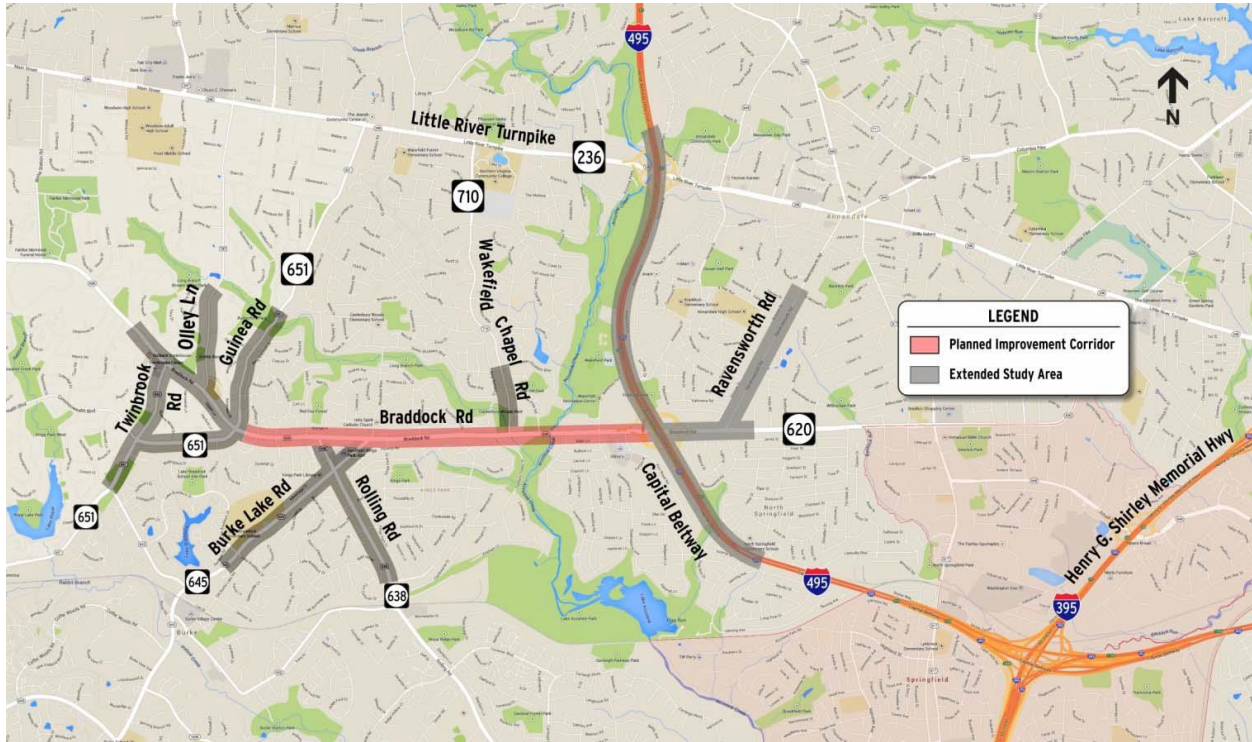


**KINGS PARK COMMUNITY UPDATE
BRADDOCK ROAD TRAFFIC FLOW IMPROVEMENT STUDY
VERSION 1 SUMMARY
September 17, 2016**



The purpose of the study is to analyze and recommend a plan to increase the capacity of Braddock Road to carry traffic from Guinea Road to I-495, including evaluation of managed (read High Occupancy Vehicle) lanes from Guinea Road to I-495. The study looks at the expected traffic along Braddock Road in the year 2040.

Our focus for this update includes the following areas which will impact the residents of Kings Park:

1. A no-build option wherein no major changes are made to Braddock Road and connector streets; leave things as they are.
2. Widen Braddock Road option

2.1 Add one HOV lane in each direction (east bound and west bound) from Guinea Road to I-495,

or,

2.2 Add one general-purpose lane in each direction (east bound and west bound) from Guinea Road to I-495.

3. Build a transit center option within the confines of the Kings Park Shopping Center general area.
4. Add spot improvements option to the roads that intersect with Braddock Road between Guinea Road and I-495 to improve traffic flow along Braddock Road.
5. Improve Pedestrian and Bicyclist access and safety option around the Braddock Road traffic improvement area.

Options 3, 4, and 5 were added during the course of the study. Note: Options 2 through 5 are not necessarily stand-alone options. A decision as to which of the options, if any, will be built is not yet made. Two or more of these options may be built dependent upon study results. Final results from the study should be available in mid-2017.

Option 1: The No-Build Option

For this option, Fairfax County will not make any major changes to Braddock Road, surrounding streets, and pedestrian paths/crossings. All concrete and blacktop surfaces will remain as they are, to include surface crosswalks. Certainly Fairfax County will make changes to roadways/walkways/crossings in the next 24 years, but such changes would probably fall into routine maintenance or small improvements category. So, what can you expect under this option? Well, for one thing, builders will not stop, well, building; homes, commercial malls and stores, government and business offices, schools, transit centers, and you get the idea. In the next 24 years, the amount of traffic along Braddock Road will increase, traffic flows and driver destinations (spots around the beltway rather than into the District) will change, vehicle and pedestrian/bicyclist co-existence will become more of a challenge, vehicle noise from stop-and-go traffic will increase along roadways and at crowded intersections, entry into and exit from Kings Park will increasingly tax our patience. How do I know this? Well, I have lived in Kings Park for 38 years. I have seen traffic increase, not decrease or stay the same, along Braddock Road in that time and believe that traffic will continue to increase over the next 24 years. Plus, Fairfax County published a chart which projects traffic flows along Braddock Road in the year 2040.

Option 2: Widen Braddock Road

This option studies the addition of two lanes on Braddock Road from Guinea Road to I-495, one east bound and one west bound. The lanes could be High Occupancy Vehicle (managed lanes) or general purpose lanes (not managed lanes). The additional lanes on Braddock Road could be either inside lanes or outside lanes. The concept of widening Braddock Road remains under study. Will the widening be worth the traffic and noise aggravation from 2021-2024, the build years? Not yet known, but the study results should give us more facts to assess the question and add more informed pros and cons.

Option 3: Build a Transit Center at Kings Park Shopping Center

Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) representatives point out, based on transit center studies, that transit centers by-and-large provide services to their surrounding communities. Drivers from communities appreciably farther away from transit centers will very seldom use transit center facilities; they will instead continue the drive to their destinations. So for the discussion to follow, remember that the Kings Park Shopping Center Transit Center will provide services to the residents of the immediate surrounding communities including those of us who live in Kings Park.

The committee has three design options under study for a Transit Center. One option is, of course, a no-build option at the Kings Park Shopping Center. Another option would provide about 210 spaces for surface parking. The third option would provide about 300 spaces for garage parking. Both of the build options would provide bus lanes and bus bays.

Option 4: The Spot Improvement Option

Okay, this option gets a little complicated; and long. Remember that the intent of the Braddock Road Multimodal Study is to improve traffic flow along Braddock Road especially during AM and PM rush hours; for commuters, the phrase is improved traffic flow; for Kings Park residents the concern is a balance between a three-year construction aggravation versus long-term benefits of improved traffic flow along Braddock Road and ease of entering/leaving Kings Park under heavier traffic. Our Kings Park subdivision could be surrounded on all sides by road improvement work; our residents are right in the bullseye of impacts of the Braddock Road traffic flow spot-improvement options. And, because this document is oriented around Kings Park, I will discuss only options 1 through 6, 13, and 14.

1. Guinea Road and Braddock Road
2. Burke Lake Road and Braddock Road
3. Grantham Road and Braddock Road
4. Kings Park Drive and Braddock Road
5. Stone Haven Drive and Braddock Road
6. Danbury Forest Drive/Wakefield Chapel Road at Braddock Road
13. Southampton Drive and Braddock Road
14. Braddock Road before Danbury Forest Drive/Wakefield Chapel Road Intersection

Option 5: Improve Pedestrian and Bicyclist Access and Safety Option

While this option is the last to be discussed it is, in my opinion, the most important of the five options. This option is last in this document only because I thought it necessary

that readers (if any) understand the numerous road and signage changes (if any) that could happen to Braddock Road and surrounding side streets and combine that with the realization that traffic flow will increase and traffic patterns will change. Even under the no-build option, traffic on Braddock Road and Kings Park side streets will increase by 2040. Human driver, pedestrian, and bicyclist frustrations will only increase with increased stop-and-go traffic; this will lead to unfortunate decisions on the part of all three types of road warriors with possibly tragic consequences. Even under the no-build option, changes to improve safety at street crossings must be addressed.

There exist four possible designs for street crossings to improve the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians. These four designs are:

1. High-Visibility Surface Crosswalks.
2. Pedestrian Refuge Islands.
3. Pedestrian Bridges.
4. Improved Underpass, either closed tube or open enclosure constructs.

Conclusion

All entrances and exits from our Kings Park subdivision could be impacted by road improvement work; our residents are right in the center of the Braddock Road Traffic Flow Improvement options. So, pay attention to the happenings throughout the study period (now to mid-2017) and understand the various options as they evolve. And remember to try to balance two viewpoints. One viewpoint is improved traffic conditions for all travelers on Braddock Road, including ourselves; the other is a focus on the impact of quality of life changes on us as residents of Kings Park.

Kings Park residents can provide feedback to Jim Sobecke or Terry Boschert, the KPCA representatives to the Citizen Advisory Group. The KPCA email address for feedback about the topic of Braddock Road Widening is kpca.braddockroad@gmail.com. Also check the November issue of the Kings Park Gazette, published by the Kings Park Civic Association and delivered door-to-door by volunteers to every home in Kings Park, for study feedback contact information and status of the study as known at that time. The Kings Park Gazette is published six times a year, usually January, March, May, July, September, and November.

You may find much more information at:

<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/braddock/braddockroadmeetings.htm>,
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/fcdot/braddockroadmmstudy/>,
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/braddock/braddockroadstudyhome.htm>