

## Virginia byway

# Traffic on state Route 5 at issue

Road under review  
in light of growth  
expected in area

**BY LUZ LAZO**

Times-Dispatch Staff Writer

With a projected growth along state Route 5 in eastern Henrico County, improvements to this scenic Virginia byway may be necessary.

A state-funded study of the corridor is under way to determine future travel needs in the area — from Seventh Street in downtown Richmond to state Route 895 in eastern Henrico — which has been primarily low-density residential, industrial and rural but is attracting some mixed-use development.

“In 15 to 20 years, you are going to have a ton of development there, and you are going to need to address traffic,” said Lee Yolton, principal planner with the Richmond Regional Planning District Commission, the regional agency overseeing the study.

### Community meeting

The Route 5 Corridor Study team will hold an open house-style meeting where the public will have an opportunity to comment and learn more about the study.

**When:** Tomorrow from 6 to 8 p.m., presentations at 6:15 and 7:15 p.m.

**Where:** Varina High School, 7053 Messer Road in Henrico County

**More information:**  
[www.route5corridor.com/index.html](http://www.route5corridor.com/index.html)

Major projects such as Rocketts Landing, a mixed-use community on Old Osborne Turnpike that straddles the Richmond-Henrico line, promise to bring additional traffic to this part of the county and into the city, Yolton said. Plus, he said, other housing developments in the planning stages, such as Tree Hill Farm and Wilton Farms subdivisions, could add more than 4,000 homes to the area when combined with the Rocketts community.

Each new home, Yolton said, is expected to generate 10 trips per day. “That’s 40,000 trips. It is going to be very congested,” he said.

Currently, near the city limits, in the vicinity of Rock-

## Route 5

From Page B1

etts Landing on the county side, about 8,000 cars per day travel on Route 5, said E. Todd Eure, Henrico’s transportation-development engineer. Those values decrease farther east toward Charles City, he said.

But the road is already reaching capacity, he said.

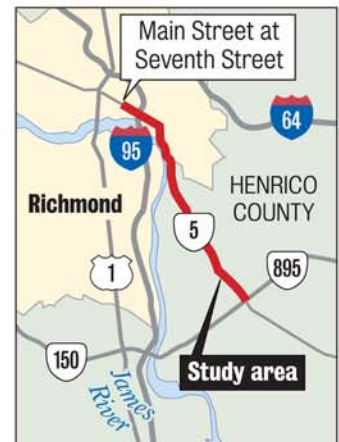
“There is some congestion in peak time. As those developments come alive, we expect more traffic,” said Eure, who is part of the corridor study team made up of representatives from Richmond, Henrico and state and local agencies, including GRTC Transit System. “We want to make sure that the additional traffic can be handled.”

Two years ago, the Virginia Department of Transportation and the commission began talking about doing research to determine how the region will handle the growth. VDOT provided the funding for the \$400,000 study being conducted by consultant Kimley-Horn and Associates.

The corridor presents some challenges for planners. Because of the way Route 5 is built, with some very curvy

### Route 5 corridor study

The state-funded study will help determine future travel needs in Richmond and eastern Henrico County.



JOHN G. OWNBY/TIMES-DISPATCH

parts, there would be limited possibilities for widening. That is why the study will look not only at road widening but also at other solutions, including pedestrian and bicycle access and mass transit.

“This is going to be an innovative type of plan,” Yolton said. “We are even talking about water taxis because the James River is right there.”

Yolton said the report will provide “a blueprint as to what kind of improvements will be needed to handle the projected traffic count.”

• Contact Luz Lazo at (804) 649-6058 or llazo@timesdispatch.com.

See **ROUTE 5**, Back Page