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**CTB Approves \$140 MILLION For
State-Wide Transportation Projects
Springfield Interchange begins next phase of construction**

RICHMOND - Major transportation projects across Virginia will greatly benefit from action taken today (July 19) by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB). The Board approved \$140 million for 40 construction and maintenance contracts during its monthly board meeting. The three largest contracts awarded this month are:

Springfield Interchange

The largest amount, \$57 million, funds the next phase (referred to as phase 5) of Northern Virginia's Springfield Interchange, one of the largest construction projects in the country. The contract was awarded to the Lane Corporation Construction Corporation of Meriden, Connecticut.

Phase 5 work will consist primarily of improvements on the western leg of the Capital Beltway between I-95 and the Heming Avenue Bridge. The final contract for the Springfield Interchange (phases 6 and 7) will be advertised for bid next summer. The entire project consists of building more than 50 bridges and widening I-95 to 24 lanes between the beltway and Franconia Road.

"The Springfield Interchange project is running well ahead of schedule," said Commonwealth Transportation Commissioner Charles "Chip" Nottingham. "VDOT is committed to finishing this project on time with the last phase of the project scheduled for completion by late 2006 or early 2007."

Madison Heights Bypass, Lynchburg area

The second largest amount, \$42 million, goes to building the first section of the Madison Heights Bypass north of the James River in Amherst County. The CTB awarded the contract to Glade East, LLC of Mount Juliet, Tennessee.

The project involves building 4.8 miles of Route 29 around the Lynchburg area, through a low mountainous terrain. This project is one of several that makes up the Madison Heights Bypass which is being built to provide a much needed transportation alternative in the Lynchburg and Madison Heights area. The entire bypass is scheduled for completion in summer of 2004.

Route 265, Pittsylvania County

The CTB awarded the third largest contract, \$18 million, to W.C. English, Inc. of Lynchburg, Virginia to widen and improve Route 265 in Pittsylvania County. Nearly seven miles of Route 265 will be widened from two to four lanes between Route 58 and Route 360. Construction also includes sound walls and four bridges. When completed, the section will meet interstate standards and eventually become part of the Danville Expressway.

Background

The 17-member Commonwealth Transportation Board appointed by the Governor meets on the third Thursday of each month. The Board is primarily responsible for locating routes, approving construction contracts, creating traffic regulations, naming highways and administering and allocating the Transportation Trust Fund. Virginia Secretary of Transportation Shirley Ybarra is chairperson of the Board.

Since the year 2000, VDOT has experienced record seasons for construction activity. Including the projects built under the Public-Private Partnership Act, VDOT has an average of 600 or more contracts worth nearly \$3 billion under way at any one time, the most aggressive construction program in Virginia's history.

The boost in construction activity is largely due to Governor Gilmore's Innovative Progress program. A critical part of that program is the Commonwealth Transportation Act, which pumped an additional \$3 billion into transportation programs, making for a record total of \$10 billion over a six-year period.