

# U.S. 29 STAKEHOLDERS WORKSHOP

Corridor Improvement Discussion, Fauquier County & Prince William County

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November 18, 2019  
Battlefield Baptist Church

# Agenda

- **Introductions**
- **Purpose**
- **Stakeholder Corridor Interests and Vision**
- **Review and Discussion of Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP)**
- **“Where do projects come from?”**  
**Review and discussion of the SMART SCALE process**
- **Conservation interests (including easements) along the U.S. 29 corridor**
- **Overview & discussion of proposed U.S. 29 intersection improvements**
- **Opportunities for collaboration**

**Route 29 Corridor Improvement webpage:**

**[http://www.viriniadot.org/projects/culpeper/rt\\_29\\_fauquier\\_county.asp](http://www.viriniadot.org/projects/culpeper/rt_29_fauquier_county.asp)**

# Purpose

- **“The DHR ... requests VDOT, in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration, host a meeting among the appropriate county officials, the Buckland Preservation Society and other historic preservation organizations, and DHR to discuss these larger issues.”**
- **Examples of collaborative opportunities:**
  - **Land use and transportation**
  - **Cumulative effects arising from small incremental actions**
  - **Collaborative, regional opportunities to managing traffic on Route 29**

# Stakeholders & Attendees

**Marc Holma, Va. Dept. of Historic Resources**

**John Simkins, Federal Highway Administration**

**Mandy Ranslow, Advisory Council on Historic Preservation**

**Holder Trumbo, Fauquier County Board of Supervisors, Scott District**

**Linda Wright, Brian Mannix, Brian Kohn, Buckland Preservation Society**

**Elizabeth Merritt, National Trust for Historic Preservation**

**Michelle Burelli, Bill Sellers, Journey Through Hallowed Ground**

**Julie Bolthouse, Piedmont Environmental Council**

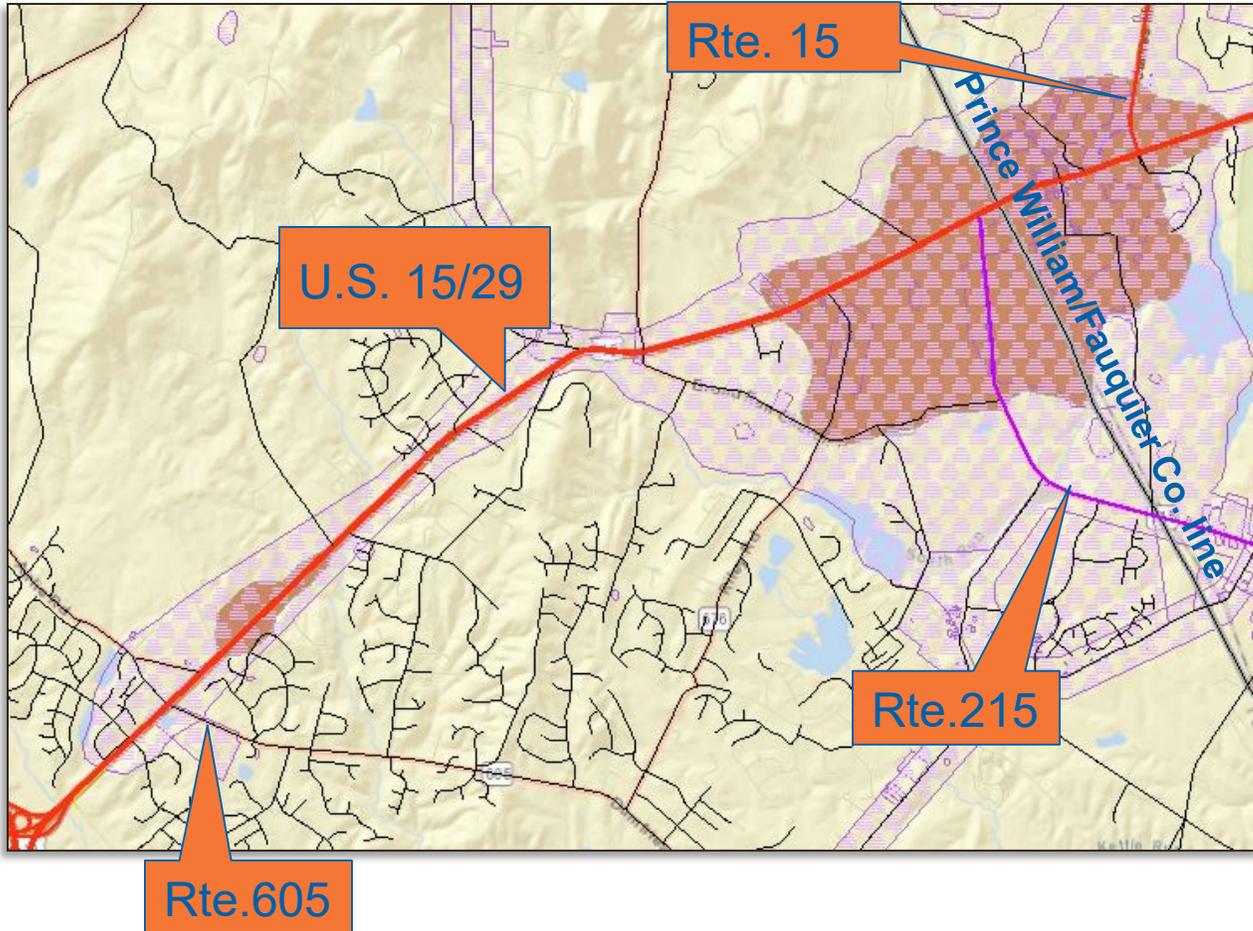
**Route 29-New Baltimore Advisory Panel**

**Fauquier County staff**

**Prince William County staff**

**VDOT staff: Culpeper & Northern Va. districts, Central Office**

# Cultural Resources and Conservation Lands



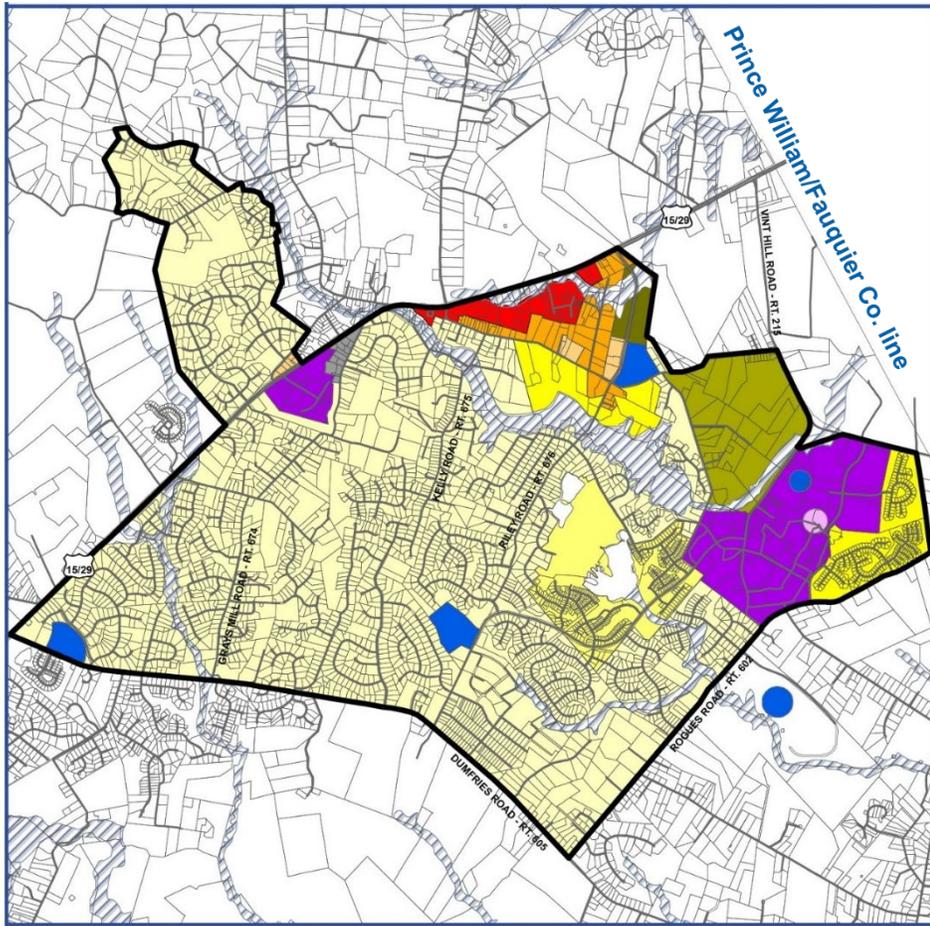
## VDHR Easements

- Land and Water Conservation Funds (olive green)
- 6(f) Implications

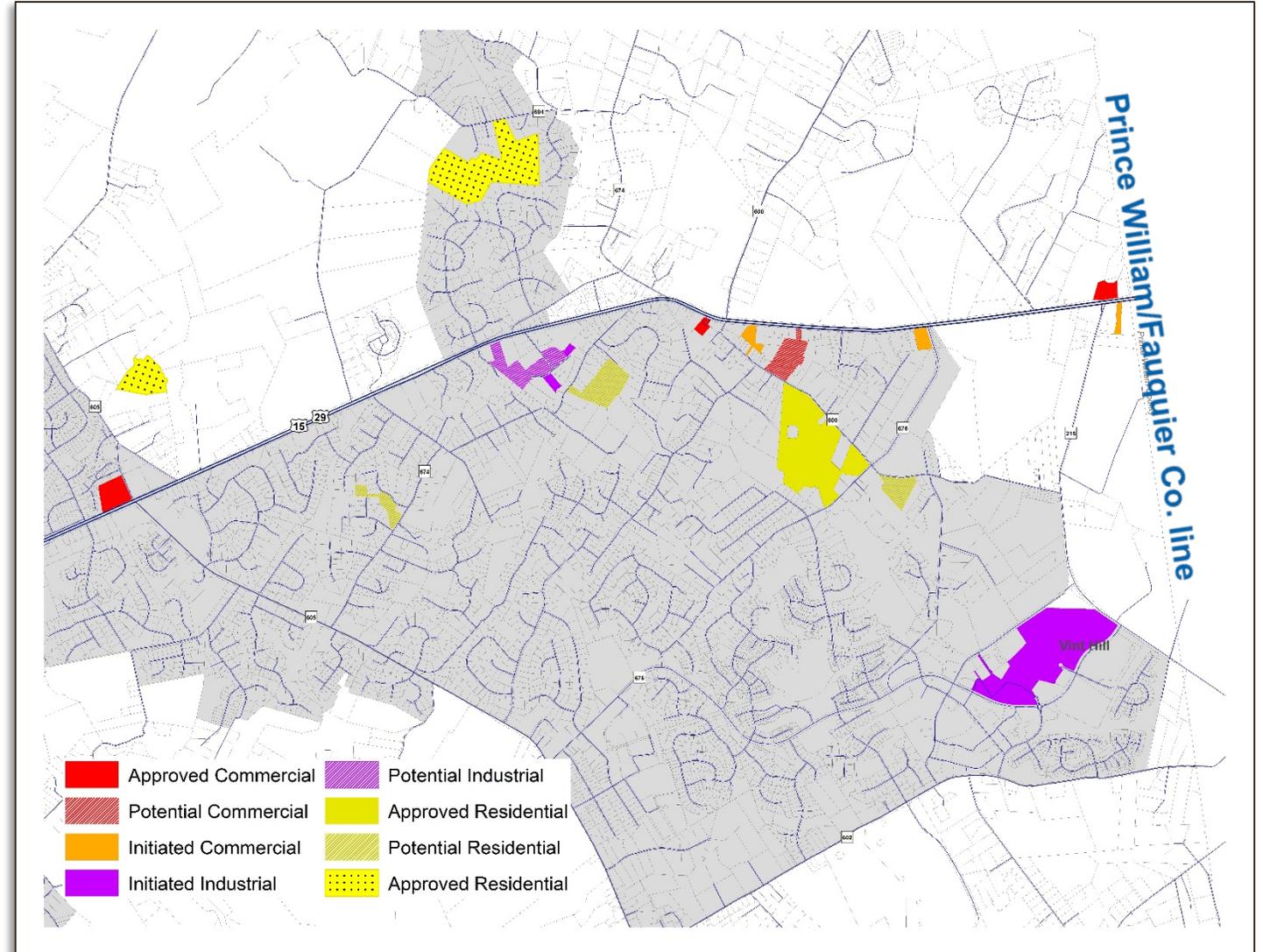
## Other Easements

- Fauquier Open Space Easement (blue)
- VOF Easement (forest green)

# New Baltimore Service District, Planned Development



*From Fauquier County presentation to U.S. 29-New Baltimore Advisory Panel, Sept. 27, 2018*



# Stakeholder Corridor Interests and Vision

**Linda Wright, Buckland Preservation Society:** The region needs to come together with a plan. That there have been different plans through the years, but the plans have never come together. Proposed improvements, i.e. Rt. 215, are a 5-10 year band aid. Why not get ahead of that with a long-range plan? Back in the day the Town Council of Warrenton and VDOT-Warrenton got together and figured it out. Why not similar option for Buckland?

**Katherine Grayson Wilkins, Journey Thru Hallowed Ground:** Second Linda's big picture comment. If we plan ahead then we can maintain the open spaces, historic preservation, nice place to live, and be able to get around.

**Ike Broaddus, Vint Hill Business Owner:** The uproar from the last plan announced scared businesses. The outcome is a good solution. We have dodged a bullet. There are solutions, but there is a lack of political courage.

## Corridor Interests and Vision (cont.)

**Tim Hoffman, Vint Hill Homeowners Assoc.:** This area is on the cusp of NOVA traffic problems. How to deal with the current issues, either fix 29 to make it work for the long term. Or build a bypass. What is on the table right now is a temporary solution.

**Pete Eltringham, Fauquier Transportation Committee and Poms Farm HOA member:** There is a lot of history to this corridor; I've been involved in major efforts for the last 18 years, some good and bad. Three-year effort for New Baltimore Service District Plan, internal and around transportation. The plan will continue to evolve with changes in BOS and the plan talks about maintaining a sense of place. Every effort results in discovery of new archaeological elements – we need to be careful. Concessions made 15 or 18 years ago are not adequate. **Lessons Learned:** Area of significance. Truck restriction routes that take people off 29. The county needs to determine where they want development and where they don't. Understand that new pavement is not the answer. Explore the possibility of 29 being a local road in 10-15 years.

## Corridor Interests and Vision (cont.)

**Barry Wright, Buckland resident:** Politics getting in the way of the studies. Some of the studies people don't want it in their backyard. If you want to move forward, need a blue ribbon panel, an independent panel that takes the citizens out of the decision making. Provide a few options. Engineers come out with studies, but they get watered down and by the time they are implemented they are useless. Get locals unified and get a clear picture and focus that is embraced, may not be what the counties want, but what is best.

**Tony Opperman, VDOT Environmental Division:** Government work done in the past 15-20 years is not wasted money, there have been some good ideas.

**Adam Shellenberger, Chief of Planning, Fauquier County:** Their vision is complicated with issues of history and safety. Try to keep Route 29 four lanes, preserve business access, efficient movement, enhance safety. Conscious of the issues and concerns, but they haven't figured out a solution yet.

## Corridor Interests and Vision (cont.)

**Julie Bolthouse, Piedmont Environmental Council:** The county's vision has remained consistent. Keep scenic viewsheds coming into Fauquier County, try and retain what they have. Cannot turn back time, leaving Prince William into Fauquier it is a different feeling and view (setting)? The country wants to retain that feeling. PEC is not against a commercial corridor as long as it stays on the south side of 29, not on north side 29. Very against the widening of 29. Buckland Battlefield is an important resources, long term vision is for Buckland to be a park that is open to the public. Retain and protect the village of Buckland.

**George Phillips, Prince William Co transportation planner:** Rt. 29 will remain a four-lane road from county line to Rt. 15, beyond that they wish to widen it to six lanes, multi-modal. There is a plan for an overpass on the railroad tracks, not funded. Small area plan, comp. plan update. Rt. 29 is one area being explored. Recommendations for downsizing some roads in the area. The Board of Supervisors has 5 new members and so land use proposals, there may be some changes. Prince William and Fauquier did a joint study for a Buckland bypass a number of years ago for shorter bypasses and the cost and resistance to the bypass was too great. I-66 expansion may help the corridor. No plans to widen roads along the corridor.

**Tony Opperman:** Making other systems better can help these smaller roads.

## Corridor Interests and Vision (cont.)

**Tim Hoffman:** Everything done on 29 has peripheral effects on traffic on secondary country roads. As 29 becomes less reliable people begin to use back roads. Glenkirk Road is increasingly used in the Vint Hill and Gainesville area. Have to think about projects and problems holistically.

**Natalie Erdossy, Brookside HOA:** Second Tim's comments.

**Betsy Merritt, National Trust for Historic Preservation:** The National Trust is looking at this from legal constraints with easements and ensuring federal preservation laws are honored. Minimizing impacts to historic resources.

**Justin Patton, Prince William Co. archeologist:** Discusses challenges in the area including: two VDOT districts in area, local traffic corridor, intense development at either end, layers of history, historic zoning overlay that protects Buckland, National Register District Buckland, local historic designations in Prince William County. Some planning in Prince William to keep four lanes, the plan is for six lanes going eastward. Route 29 Sector Plan calls for development east of 29, designated as a community employment center. Opportunities and challenges, there will probably not be a single alternative, but many, that will mitigate traffic and preserve historic resources and residential areas.

## Corridor Interests and Vision (cont.)

**Tony Opperman:** Points out the conservation easements along Route 29 on a slide. Mentions funding with American Battlefield Protection Program, who uses Land and Water Conservation Funds money to purchase these easements, results in constraints within federal law 6(f). The easements that DHR holds has to be reviewed by the State Review Board at DHR, most are on the Prince William side.

**George Phillips:** Manassas Battlefield and I-66, U.S. 29 is a two-lane road through the park. I doubt that will remain so, and that places limitations on expansion in the park.

**Tim Hoffman:** The number of constraints, what are the impact of the constraints on achieving the goals for the corridor? What are those goals: speedier travel, preservation of the surroundings? What are the constraints, too many constraints make a feasible solution difficult. Eventually, what constraints are we willing to forgo? What are people's vested interests? Too many interests make achieving that goal impossible. Identify and agree on constraints first, then solutions. We are looking at it backwards. We need to identify a vision first, then plan how we get there.

**Justin Patton:** Is Route 29 a statewide corridor of interest?

## Corridor Interests and Vision (cont.)

**Chuck Proctor, VDOT Culpeper District planner:** Section is currently at Level of Service “D,” which will fail within the next 7 years. Primary causes are development from Vint Hill to Culpeper, and commuter traffic. The problems are going to get much worse without improvements. Looking at intersection improvements, Routes 29 and 15 are getting people to I-66, it is a bottleneck of the corridor. The issue is not primarily commercial traffic but commuters.

**Barry Wright:** The future widening of Route 29 north of Route 15 at Gainesville. The traffic in the evening comes from I-66, and does not go north to Haymarket. All the solution does is funnel traffic into an area where there is no place to go. Take money and studies to find a solution. The VDOT study from 2015 , 51-52,000 cars use that stretch, almost as busy as I-66. Choking up at New Baltimore, they may not be coming here, but they are coming through here.

**Julie Bolthouse:** Traffic at PM peak in Fauquier and Prince William counties. Where are the bottlenecks? Create a map that shows these things. If you could address those places it would improve corridor flow. Adding pavement is not the solution.

**George Phillips:** Any future Route 29-15 intersection improvements really constrained by historic resources. Creating a free-flow intersection is the answer to the problem.

## Corridor Interests and Vision (cont.)

**Chuck Proctor:** discusses his slides concerning planning, Commonwealth Transportation Board, and SMART SCALE.

**Pete Eltringham:** Those who have worked on behalf of the county have experienced frustration with the SMART SCALE process. It has been a moving target. Are there more changes on the horizon?

**Chuck Proctor:** The system has evolved over time in an attempt to make it fair across the state. Have to provide the best projects at the best price that provides the best benefits. Fauquier is an “Area D” that means projects must address safety and economic development. Realize that high-cost projects are not likely to score well. The district’s most expensive project is the Warrenton Interchange, \$27 million. Most SMART SCALE funded projects are \$5-\$7 million.

**Pete Eltringham:** So the rigor (ruthlessness) that is in the process now is not going to change?

**Chuck Proctor:** Yes.

## Corridor Interests and Vision (cont.)

**Linda Wright:** Please expand on the role of National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) in the project development process. Is NEPA done before a locality even applies for a project? The Route 29 corridor study, four years in the making, public wasn't grounded in the rationale for the study, the meetings were contentious. The consultant said that all of these numbers will be subject to NEPA and so they may change. There needs to be a better learning curve as to what NEPA is and what it entails.

**Tony Opperman:** Projects are competing with other projects statewide and those projects with NEPA done are more ready than those that are not. That makes a project more competitive.

**Chuck Proctor:** Every project must have a preferred alternative, justification reports for alternatives are needed for the applications process and NEPA.

**Tony Opperman:** Most projects (90%) are Categorical Exclusion documents with a "no adverse effects" determination. There is an advantage to simple projects versus those more complex and involving more difficult issues.

## Corridor Interests and Vision (cont.)

**Linda Wright:** Requested a panel discussion of 6(f) with John Simkins, Rick Crofford, John Lynch, and Betsy Merritt. Linda inquired as to protections afforded 6(f) properties via federal legislation. Linda stated that 4(f) properties require avoidance and mitigation, while 6(f) mitigation results in replacement property. It has to go through Department of Conservation and Recreation and the National Park Service.

**Betsy Merritt:** NPS requires as a condition more than just a 1:1 replacement, similar value and usefulness (is how this is defined). NPS has to go through the Section 106 process and enter into a Memorandum of Agreement as part of that approval.

**Linda Wright:** Referenced an older letter from Paul Hawke where 25 acres was acquired of prime historic land in exchange for 1 acre of land used for a bridge replacement project. Buckland just updated its National Register nomination for the third time and that took five years. There is more to Buckland than the battlefield, including the macadam road, Native American and African-American, lots of layers of history. That is why they have been working with the American Battlefield Protection Program for easements to create a “federal nexus” in which if you touch one easement you touch them all, they are now viewed as a whole. There are additional ones that are finishing up and in application with the exception of one all are within the National Register boundaries for the district.

## Corridor Interests and Vision (cont.)

**Chuck Proctor:** Any projects along the U.S. 29 corridor will likely include an analysis of the potential effects to the Broad Run watershed, Lake Manassas and the public water supply.

**John Houston, resident on Lake Mansassas:** 1993 railroad realignment through this area, what came out is the City of Manassas wrote a letter to VDOT that Lake Manassas is a public water supply in which the City of Manassas was making a lot of money. Highlighted the value of drinking water.

**Tony Opperman:** Discusses the Six-Year Improvement Program and funding constraints.

**Greg Cooley, VDOT Culpeper District Construction Engineer:** Discusses U.S. 29 / Vint Hill Road Improvements. The advisory panel identified this as the #1 priority.

**Chuck Proctor:** The advisory group is still working with VDOT on this project as well as others in the area.

**Greg Cooley:** Two priority projects remain, U.S. 29/Vint Hill Road and 29/Broad Run Church Road.

# Corridor Interests and Vision (cont.)

**Tony Opperman:** The priority projects have not been coordinated.

**Betsy Merritt:** Wanted to know if VDOT was attempting not use ROW so that they don't have to coordinate the project.

**Marc Holma, Virginia Department of Historic Resources:** Is there an easement on priority #2?

**Julie Bolthouse:** Is there any impact to the cemetery on the parcel on the southeast corner of 29/Broad Run Church Road?

**Betsy Merritt:** There is no federal money?

**Tony Opperman and Greg Cooley** replied that VDOT's goal is to constrain the projects to minimize overall impacts and avoid impacts to protected properties. There is no easement on the priority #2 project, and no impact to the cemetery on that parcel. We do not at this time know if federal money will be used and at this time there is one project with funding allocated.

## Opportunities to Move Forward:

**Ike Broaddus:** The right solution is dependent on what problem you are trying to fix. Is it commuters or local traffic? Where does traffic originate and where does it go? An Origin-Destination (ODT) study may be a good place to start. Either improve the throughput or reroute through a bypass. Improve commuter options, which one makes the most sense depends on where the traffic originates and where it is going.

**Tim Hoffman:** What is the big picture? What are we trying to accomplish? Define the problem. Until we figure that out we will be dealing with issues relevant to the problem, but this ultimately decides how we solve the problem.

**Linda Wright:** We are seeing a steady increase in corridor traffic, night time is still. Prince William just voted on a bond to fund Route 28 improvements. She asked George whether the 28 project will affect 29? Godwin Drive alignment has been on the books since the 1980s. The bond was just voted on and approved. This project will impact 29. New members on Prince William BOS may result in additional changes. Agrees with previous, define the problem. Buckland is not the problem, but part of the problem.

## Opportunities to Move Forward (cont.)

**Pete Eltringham:** Once the problem is defined VDOT also has to have an open mind about solutions. The mission now is to manage 58,000 vehicles per day. Should that continue?

**Barry Wright:** global picture, the project being presented are so small relative to the issues being dealt with. How do we feel about the little pictures?

**Chuck Proctor:** VDOT has an obligation to show what is being done now. We are constrained by time and money. It was what could be done now with the resources available at the time. VDOT does not have significant projects in the future plan.

**Barry Wright:** A lot of chit-chat but with very little tangible info that we can use to move forward in a meaningful way.

**Ike Broaddus:** Setting date on the calendar, by Q1 2020 have some data about options, what they accomplish and what do they cost.

## Opportunities to Move Forward (cont.)

**Tony Opperman:** PW study, what degree of granularity provides origin and destination information. Or is it just traffic numbers with projections and land use?

**Betsy Merritt:** None of the projects addressed intersection of 29 and 15. It was outside of the study area.

**George Phillips:** Prince William transportation plan is 4 lane from Fauquier County line to 15, then 6 lanes from 15 north. This is part of their comprehensive plan.

**Linda Wright:** In 2009 worked with Wally Covington to amend the comprehensive plan to retain footprint of U.S. 29 to remove any discussion of split intersection at 29 and 215.

**George Phillips:** 29 north of 15 (Prince William County) will be 6 lane.

**Ike Broaddus:** Would love to see a holistic view of 29. There is the Fauquier focus and Culpeper and Prince William Counties focus. The Northern VA and the VDOT district split is causing a disconnect for the people that live in that area. U.S. 29 should not be divided by political boundaries.

## Opportunities to Move Forward (cont.)

**Julie Bolthouse:** Suggest origin and destination study would be useful. We need to define problem. Traffic count that is more inclusive, especially intersections, even off 29 to see what other areas are affected and to help define the problem.

**John Lynch, VDOT Culpeper District Engineer:** Discussion is good, but a lot of this has already been looked at. A lot of money has been put into this and we still haven't solved the problem. Each person will define the problem differently. Garrett's panel helped to really single all of this info out - safety, travel, and cultural resources. The data is probably all there it is just a matter of compiling. But it seems that there is always one person or one group that does not agree with the proposed solution.

**Tim Hoffman:** Applaud VDOT for their attempt to address the problem. But this is a micro view. In the future this needs to be more holistic and broader. What is the master plan for the long time? At the advisory panel, Garrett said there is no master plan, VDOT solves problems in 5-year increments. What are you trying to do here? The solutions will be different.

**Chuck Proctor:** There is recent traffic data from the Cut the Hills project.

## Opportunities to Move Forward (cont.)

**John Lynch:** indicated that a lot of that data is already there.

**Chuck Proctor:** States that some of the data is probably all ready there, it just needs to be worked with.

**Linda Wright:** There have been 5 corridor studies. There is a lot of data in the existing studies. Lots of development -- commercial and residential.

**Ike Broaddus:** Most of those studies include projections but are vague and do not provide that origination and destination information that seems to be the focus.

**Justin Patton:** Is VDOT really looking closely at the 29 corridor?

**Tony Opperman and John Lynch:** No

**Tim Hoffman:** How do VDOT and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) coordinate on highway management? The states own and operate the interstates, FHWA is consulted in certain matters, but for the most part the state takes care of the roads. He wants to know how road funding works.

## Opportunities to Move Forward (cont.)

**Ike Broaddus:** If VDOT is not looking at this holistically, then we need to rethink this. Looking at comprehensive plans is a problem because they are local.

**John Lynch:** VDOT looked at the whole corridor. Most localities at the time built their own bypass, except Charlottesville. At the time a broader view was considered and preferred. True, but from a state perspective, the comprehensive plans are looked at regionally. Could there be more regional guidance, sure. If the problem examined is too large then money is an issue, funding is a big issue. It is more of a resource issue, not an unwillingness to look at a big problem.

**John Houston:** The last 29 corridor study has some origin and destination information in it.

**Tony Opperman:** How about if VDOT takes a look at what has already been done to see if some of that information is present in that study.

**Ike Broaddus:** Said he looked at the 2009 corridor study and the info isn't in there.

# Opportunities to Move Forward (cont.)

**Linda Wright:** There was an amendment that allowed for expanding the alternatives for the region. **Doug Koelemay** (former CTB member) was part of a subcommittee that did additional work to provide more details in the study document.

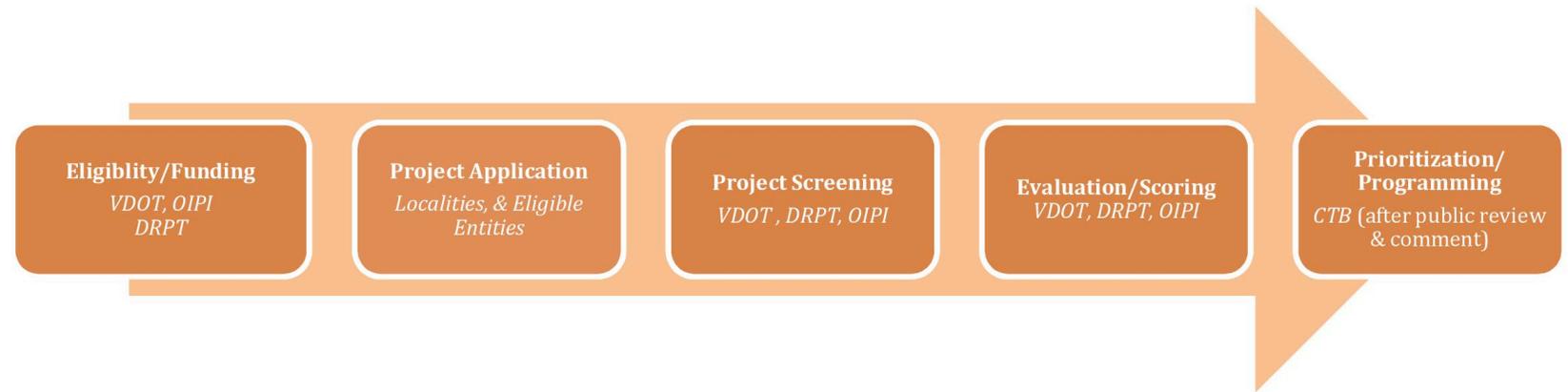
**Tony Opperman** proposes a meeting like this for early next year.

**Tim Hoffman:** Very complimentary of VDOT efforts and sees the proposed projects as a success through compromise. Tried to accommodate other people and points of view.

**Tony Opperman:** will look through the data and compile what information we can and look at a follow-up meeting.

# Smart Scale

## Potential Project



### Eligibility

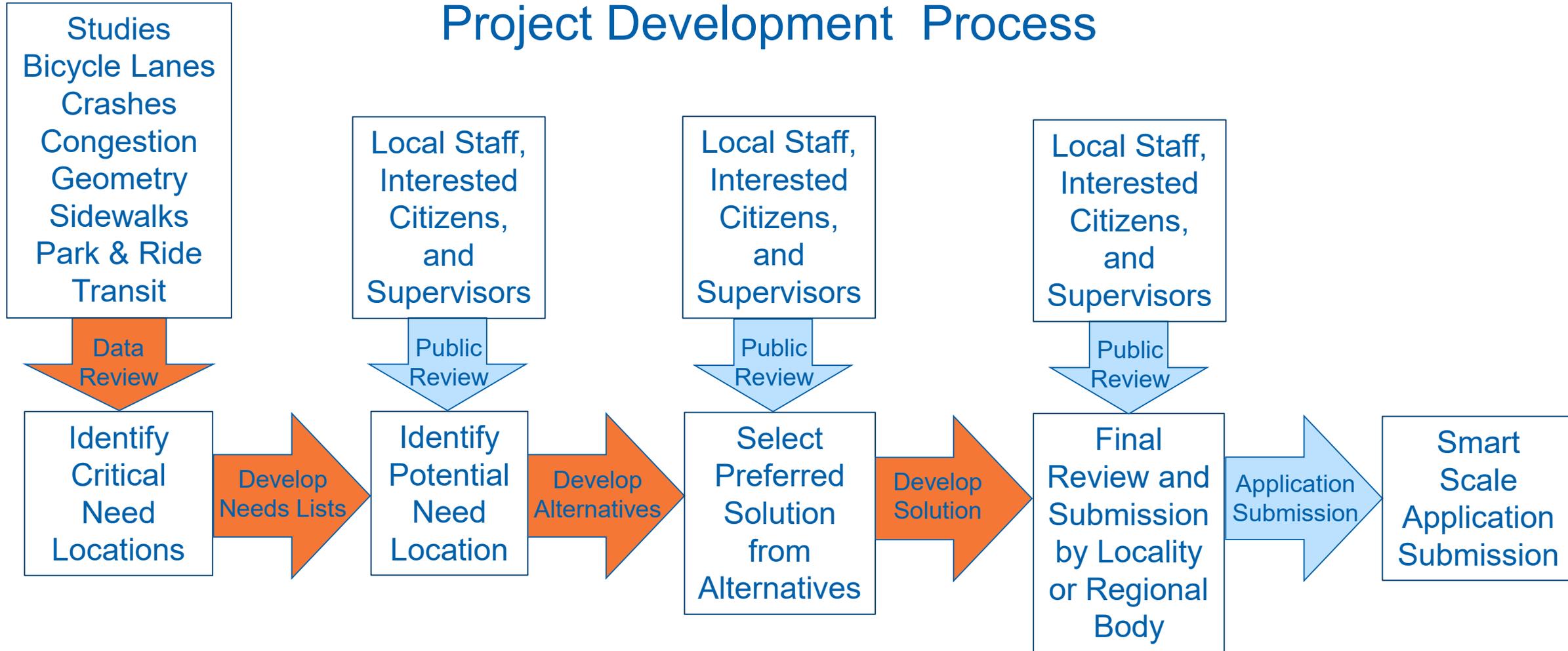
1. Must meet a VTRANS need
  - a. Corridor of Statewide Significance (COSS: U.S. 29, 28, 17, I-64 & I-66)
  - b. Regional Network (RN - Multimodal Network within the urbanized area)
  - c. In a designated Urban Development Area (UDA)
  - d. Identified safety need locations
2. Need to be submitted by an eligible entity (locality, MPO, PDC, or transit agency)

### Readiness

1. Clearly define sketch, project description and cost estimate
2. Completed study (traffic, crash, NEPA, SJR, IJR, etc.)

# Smart Scale

## Project Development Process

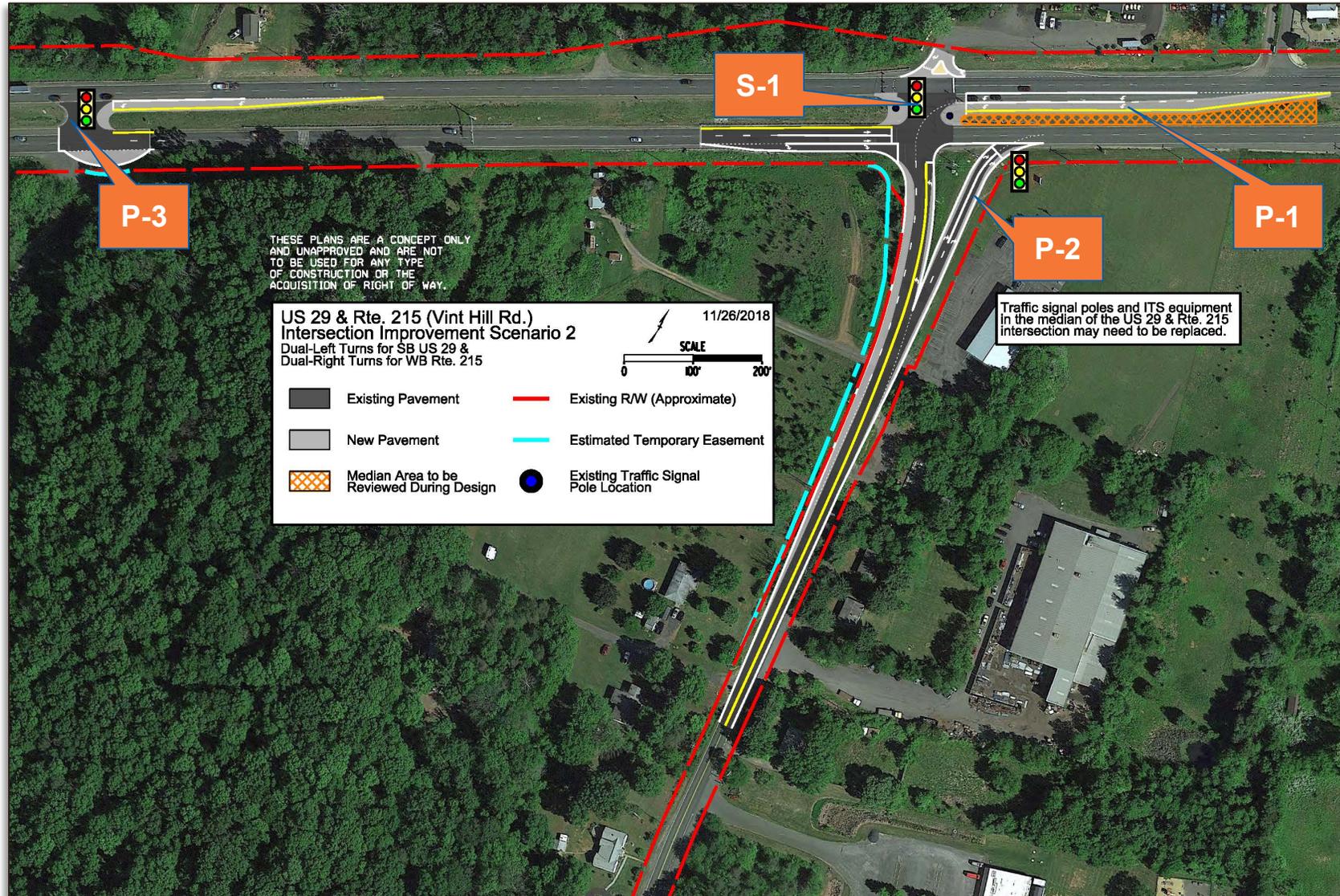


# Phase 2 Improvements: Rt. 29 / Rt. 600 & Rt. 29 / Rt. 215 Intersections

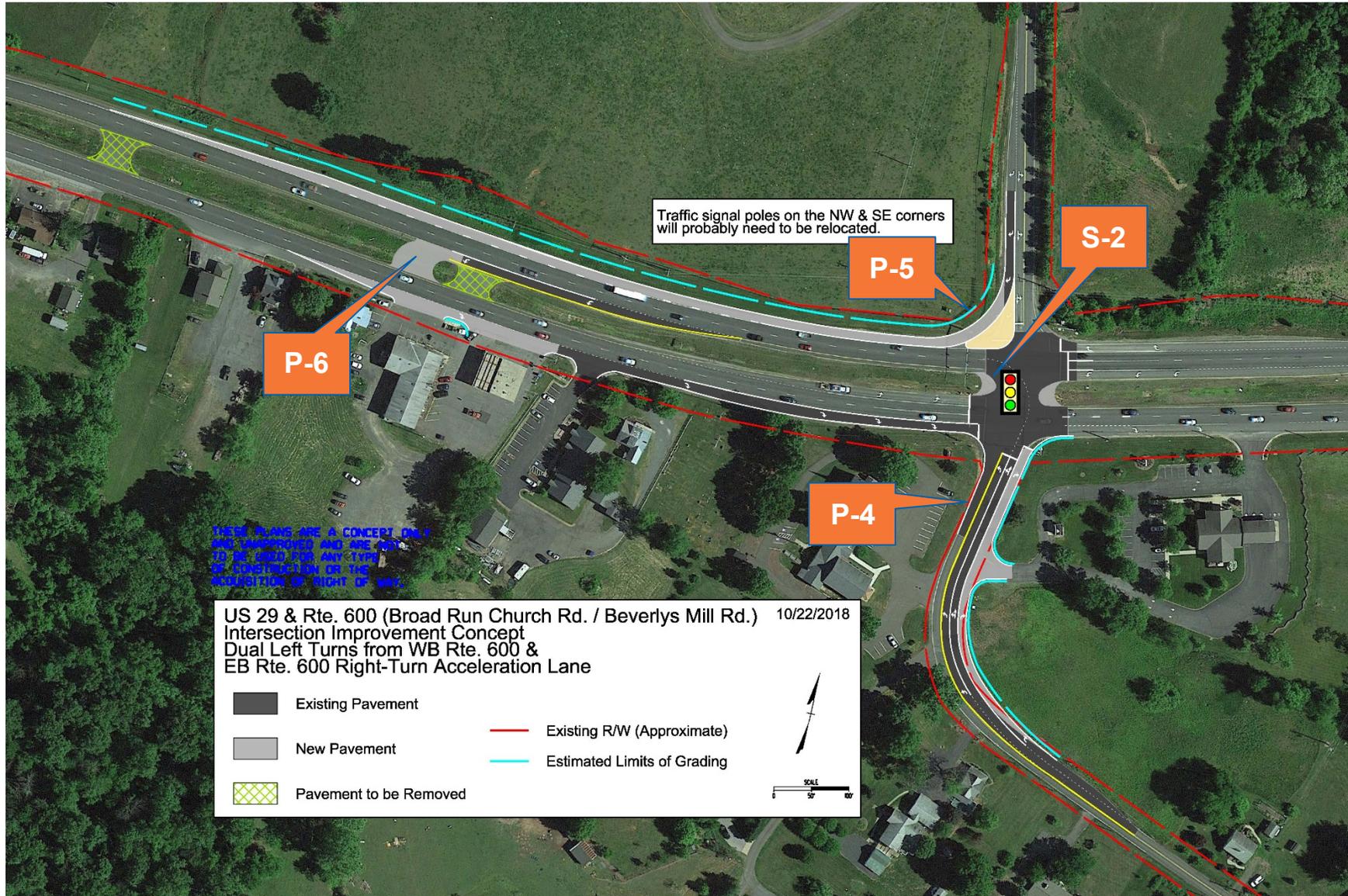
	Project Phase	Preliminary Engineering	Right-of-Way & Utilities	Construction	Total Costs
29 / 215 intersection	<i>P-1 Rt. 29 SB dual left turn lanes</i>			\$ 1,380,000	
	<i>P-2 Rt. 215 right turn lane</i>			\$ 245,000	
	<i>P-3 Rt. 29 U-turn south of Rt. 215</i>			\$ 480,000	
	<i>S-1 Signal improvements at 29/215</i>			\$ 760,000	
	<b>Rt. 29/215 Project Total</b>	<b>\$ 650,000</b>	<b>\$ 355,000</b>	<b>\$ 2,865,000</b>	<b>\$ 3,870,000</b>
29 / 600 intersection	<i>P-4 Rt. 600 to 29 SB left turn lanes</i>			\$ 856,000	
	<i>P-5 Rt. 600 EB acceleration lane</i>			\$ 1,290,000	
	<i>P-6 Rt. 29 U-turn south of Rt. 600</i>			\$ 342,000	
	<i>S-2 Signal improvements at 29/600</i>			\$ 445,000	
	<b>Rt. 29/600 Project Total</b>	<b>\$ 700,000</b>	<b>\$ 945,000</b>	<b>\$ 2,933,000</b>	<b>\$ 4,578,000</b>

Cost estimates are current dollar values

# Phase 2: U.S. 29 / Vint Hill Road Improvements

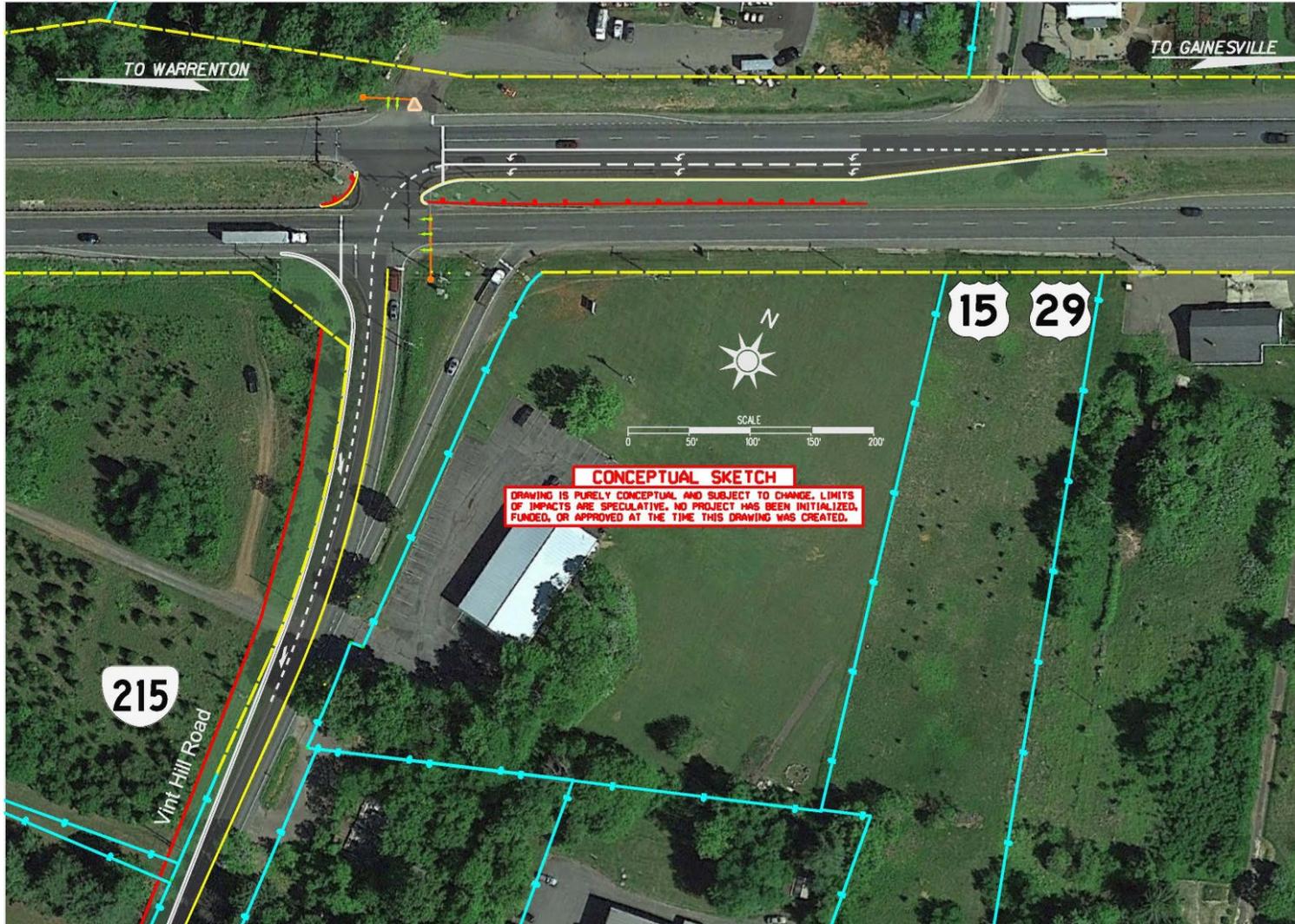


# Phase 2: U.S. 29 / Broad Run Church Rd. Improvements



# Panel Priority #1

## Route 29 / Vint Hill Rd Dual Left Turn and Merge Lane



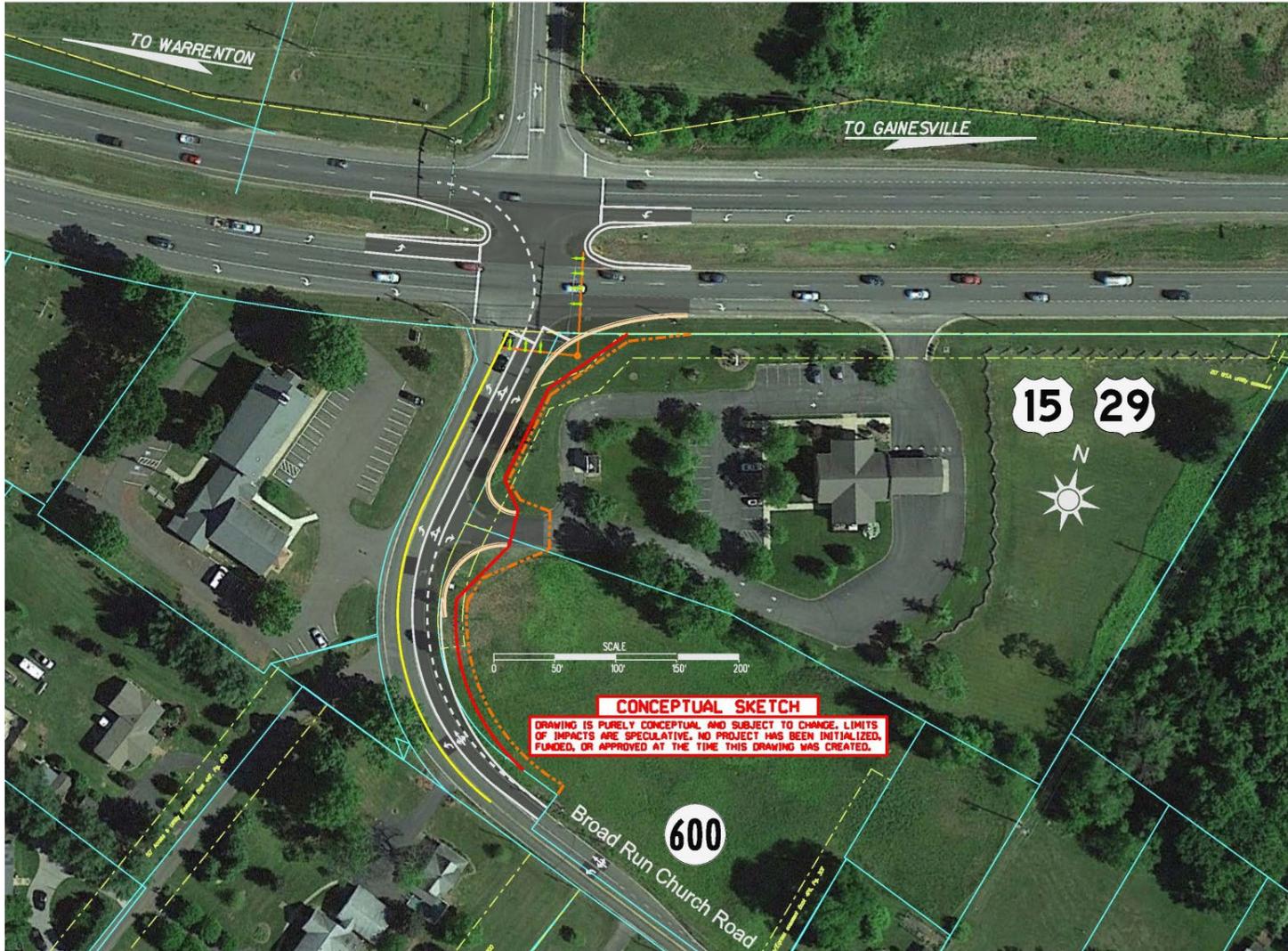
### Project P-1

Project Phase	Current Dollar Costs	State Forces-HE Approach
<i>Preliminary Engineering</i>	\$500,000	\$500,000
<i>Right of Way and Utilities</i>	\$300,000	\$300,000
<i>Construction</i>	\$1,380,000	\$750,000
<i>Signal Work</i>	\$190,000	\$210,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$2,370,000</b>	<b>\$1,760,000</b>

*Note: All costs are in 2019 dollars*

# Panel Priority #2

## Route 29 / Broad Run Church Rd Dual Left Turn Lanes



### Project P-4

Project Phase	Design-Bid-Build Approach	State Forces-HE Approach
<i>Preliminary Engineering</i>	\$400,000	\$400,000
<i>Right of Way and Utilities</i>	\$545,000	\$545,000
<i>Construction</i>	\$856,000	\$364,000
<i>Signal Work</i>	\$149,000	\$165,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$1,950,000</b>	<b>\$1,474,000</b>

*Note: All costs are in 2019 dollars*

# Panel Priority #3

## Route 29 / Vint Hill Road Dual Right Turn Lanes



### Project P-2

Project Phase	Current Dollar Costs	State Forces-HE Approach
<i>Preliminary Engineering</i>	\$300,000	\$300,000
<i>Utilities</i>	\$55,000	\$55,000
<i>Construction</i>	\$245,000	\$245,000
<i>Signal Work</i>	\$80,000	\$90,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$680,000</b>	<b>\$690,000</b>

*Note: All costs are in 2019 dollars*

# Opportunities for Collaboration

- **Land use and transportation**
- **Cumulative effects arising from small incremental actions**
- **Collaborative, regional opportunities to manage traffic on Route 29**
  
- *(record discussion here)*

# Opportunities for Collaboration (cont.)

