

Welcome to the public meeting for the proposed pavement rehabilitation and road diet project for Government Street (LA 73) from its junction with East Boulevard to Lobdell Avenue in East Baton Rouge Parish. This project is funded by the Federal Highway Administration, the Louisiana Department of Transportation and Development, and the City of Baton Rouge/Parish of East Baton Rouge.



In addition to this presentation, the following stations are available tonight:

- A Sign-in and Hand-out Station
- An Exhibit Station to review layouts of the proposed project and to ask questions to project staff
- And a Comment Station for giving written and/or verbal comments. Comments received tonight and those postmarked within 10 days of this meeting will be included in the official meeting transcript.

Project team members are available to assist you and receive your comments.



As shown on this vicinity map, the proposed project is located along the Government Street corridor from the East Boulevard intersection, west of Interstate 110 eastward to the Lobdell Avenue intersection in Baton Rouge.



The purpose and need for this project is to: improve the condition of the pavement on Government Street, Provide safe and diverse multimodal transportation options, and Contribute to the livability and the economic revitalization of the corridor.



The proposed project would include pavement rehabilitation for the full length of the project corridor,

A road diet and incorporation of bicycle and pedestrian elements

Intersection Improvements at Jefferson Highway

A roundabout at Lobdell Avenue/Independence Park boulevard,

Americans with Disabilities Act-compliant sidewalks, and

Streetscape improvements along the corridor.

Upon completion of these improvements, the ownership of Government Street (LA 73) will be transferred to the City of Baton Rouge/Parish of East Baton Rouge.



Pavement rehabilitation includes patching the existing concrete, cold planing the existing asphaltic concrete, and overlaying the road surface with asphaltic concrete.

During construction, one lane in each direction must remain open at all times. Lane closures are only allowed at night and/or on weekends. Public Notices will be sent out in advance for these situations.



The reduction in the number of lanes is often called a road diet. This change will reduce the number of conflict points for vehicles, enhance safety for pedestrians (crossing a fewer number of lanes) and provide better access for the many side streets and driveways from the center TWLTL. Another benefit of the road diet is that the excess pavement remaining from the original four-lane section can be used to incorporate the Complete Streets policy which provides street space for multi-modal improvements such as bike lanes.



Government Street typically has 4-11' travel lanes with curb and sidewalks outside of the pavement.

The ROW width varies within the project limits from 50' to 75', but the ROW is typically 60' wide (leaving only 8' outside the pavement on each side to the row).



The project limits include the entire existing ROW width. Numerous constraints and deficiencies were identified along the project corridor:

- 1) ROW widths vary throughout the corridor. The ROW lines are shown on each exhibit on display.
- 2) Sidewalk widths are substandard in many areas and numerous intersections do not have handicap-accessible crossings with ramps.
- 3) Many businesses currently allow parking within the ROW. Throughout the project area, the design goal has been to minimize parking or backing out into the ROW or directly onto Government Street.
- 4) There are many Wide areas of mountable/roll-over curb; and
- 5) There are a large number of driveways on Government Street



This photograph shows patrons parking within the right-of-way at a small grocery store on Government Street.



This photograph points out the difference between Mountable or Rollover curbs and Barrier Curb.



The proposed project would provide a 3-lane roadway (2 11-foot wide travel lanes with a 12-foot wide center two-way left turn lane) with 5-foot wide bike lanes on each side through most of the project corridor.

Median islands are proposed throughout the corridor to define or limit left turns or to offer pedestrian crossing refuge.



The project designs have identified solutions to some of the deficiencies identified within the project corridor.

Sidewalks will be designed to meet ADA standards

Barrier curbs, raised medians, and defined driveways will all help to alleviate deficiencies caused by parking within the ROW and the number of driveways (or access points) onto Government Street



Raised medians were used to define where left turns are allowable onto side streets or driveways. On the figure shown, a car travelling east can turn left onto Ogden Drive from Government; however, that same traveler cannot turn left onto Bedford Drive. The median blocks left turn access onto Bedford Drive, because Bedford Drive is one-way, south bound.



Replacing mountable or roll over curb with barrier curbs limits access to the large parking lot between Aladdin's Lamp Antiques and Ragusa's Automotive. The barrier curbs would no longer permit vehicles to drive over the curb anywhere along the parking lot opening. Defined driveways would reduce the number of access points onto Government Street, thus minimizing conflict points.



The traffic models predict that up to 100 vehicles out of the daily total of 20,000 (or about 2 cars per minute) may reroute from Government Street to North Boulevard during the PM peak hour.

Some additional traffic may divert to Claycut Road during the PM peak hour, but it is projected to be no more than 50 vehicles, or less than 1 car per minute. According to the model supplied by the Capital Region Planning Commission, any additional drivers on Claycut would be locals with destinations on neighborhood streets.

No rerouting is anticipated between S Foster Drive and Lobdell Avenue. The traffic modeling has shown that the proposed lane configurations will be sufficient for maintaining existing traffic levels.



This map indicates the increases or decreases in delay of 10 seconds or more at the intersection approaches during peak periods for the proposed project. During off-peak periods, we would expect less delay at the intersections. There is a large scale version of this map on display with the project exhibits.



The section of Government Street with the highest traffic counts is from Moore Street to Jefferson Highway. Approx. 25,000 vehicles per day travel through this 11-block area. Traffic analyses show that the road diet would not work in this section of Government Street. Therefore, a modified cross-section is proposed.

The intersection of Foster (southbound) has 2 left turn lanes which require 2 through lanes to accept vehicles turning eastbound onto Government Street. The 2 EB through lanes on Government Street must remain (as shown in the top cross section).

At Jefferson Highway, the right eastbound lane on Government Street would become a dedicated right turn lane onto Jefferson Highway (as shown in the lower cross section).



You may have noticed on the previous slide that there are no bicycle lanes between Moore Street and Jefferson Highway, bicyclists can either choose to remain on Government Street as vehicles in traffic, or they can divert from Government (shown in dark blue above) south to existing bike lanes on Capital Heights (shown in green) or to existing sharrows on Claycut (shown in Orange). Bicyclists can re-connect with Government Street through the proposed sharrows on Moore Street in Capital Heights or through the proposed sharrows near Goodwood Park. These sharrows and bike lanes are consistent with the Center for Planning Excellence Street Smart plan.



Road diets reduce the number of conflict points in the corridor and make traffic operations safer for users. Conflict points are any point where the paths of two through or turning vehicles diverge, merge, or cross, shown graphically by the white diamonds on the graphics.

The graphics at the top of the screen compare right angle conflict points on a four lane undivided roadway, as Government Street currently is, to a 3-lane road diet.

At the bottom of the screen, the conflict points shown are for left turning vehicles, right turning vehicles, and vehicles changing lanes. As you can see, the number of conflict points are reduced by half with the road diet.



Road diets reduce the likelihood of vehicles that are difficult to see or are hidden in blind spots for turning vehicles or for pedestrians crossing the roadway.



The safety performance of the corridor and proposed improvements were analyzed using the Highway Safety Manual predictive method. The existing Government Street has a crash rate greater than 2x the Statewide average for similar 4-lane roadways. This 16.1 crashes per mile makes Government Street an abnormal location. The results of the predictive model show that the safety performance of Government Street will improve to 7.7 crashes per mile. The two bar charts show predicted crash comparisons between the existing condition and the proposed road diet. In each category compared, overall crashes per mile, crashes at intersections, segment crashes, fatal and injury crashes, and property damage only crashes, the road diet would provide improved safety.



This slide and several of the following slides show how the crash rate of several segments along the Government Street corridor would improve with the implementation of a road diet. This slide provides a crash rate comparison between the existing Government Street Geometry and the proposed Road Diet Geometry from Interstate 110 to 18<sup>th</sup> Street. The Road Diet Geometry shows a reduction in crash rates from 5-15 crashes per million vehicle miles (MVM) to 0-5 crashes per MVM.



The Road Diet Geometry shows a reduction in crash rates from 0-15 crashes per million vehicle miles (MVM) to 0-5 crashes per MVM from 19<sup>th</sup> Street to Eugene Street.



The Road Diet Geometry shows a reduction in crash rates from 5-15 crashes per million vehicle miles (MVM) to 0-5 crashes per MVM from Eugene Street to Blanchard Street.



The Road Diet Geometry shows a reduction in crash rates from 5-15 crashes per million vehicle miles (MVM) to 0-5 crashes per MVM from East Drive to Bienville Street.



The Road Diet Geometry shows a reduction in crash rates from 5-25 crashes per million vehicle miles (MVM) to 0-5 crashes per MVM from Bienville Street to Esplanade/W Ardenwood.



The Road Diet Geometry shows a reduction in crash rates from 5-10 crashes per million vehicle miles (MVM) to 0-5 crashes per MVM from Esplanade/W Ardenwood to Audubon Avenue.



The Road Diet Geometry shows a reduction in crash rates from 5-10 crashes per million vehicle miles (MVM) to 0-5 crashes per MVM from Audubon Avenue to Lobdell Avenue.



A single lane roundabout is proposed for the intersection at Lobdell Avenue/Independence Park. The single lane roundabout design provides drivers with simpler decisions and fewer conflict points than in a multilane roundabout or in the existing intersection.

There are bypass lanes in each quadrant for right turns. The required row in the NE quadrant is currently owned by the City of Baton Rouge.



Let's discuss roundabout basics.

Roundabouts are one-way, circular intersections designed to improve safety and efficiency for motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

In a roundabout, traffic flows through a center island counterclockwise.

A roundabout redirects some of the conflicting traffic, such as left turns, which cause crashes at traditional intersections. This is because drivers enter and exit the roundabout through a series of right-hand turns.



What are the advantages of Roundabouts?

A well-designed roundabout can improve safety, operations, and aesthetics of an intersection.

Greater safety is achieved primarily by slower speeds and the elimination of more severe crashes. Operations are improved by smooth-flowing traffic with less stop-and-go than a signed intersection. Aesthetics may be enhanced by the opportunity for more landscaping and less pavement.



What do statistics from FHWA say about Roundabouts? **Roundabouts save lives** 

Studies show that roundabouts reduce fatalities by up to 90%; reduce injury crashes by up to 76%; reduce pedestrian crashes by up to 30% to 40%; and create up to 75% fewer conflict points that a four-way intersection.



## Roundabouts save money

Roundabouts reduce road electricity and maintenance costs by an average of \$5,000/year. Also, roundabouts provide a 25-year service life, compared to the ten-year service life of signal equipment.



## Roundabouts provide environmental benefits

Roundabouts reduce vehicle delay and the number and duration of stops compared with signalized intersections, thus decreasing fuel consumption and carbon emissions. Fewer stops and hard accelerations mean less time idling.



For those of you who have never driven through a roundabout intersection, let's discuss the general principles of using a Roundabout.

Think of roundabouts as a series of "T" intersections, where entering vehicles yield to oneway traffic coming from the left. A driver approaching a roundabout must slow down, stop or yield to traffic already in the roundabout, and yield to pedestrians in the crosswalk. Then, it's a simple matter of making a right-hand turn onto a one-way street. Once in the roundabout, the driver proceeds around the central island, then takes the necessary righthand turn to exit.



This video shows a simulation of traffic using the roundabout at the Government Street, Lobdell Avenue, and Independence Park Boulevard Intersection. Notice how a right-turning vehicle from each approaching street uses the bypass lanes to avoid the circular roadway within the roundabout. Bicyclists can safely enter the travel lanes to use the roundabout due to the slower vehicle speeds.



Can roundabouts accommodate larger vehicles?

The answer: Yes. Roundabouts are designed to accommodate vehicles with a large turning radius such as buses, fire trucks and eighteen wheelers. Roundabouts provide an area between the circulatory roadway and the central island, known as a truck apron, over which the rear wheels of these vehicles can safely track.



There are three ways you can help tonight.

- 1. Sign-in and review all materials.
- 2. Speak with a team member about your concerns.
- 3. Provide us with your written or recorded comments. Written comments can be submitted tonight or will be accepted by mail until **December 30th**.



## This is the end of the presentation.

Thank you for your time. Please visit the remaining stations to view the exhibits and provide comments.



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## The presentation will begin shortly.

