

GrowCove - Cecil B. Ashburn Drive



Major Concerns:

- OPERATIONS AND SAFETY
 - Concurrent resurfacing of five miles of Governors (431) between Old Big Cove and Bassett in 2019 while significantly more non-typical traffic uses the corridor, leading to worse-than-expected traffic operations
 - Regarding the use of Eastern Bypass as an alternative route in and out of the Cove, both Little Cove Rd and its intersection next to MapCo and Rock Cut Road are inadequate. Construct route realignment as depicted in the LRTP and Major Street Plan plus a full permanent traffic signal at US-72 for safety and operational efficiency, in coordination with the Town of Gurley. Also consider how alternative routes are utilized when flooding events impact traffic operations on Little Cove Road
 - Green Mountain Road is substandard as inevitable alternative route, and should be repaired to better accommodate somewhat increased traffic
 - Mid-school year construction start creates confusion with changes to school bus utilization and routes, magnified by new bus service provider
 - Determine opportunities for intermittent openings? Weekends? Other?

- DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION
 - Residents need to understand potential safety and operational impacts of performing clearing and grubbing, blasting, or other preparatory work on the side of Cecil Ashburn adjacent to typical full traffic volume, prior to complete closure, as currently proposed in order to minimize overall complete shutdown time. Slope stability and rockslides? Large trucks and debris removal?
 - Bicycle accommodations on entire corridor do not follow Bike Plan or desired design standards – according to expert cycling community, may be dangerous and will be underused due to improper study limits / facility termination and various aspects of design
 - Safety concerns result from increased vehicular speeds on Cecil Ashburn corridor
 - Minimal overall time savings from increased lane capacity on Cecil Ashburn due to many surface streets and intersections on either side of the mountain on typical commuter routes

- TRAVEL DEMAND MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES
 - No transit options exist in the Cove. A transit study is currently underway, but will not be complete before December. Issues to be addressed include: arsenal access for transit vehicles, resident demand analysis, fare structures, fleet vehicle procurement and funding, etc. We want good transit and ridesharing options in place before any construction is commenced



- Vanpool and commuter program not well-advertised or utilized. Need to work with City, MPO, and major employers to incentivize use of carpools and vanpools, such as preferred parking locations or monetary encouragement
 - Need to work with major employers to encourage implementation of flexible schedules, telecommuting, and other strategies as applicable
 - Need time to put in place various Cove-side services and amenities before access to Jones Valley and South Huntsville destinations is limited (ex. mini police substation, small library and/or community center, temporary or permanent retail/ business relocations, pop-up restaurants or dinner food trucks, etc.)
 - Relevant planning studies (Regional Commuter, Transit, Main Street South Huntsville, and Big Picture Planning for the Cove) will not be complete prior to proposed construction timeline, leading to uncoordinated or non-implementation of possible recommendations
- PROJECT PLANNING, COSTS, AND TRANSPARENCY
 - Regional Travel Demand model is decades out of date with regards to best practices (re: capacity calculations, trip generation, land use, mode split, etc.) and is not properly calibrated for the Cove, leading to potentially erroneous conclusions and project justifications.
 - Transparent multi-modal infrastructure project identification, evaluation, and prioritization procedures do not yet exist, and project selection is heavily biased and not aligned to goals identified by residents via planning processes and studies
 - Full widening of Cecil Ashburn does not meet the screening criteria set forth in our City congestion management documents and procedures, and nor have lower level congestion management strategies appear to have been considered or implemented, as required by federal legislation.
 - The cost of completing the corridor project in phases (Sutton + OBC Intersection, then full widening later) vs doing everything at once has not been made available
 - It is not apparent that a full and detailed corridor study including alternative intersection and lane configurations has been performed, and more information regarding tradeoffs among alternatives is requested
 - Maintenance costs associated with Cecil Ashburn, in both current and proposed future design, and timing of expenditures
 - The Restore Our Roads "Innovative Financing" agreement shows the Cecil Ashburn project as being 100% locally funded (Table 10.4 in the 2040 LRTP). Why isn't there a direct state match for this project (vs most other RoR projects), and who will pay for any cost overruns?