



# COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
1401 EAST BROAD STREET  
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23219-2000

PHILIP A. SHUCET  
COMMISSIONER

May 10, 2004

The Honorable Frank R. Wolf  
Member, U. S. House of Representatives  
241 Canon House Office Building  
Washington, D. C. 20515

The Honorable Thomas M. Davis  
Member, U. S. House of Representatives  
2348 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D. C. 20515

Gentlemen:

In view of your amendments to provide funding for a study of transportation improvements to I-66 inside the Beltway, I thought it would be appropriate to update you on our efforts to obligate and effectively use those funds. As you know, Congress appropriated these funds in January. We are making our best efforts to comply with the terms of that appropriation, which require an obligation of these funds by June 1, 2004. I also am aware of the additional funding for this corridor proposed in the House surface transportation reauthorization measure.

When the Governor challenged the Department to define a new way of doing business in Northern Virginia, we immediately established a partnership with FHWA for a "context-sensitive solution" for this corridor. FHWA has begun training VDOT staff in this approach and is a full partner in the I-66 study that is outlined below.

The length of time required to work through this process may be troubling to some and insufficient to others. We have tried to develop a process that is reasonably quick, but also allows adequate time for us to communicate directly with constituents, stakeholders, affected communities, and all the relevant elected officials and decision makers.

In January, we began our planning efforts for this study. Our guide for this study has been Governor Warner's letter to you from last August (attached). As you know, the Governor has asked that any proposed improvements be located within the existing rights of way. Based on his guidance, we have developed the following study process and milestones.

- As of today's date, we have designated two individuals to lead this study. Mr. Tom Farley, Northern Virginia District Administrator, and Mr. Vince Mammano, of the Federal Highway Administration, will provide joint overall leadership for this study.

As of May 1, VDOT has designated a project manager for this study, Ms. Theresa DeFore. Given the length of time and complexity of community and transportation issues, we believe it is prudent to designate a single individual to be responsible for the day-to-day conduct of this study.

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- By June 1, we will identify a scope of work for outreach and technical consultants. In addition we will identify an initial set of affected communities and interests for this study. The study team will share this work with your staff. The consultants will be under contract by August 1.

By October 1, we will provide basic data on at least five options for initial consideration in this corridor. The initial options will be taken directly from the Governor's letter. Each option will be broadly evaluated for its community and neighborhood impacts, its infrastructure impacts, its safety impacts, its costs, its social/economic impacts, its long-term congestion impacts, and its environmental impacts. This initial list of options is not intended to be complete or exhaustive. However it will provide a basis for concrete, meaningful dialogue that is integral to the context sensitive design approach.

- By November 18, the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority and the Commonwealth Transportation Board will be briefed on the initial options, their impacts, and the outreach plan for the affected communities and interested parties.
- By January 1, 2005 the outreach consultant and the project manager will meet and discuss options, alternatives, modifications, and objections with all of the affected communities and interested parties.
- By February 1, 2005 the study leaders, Tom Farley and Vince Mammano, will rank the recommended options for consideration by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority and the Commonwealth Transportation Board.
- By March 1, 2005 the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority and the Commonwealth Transportation Board will consider the recommendations of the study team. If needed, additional outreach efforts and/or analysis may be undertaken.

A key to maintaining this schedule will be the timely approvals of the National Capital Regional Transportation Planning Board, the Commonwealth Transportation Board, and the Federal Highway Administration. Delays or disapprovals by any of these bodies could significantly affect this proposed process.

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While this is a fairly simplistic overview, it does represent a very significant commitment of the resources of both VDOT and FHWA to address a serious transportation problem in a new and different way. Throughout the course of this study, we also will have at our disposal the resources of the office of context sensitive solutions in the FHWA central office. We hope you find this information useful and look forward to working with you on this important study.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Philip A. Shucet". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Philip A. Shucet  
Commissioner

**Attachment**

cc: The Honorable James P. Moran  
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority  
Secretary of Transportation  
Mr. Roberto Fonseca-Martinez, FHWA