

Braddock District Land Use and Environment Committee

9002 Burke Lake Road
Burke, VA 22015

Keith DePew, *Chair*
Cary Adams, *Vice Chair*
Roxanna Mejia, *Secretary*

To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the Braddock District Land Use and Environment Committee, I respectfully submit the following comments for your consideration:

Background: The Braddock Road Multimodal Project is a costly and complicated engineering effort that has been in the planning stage for over 16 years. The goal of the project, according to a report by former Braddock Supervisor John Cook, has been to identify and evaluate potential improvements along the corridor from Guinea Road to Ravensworth Road in order to address anticipated traffic congestion and improve bicycle and pedestrian access and safety along the corridor. These improvements include widening Braddock Road, adding HOV lanes, adding a commuter parking lot, adding a transit center, modifying intersection designs, and adding new shared use paths along both sides of Braddock Road. The proposed plans have been modified over the years.

The 2018 Braddock Road Multimodal Report (pg. 3-30) noted that “The Braddock Road corridor possesses a few key environmental features that will be impacted by the proposed improvements. Braddock Road is a suburban roadway that includes trees lining the roadway along most of the corridor, with the offset of the trees from the roadway varying throughout the study corridor, with some areas having offsets greater than 30 feet. The proposed improvements will also impact the Resource Protection Area (RPA) located in the eastern sections of the study area. The Accotink Creek flows through the RPA and intersects Braddock Road where Braddock Road crosses the Accotink Creek on a concrete bridge structure.”

The Braddock District Land Use and Environment Committee (BLUE) has the following concerns about the proposed shared use paths:

- The proposed 10-foot-wide paved paths, plus the land needed as a buffer and for construction (totaling at least 23 feet plus on each side of Braddock Road), will require the removal of many acres of trees along the targeted 3.65-mile Braddock Road corridor, as well as potential impacts to the nearby Resource Protection Area.
- The removal of trees will increase noise, light, and exhaust pollution for homes adjacent to Braddock Road, as well as reduced shade for those people who may be using the proposed new paths.

- The shared use paths will add more paved, impermeable surface on Braddock Road, which will increase stormwater flow into the creeks and create greater heat island impacts due to the loss of trees and vegetation.
- The Braddock District has already experienced significant loss of tree canopy from infill developments along the Braddock Road corridor, including the recent developments on the Erickson Living property, the Virginia DMV customer service center, Kenilworth, and proposed Kenilworth II, and the Roberts Road project.
- VDOT has not yet provided the public sufficient evidence of the need for, or expected use of, the proposed shared use paths to justify their costs and impacts on the environment, especially considering there are some existing tree-lined paths along the south side of Braddock Road and continuous paths along the north side connecting Wakefield Park to Kings Park shopping center.
- Many of the assumptions and data about environmental impacts, driver behavior, traffic, and land use in the original study are likely outdated and do not taking into account the long-term impacts of Covid-19 on commuting patterns or recent Federal and County environmental policies, such as CECAP and Resilient Fairfax.

Therefore, the BLUE Committee:

- Encourages VDOT and FCDOT to be open and flexible with exploring alternatives to the most recent proposed design, in consultation with the Braddock community, to identify opportunities to minimize likely adverse environmental impacts of the proposed shared use paths and intersection realignments, as well as identifying more cost beneficial options.
- Urges greater priority for the preservation of trees and vegetation along the Braddock Road corridor. In addition, we support VDOT investigating the planting of trees in the buffer zone areas and/or in the median to help with reducing noise and air pollution affects, as well as reducing heat island impacts and offsetting the inevitable loss of trees along the corridor.

Thank you for your consideration.


 Keith DeRue

Chair, Braddock District Land Use
 and Environment Committee

1/6/2023
 Date