



## **Evergreen Mills & Watson Road Safety Improvement & Enhanced Enforcement Update**

October 30, 2017

While no amount of improvement will suffice until the road has been widened to its ultimate four lane median divided condition - as called for in the Revised 2030 Countywide Transportation Plan - I wanted to provide you with the latest update on several of the improvements I am working on.

Many thanks to the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office, VDOT, County staff, and my colleagues on the Board for continued support of our efforts to implement immediate, short and long term safety improvements on both Evergreen Mills Road (EMR) and Watson Road.

**Newly Repaired Guardrails (both sides of EMR)**



### **Application of High Friction Material to EMR This Week**

Tomorrow - Saturday (weather permitting) from 8 a.m. - 6 p.m. daily, VDOT will apply several rectangular blocks of high friction material across the northbound travel lanes of EMR beginning prior to Reservoir Rd and leading up to Watson Rd. The strips are designed to improve skid resistance and grab drivers attention as they feel and sound different when driven over. Drivers are advised to utilize alternate routes during installation as delays are expected.



### **Additional EMR & Watson Intersection Improvements**

My office continues to advocate directly with VDOT for additional safety improvements to the intersection of EMR and Watson. Based on recent discussions we believe drivers will see the following additional improvements by November 30, 2017:

- Relocation of Watson Road Stop Bar closer to the intersection of EMR to provide increased visibility for Watson Rd drivers waiting to turn onto EMR.
- Relocation of Reservoir Road Stop Bar closer to the intersection of EMR to provide increased visibility for Reservoir Rd drivers waiting to turn onto EMR.
- Increase size of the Watson Road Stop Sign.
- Installation of yellow flashing lights (battery powered) atop of the existing 35 mile per hour advisory signs along EMR on the north and southbound approaches to Watson Rd.
- Creation of a center island on Watson Rd at its intersection with EMR (utilizing road markings only) to encourage only one driver at a time to turn onto EMR from Watson. Currently, when a driver is attempting to turn northbound from Watson onto EMR, other drivers often pull beside them in an effort to turn southbound onto EMR, thus causing additional line of sight and safety issues for everyone.

### **Increased Enforcement**

Whether it be traffic stops, commercial vehicle inspections, command directed patrols, data collection, variable sign safety and enforcement messaging, or decoy police vehicles, the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office has been extremely responsive to our request for increased enforcement along EMR & Watson Rd! As such, I want to personally thank Sheriff Chapman and Dulles South Station Commander, Captain Bobby Miller, for their continued support of our requests for increased enforcement.

The LCSO reports the following enforcement statistics over the past 10 days for EMR and Watson Rd:

- Traffic stops with tickets: 27
- Traffic stops with warnings: 11
- Commercial Vehicle Inspections: 17
- Command directed patrols: 17

Drivers are encouraged to report all reckless/aggressive driving to: 703-777-1021



(LCSO Commercial Vehicle Inspections on EMR)

**Board Approves Supervisor Higgins & my Board Member Initiative to Conduct a Safety Audit of EMR & Watson Rd**



Click [here](#) for Supervisor Higgins' and my recent update on Board approval of our joint initiative to conduct a Safety Audit of both EMR and Watson Rd. The item will return to the Board for further direction on December 5, 2017.

### **Will Seek to Accelerate Planned Long Term Improvements to EMR between Watson Rd and Reservoir Rd Within County's Capitol Improvement Program (CIP)**

During last years FY18-FY22 County CIP discussions, I was able to gain support from my colleagues for the addition of safety improvements and possible realignment of EMR, to include the intersections of EMR & Watson Rd and EMR and Reservoir Rd, as a new project with partial funding in FY22 and remaining funding to be identified in future years.

As we approach this years FY19-FY23 CIP deliberations, I have made clear to my colleagues and County staff that acceleration of this project is my TOP priority! While the County process for funding and accelerating projects is very competitive as there are always more projects than funding, I'm optimistic that with your help, we can gain sufficient support from my colleagues to have this project moved up!

### **Effort to Obtain State Funding**

In search of all possible funding sources for much needed safety improvements to EMR, I offered an Amendment at the Board's October 23, 2017, Business Meeting to expand the scope of the County's request for Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) state funding, in order to include funding of the above listed CIP project which was not included in the staff recommended project list.

On November 8, 2017, Staff will return to the Board with additional information on the likelihood of NVTA approval of my funding request, at which time the Board will vote on whether or not to include the project in the County's request. My colleagues are aware of the need for this project; therefore, I'm confident that should staff feel the project has a reasonable chance of obtaining NVTA funding approval, they will support my request.

### **Dynamic Warning Flashers**

VDOT is seeking funding to add electrically powered Dynamic Warning Flashers (DWF) to existing signage on the north and southbound EMR approaches to Watson Rd in order to alert drivers to watch for vehicles stopped on EMR who are waiting to turn onto Watson Rd. Initial installation is planned for Spring or Summer of 2018 and will result in 24/7 flashing lights. At some point after initial installation, VDOT hopes to upgrade the system with technology that will enable the lights to flash, only when vehicles are stopped on EMR waiting to turn onto Watson Rd, rather than 24/7 flashing. This initiative has been ongoing since March of 2017.

## "Mandatory Headlight Use"

My office has asked VDOT and County staff to look into the feasibility of "Mandatory Headlight Use" as a permanent safety measure along EMR. In the mean time I encourage all drivers to utilize their headlights day and night in order to increase their visibility to others.

Click [here](#) for a previous update regarding the intersection of Evergreen Mills and Watson.

As always, I will continue to keep you informed as progress continues.

All my best,



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