COMMISSIONER’S MESSAGE
During the fall, Secretary of Transportation Shannon Valentine and I attended Six-Year Improvement Program public meetings held around the state. These meetings highlighted and gathered input on the 468 applications for transportation projects submitted by 158 local and regional governments for evaluation and scoring through SMART SCALE.

Several of those meetings were held in conjunction with the third and final series of public meetings on the Interstate 81 Corridor Improvement Plan. On Dec. 5, the Commonwealth Transportation Board voted to approve the plan, which included targeted solutions to improve travel on I-81 and a variety of funding mechanisms to support those improvements.

In early December, the governor issued a directive establishing an executive leadership team on highway safety charged with reducing the number of fatalities on Virginia’s roadways. The governor invited Virginians to provide the team with feedback on how to curb safety issues, including distracted driving, by participating in a digital town hall.

Later in December, VDOT announced a partnership with the Piedmont Environmental Council to replace two aging stream crossings in Rappahannock County with designs that will help waterways mimic a more natural habitat for wildlife. This collaboration resulted in an innovative solution that highlights the way VDOT works with its stakeholders to protect our environment and improve Virginia’s transportation infrastructure.

In this quarter’s report, we focus our attention on highway safety, looking at trends in the number of vehicle-related crashes, serious injuries and fatalities on Virginia’s roads.

Stephen C. Brich, P.E.
VDOT Commissioner

SMART SCALE PROJECTS

There are 318 SMART SCALE projects being tracked in the development phase; 247 (77.7%) are progressing on schedule, and 244 (76.7%) are tracking on-budget. 35 of the 318 projects are scheduled to be awarded within fiscal year 2019, and 10 of those 36 projects have been awarded to date. Source: SMART SCALE Dashboard

There are 46 SMART SCALE projects being tracked under the delivery phase, and 12 of these are planned for completion within fiscal year 2019. 40 (87%) of the 46 projects are progressing on time and 38 (82.6%) within budget. Source: SMART SCALE Dashboard

THE BIG PICTURE ON TRAFFIC SAFETY

The annual number of traffic crashes increased by over 10,000, a jump of about 9%, from calendar year (CY) 2009 through CY 2018.

The annual number of traffic crash related serious injuries decreased by about 5,000, a drop of about 41%, from CY 2009 through CY2018.

Current CTB-approved CY 2019 goal: 7,689

Over the last ten years, the annual number of traffic crash related fatalities hit a low in CY 2014 and a high in CY 2017.

CY 2018* fatalities dropped 24 from CY 2017, but represent an increase of 119 over CY 2014 and 63 over CY 2009.

Current CTB-approved CY 2019 goal: 840

* Preliminary CY 2018 results provided by VDOT Traffic Engineering Division as of Feb. 7, 2019; final results from the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles are expected to be available in March 2019

As of Feb. 5, 2019
**VDOT NOTES**

**Major Projects**

**Park and Ride at I-66/Route 15 in Haymarket:** A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held in December for a new 230-space park and ride lot at the northeast corner of the Interstate 66/Route 15 interchange in Haymarket. The $7.1 million project is part of the I-66 Outside the Beltway improvements. The lot is intended to provide a staging area for carpools using the I-66 HOV lanes, as well as future transit services in the area. The benefits include time savings for carpools and transit users, and congestion relief on I-66.

**Jones Branch Connector:** In December, VDOT project partners opened two lanes of a new bridge across the Capital Beltway in Tysons Corner. The Jones Branch Connector provides access to the 495 Express Lanes, improves access to Metro’s McLean Station and the corporate headquarters of Capital One and Hilton Worldwide, and relieves congestion on Route 123. Two of the eventual four lanes are now open and the project is scheduled to be completed in late 2019.

**Awards and Honors**

**Design-Build Institute of America (DBIA):** DBIA named the diverging-diamond interchange at Interstate 66 and Route 15 in Prince William County its 2018 Project of the Year. The Northern Virginia District project previously received a National Award of Excellence and a National Award of Merit, both in the transportation sector, from DBIA. Additionally, VDOT’s Interstate 64 Capacity Improvements Segment I project in Hampton Roads received a National Award of Merit in the Transportation (other than Aviation) category.

**International Bridge, Tunnel and Turnpike Association (IBTTA):** The IBTTA presented VDOT with the 2018 Toll Excellence Award for Social Responsibility for its toll relief program – the first-of-its-kind in the United States – helping to provide meaningful financial relief to qualified residents who travel the Elizabeth River Tunnels.

**I-95/Temple Avenue Interchange:** The I-95/Temple Avenue interchange improvements and roundabout project in Colonial Heights, completed in November 2017, received the Award of Merit in the highways/bridges category from the Engineering News-Record Mid-Atlantic region. The project also received an honorable mention for excellence in design-build from the Design-Build Institute of America Mid-Atlantic region.

**Women’s Transportation Seminar (WTS):** Northern Virginia District Engineer Helen L. Cuervo, P.E., was named 2018 Woman of the Year by the Washington, D.C., Chapter of WTS for her leadership and contributions to transportation in the region spanning more than 30 years.

**TransComm Skills Awards:** VDOT’s Communications Division received two 2018 American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials TransComm Skills Awards, including one for best external video production with an emotional first-person account of a serious work zone crash, and another for best logo, illustration or infographic for the Colonial Heights Interstate 95/Temple Avenue roundabout mat.