

# Route 3 signals adjusted

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BY SCOTT SHENK

The signal synchronization adjustments on congested State Route 3 have begun as the Virginia Department of Transportation this week started changing the patterns in an effort to see if commuter congestion could be improved.

"Work has been under way all week, and motorists may be noticing a change already," local VDOT spokeswoman Kelly Hannon said in an email.

The new signal timing pattern will include the traffic lights from Interstate 95 in Fredericksburg west to Chewning Lane and Rutherford Drive in Spotsylvania County.

During the next month, VDOT crews will monitor traffic from the field and will analyze the data before and after the changes, Hannon said. VDOT will release its findings to Spotsylvania officials and the public.

VDOT has for some time regularly coordinated the traffic signals on Route 3, monitoring and adjusting them to help ease traffic jams caused by the thousands of vehicles that flood the highway every weekday during rush hour.

The new traffic signal adjustments come after the new Spotsylvania Board of Supervisors shelved proposed plans that could have added a new interchange on I-95 at the Virginia Welcome Center and rest area and a parkway that would have bypassed Route 3 before reconnecting with the highway in the Gordon Road area.

During the debates over the merits of the interchange and parkway, some wondered if better traffic light synchronization would help with the congestion on Route 3.

The new pattern has five timing schedules, which are adapted to traffic patterns and the traffic flow during different periods:

Morning peak.

Midday.

Afternoon peak.



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Off-peak.

Weekend.

One drawback of the new timing sequences is that during the afternoons and evenings, drivers on side roads along Route 3 will have longer waits as the lights cater to the heavy flow of commuter traffic.

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