



city of
bristol

News Release

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CONTACT: David Metzger, Traffic Engineer
Public Works Department
Phone: 423-989-5585 Office
E-Mail: dmetzger@bristoltn.org

Significant Traffic Changes in Traffic Patterns Anticipated

Bass Pro Shops Grand Opening during Race Week Activities

An exciting race weekend is fast approaching and along with that always comes the inevitable traffic pattern changes. This year the city's Traffic Engineer David Metzger had to do a little more planning to accommodate the August 20-21 grand opening of the new Pinnacle Development's Bass Pro Shops adjacent to the Tennessee Interstate 81 Exit 74 interchange.

The timeframe of some of Bass Pro Shop's grand opening events are overlapping some of the August Race Weekend events at Bristol Motor Speedway including an enormous Bass Pro Shops fireworks show scheduled for 10:30 p.m. Thursday, August 21.

Components of the traffic plan include substantial traffic impacts at the Pinnacle site itself, Bristol Regional Medical Center, I-81 in Tennessee and I-81 in Virginia. Higher traffic volumes are also anticipated on Highway 11W, West State Street, Meadow View Road, Walnut Hill Road, and Highway 126. The fireworks launch in particular has the potential for the greatest impact in these locales. "Motorists need to remember that parking along the shoulders of Interstate 81 for the fireworks display taking place at the Pinnacle development is strictly prohibited," said Metzger. "This is a safety hazard."

The traffic plan similarly includes components for traffic control at the Bristol Motor Speedway and Tri-Cities Regional Airport.

The events at Bass Pro Shops will span over August 20-24, though the greatest potential for traffic flow changes in that area will be centered on August 20-21. “Around 3PM on Wednesday we will begin manual control of the traffic signals at Highway 11W and Pinnacle Parkway, and at West State Street and Medical Park Boulevard,” said Metzger. “Bass Pro Shops will officially open their doors at 6PM so we are anticipating our heaviest traffic flow bound for that event to begin around 5PM.” Manual operation of traffic signals will be implemented at the two signals near Bass Pro Shops as circumstances warrant throughout the weekend.

In addition to maintaining access for Bass Pro Shops traffic, Bristol Motor Speedway traffic and general motoring traffic, it is a priority to maintain ground traffic access bound for Bristol Regional Medical Center campus through manual operation of the traffic signal at West State Street and Medical Park Boulevard.

“It is a monumental undertaking by a huge number of agencies to put together a blueprint for traffic flows that are anticipated for all the events that are planned. We are comfortable with the extensive planning that has been going on for many months and that we are as prepared as possible. We want all our guests to arrive safely at all of the many events taking place in Bristol and to have a great time while keeping safety first,” said City Manager Bill Sorah. “It is going to be a great weekend!”

For more information please go to www.bristoltn.org; click on the “Spotlight” tab on the front page or watch BTN-TV Channel 16 for a full briefing on race weekend traffic plans.

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