

FEDERAL ETC UPDATES

Employee Transportation Coordinator

FORT BELVOIR IMPROVES TRAFFIC FOR NEIGHBORS



Since the 2005 Base Realignment and Closure Project (BRAC), the number of workers, and the number of cars, have grown exponentially around Fort Belvoir.

One of the consequences of the BRAC influenced traffic has been a strain on the relationship between the post and its neighbors. With about 80,000 cars driving in and out of the installation's main post each day, military officials are trying to become better neighbors to people in the area. A new road, a Route 1 widening project, and a proposal to open the facility's golf course and fields could go a long way to living in harmony with the general public.

Army officials are working on a number of initiatives that would open Fort Belvoir's gates to the public, or at least make life easier around the main post. Since the 2005 BRAC effort, the number of workers there and at three nearby, affiliated military installations has soared by 60 percent to just over 51,000 – more than twice as many employees as at the Pentagon.

According to a congressional study, the Pentagon's decision to add tens of thousands of commuters to the region has caused some of the most congested roads in the nation. In response to this congestion, the Department of Defense has dedicated \$180 million toward a Route 1 road-widening project that began this past spring.

The planned road improvements – which also include expanding the Interstate 395 ramp near another of the realigned military sites – should dramatically ease traffic in the corridor. The Route 1 expansion will include a center median that could later be used for

commuter bus service or train service – and, possibly, safer places for pedestrians to cross.

“We recognize that we're part of a community,” said Col. Gregory Gadson, Fort Belvoir's commanding officer. “We're not this distinct entity by ourselves, in isolation.”

As part of their effort to improve traffic around Fort Belvoir, the post's Transportation Demand Management (TDM) coordination office produces a “Commuter Resources Guide” that lists Fort Belvoir's Rideshare Mission and Objective as:

- To reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles entering the post
- To increase the use of telework
- To increase the number of employees ridesharing
- To promote the use of alternative work schedule options

Through their website www.belvoir.army.mil/rideshare, the TDM coordination office offers information on:

- Ridesharing
- Transit Benefits
- Carpool and Vanpool Agencies
- Local Transit Services
- Telework and Telecommuting
- Current Traffic Information
- Local Schedules and Maps

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Additionally, the Commuter Resources Guide lists “Useful Commuting Tips & Tools” on vanpool and carpool formation such as finding interested riders and setting the meeting date and time, selecting drivers and backup drivers, discussing costs and individual rider preferences, seeking out financial incentives and rewards for ridesharing, and using Commuter Connections’ rideshare system to find additional riders.

Along with the tips for vanpool and carpool formation, also offered are tools for transit planning and riding such as talking to Fort Belvoir’s TDM coordination office to see commuting options. Other benefits include signing up for the Guaranteed Ride Home program, talking to other transit riders, and the result of sitting back and enjoying saving time and money while sharing the ride!

Finally, the TDM coordination office promotes the use of “real-time ridesharing” by supporting www.WeGoMil.com.

WeGoMil is a new concept in commuting where commuters offer their unused seats to riders in real-time and share commuting costs through an automated, electronic payment system based on miles traveled. The system is flexible and designed around the commuter’s schedule. They can depart when they want, use the system daily or skip a day or two, and take advantage of the HOV lanes. They can be the driver one day and the rider the next.

The project’s goal is to bring real-time ridesharing to Department of Defense employees and contractors who were directly impacted by the re-locations from BRAC, and traveling along the

I-95/395/495 and Route One Corridors. The program not only serves Fort Belvoir, but also additional BRAC sites Defense Health Headquarters, National Geospatial Agency, the Mark Center, Marine Corps Base Quantico, the Navy Yard, and Arlington Hall.

The WeGoMil project is funded by a grant from the US Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, with matching funds from Virginia Department of Transportation, the District of Columbia, City of Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax Counties.

For more information on the options available to Fort Belvoir employees, visit www.belvoir.army.mil/rideshare.



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