

Text of the Old Landing Road Coalition Presentation to the Sussex County Council
on 3/16/2020
– Request for FAST funds to accelerate OLR improvements

Good Morning members of the Council and Mr. Lawson. I am Donna Voigt, and serve as the Director for the Old Landing Road Coalition (OLRC). Bobby Mills, another Coalition member is also here with me today. Our Coalition was formed in 2020 and consists of 13 (~80%) of communities along OLR and represents more than 1600 homes. The mission of our Coalition is to collectively identify and seek remediation of traffic and life-safety issues along the OLR corridor that has grown tremendously worse over the past several years due to development pressure.

The Coalition provided a letter to the Council and Mr. Lawson on 3/8, and we respectfully request this letter be included in the record as part of today's proceedings. We also would like to acknowledge and thank Councilman Hudson for his continued support and assistance, and Mr. Lawson for his response to our letter.

Our purpose today is to make a direct request to this body for acceleration of 2 OLRC Projects that are on the CTP with a scheduled Preliminary Engineering start in FY 2025. Specifically, we are seeking FAST funding approval for the OLR-Warrington Road Intersection project; and the Airport Road Extension project.

The need for acceleration of these projects is compelling: 624 homes built over the last several years along the south end of OLR, and another 243 approved, of which 217 lots are under development right now. Additionally, along Warrington Road from Rt 24 to OLR there is a new Beebe Medical Center and well on its way to completion, and another 334 homes under development. All of the resulting traffic from this development is being transited onto 2 lane roadways – OLR and Warrington Road.

Communities closest to the 2 OLR projects already have trouble getting out of their communities due to traffic volume. Communities south of OLR have one way in/out of their communities forcing them to transit thru the OLR/Warrington Rd Intersection. As noted in our March 8th letter, in 2015 DeIDOT acknowledged in a response to the Osprey Point Traffic Operational Analysis that the Warrington Rd at OLR intersection fails 7 days/week at all time intervals by 2024, and that was determined before the development of the Beebe Medical Center, and the Wellesley and Arbor Lyn housing projects along Warrington Rd.

Continuous development pressure has been experienced along this corridor since the mid 1990's and the impact predicted has been realized.

We understand the State and County prioritizes projects using DeIDOT's safety analysis measures which uses crash data and fatality rates to come up with a Safety score. We maintain

that there is another significant and perhaps even greater safety concern, that is not being considered – which is the ability of first responders to respond to an emergency in OLR communities from the Bay to Coastal Highway.

So yes, there is a significant yet not captured life-safety issue directly tied to these 2 intersections. We hope Mr. Vincent and Mr. Hudson can provide some validation regarding the need for quick response to emergencies by first responders, given their background as first responders. Considering consistently strong bay winds and the density of housing at the south end of OLR, it's easy and probable to imagine a disastrous loss of property and potentially lives due to a fire or other similar event.

Finally, given the reported \$20 million surplus of Realty Transfer tax, to which the new developments along this corridor have contributed, and are continuing to contribute, along with the more than sufficient developer contributions to these 2 projects--- it is clear that there are ample funds available to satisfy our request.

In closing, these projects meet the criteria established by the County Council and State, for acceleration. They are on the CTP, planned for FY 2025 start which can be done sooner; are exacerbated by tremendous development pressure, and will greatly improve safety for the thousands of residents along the OLR corridor.

Therefore, we respectfully request consideration for accelerating these 2 projects.