

To all media

**From: City of Huntsville
Department of Urban Development
Division of Traffic Engineering**

Subject: Change in afternoon peak hour traffic signal operation at the Governors Dr @ Whitesburg Drive intersection:

Effective Tuesday, September 8 , Left Turns will be prohibited , Monday through Friday, between the hours of 4PM and 5:30PM for Westbound motorists from Governors Drive to Whitesburg Drive until traffic congestion at this intersection is reduced following the completion of the Governors Drive Phase II construction project, currently anticipated to be under construction by June 2010.

Signs will be posted at the intersection adjacent to the traffic signal positioned over the left turn lane, and also posted for advanced notice, on Governors Drive East of Franklin Street.

Motorists currently turning left to Whitesburg during this PM peak traffic period, are directed either to Franklin Street or to Gallatin Street, where at both locations, left turn signals are provided.

A recent survey showed an average of only two vehicles per signal change, made this left turn movement during that 90 minute period. This resulted in a loss of signal time for Governors Dr or Madison Street, averaging **10** seconds per cycle, for green, yellow, and all-red time. From the total of 97 cars making left turns between 4 and 5:30 PM, only two turned into business establishments between Governors Dr and Longwood, and only those two motorists would suffer any inconvenience by changing their travel route.

By utilizing these **10** seconds of green time per signal cycle, for Governors Drive traffic from 4 to 5PM, and by switching these **10** seconds to Madison Street from 5 to 5:30 PM, will produce an increased capacity equal to **5** additional vehicles for each of the two lanes, or **10** vehicles for each signal change., The change will thus increase the thru traffic capacity at this intersection by 450 vehicles over the 90 minute PM peak traffic period.

Eastbound motorists on Governors Dr should notice this improvement between 4 and 5 PM, and the employees of City, County , legal and financial institutions based downtown should also notice reductions in delay as they head South on Madison Street between 5 and 5:30.

Recent timing changes made earlier this week have produced somewhat lesser added capacity for morning rush hour westbound motorists from “over the mountain” on Governors Drive.

5 to 7 additional cars per signal change, have been gained through its intersections with California, Franklin, Madison and Gallatin Streets. The effects of this timing changes may be more obvious to motorists at both the beginning and ending of the short periods of heaviest traffic that occur during the morning peak. Vehicle queues that extend east to Covemont Drive, are now a little shorter in length; begin to develop a few minutes later; and dissipate a few minutes earlier.

Other potential operational improvements are in various stages of a cost: benefit & feasibility analysis by Traffic Engineering staff, and are planned for implementation before the Governors Drive Phase II construction begins, now expected for early summer of 2010.

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