain east of Route 28

- Assume that the Rural Crescent north of I-66 and in the Loudoun Transition Policy Area south of Braddock and west of Route 659 are maintained at their current lower densities and that land conservation measures are utilized to preserve significant tracts of land in each area, ensuring that these areas do not add more traffic.
- In developing an alternative growth projection, discard the Round 8.0 regional forecasts.
 - The regional forecasts allocate growth to each jurisdiction based on underlying comprehensive plans and zoning and also tend to be based on past trends, and not on the significant shifts the region and the nation are seeing in demographics, the real estate market, and energy prices.
 - Federal government downsizing, the aging population, the preference of "millennials" for urban living, the shift from ownership to rental, increase in transit-oriented centers in the region, and higher energy prices should all be factored in, and are likely to show slower growth rates and a smaller increment of growth than the Round 8.0 regional forecasts for Loudoun and Prince William.
- Base projections on a true no-build scenario for the MBB and Tri-County/Bi-County/234 Bypass Extended/N-S Corridor.
 - Do not base the growth and traffic projections on the assumption that the Tri-County/Bi-County Parkway and Manassas Battlefield Bypass are in place.
 - Recognize that by not including the proposed highway, which would attract new long-distance vehicle trips including more truck travel to Dulles Airport, new travel demand in the area would be less under the composite scenario than with the proposed new highway.
- Recognize that local residents north of the Battlefield will have access to alternate shopping outlets, not requiring driving south through the Battlefield to Manassas. Those future locations include Loudoun's Route 50 Corridor, Gainesville, and Haymarket
- Target local road and safety improvements to cost-effectively reduce incidents in the high accident sections;
- Include Transportation Systems Management (TSM)