

Preliminary Observations of Traffic Impacts from Canal Street Improvement Options

March 25, 2019

Staff have done preliminary work driving Canal Street while following potential traffic patterns as described in Option 4 of the Canal Streetcar Improvement Analysis. Option 4 would deliver high-capacity transit per the Strategic Mobility Plan; this option would include more changes to traffic patterns on Canal Street than the other three options.

These preliminary observations are not a traffic study. A scope of work for a more complete traffic analysis is under development.

Observations from Test Drives on Canal Street

To estimate the potential time added to motorist trips in an Option 4 scenario, staff took multiple driving trips along Canal Street. We timed the driving travel time per block and per segment of Canal Street from Carrollton to Harrah’s Casino. We also completed trips that would make up the longest detour required by the proposed crossings in Option 4. We complemented this exercise with analysis of data from the Waze application, which collects information from drivers on the road to create real-time estimates of driving times. Through data collected by hundreds of drivers each day, the Waze estimates reliably capture what an average trip time would be for different hours of the day.

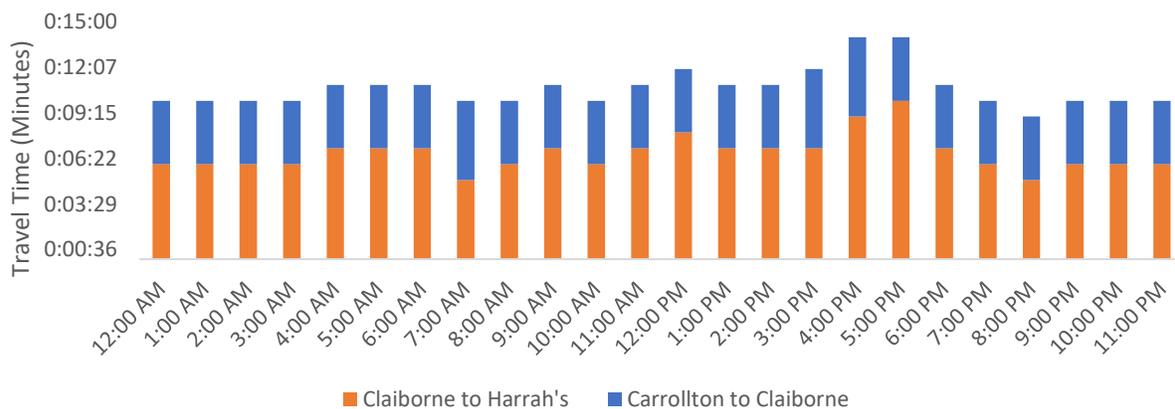
The goal of these observations was to get a ballpark figure for how much added time drivers may see to their regular trips under the conditions in Option 4.

Canal Street Driving Times Today

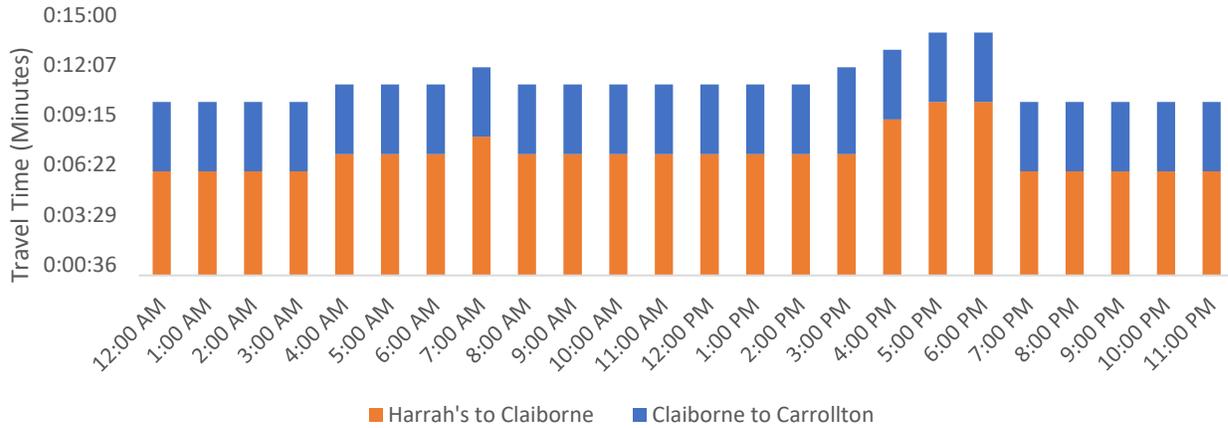
Driving times on Canal Street today fluctuate based on times when school zone speeds are in effect and during AM and PM peak times. According to Waze, driving the length of Canal Street from Carrollton Ave to Harrah’s Casino takes 10 – 11 minutes for most of the day, with spikes to 14 minutes during the peak PM rush hour.

Much of the time of this trip happens river-side of Claiborne on Canal. On the Upper segment of Canal Street from Claiborne to Carrollton, average driving time is around 4 minutes, which peaks to 5 minutes during AM and PM peak times (7:00 AM and 3:00 PM). The Riverside of Canal Street from Claiborne to Harrah’s ranges from 5 minutes to 10 minutes during the day, with the slowest times occurring during the PM peak (5:00 – 6:00 PM).

Canal Street Inbound Driving Times



Canal Street Outbound Driving Times

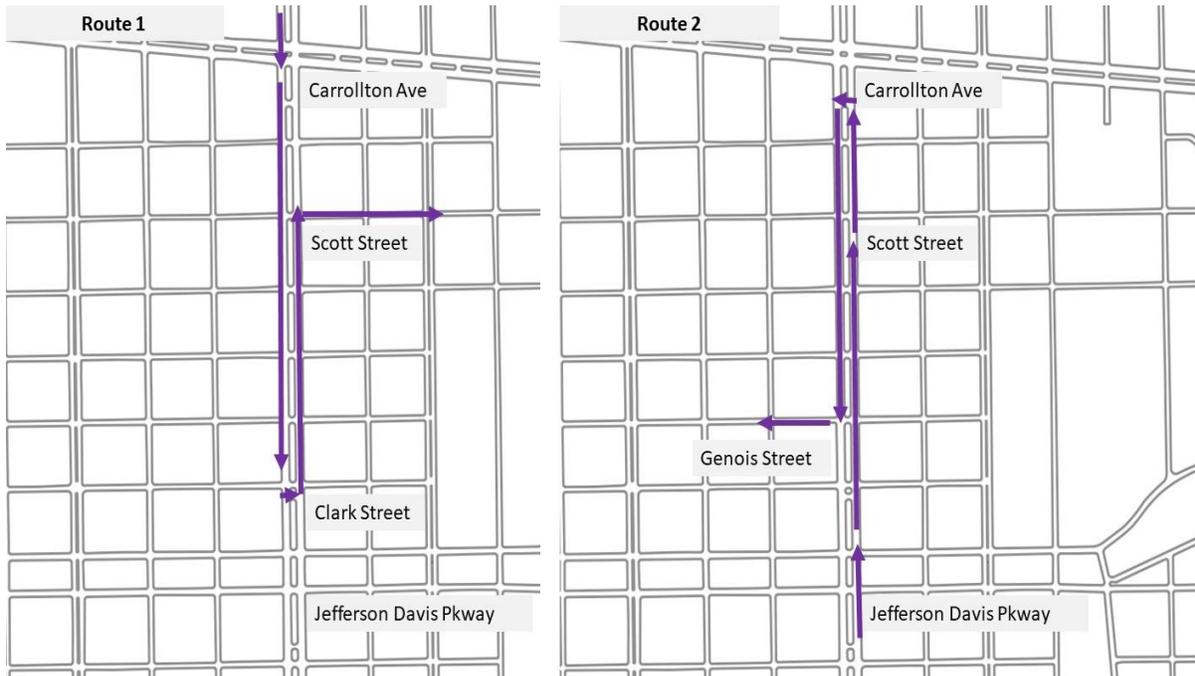


Preliminary Traffic Observations

These averages taken from Waze were tested through the field work completed by staff. Staff took trips during the AM Peak times to account for school zone slowing and peak traffic times. Both Inbound and Outbound trips took 12 minutes to complete. The longest travel time stretch was between Elk and S. Peters, which took 3.5 – 4 minutes to complete.

Staff then drove the routes that would be impacted the most by Option 4:

- **Route 1:** Driving riverbound from Carrollton, with a planned left turn on Scott Street.
- **Route 2:** Driving lakebound from Jeff Davis, with a planned left turn on Genois Street.





These preliminary observations suggest that the maximum possible delay for a motorist under Option 4 is between 1:16 (for the riverbound direction) and 1:55 (for the lakebound direction). However, these preliminary conclusions come with an important caveat. The conclusions do not account for driver adaptation to minimize their own travel times with changing traffic patterns.

Observed Traffic Impact

Route	Travel Time Today	Travel Time under Option 4	Added Time Due to Option 4 Changes
Route 1: Carrollton to left turn on Scott Street (riverbound)	0:00:40	0:01:56	0:01:16
Route 2: Jeff Davis to left turn on Genois Street (lakebound)	0:00:35	0:02:30	0:01:55