

July 23, 2018

The HOA/POA TDOT Liaison Committee received several questions and comments from property owners about the recent update for the Highway 444 Resurfacing Project. We appreciate your interest and comments. Here are the subjects of the questions/comments and the response from the Committee.

1. Right hand turn lane from south bound 444 to Maple Hill Road
 - 1.1. During the resurfacing project the Maple Hill intersection will be resurfaced and marked with highly reflective strips to allow broader turns onto Maple Hill Rd. but there will not be a right turn lane. The existing TDOT Right-of-Way (ROW) at the Maple Hill intersection is not wide enough to add a right turn lane. Many years ago that intersection was redesigned so that through traffic actually uses the shoulders which provided room to add the left turn lanes for Maple Hill Rd. and Sequoyah Rd.
2. Guard rails
 - 2.1. As part of the plan to make Highway 444 look like a scenic highway, the Liaison Committee asked TDOT to replace all galvanized guardrails with the brown powder coated guardrails and TDOT agreed. The galvanized guard rails and posts can be reused elsewhere.
 - 2.2. The Liaison Committee alerted TDOT to the safety hazard of the steep slope toward the Toqua Golf Course near the Richey Road and Amohi Way intersections. TDOT evaluated the hazard and concluded that immediate mitigation was necessary. They installed the galvanized guardrail as a temporary measure until the brown powder coated guardrail is available from the manufacturer in mid-August.
3. Center line Rumble strip
 - 3.1. There was considerable discussion about adding rumble strips along the sides and center of the road. The final decision was to not add rumble strips at all. Since Highway 444 is designated as a Bike Route, the rumble strips on the side of the road would be a hazard to cyclists. TDOT advised the Liaison Committee that rumble strips down the center of the road weaken the pavement and lead to premature cracking and potholes in the center of the road. Instead of centerline rumble strips, TDOT recommended installing permanent reflectors which will clearly mark the center of the road, especially at night, and because the reflectors are raised, drivers will hear the tires of their vehicle hitting the reflectors when the vehicle drifts across the center line.
4. Accommodations for Cyclists

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- 4.1. Highway 444 is a designated bike route. The existing debris along the shoulders of the road will be removed and the resurfacing will provide paved shoulders that vary from 2 feet to 7 feet wide.
5. Northbound merge from Highway 444 onto Highway 321 toward Lenoir City is too short
 - 5.1. The merge lane, as built, meets the TDOT standards for a merge lane at the posted speed limit of 40 MPH. There was not enough room for a freeway style acceleration lane. When approaching the merge lane keep in mind that there is a "Yield" sign which means that vehicles on the main road have the right of way. There is enough room in the lane to align your vehicle parallel to the traffic on Highway 321 and use your mirror to determine when it is safe to merge onto the highway.