

## Route 2 widening project discussed

by Brittany Grego

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WETZEL COUNTY, W. Va. — A project tentatively scheduled for the year 2020 includes the widening of Route Two in Marshall and Wetzel Counties.

"We need to create a situation where our people can stay here and this is going to help that situation," said West Virginia State 2nd District Senator Charles Clements.

Senator Clements is optimistic about future road projects in the state of West Virginia.

He, along with the Route 2/I-68 Authority, West Virginia Division of Highways District 6 Engineer Gus Suwaid, Marshall County Commissioner Bob Miller and several representatives from the northern panhandle are working hard to improve the Ohio Valley's roads for more traffic and safety, especially with the possibility of future development.

"I'm still very optimistic about the development of the cracker plant, and the movement of Route 2 from its present location over the hill is going to open up some land for industrial development," Senator Clements said.

One concerned opinion was the idea that pushing the road closer to the hillside wouldn't be a good deal for citizens.

With the passage of the road bond referendum, the DOH is looking at widening Route 2 to four lanes from Franklin to Kent, and Kent to Proctor.

Suwaid says they are in the design process and are evaluating the environmental impact. Senator Clements said this project is important for this region.

"The main thing we need to look at is to get the downstream business from that cracker plant that creates the permanent jobs that will be here for our children," Senator Clements said.

Miller also said he's working with the White House to gain support on connecting I-68 in Morgantown to Moundsville, and there are also plans to widen Route 2 in new Cumberland. No design plans have been made yet.

The authority will meet again Jan. 22nd.

<http://wtov9.com/news/local/route-2-widening-project-discussed>