



**US 460 Bypass Interchange and
Southgate Drive Relocation**

**State Project No. 0460-150-204, P101, R201, C501, B601;
UPC 99425**

Town of Blacksburg

Patrick Hughes

Location Study Project Manager
Environmental Division

Project History

Improvements along the at-grade intersection of US 460 Bypass and Southgate Drive have long been a regional priority

- **January 2002 CTB Resolution:** the approved alignment was for a grade separated interchange at existing Southgate Drive. We will seek to rescind this resolution in July
- **US 460 Bypass Study:** *Analysis for New Interchange in the Vicinity of Southgate Drive*, adopted by MPO in June 2011
- **MPO's Year 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan:** as amended, has the project in the constrained portion of the LRP
- **Town of Blacksburg's 2006-2046 Comprehensive Plan:** includes an interchange in the vicinity of Southgate Drive
- **Virginia Tech 2009 update to the Master Plan:** includes recommendations for a new grade separated interchange south of existing Southgate Drive
- **SYIP FY14 – 19:** includes an allocation of \$42.7M

Existing US 460 Bypass/Southgate Drive Intersection

- Isolated at-grade signalized intersection along the limited access bypass
- Primary entrance and “gateway” to Virginia Tech
- Access for the Virginia Tech Corporate Research Center
- Access for the Virginia Tech-Montgomery Executive Airport



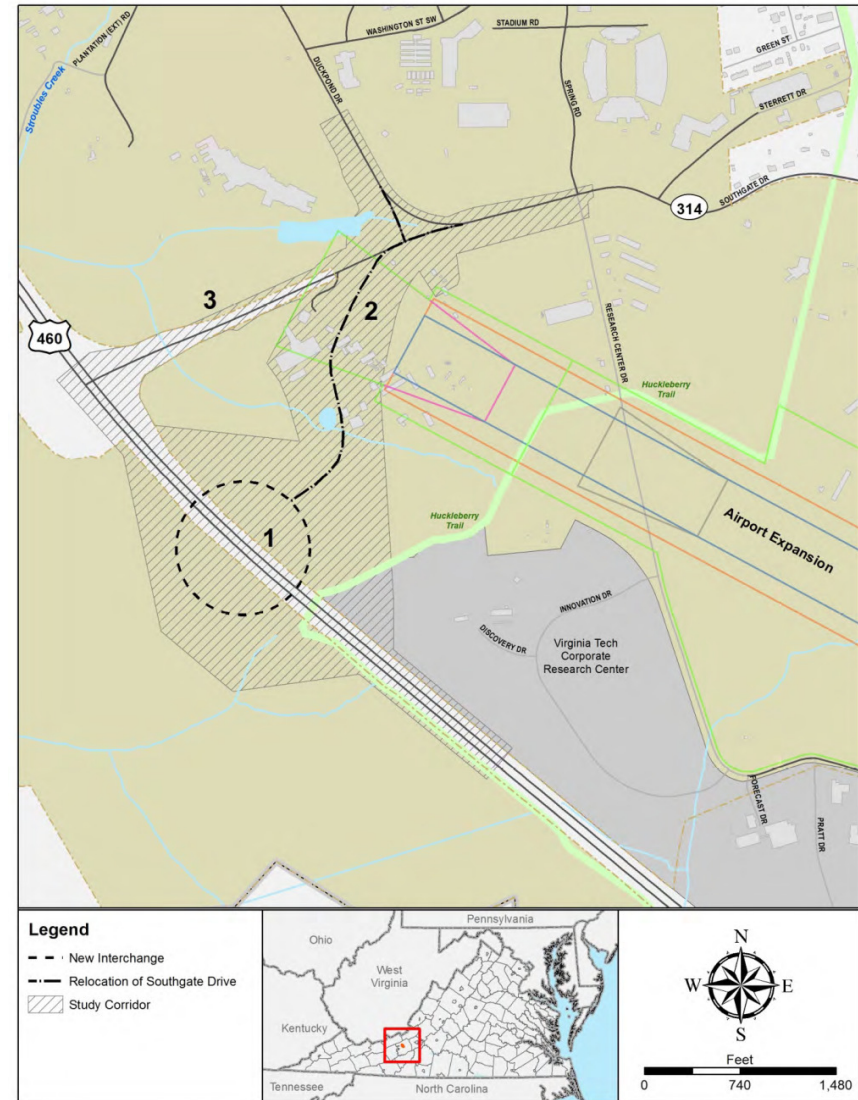
Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed project is to:

- Reduce congestion and thereby improve level of service at the intersection of Southgate Drive and US 460 Bypass.
- Improve safety on US 460 Bypass by removing the existing at-grade signalized intersection that is located between adjacent grade-separated interchanges along a limited-access highway.
- Improve accessibility and mobility to and within the surrounding activity and employment centers within the region.

Proposed Project Location & Description

1. Construction of a new interchange south of the existing at-grade intersection.
2. Relocation of Southgate Drive to connect with the new interchange on the west end and with existing Southgate Drive on the east end in the vicinity of Duck Pond Drive.
3. Removal of the existing US 460 Bypass/Southgate Drive intersection and existing Southgate Drive between US 460 Bypass and Duck Pond Drive.





Summary of Potential Environmental Impacts

Category	Potential Impacts	
	No-Build	Build Alternative
Total Area within Study Corridor (acres)	0	150
Preliminary Estimate of Approximate New Right of Way Needed for the Project, for Illustrative Purposes Only (acres)	0	25
Section 4(f) Property within Study Corridor (acres)	0	3.8
Total Prime/Unique/Statewide/Local Important Farmland within Study Corridor (acres)	0	118
Prime and Unique Farmland within Study Corridor (acres)	0	53
Statewide and Local Important Farmland within Study Corridor (acres)	0	65
Number of Streams within Study Corridor	0	3
Length of Streams within Study Corridor (linear feet)	0	2,104
Wetlands within Study Corridor (acres)	0	1
Forest Area within Study Corridor (acres)	0	3
Federally Listed Threatened or Endangered Species Identified by USFWS that may Occur in the Vicinity of the Study Corridor	0	4
Hazardous Material Sites within Study Corridor	0	1
Noise Impacts	0	2 future trails

Section 4(f) Impact Huckleberry Trail – *De Minimis* Finding

- The proposed project would temporarily impact approximately 0.5 acres of the Huckleberry Trail.
- FHWA intends to make a *de minimis* finding with respect to the project's Section 4(f) involvement with the trail.
- Before a final determination is made, officials with jurisdiction over the trail (VT, Towns of Blacksburg & Christiansburg, Montgomery County, & Friends of the Huckleberry, Inc.) will be asked to concur.



Study Timeline and Location Public Hearing Summary

April 4, 2013: EA approved for Public availability by FHWA

April 8, 2013: EA made available to the public

May 8, 2013: Location public hearing

- Approximately 70 persons in attendance

May 18, 2013: Comment period ended

- Comments Received: 29
 - 23 public comments
 - expressed support for the project
 - expressed a need to make improvements to the Huckleberry Trail
 - expressed a desire to preserve a stand of trees adjacent to the Trail
 - were related to design ideas for the project
 - 5 public comments
 - expressed a desire for spot safety improvements
 - expressed a concern that removal of the signal at Southgate Drive may create unsafe conditions downstream at the 460/N. Main Street intersection
 - Expressed concern that items of historic significance may be excavated and discarded
 - 1 state agency comment (from DCR) was received; no locality comments received

Next Steps

SCHEDULE	
Date	Event
July 2013	CTB Location Decision
August 2013	Environmental Assessment revised, based on comments received, conclusion of archaeology and Section 4(f) <i>de minimis</i> finding
September 2013	Final decision on the EA by FHWA



Virginia Department of Transportation