

COMMUNITY AND SERVICE ROADS – October 16, 2019

The residents of the Broadneck Peninsula and the Eastern Shore are living with limited movement on weekends from May to October due to the heavy volume of traffic using the Bay Bridge. The impact is being felt on their community and service roads. The repaving of one westbound lane has compounded the problem. Many residents do not attempt to leave their communities unless they absolutely have to be somewhere. Measures need to be taken to improve traffic flow. Some suggestions would be:

1. Keep 3 lanes open EB when traffic is 3-5 miles from the bridge. This needs to be done on heavy volume days (Fri. Sat.)
2. Keep 3 lanes open WB on Sundays when traffic is returning
3. More pro-active announcements on Bay Span, twitter, and other social media.
4. Bay Span-announcement at beginning to encourage drivers to stay on 50 and keep the service and community roads open for residents and emergency responders.
5. More publicity on the radio and in newspapers. (local and community newspapers as well as major papers)
6. Publicity at the Ocean Resorts.
7. Publicity at rest stops.
8. Publicity at toll booths.
9. An e-mail to e-z pass holders encouraging them to stay on 50.
10. Overhead message boards and other message boards encouraging drivers to stay on 50
11. All announcements need to encourage people to keep community roads open for emergency responders and residents. They also need to advise drivers that staying on 50 can be faster than community roads. Community roads come to a standstill and there is a longer wait time to reenter the highway because they are one lane.

I know there is not an easy answer or one solution fits all. Many EB and WB drivers will feel that they are an exception to any rule and they will take any road that they may think is a shortcut to the bridge. Perhaps repeated announcements and publicity will help to keep drivers on 50.

Proposal for East College Parkway and Skidmore/Whitehall Service Rds.

These two service roads parallel Rt. 50 eastbound. Traffic comes to a standstill when drivers use them as a "shortcut" to the bridge.

Plan A

When there is a backup to the Bay Bridge of two miles or more (approximately exit 29), the Bay Bridge Administrator or designee would temporarily close the ramp to the Bay Bridge which is located on Oceanic Dr. (also known as the Sandy Point Overpass) for a period of up to three hours. A maintenance crew from the bridge would set up barriers saying the ramp is temporarily closed. The overhead message sign on Rt. 50 would post that the Bay Bridge ramp on Oceanic Dr. is temporarily closed, stay on 50. Other signs could be posted at the end of College Parkway (across from 7-11) and on St. Margaret's Rd. The temporary closure could be added to the Bay Span message and sent to social media such as twitter, radio stations, etc. Roads are temporarily closed for many reasons: accidents, construction, special events, and public safety. This closure would be in the interest of public safety.

Plan B

Close the ramp to the Bay Bridge located on Oceanic Dr. on Fridays from 5 p.m. to 7 p.m. and on Saturdays from 11:00 am to 1:00 p.m. There would have to be advanced notices and heavy media coverage to let drivers know this would be taking place. Residents would have a window of opportunity for access to their homes during these times. (Proposal for Crownsville) Neither of these plans should require a police presence.

The State Highway Administration, Maryland Toll Authority, our elected officials and community representatives should meet to discuss whether or not these are feasible options. I am sure there are many pros and cons and other factors that need to be considered. The communities located along the service roads deserve to have a solution to the problem of non-access to their homes.

Barbara Hitchings - Resident- Log Inn