News and Updates

This edition of the Route 29 Solutions e-mail newsletter includes everything you need to know about the status of the Route 29-Rio Road grade-separated intersection project, as well as upcoming work on other projects.

**Rio Rd. Intersection Opens 46 Days Ahead of Schedule**

Through traffic flows freely below the Rio Road intersection, as seen from the bridge deck looking south toward Charlottesville.

As soon as the Rio Road intersection closed to traffic on May 23 it was apparent that Lane-Corman Joint Venture, the contractor for the project, was not planning to use the full 103 days allowed before reopening the intersection to traffic. As it happened, they needed only 57 days, a bit more than half the allowable time.

Within 48 hours after the closure the first of 47 beams for the bridge were set. Within two weeks, 60,000 cubic yards of dirt were excavated and work on the retaining walls was already under way.

By Memorial Day all the bridge beams were set; by the
Fourth of July the concrete panels that faced the retaining walls were almost all poured and the overhead directional signs were in place. That work was obvious. Less apparent to motorists were the installation of the drainage system under the bridge, the electrical conduits running through the concrete bridge deck and along the retaining walls, and the sidewalks and pedestrian crossings around the intersection.

Work continued around the clock, six days a week, through the first half of July. The final work prior to opening the intersection to traffic included testing the traffic signals and pedestrian signals, striping the lanes for the new traffic pattern and – not an insignificant task – removing all the construction equipment from the project site.

“This aesthetic detail, which appears above the through lanes on the Rio Road bridge, was suggested by the Project Delivery Advisory Panel.

“Lane-Corman accomplished the work efficiently, quickly and most important, safely. We have a lot more work to do to complete this project, and the rest of the Route 29 Solutions program, but reopening the Rio Road intersection early was a major milestone accomplishment,” said Dave Covington, VDOT’s regional program manager for Route 29 Solutions.

By meeting the interim milestones spelled out in the contract in 57 days Lane-Corman earned an incentive bonus of approximately $7.3 million for opening the intersection seven weeks ahead of schedule.

Even after the intersection reopened, VDOT’s traffic engineers, along with the contractor’s engineers, continue to monitor the signal timing at the Rio Road
intersection and along the Route 29 corridor. That work will continue for the next several weeks as the signal timing plans are fine-tuned to move traffic most efficiently along the corridor as well as on the side streets and through the intersections.

Although the interim milestones necessary to open the intersection have been reached, much work remains during the next several months. Motorists should expect to see continued overnight work, including lane and intersection closures on both Route 29 and Rio Road, as the final phase of the project continues.

As work on the Route 29-Rio Road grade-separated intersection continues well ahead of schedule, the Lane-Corman and VDOT project teams gather for a team photo. Some of the Lane-Corman construction crews have completed their work and will move on to other projects.

Watch a Time-Lapse Video of the Intersection Construction

During the intersection closure a time-lapse camera captured images of the work approximately every 10 minutes. That video, which depicts the entire sequence of construction, from May 22 until July 19, can be viewed on VDOT's YouTube channel.

Project Work Activities

Work in Process

- Complete review and fine-tuning of traffic signal timing plans at Rio Road intersection and along
the Route 29 corridor
- Complete repair work to the surface of several retaining wall panels below the Rio Road bridge
- Remove temporary traffic signals, poles and electrical wiring
- Remove temporary directional signs
- Pour concrete and apply surface finish on sidewalks adjacent to intersection

**Upcoming Work**

- Complete sidewalks and curb cuts adjacent to intersection
- Install pedestrian lighting along sidewalks
- Install roadway lighting for depressed through lanes
- Complete permanent closure of median breaks at Berkmar Drive and Myers Drive
- Seal and stain retaining walls and bridge parapets
- Install handrails and parapet railings along sidewalks
- Install planters and other aesthetic elements on Rio Road bridge
- Complete fine grading and landscaping along outside right of way limits
- Apply final travel course of asphalt pavement
- Apply final pavement markings, including lane striping, directional arrows and route designators

**Traffic Impacts**

Between 6 a.m. and 9 p.m. all lanes on Route 29 and Rio Road are open and all traffic movements at the intersection, including left turns and u-turns, may be made.

Overnight, between 9 p.m. and 6 a.m. there will be lane closures on Route 29 with traffic restricted to a single lane in each direction. On Rio Road, the crossover and intersection may be closed on both sides of the Rio Road bridge.

These closures will continue for the next several months while the contractor completes work on the project. The final phase of the project includes installation of the lighting for the through lanes and the pedestrian fixtures on the local lanes, sealing and staining the retaining
walls and bridge parapets, fine grading and landscaping along the outside right of way, and final paving.

This work will be completed no later than Dec. 2, which is the fixed completion date for the Rio Road grade-separated intersection project.

Traffic will Shift on Route 29 Widening Project Aug. 3

Work has progressed rapidly on the Route 29 widening project between Route 643 (Polo Grounds Road) and Route 1719 (Towncenter Drive). If the weather continues to cooperate to allow final grading and paving the first phase traffic shift will happen on the evening of Aug. 3.

That first shift will move southbound traffic onto the new lanes constructed in the median strip. The shift will allow the current southbound lanes to be rebuilt and moved to the west. That rebuilding will also involve significant earthwork to match the elevation of the new lanes.

New lanes are being constructed in the median of Route 29 between Polo Grounds Road and Towncenter Drive. Southbound traffic will be switched to these lanes on Aug. 3 so the current southbound lanes can be shifted to the west and reconstructed.

Once the new southbound lanes are built, southbound traffic will be switched onto those lanes and the northbound traffic will shift into the median. That shift, planned for early 2017, will allow the current northbound lanes to be rebuilt and a paved multi-use path to be added to the east of the roadway. That construction will also include significant grading to eliminate the hills and
limited sight distance at several locations.

The Route 29 widening project, which is also being built by Lane-Corman Joint Venture, will be completed no later than Oct. 30, 2017.

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**Hillsdale Extended Construction Begins in Early August**

Fielder’s Choice Enterprises, the contractor selected by the city of Charlottesville to build the Hillsdale Drive Extended project, is mobilizing to begin construction.

Relocation of utilities along the project alignment is well under way, several businesses have been relocated from spaces along the alignment, and construction should begin in early August.

The project, which will build a two-lane road to connect Hydraulic Road with the current southern terminus of Hillsdale Drive at Greenbrier Drive, will be complete by Oct. 30, 2017.

For more information about the Hillsdale Drive Extended project check the [project website](#).

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**Bridge and Roadway Work Continues on Berkmar Drive**

Work is progressing ahead of schedule on the Berkmar Drive Extension project, which will extend the roadway north from Route 1438 (Hilton Heights Road) to Route 1719 (Towncenter Drive).
Fork Rivanna River continues. Looking north in the foreground is the south abutment; across the river are the columns and piers to support the bridge. In the distance is the north abutment and the rough roadway alignment.

The piers for the bridge over the South Fork Rivanna River are nearing completion and steel beams that will support the bridge deck are expected to be set later this summer.

Meanwhile there is significant earthwork being done along the roadway alignment, with culverts placed into stream crossings and covered with fill to bring the earth to the final roadway elevation. Since this road is being built on a new alignment between Route 29 and Rio Mills Road, most of the work is not visible to drivers.

Get Connected

Hotlines: We’re here for you

- Lane-Corman Joint Venture, the contractor for the three Route 29 Solutions design-build projects, has a toll-free telephone number, 844-220-5540. Calls with questions or comments about the Route 29 widening, Rio Road grade-separated intersection and Berkmar Drive extension projects will be returned within one business day.

- Those with questions about other Route 29 Solutions projects should call 434-529-6314 or email Route29Solutions@VDOT.Virginia.gov.

- All other VDOT-related questions or comments should be directed to 800-367-7623 (800-FOR-ROAD). VDOT’s Customer Service Center is staffed 24/7/365 and the contact will be directed to the appropriate field staff.

Keep up with Route 29 news

Traffic alerts for the Route 29 Solutions projects are available on the project website under News & Traffic Alerts. Sign up for alerts to be delivered to your e-mail on the Project Newsletter page.