



All About the Braddock Road "S" Curve

The Braddock Road "S" Curve in Fairfax County has become one of the most frustrating - and frequently asked about - topics that Dulles South area residents deal with. Almost every time it rains (literally) there's an accident, which has resulted in countless delays.

I have been providing information in our Annual Report and newsletters about the efforts to improve the road, but I thought it may be helpful to consolidate everything in one place to make it easier to understand what is happening. Of course, the obvious caveat for me is that this area is well into Fairfax County, and therefore well beyond my jurisdiction, so my ability to influence this is more limited than it would be if it was in Loudoun. That said, I have been extremely vocal and in regular communication with VDOT about this area for many years now, and also have had discussions with various state and Fairfax County officials.

Short Term

Many of you noticed work that was taking place on the "S" curve this week. VDOT maintenance completed a series of patches through the curve in order to improve the current layer of surface. That work is now complete. It was being done to prepare for installation of a High Friction Surface

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Treatment. The treatment will apply a layer of aggregate material on top of the existing surface to increase the level of friction with vehicle tires. The goal of the treatment is to increase traction on areas with inclines, especially in inclement weather conditions. This is a relatively new technique for VDOT that they've used in some other areas with similar frequent crash patterns.

We do not have a date yet for the actual application of the material. I'm sure it may involve some disruption to the road, so we'll be sure to share that information when we get it. We've also asked VDOT to review any other short-term improvements that they could make to raise awareness or slow vehicles down as they approach the curve.

Long Term

The good news is that a longer term, permanent solution is in the works. After working with Fairfax County and VDOT to build the Braddock-Pleasant Valley roundabout in 2016, I became increasingly concerned about the frequency of accidents on the "S" curve. In 2017, I requested that VDOT evaluate this area to include the Old Lee Road intersection which frequently causes delays due to lack of turn lanes. In response to my request, VDOT launched a full scale Safety and Operational Study in 2018, which eventually resulted in a final report with recommendations that was published in 2021.

The recommended improvements are to straighten the "S" curve and essentially move to a straight path down the hill, and to construct a "jughandle" intersection at Old Lee Road and install a signal. These improvements were submitted to Virginia's SMART SCALE improvement process by Fairfax County, in which projects from around the state compete for funding, as determined by the Commonwealth Transportation Board. I spoke with the Northern Virginia CTB Board Member about the need for the project and Loudoun County

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