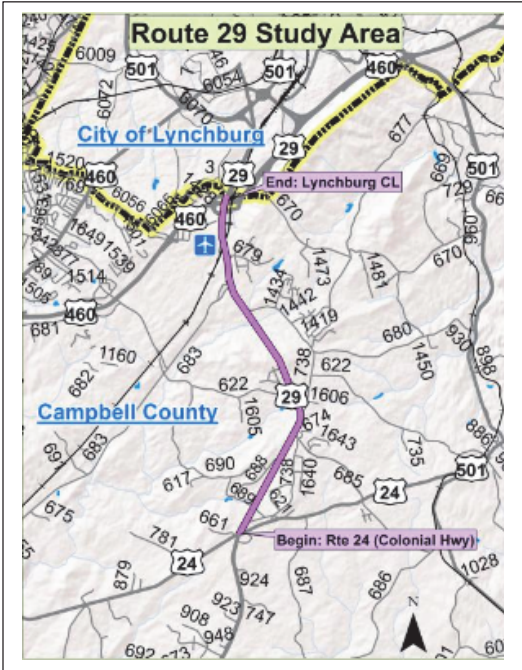


# Campbell County – Route 29 Corridor Planning Effort Findings Report

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### Overview

Campbell County, Virginia Department of Transportation Lynchburg District (VDOT), and the Central Virginia Metropolitan Planning Organization (CVMPO) are partnering to identify transportation improvements on US Route 29 from the Lynchburg city limit to Colonial Highway (Route 24). The goal is to use a community-based approach to develop recommendations for corridor improvements that:

- Enhance safety;
- Provide local access for current and future businesses and residents; and
- Support traffic flow through this part of Route 29.

The planning effort seeks input and ideas from property owners along this particular section of the Route 29 Corridor (Lynchburg city limits – Colonial Highway) and from neighboring users of the Corridor. This community-based approach involves the following elements: a series of public workshops, one-on-one conversations, a project website and user-friendly documents that describe the process and ideas that are generated.

The material in the summary was obtained from presentations and comments from the first public workshop and subsequent conversations with key community organizations and businesses. The information is organized around three areas:

- Background
- Community Input: General Comments
- Community Input: Segment-by-Segment Comments.

The findings will be used by project partners in working with the technical consultant (AECOM) to identify and further refine transportation improvement options for the Route 29 Corridor.

### Major Themes

There is a shared awareness that continued growth in the area contributes to increased traffic associated with residential, commercial and commuter travel. Community concerns about travelling the Route 29 Corridor emphasized safety, economic development and traffic flow – which are seen as inter-related. General comments about these three aspects are found in the second section of the summary, while additional details about specific locations of the corridor are described in the third section. Community members noted that while traffic conditions are not as bad as those in northern Virginia and larger cities, the hope is that traffic management strategies can improve or maintain travel times and safety into the future.

This document and other information about the Campbell County – Route 29 Planning Effort are on the project website at: [http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/lynchburg/route\\_29\\_\\_corridor.asp](http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/lynchburg/route_29__corridor.asp)

## BACKGROUND

This Findings Summary reflects a synthesis of information provided by: key project partners, comments received during the January 28, 2016 public workshop, and follow-up conversations with representatives of 16 community entities (businesses, organizations, and local agencies).

### Introduction

Campbell County, Virginia Department of Transportation Lynchburg District (VDOT), and the Central Virginia Metropolitan Planning Organization (CVMPO) are partnering to identify transportation improvements on US Route 29 from the Lynchburg city limit to Colonial Highway (Route 24). The goal is to develop recommendations for corridor improvements that will:

- Enhance safety;
- Provide local access for current and future businesses and residents; and
- Support traffic flow through this part of Route 29.

The project partners (Campbell County, VDOT, CVMPO) adopted a community-based approach for developing the Route 29 recommendations. Key features of this approach include local outreach, public workshops, and conversations with community and business leaders. This document summarizes the ideas and perspectives obtained from the public workshop, conducted on January 28, 2016, and 16 interviews with local leaders and representatives of key stakeholder groups which were conducted in March 2016.

The input received is summarized here and will be used by the technical consultant (AECOM) to identify possible transportation improvement options for the corridor. The initial list of options will be created by reviewing a number of existing studies and informed by the community ideas and perspectives described here. As work progresses, a second public workshop will be scheduled to share new information and receive additional feedback.

## Current Conditions

### Route 29 Corridor

The focus of this planning effort is on the Route 29 corridor, between Lynchburg city limit and Route 24. This corridor is a four-lane divided roadway, which extends for 6.6 miles and contains a mix of land uses:

- businesses located directly on Route 29;
- churches located directly on Route 29;
- residences and neighborhoods, usually located on side roads that connect to Route 29;
- industrial operations located on side roads that connect to Route 29; and
- the northern end of the corridor provides access to the back of Liberty University via Liberty Mountain Drive (Route 1405).

The mix of uses along the corridor is reflected in the mix of vehicles travelling the corridor, from personal vehicles to heavy trucks. Traffic originates from within and outside of the corridor. Local commuters travel between Lynchburg and outlying areas such as Altavista and Brookneal, while heavy trucks transport raw materials, products and waste materials between these same areas. This part of Route 29 also serves as a conduit for tourists, business travelers and over-the-road freight transport.

### *Speed Limits*

The Route 29 posted speed limit between Lynchburg city limit and English Tavern (northern connection) is 45 mph. Between English Tavern (northern connection) and Route 24, the speed limit is 60 mph.

### *Traffic Controls*

Six intersections are controlled by traffic signals (listed in order of north to south):

- Terminal Drive/Liberty Mountain Drive;
- FNB Drive/Russell Woods Drive;
- Lawyers Road;
- English Tavern (northern connection);
- Calohan Road; and
- Route 24 – Colonial Highway.

### *Median Crossings*

In addition to the six intersections controlled by traffic lights, there are currently 28 median crossings that provide opportunities to access side roads and local properties or to make a U-turn. Most, but not all, of the median crossings have a left-hand deceleration (decel) lane.

### *Corridor of Statewide Significance (CoSS)*

This 6.6-mile segment is part of the larger north-south Seminole Corridor through Virginia, designated as a Corridor of Statewide Significance (CoSS). A CoSS contains multiple transportation elements – such as highways, rail, air, transit – which are generally referred to as multi-modal elements. In this part of the corridor, the multi-modal element include:

- Route 29;
- Rail lines owned and operated by Norfolk Southern Railway Company;
- Lynchburg Regional Airport facilities owned and operated by the City of Lynchburg; and
- Transit service provided by Greater Lynchburg Transit Company (GLTC).

## **Alternative Transportation: Transit and Ride Sharing**

### *Transit*

Currently, Greater Lynchburg Transit Company (GLTC) buses predominately serve the City of Lynchburg. Liberty University purchases large numbers of monthly passes and is strongly involved in identifying routes to serve the University. Beyond the city limits, there is some service to urbanized areas in Amherst County. The southernmost GLTC service is to Lynchburg Regional Airport, located in the northern portion of Campbell County – on the northern end of the Route 29 corridor addressed by the planning effort.

GLTC has a unique organizational structure, where it is not a direct division of the City of Lynchburg. It is an entity of the city, with its own Board – whose members are appointed by the City Council. This allows GLTC to have conversations directly with neighboring counties, rather than having the City of Lynchburg convene those meetings.

### *Regional Transit Concepts*

Currently, GLTC is establishing an exploratory committee to determine the level of interest in regional connectivity. If there is interest, GLTC will engage community leaders in discussing potential options for regional service, which will be driven by funding. Within Campbell County, there could be routes between Lynchburg and Altavista (which runs its own transit system) providing express service – or a commuter route with some intermediate stops. Local stops could include future RIDE Solution parking lots. The timeframe for regional service might be three to six years down the road. There could be inter-city connections using that corridor to Altavista, which might help with congestion.

### *Region 2000's RIDE Solutions Program*

RIDE Solutions is a relatively new program of the local Planning District Commission (Region 2000), through their Local Government Council. The program provides information to regional commuters and employers about carpooling and other forms of alternative transportation. Outreach efforts have extended across the region to communities such as Roanoke, Blacksburg, Martinsville and Altavista. Interest in carpooling options typically increases as fuel costs rise. With the currently low fuel prices, the program is focusing on creating a network of contacts and a foundation of information that can move forward as demand for transportation alternatives increases.

### **Local Economic Activities and Development: Corridor Implications**

Route 29 is the growth corridor for Campbell County, as infrastructure is not in place to support expansion along Route 460. Over the past few years, three new hotels have opened near Liberty Mountain Drive. A Chili's restaurant is currently being constructed in a lot adjacent to the hotels, and ground has been broken for a Wendy's restaurant north of the intersection for FNB Drive/Russell Woods. Among those who provided comments on the planning effort, there is general agreement that as build-out occurs near the northern end of the corridor, development will continue to move south.

East of Route 29 and north of Russell Woods Road, Liberty University owns about 400 to 500 acres of land. The property was previously rezoned for commercial activity, but plans for commercial development fell through. It is likely that new development plans will be formulated, with groundwork initiated sometime during the next five to ten years. Liberty University routinely meets with Campbell County, VDOT and the City of Lynchburg to discuss transportation aspects associated with the University's activities and future plans.

Similarly, past and recent efforts between the city and the county have considered options for an industrial airport at the Lynchburg Regional Airport. The airport owns about 200 acres of land that is not usable for aeronautical purposes. Campbell County owns another 100 adjoining acres. If planning does not move forward with a specific proposal, Campbell County might consider selling the property.

In addition to new economic development, existing businesses are reporting growth in their activities. For example:

- Banker Steel added on 40 employees over the past eight months. At their two locations (Rangoon Road and Wythe Road), they now have 120 employees covering two shifts: from 6 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. and again from 4:40 p.m. until 6:30 a.m.
- Boxley Materials on Lawyers Road employs about 250 people and has an average of 250-300 trucks (5-axle dump trucks) coming in each day, with peak days reaching 500 trucks. They are

seeing levels of 7% annual growth. It is anticipated that the Lawyers Road quarry will be depleted in about 15 to 20 years, at which time Boxley will shift to a quarry location on Route 24.

### Regional Economic Activities and Development – Corridor Implications

Other Campbell County businesses, outside of the planning effort boundaries, rely on Route 29 for meeting essential business needs: employee commutes, customer visits, and movement of products, materials and waste. Examples include:

- Commuter travel, where employees in outlying areas are working in Lynchburg – or conversely, where Lynchburg residents are traveling to jobs in southern portions of the county.
- Moore’s Electric continues to experience ongoing growth with 250 employees and a fleet of approximately 150 small service trucks going out daily from its headquarters in Altavista.
- Foster Fuels, in Brookneal, currently has 125 employees. On a daily basis, approximately 15 delivery trucks and 5 smaller services trucks making multiple trips. The company is experiencing about 10% annual growth.
- Brookneal Chips anticipates a 10% increase over the next five years from its current level of 200 weekly round-trip truck (tractor-trailer) deliveries from Brookneal to Georgia-Pacific, located northwest of Lynchburg.
- Currently, GLTC services extend to the airport located in the northern portion of the corridor. There is also interest in exploring options for GLTC to Altavista.
- Continued use of the Regional Landfill, off Calohan Road, which currently receives about 200-300 trucks each week day.

### Planning Context

#### Campbell County Comprehensive Plan (Comprehensive Plan)

Local governments are required to review their comprehensive plans every five years. Campbell County reviewed and approved its Comprehensive Plan in 2014, covering a planning timeframe of 2014-2029. Previously, the document URL was: [www.co.campbell.va.us/Pages/comprehensiveplan.aspx](http://www.co.campbell.va.us/Pages/comprehensiveplan.aspx). The new URL is [www.co.campbell.va.us/166/Comprehensive-Plan](http://www.co.campbell.va.us/166/Comprehensive-Plan). Three chapters of the comprehensive plan inform the Campbell County – Route 29 Corridor planning effort:

- Chapter 4, Land Use
- Chapter 5, Economic Development
- Chapter 9, Transportation Systems and Facilities

The Comprehensive Plan explains relationships between these three components in the following manner:

Development and land use patterns directly influence the demand on transportation systems and facilities. As communities expand, the need for improved transportation services grows. Likewise, an effective and efficient transportation system encourages community growth. The primary purpose of all transportation systems is to provide an unimpeded flow of people, goods and services to and from all areas. (Ch. 9, p. 1)



Transportation, land use and economic development decisions are guided by goals contained in the Comprehensive Plan, which include:

- Promote a safe, effective and environmentally sound transportation system throughout Campbell County.
- Promote a transportation system compatible with existing and future planned land uses.
- Encourage orderly, efficient and environmentally appropriate land use patterns for Campbell County.
- Support existing industry expansion, the retention of existing businesses, the location of new industry within the County, and entrepreneurial activity.
- Promote policies and practices that will support local economic development. [Note: This includes maintenance and improvement of efficient transportation systems.]

Land use along the Route 29 Corridor, from Lynchburg city limits to Route 24, is zoned as Medium to High Density Commercial.

### **Funding Mechanisms**

A number of different funding sources are available for transportation improvement in Virginia. These vary according to the nature of a proposed project and the requirements associated with different funding programs. For the corridor planning effort, recommendations for improvements will include a listing of potential funding options and a description of the data necessary to develop a competitive funding application. Funding packages can be quite complex and involve a number of different funding sources. In this particular effort, funds could be sought through:

- The prioritization process established by House Bill 2 (HB2), which ranks transportation projects submitted by local governments;
- The Transportation Alternatives Program (for pedestrian and bicycle access improvements);
- The Highway Safety Improvement Program (to address key safety issues);
- The State of Good Repair Program (for maintenance and repairs); and
- The Revenue Sharing Program (where VDOT and the localities share project costs).

### **Project Updates and Communications**

Many people are interested in the planning effort but don't have the time to track the latest developments. The planning partners were encouraged to continue developing summaries on the current status of the effort and upcoming meetings. In addition to the mailings to Route 29 Corridor property owners and the postings to the website, other as-needed communication could include a variety of approaches, such as: briefings, webinars, updates at other meetings, and targeted emails which could leverage other existing email lists.

### **Transportation Planning Partners**

The Comprehensive Plan denotes that: "The Campbell County Board of Supervisors works with the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and other regional organizations to prioritize projects and make recommendations for all transportation needs." (Ch. 9, p. 1)

- The area of Route 29 addressed by the planning effort is served by the local VDOT office, the Lynchburg Construction District.

## Campbell County – Route 29 Corridor Planning Effort: Findings Summary

- Within the greater urbanized area around Lynchburg, CVMPO is the lead agency for long-range transportation planning and the transportation improvement and planning work programs. The CFVMPO is a function of Region 2000, a Local Government Council that provides services for Local Planning District #11 which includes Campbell County.

Campbell County, CVMPO and VDOT Lynchburg District work closely on transportation studies and projects. Locally, there is a network of formal and informal relationships among city, county and CVMPO staff. Additionally, the work of the CVMPO is informed by the Transportation Technical Committee, which is comprised of planning and engineering staff from government agencies as well as representatives of other interests.

Liberty University meets regularly with the Campbell County Administrator and the Director of the Economic Development Department. The University also works with the local VDOT district to discuss transportation concepts. Once concepts are moving forward, regular meetings would occur with both Campbell County and VDOT through to designs standards.

### **Project Support**

For this planning effort, additional support is provided by:

- AECOM, an engineering firm, for technical support including a review of past studies to:
  - identify possible options for transportation improvement within the corridor;
  - explain tradeoffs between the different options; and
  - develop recommendations for a preferred package of transportation improvements; which incorporate community ideas and comments.
- IEN, a program with the University of Virginia, for assisting with community input through:
  - facilitation of public workshops;
  - one-on-one interviews and conversations with stakeholders groups and business and community leaders; and
  - documenting public input, perspectives and suggestions.
- Virginia Transportation Research Council, for overall planning approach and funding support through:
  - incorporation of planning concepts and approaches from PlanWorks, a transportation decision support tool;
  - coordination with the Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) and the Strategic Highways Research Program (SHRP 2) for planning deliverables and funding; and
  - overall planning.

## COMMUNITY PERSPECTIVES AND IDEAS FOR THE ROUTE 29 CORRIDOR

This section summarizes ideas and perspectives received during the January 28, 2016 public workshop as well as follow-up interviews with 16 key stakeholder groups. No priority is associated with the order in which topics or comments are listed.

### Planning and Funding

#### Planning

Generally, there is a sense among community members that planning decisions are made on a case-by-case basis for zoning and permitting requests. Several community members emphasized the need for longer-term, comprehensive planning to better inform land use, economic development and transportation decisions. Each planning element needs to anticipate future development and changes in the other elements. Community members observed that while agencies and staff are doing a good job trying to address this, agencies face staffing and funding constraints. Often, decisions are made by looking at the minimum improvements needed to get by for the moment – which will not help attract business. An inclusive and comprehensive approach can maximize and leverage current resources, while anticipating future needs and opportunities. For example, stakeholders mentioned several ways that local planning could anticipate future transportation needs:

- Access or service roads can be incorporated into economic development proposals.
- Transportation improvements may be able to factor in locations for bus curb pullouts.
- Projects can be evaluated in terms of unintended consequences – for example, ensuring that new construction near the airport will not interfere with airspace.

Route 360, from Amelia to Richmond, was mentioned as a successful transportation project. In that location, the preferred option was to add travel lanes. In another location, the preferred option may focus on access management. Long-term transportation infrastructure projects can take decades to move from the concept state to final implementation as they are high-cost investments. The goal is to find the right balance between meeting more immediate local revenue and transportation needs, while not precluding longer-term options and investments. One stakeholder emphasized the need to develop incentives that could financially reward localities for supporting regional efforts. The ability to share revenue across jurisdictions would reshape the approach to planning for local and regional growth.

#### Funding

There is a sense in the community that funding for the VDOT Lynchburg district is low. Prior to HB2, this area seemed to be a low priority for road construction, maintenance and paving. The current VDOT Lynchburg district allocation, while the largest in years, is still small. There is also a sense of inequity in how funding is distributed across the state.

### Key Themes

General community concerns regarding traveling the corridor revolved around:

- Safety
- Economic Development
- Traffic Flow

However, participants noted that these three aspects are inter-related and cannot be cleanly separated. Numerous examples were given of the interconnection between these three key concerns.

- Traffic flow itself can create a safety issue:
  - A steady stream of vehicles makes it difficult to negotiate turns and increases risks for roadwork crews.
  - Many times a vehicle must stop before it turns into high-speed traffic, with only a short amount of time and distance to come up to speed.
  - Increased congestion increases the risk of accidents with lane changes.

One firm has adopted a company policy that trucks don't change lanes. Northbound on 29, the trucks travel in the right lane at all times – since they will exit 29 via a right-hand turn. Southbound, they travel in the left lane – since they will exit 29 via a left-turn at a signalized intersection.

- Economic development can adversely affect traffic flow through unintended consequences through indirect and cumulative impacts: i.e., secondary (induced) growth or development that would not have otherwise occurred without the initial project.

An example of induced growth would be the creation of a new access road for one business, where the new access road attracts future businesses. While the additional growth was *foreseeable*, the exact nature of the development was not *known*. One possible cumulative effect of the economic development projects might be that combined business-related traffic exceeds the capacity of the original design, resulting in new congestion.

- Roadwork can affect both safety and traffic flow. Some community members noted that the worst congestion occurred when road construction on Route 29 reduced traffic down to one lane during business hours. It was suggested that roadwork occur during the evening, or at night, taking workers out of harm's way and reducing traffic congestion.
- Safety issues are compounded by congestion, distracted drivers and trucks carrying hazardous materials. Additionally, truck drivers must adjust for:
  - a wider turning radius;
  - longer distances for acceleration and deceleration; and
  - blind spots where it is difficult to see other vehicles.
- Traffic congestion was reported as typical for the area between Lynchburg city limit to just south of Russell Woods Drive. During the morning rush hour, northbound traffic congestion starts at English Tavern (northern connection). While many people commented on traffic congestion, several noted that the problem here is not nearly as great as in Charlottesville and northern Virginia communities that are closer to D.C. That said, community members here do not want to see traffic conditions deteriorate further where this part of the Route 29 corridor begins to resemble traffic congestion found elsewhere.

## Transportation Management Improvements

### Speed Limits

There was a suggestion to reduce the Route 29 speed limit to 35 mph from Lynchburg city limits to Lawyers Road (Route 683).

### Traffic Lights

Overall, people repeatedly emphasized the need to minimize the presence of traffic lights since these act to stop the flow of traffic. However, people also recognized the need to provide breaks in traffic to allow vehicles to safely turn onto or across lanes of traffic – and the role of traffic lights providing protected access.

- It was noted that truck traffic affects the timing of traffic lights. With slower acceleration times, trucks can choke off the possible flow of traffic that might otherwise be obtained from timed lights. A truck may accelerate and get up to speed only to reach the next light as it turns red.
- One community member suggested that, if traffic lights are needed, a jug-handle design be used to help reduce the delays associated with left-turn arrows at signalized intersections (by reconfiguring how the change in travel direction occurs).
- Several participants remarked that yellow flashing left-turn arrows help with congestion. The planning partners were encouraged to evaluate this option for addition signals.

### *Intersection/Median Crossing Configuration*

Most of the intersections and median crossings on this part of Route 29 are not designed for heavy truck traffic. The center median needs to be opened up, as current intersection configurations do not accommodate the turning radius of trucks. Subsequently, trucks are not able to stay in one lane when turning – they intrude into the adjoining lane and/or ride over curbs and gutters. It was noted that the only median crossing designed for trucks is located near Powell's Truck and Equipment.

### *Access/Service Roads and Overpasses*

There is community interest in better understanding how access roads work and whether they help:

- reduce traffic lights;
- improve traffic flow; and/or
- increase local access.

Responses underscored that access roads need to be user-friendly, with an easy-on/easy-off flow. Longer-term, comprehensive planning can help identify where future growth may occur – and incorporate space requirements for access roads as new properties are developed. Specifically, potential access road locations should be looked at now for the less developed areas, on both sides of Route 29, beginning at Baker Road and to the south. Access roads need to be installed before areas are developed.

- Simons Run was mentioned as a good example of an access road, connecting Leesville Road and Wards Ferry Road.

There was a suggestion that big box developers be required to put in service roads or overpasses as part of their project, an approach which has been used in the Richmond area and in North Carolina.

#### *Deceleration (decel)/Turning Lanes*

Most median crossings, and controlled intersections, have left-hand decel/turn lanes. These are seen as definitely helping with the flow of traffic, although some may need to be lengthened as there is not enough storage and cars can still back up into the left hand travel lane.

Conversely, there are only a few right-hand decel/turn lanes along the corridor, including controlled intersections. There is also an absence of shoulders along this part of Route 29. Subsequently, drivers who are making right-hand turns off of Route 29 must slow significantly in the right travel lane to prepare for the turn. Alternately, drivers making right-hand turns onto Route 29 from a side road or from driveways do not have a shoulder or acceleration lane to come up to traffic speed. As these drivers come onto Route 29, they represent significantly slower traffic in the right travel lane. This condition also occurs as drivers complete left-turns from median crossings.

There was a suggestion that as new construction occurs, especially where turns will be occurring into new driveways or access roads, there should be space allocated for turn lanes.

#### *Number of Travel Lanes*

While two suggestions were made to consider adding another travel lane on Route 29, another participant suggested that widening of the corridor would only provide temporary relief – since future development would again increase traffic levels and congestion would reappear.

#### *Bypass*

Many are hopeful that the 29 Bypass will eventually extend further south, connecting at Colonial Highway or beyond. There is an understanding that costs precluded that option during bypass construction and remains cost-prohibitive at this time. One question was raised as to whether a bypass would negatively impact local businesses. Conversely, that is the thought that local businesses have a largely local customer base and may not be significantly impacted by a bypass.

Some have suggested creating a substitute bypass by using existing roads, perhaps with some new connector segments, to help redirect through-traffic around Route 29. For example:

- Take English Tavern to either Sunnymead Road or Suburban Road to reach 501.
- Connect Russell Woods Drive Chandlers Mountain, perhaps through Tavern Grove Lane.

## COMMUNITY INPUT: SEGMENT-BY-SEGMENT COMMENTS ON THE ROUTE 29 CORRIDOR

The following community ideas and suggestions are numbered (by letter) for reference purposes only and are presented in a north-to-south sequence. No priority is associated with the order in which comments are listed.

### Lynchburg City Limit to Terminal Drive/Liberty Mountain Drive

Within this segment, the following issues were identified:

- a. There is a sense that the interchange configuration from Route 460 could be better designed. Specifically:
  - There are some concerns with how traffic decelerates off the 460 exit ramp onto Route 29. There are some issues with visibility and how the ramp merges. Moving onto 29 north, from 460 east, drivers come down a long, oddly-shaped ramp that dumps traffic into a traffic signal. When heading south onto 29, there is a cloverleaf that leads into backed-up traffic.
  - Generally, it is hard to incorporate acceleration and deceleration into the same lane. This requires vehicles to cross over each other.
- b. Commuters coming eastbound on Route 460, who take the southbound Route 29 exit, often are trying to turn left onto Liberty Mountain Drive to access the back of Liberty University. Those drivers are traversing three lanes of traffic (coming off the right-side exit ramp, crossing two travel lanes, and moving into the left-turn lane). Several people commented that drivers already southbound in the Route 29 travel lanes get cut off, by those exiting Route 460. (Alternately, some people exit Route 460 and stay in the right lane to loop through the airport, using Terminal Drive to cross Route 29 onto Liberty Mountain Drive.)
- c. The southbound decel/turning lane at the Liberty Mountain Drive intersection is good, but it fills up quickly in the morning with vehicles going to Liberty University.
- d. There are red-light violations by southbound drivers turning left onto Liberty Mountain Drive.
- e. There are some red-light violations by southbound trucks. This intersection is situated at the top of a slight grade and, it seems that when the light turns yellow, trucks do not want to lose momentum.
- f. The signal-protected access in and out of the airport is critical.

A few people commented that at this intersection “yellow means go.” One suggestion was made that perhaps there should be a pause between the light turning red for north-south traffic, before the green light is triggered for east-west traffic.

As mentioned previously in the section on Local Economic Development:

- Campbell County owns 100 acres of currently undeveloped property adjacent to the airport. This could be developed through a joint undertaking by Campbell County and Lynchburg Regional Airport. If no plans are pursued, the property might be sold – which could result in some level of future development, with potential implications for direct access to the airport.

### Terminal Drive/Liberty Mountain Drive to FNB/Russell Woods

The following comments were provided for this section of the corridor:

- g. The current situation at Rangoon Road can be a dangerous one, with tractor-trailers exiting Banker Steel to head north on Route 29. Several people remarked that they would hate to see a fatality or severe injury accident occur before action was taken to address the situation.

Two key factors contribute to the challenge of tractor-trailers making a left-hand turn from Rangoon Road:

- The median crossing is short and there is no space for a truck to “stage” their turn (i.e. cross southbound lanes when there is a break in traffic, then stop and wait for a break in northbound traffic before continuing north).
- The ability to view northbound traffic (approaching Rangoon Road) is complicated by reduced visibility associated with the concrete guardrails on the northbound lanes of the overpass for the railroad tracks.

As a result, there have been times when trucks have pulled out of Rangoon Road to make a left onto Route 29 – only to stop (blocking southbound lanes) before being able to move into the northbound flow of traffic. One time, at night, this resulted in a southbound vehicle hitting the truck.

On a busy day, Banker Steel will have 15 trucks leave the facility, with approximately six of those trucks transferring material between the plants at Rangoon Road and Wythe Road. Shipments occur between 6 a.m. and midnight. The movement of permitted loads has special requirements which currently restricts the timing of shipments. Some of the loads can be 90’ - 120’ long, requiring an escort vehicle.

Several people remarked on the need to address this situation and contemplated possible options for a solution. These ideas included considering:

- whether trucks might be able to exit via intersection at Terminal Drive;
- whether a back access road might allow exiting via the intersection at FNB, although it’s not clear how the railroad right-of-way would factor into this; or
- the option of “activated” or “on-demand” traffic lights, such as those located in front of fire stations (e.g. the traffic lights are only activated when a truck is making a left hand turn)

Creating controlled conditions for the left-turn would also make it easier for permitted loads. There was also some discussion as to whether an “on-demand” traffic light might be activated during shift change, when employees are also making left-hand turns from Rangoon Road.

- h. The turning radius for trucks heading south from Rangoon Road is very tight.



- i. Liberty University is looking to develop a 400-500 acre parcel, likely over the next 5-10 years. Wards Road North (just east of the railroad track and the Route 29 overpass) does not connect with Route 29, since the median crossing at the south end of the overpass cannot be used for turns, and right turns onto northbound Route 29 are prohibited from Wards Road north. Consequently, an alternative is needed for access to Liberty University's property, perhaps a service road off Russell Woods Drive.
- j. Both right- and left-turn lanes on southbound 29 at FNB/Russell Woods need to be longer.
- k. Russell Woods Drive needs an additional lane in (eastbound), of a least a couple hundred feet, due to the new Bojangles. Similarly, the outgoing lane (west bound) will need a right-turn lane.
- l. The timing of the light at the FNB/Russell Woods intersection was mentioned as problematic.

#### **FNB/Russell Woods to Lawyers Road**

- m. On both sides of 29, beginning at Baker Road and to the south, access roads need to go in before the surrounding areas are developed.
- n. Congestion on Route 29 is generally located between Lynchburg city limit and just south of Russell Woods Drive.
- o. Access is difficult at the median crossing just south of the Clayton Homes business and across from Wooldridge Heating and Air.
- p. Lengthen the southbound left-turn lane.
- q. The southbound right-turn lane has heavy truck traffic onto Lawyers Lane to Boxley.
- r. Acceleration and decel lanes are important for safety and traffic flow at the Lawyers Road intersection.
- s. The timing of the Lawyers Road intersection was mentioned as problematic.

#### **Lawyers Road to English Tavern (northern connection)**

- t. Trucks making a right-turn from Lawyers Lane onto Route 29 south have a hard time, since this is a tight radius turn for trucks to maneuver.
- u. Northbound on 29, immediately in front of the Food Lion shopping area, a concern was raised about frontage property if the corridor is widened.
- v. At the median crossing providing access to the south end of the shopping area, the acceleration and decel lands are important for safety and traffic flow.
- w. People like the long southbound left-turn lane onto English Tavern (northern connection).
- x. At the English Tavern intersection, long trucks that are turning around can block traffic.
- y. The English Tavern intersection has a high rate of accidents.
- z. It seems that the light at English Tavern intersection is not well synchronized.

### English Tavern to Calohan

- aa. The impression is that there has been no real planning for the development near Hyland Drive. People are interested in knowing what will happen here.
- bb. On Lynbrook Road, 100 sites have been approved for future development (see public workshop comments map, on project website, for location).
- cc. The median crossing at Lynbrook Road can be dangerous. The speed limit there is 60 mph. As people pull out of Lynbrook onto Route 29, they misjudge the speed and the distance. People use Lynbrook Road as a back entrance to Timberlake. While it doesn't provide great access, since Lynbrook is narrow and winding, people are taking a shortcut. Looking towards the future, there is a possibility that the decel lane may need to be extended.
- dd. There is a desire for direct access to Route 29 for properties in the vicinity of Lynbrook Road and Leland Road. This seems to reference the lack of a median crossing at the northern-most driveway for Hyland Heights Baptist Church, just south of Lynbrook Road on the east side of Route 29.
- ee. There is a lack of a median crossing to connect to Exchange Drive.
- ff. Behind Hyland Heights Baptist Church, there are two mobile home parks. For people turning here, it can be difficult to see – since there is a small crest in the road, just south of English Tavern (southern connection). It affects the visibility for those turning onto 29 (in either direction), and for those traveling south on 29 and making a left onto English Tavern (southern connection) from the decel lane.

There was a suggestion to either eliminate or signalize the median crossing at English Tavern (southern connection). A different suggestion was to create an access road to connect English Tavern and Livestock Road.

- gg. The number of vehicles accessing Hyland Heights Baptist Church surges from around 30 to 50, on an average weekday, to 500 or 600 during the Passion Play event. With the highest traffic volumes occurring on Sunday, week day travel on Route 29 is not affected.

There have been preliminary conversations about possible options to improve traffic flow near the church. Different ideas have mentioned:

- blocking off the median closure at English Tavern (southern connection);
- blocking off the median closure at Leland; or
- Extending Lynchburg Road through the median crossing to connect with English Tavern.

The options would need to be evaluated as part of a complete package. Whatever the final configuration, increased access needs to be in place prior to any closures.

- hh. The intersection at Calohan is very busy, including heavy truck traffic to the regional landfill. The southbound decel lane was extended once and, during peak periods, left-turning vehicles are still backed up into the southbound passing lane.

- ii. There is a sense that the timing of the traffic signal at the Calohan intersection was changed, resulting in a backup of traffic.
- jj. It would help to have an acceleration lane turning north onto Route 29 from Calohan Road.

#### **Calohan to Route 24**

- kk. There is an access concern at the Branham property, which seems to be associated with the median crossing that provides access to American Legends Motorcycles and C & B Insulation.
- ll. The 60 mph speed limit near Route 688 was described as murderous. There are several small businesses already established here and additional development will occur in the future. The speed limit is considered too high for this general area, which has many residences located on side roads.
- mm. The median crossing located north of Good's Garden Sheds (roughly equal to where Howards Manor Drive ends in a cul-de-sac) is characterized as a truck crossover where there have been some collisions.
- nn. The median crossing at Mooreman Mill Road/Amy Road is dangerous with the 60 mph speed limit.
- oo. The median crossing at Anstey Road is also described as dangerous and it was suggested that the intersection be eliminated or signalized.
- pp. There are some questions and concerns about connectivity to Bypass 29, if it were to move forward in the future. The understanding is that the concept did not advance out of the preliminary phase.
- qq. The Route 29 median crossing to Dennis Riddle Drive (just south of Route 24) provides access to Yellow Brank Elementary School and is reported as dangerous.
- rr. Approximately 1.5 miles south of the Route 24 boundary, Ewing Drive leads to an industrial park area. Presently, only two businesses are located there. With infrastructure already established, there will be increased activity over the next five years. A signal may need to be considered at some point in the future.

## **PARTICIPANTS**

Comments were incorporated from worksheets and inter-active mapping sessions at the public workshop held on January 28, 2016, which 39 people attended.

Additional comments were provided through follow-up interviews with representatives of the following community key interests groups.

- Banker Steel
- Boxley
- Campbell County
- First National Bank
- Foster Fuels
- Georgia Pacific
- Greater Lynchburg Transit Company
- Highland Heights Baptist Church
- Liberty University
- Lynchburg Regional Airport
- Lynchburg Regional Business Alliance
- Moore's Electrical and Mechanical
- Nealbrook Chips
- Region 2000/CVMPO
- VDOT Lynchburg District
- Virginia Transportation Research Council (VTRC)