

**..Title**

Discuss Virginia Parkway Lanes 5 & 6 from Bellegrove Drive to Ridge Road

**..Summary**

**MEETING DATE:** November 3, 2014

**DEPARTMENT:** Development Services/Engineering

**CONTACT:** Gary Graham, PE, CIP and Transportation Engineering Manager  
Carla Easton, PE, CIP Engineer

**RECOMMENDED CITY COUNCIL ACTION:**

- Discuss and provide direction.

**ITEM SUMMARY:**

- The City is developing plans to widen Virginia Parkway from US 75 to Ridge Road to provide three lanes in each direction, in order to accommodate increasing traffic needs, improve safety, and provide continuity for the corridor.
- The Engineering Department hosted a public information meeting with business owners, property owners and residents along Virginia, and received a number of comments and concerns regarding the project.
- A separate neighborhood meeting was requested by the residents of the Mallard Lakes subdivision, at which the City was asked to reconsider the widening project along Virginia at Mallard Lakes Drive (section from Bellegrove to Ridge).
- The Engineering Department seeks confirmation from Council to continue the widening project as approved in the 2012-2014 Council priorities list.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION:**

- Virginia Parkway was identified as a priority project in 2012 due to capacity needs, safety concerns, and mobility for both local and regional travel.
- Traffic numbers on Virginia Parkway have steadily increased, and are nearing capacity for a four-lane roadway.

|                 |               |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Current Volume: | 24-26,000 vpd |
| Projected 2030: | 32-37,000 vpd |
| M4D Capacity:   | 26-31,000 vpd |
| M6D Capacity:   | 35-38,000 vpd |
- Safety issues arise when roadways reach volume capacity. Signalized intersections are unable to clear the number of cars queued during peak travel times, resulting in delay and frustration. Right turn movements impact the flow of

through traffic, because the progression must slow down for the turning vehicle, creating further delay.

- Virginia Parkway is designated as a major east-west arterial (M6D), providing both local and regional mobility across the City, and it aligns with a future arterial west of the City limits. As the western limits of McKinney continue to see infill development, and the neighboring cities see growth in this area, traffic will increase along Virginia Parkway.
- Virginia is currently six lanes from west of Stonebridge Drive to east of Ridge Road.
- In February 2012, Council and Staff identified the Virginia Parkway widening project as one of the top 5 priority projects, and ranked as shown below.
  - FM 546 Replacement
  - Virginia Parkway Widening East Section
  - Virginia Parkway Widening West Section
  - Stacy Road Widening
  - SH 5 Reconstruction
- A formal resolution was approved in March 2012 supporting the list of projects to be submitted as candidates to receive RTR funding from the NCTCOG.
- In August 2012, Collin County Commissioners Court selected the Virginia Parkway Widening (East Section) project to receive \$2,480,000 in RTR funding for design and ROW acquisition.
- In October 2013, Council authorized a design contract with Halff Associates (Halff) to widen Virginia from Bellegrove Drive to US 75, referred to as the east section.
- In August 2014, Council authorized a supplemental agreement with Halff to design the widening of the west section from Ridge Road to Bellegrove Drive and to incorporate the improvements into one set of construction drawings.
- By combining the two sections into a single project, construction activities can be phased in a manner that will minimize traffic impacts for the corridor. Communication and coordination between the City, engineer, contractor and stakeholders will be improved, and project management streamlined, effectively saving time and money on the project.
- In September 2014, the Engineering Department hosted an open-house style public information meeting where exhibits of the proposed widening project were displayed for public viewing and input.

- Over 50 people attended the meeting and 16 public comment cards were received. Ten (10) of the 16 comment cards noted opposition to the project, four (4) noted support of the project, and two (2) were neutral.
- There was a distinct and vocal presence from the Mallard Lakes subdivision at the meeting, and many concerns and questions were raised about the need for this project.
- A subsequent meeting was requested by the Mallard Lakes HOA, at which Mayor Loughmiller, Mayor Pro-tem Ussery, and Engineering Staff responded to further questions regarding the need for the project. Some of the comments/questions from residents included:
  - Widening the road will increase traffic.
  - Reducing the median width will make the intersection unsafe, particularly for inexperienced drivers.
  - Trees will be removed, making McKinney a “concrete jungle”.
  - The US 75 construction is the reason for increased traffic on Virginia. Wait until US 75 is complete, then re-evaluate traffic counts.
  - Why widen Virginia and not Eldorado?
  - Will the speed limit increase to 45 mph?

Ultimately, the residents requested that the City reconsider widening the road adjacent to Mallard Lakes.

- Engineering Staff received additional comments after the original public meeting regarding existing safety concerns for the intersection of Virginia and Joplin. The concerns included:
  - Minshew Elementary School backup onto Virginia
  - Limited sight distance for westbound left turns to Joplin
  - Congestion in the median due to high volume of U-turns and left turns
  - Requests were made for a traffic signal

Staff will evaluate these concerns and consider available options to improve safety at this intersection as part of the overall widening project.

- In October 2014, the County Commissioners Court selected the Virginia Parkway Widening (East Section) project to receive \$4 million in County Discretionary funds.

**FINANCIAL SUMMARY:** N/A

**BOARD OR COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION:** N/A