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LoudounNow



Residents in the historic village of Waterford are using a variety of tactics—including yard signs—to slow down commuter traffic and ultimately, reroute it. (Douglas Graham/Loudoun Now)

Waterford Residents Press to Reroute Commuter Traffic

📅 2017-11-17 👤 Patrick Szabo 💬 6 Comments

Visit the western Loudoun village of Waterford on a typical weekday, and you'll likely notice one thing. For one of the county's smallest communities, it's busy.

Since Loudoun's rapid growth began in the 1980s, drivers traveling from west and north of Waterford increasingly have used the narrow, house-lined roads

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Uncle Kracker

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the past three years, as congestion on main routes, improvements made to back roads, and the increasing population has meant more commuters see the historic village as their quickest route home.

According to Wendy Roseberry, president of the Waterford Citizens' Association, about 3,000 vehicles cut through the village each day, mainly during rush hour.

"There's a nice wakeup call every morning around 5 a.m.," said Roseberry, who lives in the village.

This lasts until about 9:30 in the morning. Then, landscaping vehicles cut through the village in the afternoon to get to their customers before commuter traffic picks back up again in the evening.

Roseberry said commuters are finding new ways to get around congestion on Rt. 287, Rt. 9 and Rt. 15 during rush hour—ways that take them through Waterford.

Nick Ratcliffe, a 39-year Waterford resident, said the repaving of Milltown Road and Stumptown Road has given commuters even more incentive to avoid main roads and cut through the village.

"It really facilitated people having the choice," he said. "That's what it's all about—how can they get to point B rather than going this other way."

Roseberry and Ratcliffe both agree that new neighborhoods being built to the west of town are adding to the problem because roads are not being built fast enough to keep up with the population increase.

"It's really pretty constant," Ratcliffe said. "It's just car after car after car."

Roseberry said the high volume of traffic is hurting Waterford's efforts to preserve its historic character. The community is a National Historic Landmark. In 1943, descendants of village families formed the Waterford Foundation to preserve the village's buildings, traditions, and rural character.

"Citizens need to realize this is a historic landmark and we need to protect it," Roseberry said.

She also said the volume mixed with the speed of cut-through traffic is

Upcoming Events

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Sat

10:00 am Phyllis Mills Wyeth: A Celebrati... @ National Sporting Library & Museum (https://live-timely-1rcrtefryp.time.ly/event/phyllis-mills-wyeth-a-celebration-exhibit/?instance_id=20654)

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Sun

10:00 am Phyllis Mills Wyeth: A Celebrati... @ National Sporting Library & Museum (https://live-timely-1rcrtefryp.time.ly/event/phyllis-mills-wyeth-a-celebration-exhibit/?instance_id=20655)

FEB

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Mon

7:30 pm Salsa, Tango, Swing Group Class ... @ Dance King Studios (https://live-timely-1rcrtefryp.time.ly/event/salsa-tango-swing-group-class-social/?instance_id=7381)

FEB

11

Tue

8:00 am Loudoun Estate Planning Council ... @ River Creek Country Club (https://live-timely-1rcrtefryp.time.ly/event/loudoun-estate-planning-council-breakfast-2020-economic-update-with-ray-owens-fed-reserve-bank/?instance_id=20409)

4:00 pm Loudoun



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“Thus traffic safety is also a major concern,” she said. “There have been several very serious accidents.”

In one instance, on Christmas Day 2014, a driver lost control and a car ended up in Roseberry’s yard, totaling her guest’s car. More recently, on Halloween night, a speeding car crashed around the bend by the village mill.

Address the concerns, the main goal among Waterford residents is to divert traffic to different routes that don’t cut through the village.

“What we need to do is restrict the volumes,” Roseberry said. “We’ve become the arterial—we’re the substitute.”

Roseberry and her neighbors hope the planned improvements to Rt. 15 coupled with the roundabout to be built at the Rt. 9/Berlin Turnpike intersection in 2020 will alleviate cut-through traffic.

Rather than wait another three years for the roundabout, however, residents asked the county government two years ago to conduct a traffic study that would be used to petition for help from Virginia Department of Transportation. The county’s Department of Transportation and Capital Infrastructure has been working with an architectural/engineering consultant on the study and they are expected to wrap it up any day now.

If the request is approved, VDOT will conduct its own traffic study to determine whether it can use money from the Residential Cut-Through Traffic Program. According to Kathleen Leidich, the county’s assistant director of Transportation Planning and Operations, the program could implement measures such as route modifications and restricting access to roads at certain times.

Roseberry said perhaps the best way of keeping cut-through traffic out would be to take a page from other Virginia towns and build temporary barriers or use signs to restrict traffic from entering the village for a portion of the day.

“They’re going to have to figure out a way to keep the traffic out of here,” she said. “We are optimistic.”

In the meantime, traffic-calming techniques are being used in an attempt to slow traffic down.

PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Administration Building
(https://live-timely-1rcrtefryp.time.ly/event/loudoun-school-board-meeting-2/?instance_id=20881)

7:00 pm GriefShare Sessions @ Purcellville Baptist Church
(https://live-timely-1rcrtefryp.time.ly/event/griefshare-sessions-2/?instance_id=19855)

FEB
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Wed

10:00 am Leading the Field: Ellen Emmet Rand @ National Sporting Library & Museum
(https://live-timely-1rcrtefryp.time.ly/event/leading-the-field-ellen-emmet-rand/?instance_id=13335)

10:00 am Phyllis Mills Wyeth: A Celebrati... @ National Sporting Library & Museum
(https://live-timely-1rcrtefryp.time.ly/event/phyllis-mills-wyeth-a-celebration-exhibit/?instance_id=20656)



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that read "Drive Like Your Kids Live Here" and "Slow Down," and trees have been planted closer to the roads.

According to Ratcliffe, the tree-planting initiative was modeled after a Long Island study from three decades ago. It was intended to preserve Waterford's old-town feel and slow traffic by creating a calming atmosphere with a tree canopy. "The program was designed to accomplish two things at once," he said. "When lines of sight are reduced, people drive more slowly."

While these strategies haven't helped slow traffic down much, some residents have reached out to the Loudoun County Sheriff's Office to ask for more enforcement.

According to Sheriff's Office Spokesman Kraig Troxell, deputies have shown a presence in the village in multiple ways. One of these has been through the use of speed trailers, which show drivers how fast they're going. Like remedies used by residents, though, the trailers haven't helped much.

"The effectiveness is always debatable," Troxell said.

Between October 2016 and October 2017, deputies have also made 112 traffic stops and written 96 tickets, which come with an additional \$200 fine within the village.

For the next three years, or until VDOT steps in, Waterford residents will continue to use traffic-calming techniques and come up with new ways to reduce cut-through traffic.

"The solutions will be ongoing," Roseberry said. "If you want to save Waterford, you're going to have to restrict [traffic]."

pszabo@loudounnow.com

Francis Asniano, Lovettsville

📅 2020-02-10 👤 LoudounNow

💬 1

Editor: Our family lives in Northern Loudoun County, just outside the Lovettsville town limits. We strongly disagree with the recent vote

Letter: Chris Stevenson, Purcellville

📅 2020-02-08 💬 1

The Peoples' Constitution - Local Power

📅 2020-02-06 💬 0

Letter: Randy Cook, Leesburg

📅 2020-02-03 💬 0

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School Board Caps Teacher Raises in Final Budget
NORMAN K. STYER
The Loudoun County School Board on Tuesday night worked through its final meeting session that will not be subject to a referendum vote. The board approved a final budget for the 2020-21 school year that includes a 2.5% raise for teachers, a 1.5% raise for administrators and a 1.5% raise for support staff. The board also approved a 1.5% raise for all employees. The board also approved a 1.5% raise for all employees. The board also approved a 1.5% raise for all employees.

New Chief Prosecutor Brings

← Leesburg Historic District Association Adopts Youth Movement



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Round Hill Grocery Reopens Saturday →

FEB. 6, 2020

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6 thoughts on “Waterford Residents Press to Reroute Commuter Traffic”

👤 mpolkey

📅 2017-11-17 at 12:32 pm

🔗 Permalink

Tear out the 50 years of pavement (now higher than the sidewalks in some parts of the village) and put in cobblestones (think of those nice little streets in Alexandria). That will reduce the appeal for commuters, and increase the appeal for the National Historic Landmark village. And just think of the potential movie income!

[Log in to Reply](#)

👤 AFF

📅 2017-11-17 at 1:10 pm

🔗 Permalink

It's too bad that republicans in the Virginia General Assembly thought that speed cameras are an unconstitutional intrusion on those who spied through our residential neighborhoods, and outlawed such in Virginia. Same goes with red-light cameras.

Cross the ferry into Maryland, speed on the way to Poolsville... expect a bill in the mail within a week.

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Those are public streets, paid for with public funds (our tax dollars). As long as we obey all speed and traffic laws, residents have a right to drive those roads as often as we want and whenever we want. I will gather support for a lawsuit if barricades go up.

If Waterford village residents want to turn that community into a private, gated enclave, then the County should explore an alternate route that allows commuters heading from/to points north and west to bypass the village. Trust me, I would rather do that.

Also, how about kicking the Route 9/287 roundabout into gear and getting it done?

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masondixonjar
 2017-11-17 at 3:42 pm
[Permalink](#)

“As long as we obey all speed and traffic laws . . .”

I agree with this. So I encourage you to bring your dog or young child and stroll around the village between 5:30am – 8:30am. Try it everyday for a week and pop back here for a comment. Tell us about all the safe and lawful driving you see going on.

Sheriff hangs out for a few hours/month in the afternoons. No enforcement occurs before 7am EVER – and everybody knows it.

Drive <= 20. Stop at signs. Don't pass school busses. Mind the occasional chicken, deer, dog, cat, or child. Yield to pedestrians and on-street parkers. You know, follow the law.

Based on my daily observations over the past 5 years – these requests are far too much to ask. Speed cameras, large speed bumps, cobblestones,



Morning ...

00:00

00:29



Ask The Expert

Are You a Community Expert? Join Our Program

2020-01-30 LoudounNow
 0


Are you often called upon to share important information about your specific areas of expertise? Or would you liked to

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Not holding my breath. But I am rolling my eyes.

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 stoshk


 2017-11-17 at 10:02 pm

 [Permalink](#)

While I know it makes it difficult for the snow plows in winter, the best option I've seen to slow down traffic (or make people want to drive somewhere else) is speed bumps. A bump every few hundred feet through the village will definitely calm traffic. You'd need something like that because unfortunately I'd have to agree that unless you privatize the roads (and therefore take care of all road maintenance yourselves), people do have the right to drive through.

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 valandsend

 2017-11-20 at 10:37 am

 [Permalink](#)

I've commuted from Purcellville through Waterford to Lucketts for almost 25 years (yes, at the speed limit). I prefer the slower pace to the dangerous Route 15. There has been a marked increase in traffic coming in the opposite direction, particularly in the afternoon. It seems to correlate with the improvements to Route 7 heading uphill west of Leesburg. With the traffic bottleneck on Route 15 just north of Leesburg, more northbound drivers are taking Route 7 to Routes 9 and 704 and through Waterford before getting on Route 15 at Stumptown Road in Lucketts.

While talking about safety measures, I wonder if anyone has considered banning large trucks coming through Waterford. Just two weeks ago, a tall box truck was ahead of me on Loyalty Road one night as we headed south toward the village. A few minutes earlier, the driver had pulled over in a turn

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came upon it. The driver had to have known what was about to happen. I was following at a safe distance, but the truck broke a limb from one of the many trees overhanging the road. After a few seconds, the limb worked its way down and fell onto my car. I only had a headlight smashed, but it could have been far worse.

I'd suggest trimming the trees, but I've also seen many close calls on Loyalty and Stumptown roads, one in which the driver ahead of me was nearly decapitated by a long trailer that came across the lane on a sharp curve.

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