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## Memo

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**Meeting Name**

Portsmouth and Chesapeake JLUS Public Meeting Series

**Meeting Date**

November 13 and 14, 2019

**Project Number**

60581250

**Subject**

Portsmouth and Chesapeake JLUS Public Meeting Series Summary

**Project Name**

Portsmouth and Chesapeake JLUS

**Prepared By**

Andrea Sweigart, AECOM

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Three public meetings were held in November 2019 for the Portsmouth and Chesapeake Joint Land Use Study (JLUS). These summary notes document the comments that were collectively recorded during the meeting series (Section 1) and outlines the media and community outreach steps (Section 2) taken to promote the meetings. The meetings were held at various locations and times, as noted below.

NOV. 13, 2019  
6:00 PM - 8:00 PM  
BIDE-A-WEE PAVILION  
PORTSMOUTH, VA

NOV. 14, 2019  
1:30 PM - 3:30 PM  
CHURCHLAND LIBRARY  
PORTSMOUTH, VA

NOV. 14, 2019  
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM  
MAJOR HILLARD LIBRARY  
CHESAPEAKE, VA

**Section 1: Public Meeting Comments**

Overall a total of 16 people attended the three meetings (3 of the citizens in attendance attending more than one meeting). Meeting materials prepared in support of the meetings including Navy and consultant Power Point presentations, two display boards, a fact sheet (English and Spanish), and a Questionnaire (English and Spanish). These materials are available on the project website [www.hamptonroadsjilus.com](http://www.hamptonroadsjilus.com).

Each meeting began with a welcome and team introduction by Hampton Roads Planning District Commission (HRPDC) Senior Planner Ben McFarlane. The welcome was followed by a presentation by one of the following Navy representatives: CDR Butler (Public Works Officer, Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY)), Captain Booth (Base Support Officer, NNSY), or Doug Taylor (Community Plans Liaison Officer, NNSY). The Navy presentation provided a brief overview of the Navy sites included in the study and their respective functions. Andrea Sweigart, AECOM then reviewed the JLUS purpose, timeline for the study, and areas of preliminary focus, before inviting attendees to organize into working groups. The remainder of the meeting was dedicated to tabletop discussions whereby participants were asked a series of questions about their experience living, working or traveling near the military sites. The feedback received from participants is summarized by topic below.

### **Transportation & Access**

- There is a general lack of alternative transportation routes when a traffic backup and/or accident occurs.
- Portsmouth Marine Terminal trucks create congestion on the highways.
- Gate congestion at NNSY and the Navy Hospital occurs in many areas:
  - Effingham, Gate 10, and Gate 3 have back-ups.
  - It is faster to get to the shipyard than it is to get on the shipyard.
  - Streets near the hospital are blocked both morning and afternoon due to gate back-ups.
  - More access points are needed to get onto the bases.
  - A closer look at gate access times is needed.
- Commuters time their trips to avoid NNSY shift traffic.
  - By 3:00 pm, shipyard traffic is an obstacle (eastbound through the Downtown Tunnel).
  - By 4:30 pm, tunnel traffic is backed up to Frederick Boulevard.
- There is a large amount of vehicle cut-through traffic in the Park View neighborhood. Court Street vehicle cut-throughs onto Crawford Parkway create congestion that blocks neighborhood access. A “no left turn” onto Crawford Parkway from Court Street was suggested as an idea to help resolve this issue.
- Vehicles often do not obey traffic laws.
- There are backups in Chesapeake down by the Deep Creek Locks/Bridge.
- Traffic signaling is not timed to ease congestion.
- Frederick Boulevard / George Washington Highway traffic signals are located too close together and it creates issues.
- Elm Avenue has a rough road surface and is confusing to navigate due to poor wayfinding.
- Trains block George Washington Highway which adds to congestion.
- There is concern about Craney Island Terminal and the future impact of a third crossing.
- The City (Portsmouth) needs a dedicated Transportation Master Plan.
- Need dynamic messaging signs from Chesapeake direction that would indicate wait time in minutes at each gate.
- Churchland Bridge will undergo reconstruction in 2020.
- Tolls create a challenge for Portsmouth.

### **Transit**

- The shipyard has a vanpool program run by TIP/TRAFFIX that is well-utilized.
- Transit options are not well publicized.
- Portsmouth lacks newer types of transit (e.g. light rail).
- HRT Bus Service

- During the day, the bus routes are relatively frequent (every 15-minutes during peak, 30 minutes during off-peak) and reliable.
- The transit schedule is not compatible with shift work. It does not begin early enough.
- Outside of “core areas,” transit does not go where it needs to go. Not all parts of the community are served equally, and the routes do not go to some shopping areas (ie. Chesapeake Square)
- There are issues with low Hampton Roads Transit (HRT) ridership.
- The way public transit is funded is a real issue.
- Some streets are not accommodating to busses (too narrow).
- HRT needs to look at multi-jurisdictional connections to make the system functional.
- The City of Portsmouth is looking to permit e-bikes and scooters in the areas between the hospital and the shipyard.
  - The city wants to encourage workers to get lunch in Downtown/Olde Towne
  - There are safe crossing areas near the Pavilion and at Crawford Street.
  - Some people are already bringing scooters over from Norfolk on the ferry.
  - NNSY may not allow scooters on the installation due to the possibility of injury. The Navy is working on guidance related to scooters.
- Some bicycle commuters take the ferry, but it is not heavily used for commuting.
- Parking fees deter commuters with vehicles from using the ferry from Norfolk because they do not want to pay for parking and also pay for the ferry ride. It is cheaper to drive to Portsmouth and park locally.

### **Parking**

- There are parking issues near all shipyard gates.
  - There are problems with illegal parking in Southside neighborhood north of NNSY.
  - On-street parking is a hazard for children.
  - When additional ships are at the shipyard, there are sometimes parking issues along Elm Avenue.
  - There has been an issue with people parking under the Jordan Bridge.
- There were varied responses on how to address the parking issue.
  - Someone should charge shipyard personnel for parking.
  - Structured parking at or near the shipyard is needed.
  - Increased parking enforcement near NNSY won't solve the problem – there has to be somewhere for the cars to go.
  - If there was more parking at the shipyard, there could be an incentive to use the Jordan Bridge as an alternate route.
  - Explore satellite parking and shuttles to the installations.
  - Could look at underutilized city land for temporary parking (new Community Center area).

- There are major parking issues near the hospital; parking overflow extends 2-3 blocks into the neighborhood.
- The Coast Guard uses downtown garages for parking.

### ***Flooding and Sea Level Rise***

- The north end of the NNSY floods with moderate rainfall.
- Many streets become impassible during storm events. Specific streets identified include:
  - Effingham Street (in several locations)
  - Port Centre Parkway
  - Lincoln Street
  - London Boulevard
  - Elm Avenue south of the shipyard main site.
  - Hospital traffic gets “stuck” when flooding occurs. The traffic re-routes through the hotel and gets stuck.
  - There is flooding at railroad crossings south of the shipyard during storms.
  - The Martin Luther King Expressway off-ramps flood near the apartments.
- Several neighborhoods have flooding issues.
  - Swanson Homes
  - West Parkview
  - Ebony Heights
  - New Town (Southside)
  - Cavalier Manor
  - Renters and transient people need a better way to get flooding information.
- Flooding creates health issues with mold and contamination.

### ***Other***

- Land Use – Taxable land is an important benefit to local government.
- Land use and taxable development should be a priority.
- There needs to be more local restaurants near NNSY.
- Most individuals don’t know how to reach their elected officials.
- Concern about Hope Village / Effingham Senior Housing being contaminated. These areas should not be residential – potential for reuse as some other type of development.
- The shipyard should consider the impact of temporary buildings and functions during the implementation of the Shipyard Infrastructure Optimization Plan. Temporary facilities should be located away from congested areas to lessen or better distribute any impacts on parking and access. As future development occurs, the impact to parking and access should be considered and mitigated where possible.
- People reported that they often get their information through civic leagues, NextDoor, and Facebook. NextDoor requires a membership.

## **Section 2. Media and Community Outreach**

The meetings were publicized to print and broadcast media on October 29, 2019. Public Affairs Officers and city communications staff were asked to post meeting details on their respective websites and social media platforms.

### *Inside Business*

*The Virginian-Pilot*

*Daily Press*

WAVY TV

WTKR TV

WVEC TV

### New Journal & Guide

PAOs

CPLOs

Portsmouth Communications

Chesapeake Communications

WVEC story -- <https://www.13newsnow.com/article/news/national/military-news/studying-impact-of-tidal-flooding-on-military-readiness/291-8c8fd8f5-8ecf-4926-b01a-7da7bf18e449>

A Press Release email regarding was sent to the following entities on November 6th and 12th:

- Portsmouth City Council Members (7)
- Portsmouth School Board Members (1 email address for all)
- Portsmouth Civic Leagues (41)
- Stakeholder Interviewees List from JLUS Interviews (45)
- Portsmouth Redevelopment and Housing Authority
- Portsmouth NAACP (1)
- Portsmouth Schools PTAs (19)
- Pentecostal Leaders/Churches in Portsmouth (5)
- Portsmouth City Communications Office
- Elizabeth River Project
- Chair of the CTAC (Portsmouth resident and community activist)
- Comprehensive Plan community stakeholders
- Chesapeake City Communications Office
- Chesapeake Civic Leagues (35)
- Chesapeake NAACP (1)
- Chesapeake City Council (9)
- Chesapeake School Board (9)
- Chesapeake Environmental Group (1)

### **Consultant Team Attendees:**

AECOM – Andrea Sweigart, Stephanie Mertig, Michael Sabon, Sarah Richards

Moffatt & Nichol – Brian Joyner

Kimley Horn – Ben Reim

The Miles Agency – Season Roberts