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Changes to address safety, congestion on Port Republic Road

HARRISONBURG, Va. – Drivers along Harrisonburg’s Port Republic Road will soon see changes aimed toward making the roadway safer for all.

Left turns will no longer be allowed onto, or off of, Port Republic Road from Crawford Avenue, Hillcrest Drive and Hunters Road during peak hours starting the week of August 19. Restricted hours will be in place Monday through Friday, 7 to 9 a.m. and 3 to 6:30 p.m. There will be no restrictions on weekends or holidays.

The changes, which will include signs and flashing lights to remind drivers of the restricted hours, are focused on reducing crashes and congestion at these intersections. Left turns are one of the most dangerous turning movements and are responsible for a high percentage of crashes with injuries. Left turns off of Port Republic Road onto neighborhood streets also have a tendency to cause rear-end crashes when the vehicle turning left has to wait for a gap in traffic and comes to a stop in the through-lane, causing the drivers behind the turning vehicle to have to rapidly or unexpectedly come to a stop.

Those traveling to or from the neighborhoods between Main Street and Interstate 81 can use South Main Street as an alternative route during these hours. Those traveling to or from neighborhoods on Hunters Road should use Bradley Drive as an alternative route.

“The City realizes there is a tradeoff between convenience and safety, and recognizes that some trips will be slightly longer due to this change,” Director of Public Works Tom Hartman said. “This is the reason for the restriction being limited to only peak travel times.”



(Above) The Port Republic Road study area. The City is looking at ways to improve safety and reduce congestion at a number of intersections along the corridor.

These changes were the result of a detailed study of the Port Republic Road corridor. The study also analyzed any additional safety and congestion improvements that are needed at multiple intersections between South Main Street and Devon Lane.

“At the end of the day, we want to make sure drivers can safely move through this corridor to get where they are going,” Hartman added. “And while these changes will take some getting used to, we know the end result will be a much-improved area for all who live in and pass through this area.”

Port Republic Road is a major urban arterial, providing access to commercial and residential areas of the City as well as the primary entrance into James Madison University. Increased growth and demand from all modes of transportation, combined with closely spaced intersections and interchange ramps, create traffic congestion and safety issues that have an impact on regional travel conditions.

More information on the study is available online at www.harrisonburgva.gov/port-republic-study-2018

***The City of Harrisonburg** is centrally located in the Shenandoah Valley of Virginia. It is home to approximately 54,000 people. More information about the City of Harrisonburg is available online at www.HarrisonburgVA.gov.*



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