



Idea-66

Imagine the Possibilities



I-66 INSIDE THE BELTWAY

FEASIBILITY STUDY PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY



MAY 2005

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I-66 Inside the Beltway Report to Commonwealth Transportation Board May 2005

PUBLIC COMMENT ON THE FEASIBILITY STUDY

The Virginia Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration recently completed a feasibility study on how to best ease congestion within the existing right of way on I-66 westbound from the Rosslyn Tunnel to the Dulles Airport Access Road.

Concepts and criteria were developed through public meetings, Web site comments, and comments received from all stakeholders using a Context Sensitive Solutions approach. Thirty-eight concepts were evaluated under broad categories of no-build, high occupancy vehicle/high occupancy toll lanes (HOV/HOT), transit, and roadway widening concepts. In keeping with the original problem statement from Governor Warner and Congressmen Wolf and Davis, five concepts met the criteria.

On March 16, 2005, the Idea-66 Summary Report was presented to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB). The CTB requested that a 30 day comment period be provided via the internet, phone and mail. These comments will be considered when the Six Year Improvement Plan is developed and finalized. The recommendations from the I-66 Summary Report include:

- Advancing to a multi-modal environmental study – the environmental study would review all alternatives independently. These alternatives will include adding a third lane reserved for high occupancy vehicles (HOV), high occupancy tolls (HOT), and/or an express bus lane as recommended by the study.
- Evaluating a series of interim improvements that could be done with minimal impact to address spot problems and improve roadway safety. These range in cost from \$2 million for improved signage to \$45 million for a continuous shoulder.
- Continuing community involvement.

Feasibility Study Report

On March 31, 2005, the final report was published. It contained the project history, the community outreach efforts and results of the technical analysis of the 38 concepts.

On April 1, 2005, the study team mailed 56 copies of the *Feasibility Study* Report to elected and appointed officials and agency representatives, including members of the U.S. Senate, U.S. House of Representatives, Virginia General Assembly, Commonwealth Transportation Board, Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, Federal Highway Administration, Virginia Secretary of Transportation, Virginia Department of Transportation, Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, Arlington County Division of Transportation, and Fairfax County Department of Transportation.

The *Feasibility Study* Report was posted to the www.idea66.com Web site on April 1, 2005, which informed the public of the 30 day comment period. This notice was prominently advertised on the project Web site on the “What’s New” page. An E-mail broadcast to some 225 individuals and civic groups was also transmitted on April 1 notifying them of the posting of the Study report on the Web site and that public comments would be accepted through May 1, 2005.

In addition to posting the report on the project Web site, the team made hard copies of the report accessible to the general public by displaying copies of the report at two public libraries adjacent to the study corridor – the Arlington Central Library and the Mary Riley Styles Public Library. Copies were also sent to Arlington and Fairfax County study representatives and the VDOT NOVA District office. (Appendix B: Feasibility Study Distribution List)

Media Notification

A VDOT press release titled “VDOT Completes Idea-66 Study; 30 Day Public Comment Period begins April 1” was distributed to media outlets on March 21, 2005. An e-mail broadcast was sent out the same day to 225 individuals and groups advising them that the press release had been placed on the project Web site. (Appendix A: VDOT Press Release)

Community Meetings

Numerous stakeholder meetings were held prior to the completion of the *Feasibility Study* as outlined in Chapter 2 – Community Outreach Activities in the Feasibility Study. After the Commonwealth Transportation Board meeting held on March 16, 2005, the Arlington Civic Federation and the Metropolitan Washington Board of Trade requested presentations on Idea-66.

Representatives from the Virginia Department of Transportation and the project team briefed community, civic, and business members about the status and findings of the I-66 Inside the Beltway Study. On April 7, 2005, the team presented a PowerPoint presentation to representatives from the Arlington Civic Federation. In addition to its members, the Federation made several efforts to invite the general public to the meeting. Approximately 25 Federation delegates and residents attended.

On April 28, 2005, Dennis Morrison, NOVA District Administrator, provided a brief presentation to members of the Metropolitan Washington Board of Trade's Transportation and Land Use Committee on Idea-66 and other projects within Northern Virginia.

Summary of Comments

In a continuing effort to engage the public in the Context Sensitive Solutions approach, public comments were accepted on the *Idea 66 Feasibility Study* from April 1, 2005 through May 1, 2005.

The project team received 218 comments from 183 commenters during the 30-day comment period following the posting on the Web site and mailing of the *I-66 Inside the Beltway Feasibility Study Report*.

A copy of the Comment Summary is attached as Appendix C. Excerpts from the comments were organized into the following categories:

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Copies of comments received from Arlington County and Fairfax County are attached in Appendix D. Additional comments received after May 1, 2005 were not included in the Comment Summary but are included in the *Summary Study Report* files. A copy of all correspondence is available upon request.

In summary, most comments received will be addressed in a formal environmental document.



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Appendix A
VDOT Press Release

Appendix A: VDOT Press Release



News Release

VirginiaDOT.org

RELEASE: **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

March 21, 2005

CONTACT: Joan Morris 703 383 2465; 571 238-5030

Joan.Morris@VDOT.Virginia.org

VDOT COMPLETES IDEA-66 STUDY; 30 Day Public Comment Period begins April 1

The Virginia Department of Transportation and the Federal Highway Administration have completed a feasibility study on how to best ease congestion within the existing right of way on I-66 westbound from the Rosslyn Tunnel to the Dulles Airport Access Road. The final feasibility study will be posted on the study Web site, www.idea66.com, on April 1 and public comment will be accepted through May 1, 2005.

The Idea-66 feasibility study recommends:

- Advancing to a multi-modal environmental study that would include adding a third lane reserved for high occupancy vehicles (HOV), high occupancy tolls (HOT) and/or an express bus lane. Adding a third lane within the existing right of way would reduce congestion on I-66 and parallel roadways as well as improve evacuation capability. The cost would range from \$112 to \$233 million.
- Evaluating a series of interim improvements that could be done with minimal impact to address spot problems and improve roadway safety. These range in cost from \$2 million for improved signage to \$45 million for a continuous shoulder.
- Continuing community involvement to bridge the gap between the current Idea-66 study and a possible environmental study.

The Idea-66 Feasibility study began last summer in response to congressional and state concerns about growing congestion in the corridor and ease of evacuation during emergencies.

Beginning April 1, the completed Idea-66 Study will be available at www.idea66.com. For more information, call the toll free info line at 1 866 816-4466.

#

NR05-12



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Appendix B
Distribution List

Appendix B: I-66 Inside the Beltway Feasibility Study Report Distribution List

U.S. Senate

Honorable George Allen
Honorable John W. Warner

U.S. House of Representatives

Honorable Thomas M. Davis, III
Honorable James P. Moran
Honorable Frank R. Wolf

Senate of Virginia

Honorable Ken Cuccinelli, II
Honorable Janet D. Howell
Honorable Jay O'Brien
Honorable William C. Mims
Honorable Mary Margaret Whipple

Virginia House of Delegates

Honorable Vincent F. Callahan, Jr.
Honorable Adam P. Ebbin
Honorable Tim Hugo
Honorable Kenneth R. Plum
Honorable Thomas Davis Rust
Honorable James M. Scott
Honorable Stephen C. Shannon

Commonwealth Transportation Board

Mr. Ambrose W. Bailey
Mr. Jim Bowie
Mrs. Julia A. Connally
Mr. John J. Davies, III
Ms. Helen E. Dragas
Honorable Katherine K. Hanley
Mr. James L. Keen
Mr. Harry T. Lester
Mr. Dana M. Martin
Mr. Gerald P. McCarthy
Mr. Robert E. Sevila
Dr. Phillip C. Stone
Mr. Hunter R. Watson
Mr. Kenneth Spencer White

Public Libraries

Arlington Central Library
Mary Riley Styles Public Library

Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

Honorable Sean T. Connaughton
Honorable Gerald E. Connolly
Honorable William D. Euille
Honorable Jeff Frederick
Honorable Robert F. Lederer
Honorable Harry J. Parrish, II
Honorable Bryan Polk
Honorable David F. Snyder
Honorable Margaret E. G. Vanderhye
Honorable Scott K. York
Honorable Christopher Zimmerman

Federal Highway Administration

Mr. Vince Mammano

Virginia Secretary of Transportation

Mr. Pierce Homer

Virginia Department of Transportation

Mr. William Cuttler
Ms. Theresa DeFore
Ms. Renee Hamilton
Mr. Mal Kerley
Mr. Robert McDonald
Mr. Dennis Morrison
Mr. Phillip Shucet
Ms. Joanne Sorenson
Mr. Tim Sproat

Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

Ms. Karen J. Rae

Arlington County Division of Transportation

Ms. Nicole Lewis

Fairfax County Department of Transportation

Mr. Dan Southworth



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Appendix C
Idea-66 Comments Report

Public Comment Excerpts

Congestion

- Looking at the set of options being considered, I am extremely surprised that some relatively simple, but potentially effective measures are not even in the mix. One can readily observe that CONGESTED TRAFFIC on I-66 westbound slowly achieves speed in the half-mile immediately after the on-ramp from Washington Boulevard. This is due to two factors: first, the entering traffic has difficulty accelerating to speed as their lane is on an uphill grade and, second, both the entering traffic and the roadway traffic attempt lane changes too quickly in an effort to align themselves for the 267 split. This could be greatly alleviated with three measures: 1) Eliminate the initial curve in the entrance ramp and re-grade it so that, instead of going downhill and then uphill, it stays level until reaching the main roadway. 2) Extend the acceleration area (where no lane changing can happen) of the three-lane roadway with vertical knock-over posts. This allows the entering traffic to match speed before lane changes can occur. 3) Post signs on the entry ramp clearly indicating that, given the additional lane, no immediate merge to the left is necessary and move the 267 split notification signs further ahead so that lane-changing occurs after the crest of the hill.

- In my experience, the TRAFFIC problems stem from the large influx of traffic at Fairfax Dr. Thus, spot improvements at Fairfax and Sycamore, which could include a third lane all the way from Fairfax to the Dulles Access road seem to be prudent. Bringing additional traffic from farther east will only compound the problem.

- Every day I either take the metro from East Falls Church to DC or I drive west to the beltway. The I66 situation is beyond crises. Every aspect needs attention. I realize that resistance exists, but it must be overcome.
 1. Double deck I-66 all the way to DC
 2. The Westbound entrance to I-66 from US 29 is totally inadequate
 3. Add more rail lines for metro in this expansion
 4. Build parking garages at EFC. Big ones, from the metro across US 29 to the Fairfax Drive overpass. Plan egress and ingress accordingly. With the right planning you can park many cars. It will also provide shelter to walk from US 29 to the actual station.
 5. Re-vamp the roads to carry more traffic.
 6. Maybe the outfall will bring more than 1 gas station and one bank in the vicinity.

What can I do to help?

➤ The presentation materials do not mention that westbound I-66 has CONGESTION problems on weekends as well as weekdays. This is an important point since it makes it more clear that HOV/HOT and mass transit solutions could not solve the problem. I hope that this point can be included in the CTB presentation.

➤ How about easing the TRAFFIC from Arlington to Haymarket?

➤ A wider highway might relieve traffic and it might not. The one thing it will surely do is ensure the destruction of the excellent biking trail (The Custis Trail) that runs parallel to the highway. Why doesn't Virginia look into other options to relieve traffic congestion? WIDENING is a short-term resolution. Additional lanes will eventually become congested as well. Congestion is a problem, but so is finding safe paths for cyclists, runners, walkers and their families throughout the greater DC area.

➤ I-66 inside I-495 in Virginia is one of the greatest BOTTLENECKS in Northern Virginia.

I urge the CTB to authorize the commissioning of an Environmental Impact Study for this corridor in both directions so that we can get on with eliminating the backups on this important Dulles Airport and commuter road.

➤ I travel I-66 east and westbound each working day. It is one of the worst traffic BOTTLENECKS in the area.

I strongly urge the Commonwealth Transportation Board to authorize the commissioning of an Environmental Impact Study or other appropriate environmental assessment of the corridor in both directions to improve mobility and traffic flow and reduce the commute time of thousands of area residents--like me. Reducing the congestion will also, obviously, improve gas mileage and thus reduce gasoline consumption for I-66 commuters.

Transit

- Northern Virginia and the I-66 corridor, expanded to include the route to Tyson's and Dulles, have a historic chance to set the stage and star in the production of an American, 21st century and beyond, public transportation plan and facility. The existing METRO RAIL SYSTEM is but a good start on what could be done to get Americans out of their cars and off the roads and into public transportation systems. Investing now in overhead, elevated and underground rail transport, tied to METRO (so long as METRO is aggressively managed for the riding public's benefit), will make the best future for our region's transportation needs.

Please do not buy more highway. Acquire better PUBLIC MASS TRANSPORTATION and invest in long term jobs for people to keep it clean, maintained and policed.

- Increasing PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION capacity between DC and Vienna could be a great idea, provided that the problem of transportation IN and AROUND Vienna/Fairfax were improved. As I mentioned earlier, I think many people would be more than willing to increase their usage of public transportation if it were a viable option (meaning, they could get to work once they'd arrived at their destination metro or bus station).

- Would like to see METRORAIL extended out to Manassas.

- We completely favor anything that can be done to help the ORANGE LINE. We live at East Falls Church and it is extremely rare that we can ever get a seat on metro and usually find ourselves jamming into an already packed train lucky to have a small space to stand in. With more expansion happening out towards Dulles, how on earth are all of these people supposed to fit? Riding the metro has become a survival sport among frustrated, bag swinging commuters who know the smallest gesture of politeness could cost them the little remaining standing space on a train.

- Parking
TRAIN USE should be encouraged by increasing parking space and subsidizing parking costs. Multi story underground parking would allow the maximum parking space and while it is more expensive, I expect you would find this more cost-effective if you include all true costs of road widening, such as health costs, in your analysis. More people would take the train if they knew they could be guaranteed a parking spot - e.g. East Falls Church is usually full by 8AM or earlier.

The future

In suburban areas such as Northern Virginia, traffic will always fill the available road space. If you build extra lanes, more people will use the road until in a few years, and we will be at the same problem we are at now. 66 is one example, but there are many more. Investing in trains and buses is the better long-term approach to this problem.

- I read with dismay your newsletter of Jan. 2005 suggesting that PUBLIC TRANSIT is only one of several ideas being considered for relieving congestion in the I-66 corridor. In my view, this is the only sensible solution. A combination of increased bus service, increased Metrorail service, and expanded parking lots on the perimeter of the Metro area, would significantly and permanently reduce congestion. More HOV lanes, in both directions, would also be helpful, with supportive carpool services available.

Public transit needs to run both ways, so that my many neighbors who work in the Tyson's Corner and Dulles Corridor can also use public transit, as I do when I work downtown.

Increasing roadways only temporarily relieves congestion, while more autos fill up the space. It creates more air pollution, noise and continued congestion. It is not a good solution.

- The hearings were a sham. Build more PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION.

- Feasible alternatives were limited to "I-66 widening", yet public comment desired to see MASS TRANSIT options. Why are there no mass transit, multi-modal options in the study?

What was lacking was a true description of the public's requirements for transportation alternatives in the affected region. Please define how the requirements and expected outcomes desired by the public were defined.

- Please don't push for widening I-66 without some progress on MASS TRANSIT, expanded Metro, pedestrian-friendly intersections, return to HOV-4, and bike path preservation. We can't just throw in the towel and say cars rule, because the traffic growth will continue to outpace your new concrete, making it a disruptive waste. Instead, Virginia should become a trendsetter in sane and balanced transportation policy.

- In addition to adding capacity to I-66, my understanding is that a goal of any investment in the highway is to encourage potential single car drivers to use PUBLIC TRANSIT or high occupancy vehicles. I suggest that two features be included in any future study for improving I-66 capacity between Rosslyn and Route 7. I expect these features would make the entire project friendlier to Arlington County residents, and could reduce some of the Arlington County opposition to the projects:

First, make pedestrian access to the East Falls Church Metro station less dangerous and difficult. Most pedestrians using the station must cross either Sycamore Street or Washington Boulevard, or both, to reach the station. These roads are used by vehicles leaving and entering I-66. Traffic around the station is heavy, and pedestrian crossing can be risky to the walker and clearly slows traffic during peak periods. If pedestrian access to the station from both north and south of the station could be by either bridge or tunnel over or under Sycamore and Washington Boulevard, pedestrians would be removed from the traffic equation, pedestrian access would be much safer (check the pedestrian accidents in the area over the past five years), and station patrons, by walking, would be less likely to want to use the station's parking facilities.

Second, expand parking capacity at the East Falls Church Metro station by replacing the parking lot with a larger parking structure. At the same time, improve vehicle access to the parking lot; the left turn from westbound Washington Boulevard into the Metro parking lot and the left turn to leave that lot are at best risky and are bad traffic engineering. An argument can be made that the more cars that park at the East Falls Church station, the fewer drivers will need to use I-66. At the same time, the station area could be re-designed to facilitate carpool pick up from the parking lot for those parkers who can't get to work by Metro.

I know there will be strong opposition to any widening among many residents of Arlington County. However, by considering the improvement of pedestrian and parking facilities and traffic flow around the East Falls Church Metro station as an integral part of an I-66 widening effort, the entire project becomes more friendly to that neighborhood, as well as useful to drivers who enter the County on their way to somewhere else. The improvements I suggest are likely to be made only as part of a very large project with regional support, and would bring a sense of accommodation of their needs to some residents of Arlington County.

Also, I would expect that any plan for I-66 development in Arlington and Falls Church would consider the provisions of the "East Falls Church Metro Area Plan" which includes covering I-66 west of the Metro station to provide retail locations and better pedestrian access across I-66. The area around the East Falls Church Metro station is likely to become much more highly developed during the next ten years, and any plan for the I-66 corridor needs to consider the new local development.

I think the VDOT study is well done, and provides an excellent start to consideration of future needs of the corridor. Arlington and Falls Church will continue to urbanize, and needs to be serviced by appropriate transportation facilities and traffic arrangements.

- It is time to move ahead to improve the traffic efficiency of the westbound lanes of I-66. This measure will improve the capacity of the facility and allow more carpools to use the facility and thus relieving the local streets of some of this traffic. The area needs some relief from car air pollution. A fix is long over due. Those that wish to travel by themselves can use metro when possible. A suggestion would be to required carpooling in both directions during rush hours, except for those Dulles Airport bound types. I also suggest that traffic restrictions be applied to the presently unlimited volumes of traffic combining from Rte 7 , I-66, and the Connector in order to create an orderly limited stream of traffic that can operate at reasonable speeds on the Arlington parts of I-66 and to max the service to the users. Too much volume leads to breakdowns in speeds and finally leads to levels of service F. Please also complete corrections needed for eastbound I-66 especially around the Fall Church sections. If monies ever come available, creating a black (orange) line to relieve metro train congestion along the present orange/blue line portion is a good idea. Although I-66 helps with the east-west motorists, the high rise building corridors in Arlington also will need help with the north-south bound traffic routes. This area is adding lots of infill and density which results in a heavier burden on the transportation systems.

- As reported in a recent Washington Post series and by every serious measure of commuting habits conducted by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and others over several decades, METRORAIL is a niche service -invaluable to some but impractical for most. It will ever be thus, given decades of development patterns throughout the region. Even within a mile radius of Arlington's Metro corridor, most residents do not rely on Metrorail for the large majority of their varied travel needs. Thus, the suggestion by some officials that widening I-66 - and reducing the attendant wasted fuel, greater emissions, lost productivity, missed soccer games, unhealthy stress, aggressive driving, etc. -- will halt a pending mass diversion to Metro is pure sophistry. If Metrorail was a viable solution for most commuters, would they not already be riding the rails to avoid I-66's pandemic congestion? Commuters are not fools - they do not bang their heads against the dashboard out of choice, rather necessity Even if Metrorail were extended to Reston and then Dulles, the large majority still will drive and still will be caught in the web of I-66's planned congestion.

- I am concerned that widening I-66 westbound within the ROW will preclude the opportunity to later add a second METRO RAIL service down the I-66 corridor. It seems inevitable that the orange line will eventually need to extend past Vienna and if so an express metro rail may be the only viable solution for its affective use.

- Solutions exist that would improve travel. I urge our representatives and other residents to back RAIL solutions (and get it to Dulles Airport!) that can move the public efficiently and lessen the increase in vehicle traffic.

- Without access to METRO lots, why would anyone from beyond 66 take a two-step commute using cars and METRO? Personally, I'd retake the W&OD right of way and run light rail out to Falls Church, Reston, Dulles, and Leesburg, but I know that has even less of a chance of happening.

- The report's findings show that non-widening alternatives could have a significant impact on traffic congestion without breaking the compact with Arlington that I-66 would never be widened. Specifically, enhanced HOV and toll lane options would offer significant impact for minimal cost. Spot improvements at key congestion points are also critical.

Given that Metro runs in the middle of I-66 for much of this corridor, there is also concern that widening would eliminate any possible Metro expansion in the future. Public transit is at the core of Arlington's Smart Growth and highway planning should not impact this key public asset.

- The report is quite clear in one aspect: that non-widening ALTERNATIVES provide the most benefit for the least cost. Everything else in the report significantly impacts the neighborhoods and will cause legal action as a result of breaking the promise to Arlingtonians that I-66 would never be widened. Wiser management of existing lanes combined with traffic improvements would improve travel conditions on I-66.

Let's pursue this course because it is the best overall solution. Following the reports recommendations will lead to Northern Virginia's own "Big Dig" disaster in the future.

- The local area has taken a big step in the now-very likely extension of METRORAIL service to Tyson's Corner and eventually, and hopefully even sooner, to Dulles airport. The I-66 corridor is the key to that mass-transit-by-rail solution and adding a new I-66 lane will compromise our future ability to use that space efficiently.

Current traffic problems can be addressed by less expensive options such as spot roadway improvements, better traffic control by toll charges, and more efficient and enforced time, occupancy, and vehicle type limits.

- Any desire to widen the paved portion of the I-66 corridor should give way to the probable future need of METRO for an express line (referred to by some as the Silver Line) that could run down the I-66 corridor from the East Falls Church station to Rosslyn. People who reside and work in the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor have grave concerns that the expansion westward to Dulles Airport of the Orange Line may, in time, make use of Metro in that corridor increasingly difficult during rush hours due to the influx of many new commuters from the future western stations. A conceived express line that would run in the I-66 right of way from East Falls Church to Rosslyn may be needed to keep this extended Virginia segment of the Metro system functional in the decades to come. This future mass transit need must, in our view, prevail over the present inconvenience experienced by some drivers on I-66. Further development of the current feasibility study appears needed before any authorization by the Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) of a full environmental study under the National Environmental Policy Act. In this respect, for example, we take special note of the very reasonable actions requested by the Arlington County Board in their letter dated April 21, 2005, to Virginia Secretary of Transportation Pierce Homer.

- I request, on behalf of my wife and myself, that VDOT undertake a second phase of the I-66 feasibility study to develop a realistic and broadly accepted management plan for operating all four existing lanes of I-66 more effectively. A Location (NEPA) Study for adding a westbound travel lane to I-66 should not be undertaken at this time. Furthermore, we support the eight requests by the Arlington County Board in their Resolution of April 19, 2005 which include steps: 1) to study TRANSIT ALTERNATIVES, including rail expansion in combination with management alternatives; 2) to implement relatively low-cost, traffic operations (reverse-commute HOV, HOV-3, HOV enforcement and transportation demand management programs) prior to funding larger capital improvements; and 3) to define future I-66 corridor statements and priority criteria that emphasize enhanced livability for communities within the study area.

- I just want to emphasize, in particular: 1. that the analysis in the "study" of the "comparison of concepts" (the detailed grid in the technical chapter) actually was clear in its results: by far, the most favorable overall concept is current configuration (i.e., NO widening) with high-occupancy toll capacity; further, the current configuration HOV scored better than any of the three widening options; and Orange Line improvements also ranked very highly. 2. that the telephone survey for the "study" actually found that, "of four options tested, making bus and/or rail transit improvements is the strongest performer overall. Nearly one-half (47%) of commuters rated the bus and/or rail transit option as their first choice for reducing congestion. One third (33%) said (without interviewer prompting) as an open-ended question) that the public transportation and Metro should be improved and expanded to lessen congestion in the I-66 Corridor. On a Concept Performance Index, bus and rail improvements also scored highest, indexing at 36."

- What should be done in the I-66 corridor? In the short-run, interim measures should include spot improvements such as lengthening entrance ramps. An experiment with adding rush hour bus routes from Ballston and East Falls Church out to employment areas at Tysons Corner would help determine if mass transit is viable (and perhaps start to build a market for the Dulles extension of the Orange Line).

Non-Motorized Transportation

- In reading the January 2005 Vol.1, Issue 2-Newsletter on Idea66--there is no mention of the BIKE/WALK/RUN TRAIL, which parallels 66 in various points prior to Sycamore Street. What is being done to ensure that the bike trail will remain if the road is widened?

- I use the CUSTIS TRAIL as my primary method of commuting from the Ballston area to DC. I do not see how it is possible to add an additional lane and a wide shoulder to I-66 without destroying the trail. What plans are being made to preserve the trail? If the trail is going to be moved how many years will it be inaccessible during construction?

- I want to know about the BIKE TRAIL. What happens to it if a lane is added?

- I am concerned about disruption of the BIKE PATH running adjacent to 66. Many of us, myself included, use this path to commute to work nearly everyday. I understand that widening 66 could result in disruption and re-routing of the bike path. Every bicycle commuter there is on that path means one less car on the road.

- I am very concerned about any widening of I-66 that cuts off the CUSTIS TRAIL in any place. I use the trail every workday, 8 months a year to commute from Falls Church to D.C. on my bike. It is a healthy alternative to driving: saves gas, contributes zero pollution, is part of a health-promoting active lifestyle that decreases risk of diabetes, heart disease, obesity, etc. Widening I-66 is throwing more public money towards only one mode of transportation, the car, instead of investing that same money in alternatives to the car. However, even if I-66 is widened, the Custis trail must be preserved in its entirety.

- Widening I-66 westbound should happen only if the site's mixed BIKE/WALKING TRAIL can be preserved. This trail is a vital link in Arlington's (and the region's) bicycle route system, and is the only major east-west route in northern Arlington. Thousands of people use the trail for recreation or commuting.

- I note reference in the most recent Idea-66 publication to the possibility of severing the CUSTIS BIKE TRAIL. SUCH A POSSIBILTiy IS UNACCEPTABLE AND MUST BE TAKEN OFF THE TABLE. Beyond the immeasurable recreational benefits offered by uninterrupted Custis bike trail connecting DC with inner and outer VA suburbs, this is the only feasible bike commuting venue from Arlington, Falls Church and beyond. Compromising this trail in any meaningful manner (without a comparable replacement) would be extremely short-sided, and would create a major gap in the DC area's (currently) excellent bike trail system that is arguably without a peer in any east coast metropolitan area. Moreover, it would be a further reversal of the very compromise that allowed I-66 to exist in the first place. This is a serious quality of life issue.

- I am greatly concerned that a project to widen I-66 could sever or destroy the CUSTIS TRAIL that parallels the highway from East Falls Church to Rosslyn. The Trail is much more than a recreational path enjoyed by walkers, runners, bikers, and pet lovers of all ages. It is also a critical link for thousands of daily bike commuters.

- I read recently on the Washington Area Bicyclist Association website that one proposed plan for the widening of I-66 would involve the severing of the CUSTIS BIKE TRAIL in several key spots. While I support efforts to alleviate traffic congestion in our area through road improvements, as a bike commuter and user of the Custis trail I depend on this resource in order to reduce my own "footprint" on I-66 congestion. Once a week, I use the trail to commute to work as an alternative to driving on I-66.

- The Idea-66 study Must Give Significant Weight to BIKE Facilities and Access to the Bike Trails Next to I-66 and Reject the "Roadway Widening" Option.

Parallel Routes

- I really think that your priority should be moving the traffic efficiently and quickly through Arlington. Restricting the "expressway" is folly. How can you think that putting all the traffic on Lee Hwy and Washington Blvd. is logical? They are and were, RESIDENTIAL STREETS. Now, they are so full of commuter traffic and cut through traffic that I can hardly get off my drive way and traffic lines up from Lee Hwy to Westover and from Glebe to Westover while you could shoot a cannon ball down 66 at rush hour and only hit 2 cars! You should be widening or double decking 66 and opening it up. Get the traffic off the side streets. Let our trees and shrubs green out again!

- As a resident of Arlington who works in Ballston and must visit clients during the work day, I think I am qualified to observe that during the majority of the day (except during HOV use times) this road is at or about it's maximum capacity and for probably 40% of the day the service is at level F (or whatever the traffic engineer's call it when a 55 mph road is stopped or crawling at 5-10 mph). In fact, I have discovered and now do drive faster to all locations west of Arlington by using the LOCAL STREETS of Arlington, Falls Church, McLean, Merrifield, Vienna and Fairfax County.

- I have only a few complaints about the report. One problem is that the study seems to underestimate the spillover onto PARALLEL ROUTES from implementing HOV/HOT in both directions. While PM volume on I-66 would fall by 4,300 vehicles with HOV3, only a small fraction of these show up on any of the alternate routes. Where did they go? Only a small fraction are likely to find mass transit suitable given the wide dispersion of residences and workplaces on both ends. Thus, presumably the largest number will have to find alternate routes. This suggests problems with the traffic model being used.

Environmental Factors

- I would like to see what kind of SOUND WALLS will be constructed if the road is widened to three lanes from Rosslyn-to points West (specifically the area from Fairfax Drive to Sycamore Street). I am opposed to road widening and would like to see more HOV lanes--most of the drivers going West are single drivers.

- Would like to see better NOISE WALLS in place on both sides of I-66. Has a number of neighbors who feel the same way.

- Evaluation Criteria/Measures of ENVIRONMENTAL Impacts.

POLLUTION will be a key impact if you widen any large part of 66. Traffic will fill the available road space and therefore pollution will increase. An NIH study, among others, has shown that suburban health is deteriorating due to pollution - with cars being responsible for much of this. See <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/dert/profiles/1999/airpollu.htm> for details. Asthma is increasing dramatically across the country and is often directly related to pollution. In addition, a recent study on newborns showed other pollution effects on health - see <http://www.news-medical.net/?id=7773> When reviewing environmental impacts and costs, please include health costs.

- I live a quarter of a mile from Rt 66 in Arlington and my biggest concern is the QUALITY OF THE AIR that I and my family breathe. Why is this issue NOT on the measures of environmental impact? Thanks!

- The NOISE LEVEL that I-66 imposes on all adjacent communities is far beyond the acceptable decibel limits. Something needs to be done to alleviate this source of pollution from our lives. Request a comprehensive study be undertaken and results put into action.

- Stop the POLLUTION and NOISE in Arlington.

- I live on the eastbound side of I-66. The community would like to have NOISE issues considered during an environmental phase. SOUND WALLS are inadequate. Trees planted by VDOT did not survive and did not provide sound lessening anyway.

➤ The Washington metropolitan area is under increasing pressure to reduce automobile exhaust emissions due to its noncompliance with the Clean Air Act. Adding additional travel lanes to existing interstate roadways can only exacerbate rather than improve the quality of air in this region. The I-66 Feasibility Study results as issued seem to ignore the established fact that adding lanes to existing limited access roadways has the long-run effect of increasing rather than decreasing vehicle traffic. In the Overview chapter of the study, the problem statement upon which the study was based is drawn from a June 2003 letter from Northern Virginia Congressmen Frank Wolf and Tom Davis. Five key elements in their letter were identified: Ease congestion on I-66 westbound; Reduce congestion on parallel local roadways; Improve access to regional activity centers; Improve economic vitality of activity centers; and Provide quicker emergency evacuations from Washington, DC. These are all car-centric elements that ignore issues related to health, responsible growth, and the inevitable decline in oil. Limiting the problem statement to this car-dependent view of transportation in the Washington region virtually ensured that the findings of the study would be limited to how to move more cars within the I-66 right of way. Governor Mark Warner of Virginia in September 2003 proposed the current study effort so long as it was conducted so as to yield a 'context-sensitive' solution to the mobility and community problems in this corridor." The Governor assumed that the study would be a community-based planning process that would not presuppose a particular outcome or result. While the public outreach sessions seem to have adhered to these guidelines, the study report as issued does not.

➤ During this time of public comment on the initial phase of Virginia's I-66 study, we are concerned this process is overlooking ENVIRONMENTAL issues.

The initial study recommends three priority criteria, but none are related to the environmental consequences of any action (or inaction) in the I-66 corridor. Thirty years after the Clean Air Act's passage, the Washington area still does not meet health standards for smog, and just this week an American Lung Association report gave our air a failing grade. Air quality impact must be a top priority.

➤ I am concerned for the ENVIRONMENTAL welfare of the area and of my three daughters growing up in Arlington. This would include all of the lovely parks and natural environments that we have worked so hard to preserve. They are essential to the health of all of us in the region and to future residents of Northern Virginia.

Security

- Evacuation seems like a red herring. If a natural disaster (most likely a hurricane) were to strike, we would have several days notice to evacuate using several different road options. A TERRORIST ATTACK is likely to be limited in range (initially and after fallout), and so does not justify mass evacuations. If it is big, then a traffic jam on 66 is not the biggest problem we face. Never mind that there are only a few Potomac crossings available, none of which will be expanded for this purpose.
- One of the main reasons you've listed for widening 66 is to provide better evacuation from DC in the event of a terrorist attack. This contradicts the fundamental approach taken by the Department of Homeland Security, which is to shelter in place - and avoid a mass evacuation. Will you conduct a cost/benefit analysis of the comparison of lives saved using shelter in place concept of operations versus the potential lives saved by evacuating on 66? Will you share that with the public?

Funding

- H.R. 3 contains \$12 billion in earmarked transportation projects. There are 435 congressional districts. The average in earmarks per district is thus \$28.5 million.

How much did the 8th get? Arlington Board Member Chris Zimmerman claims it is \$20 million. Why so little?
- Given our economic and population growth, Northern Virginia needs at least \$500 million right now for 21st Century transportation infrastructure. We can and must act to implement an integrated, comprehensive 21st Century transportation system in Northern Virginia and in our region.
- Obviously, this doesn't make sense for the entire highway past 495; only maybe out to Rt 50. Save money by offering southern & western VA contractors the work instead of all N VA contractors. Many contractors in N VA get workers from those areas anyway, but still charge N VA prices. Offering some work to contractors south & west of this area could save millions over the life of a project. Expanding 66 is a national security concern, deserving some money from that federal agency. Don't concede to ridiculous private interest groups with political influences. N VA citizens need this. Don't start making HOV garbage concessions!!! Everyone knows that the idiots in DC won't give you any transportation money unless you make part of your road HOV. Stand tall and they will give in. DON'T RAISE OUR TAXES TO DO THIS. VA can find enough money if they really want to!!!

In Favor of Widening I-66

- I urge the Commonwealth Transportation Board to commission an Environmental Impact Study for the WIDENING of I-66 inside the Washington Beltway in both directions. Please do this as soon as possible, for economic, quality of life, and security reasons.

- I was never contacted during the survey, but I-66 should be WIDENED from Spout Run & 29 to at least Dulles. I use it to commute and often leave the roadway to go onto neighborhood streets, which were not meant for commuters and another concern is "standing" traffic adds to pollution of residential areas. If you don't want to widen 66 then don't allow more construction of homes/apts. That is what increases traffic, not a wider road.

- I attended the "outreach" meeting in Arlington, and my photo is even in the Idea-66, Vol. 1, Issue 2. I support ADDING A LANE to I-66 westbound and making all three lanes HOT lanes at peak periods. But that will not solve the basic problem, which is that there are no constraints on development west of Arlington County. As soon as the traffic jams up, VDOT says there's a problem. There's a problem all right, but it's unrestricted growth.

- I wish to offer my opinion on how Route 66 should have been constructed in the beginning, the late fifties and early sixties. Back at that time I was the President of the Clarendon Business Association and I attended all of the Public Hearings that offered opposition to the highways construction. I always felt that when I got up to speak in favor of support for the roads construction to help the Clarendon Business owners, the citizens were going to try to execute me after the meetings. Now all of the businesses are gone due to no highway access. The ROAD WAS BUILT TOO SMALL. My argument was always for 4 lanes east and 4 lanes west at all of the Public Hearings.

My recommendation is still for the same 8 LANE WIDTH on Rte. 66. It would have been very economical to do that kind of construction in the late 50's, now the expense will go through the roof. Please just forget about all the HOV stuff and build a decent State Highway with good access ramps like it should have been done in the beginning.

- As a resident a few hundred yards from Rt 66, INSIDE the beltway, I say it is time to do something to get traffic moving. All the eco freaks want GRIDLOCK - what they do not understand is that environmentally there is far less pollution from normally moving traffic than gridlock.

A car with an average speed of 10 miles per hour generates vastly more (and worse) pollutants than one moving at 55

WHAT to do?

First: DO SOMETHING FAST. Make it simple, then work on the complex issues. You guys know best what can be done to help the problem quickly without major expense. DO IT!. Then work on the more expensive, complex issues.

I am ALL FOR another lane (expensive).

I am all for TOLL - quick and immediate - PLUS it will generate revenue for construction of the more expensive improvements like another lane (which will have to come eventually, so why not build it now). These revenues can even be dedicated to paying off bonds which will move the financial end along quicker.

This all can be studied to death while people are dying of pollution related diseases, VAST amounts of time are being wasted, not to mention vast amounts of oil - so even from a national defense (homeland security) point of view, moving traffic along faster will reduce our reliance on foreign suppliers (tiny if one looks at just this project, but if done everywhere, it would be meaningful with enormous domestic economic benefits as well as quality of life benefits -more time for family, less stress, healthier environment (which itself leads to reduced medical costs, etc.)

- I would like on behalf of my family to voice my STRONG support for WIDENING 66. The Arlington County leadership try to make it appear that the entire County opposes the widening. This is not the case. A significant proportion of Arlington citizens are frustrated by the overcrowding, by pass-through commuters, by the inability to use a highway we paid for, and by a county government that is so entrenched that they feel completely unaccountable to their citizens. PLEASE be assured that there are many of us here in Arlington who fully support widening of Rte. 66 through Arlington.
- I would recommend that I 66 inside the beltway be WIDENED TO 3-4 LANES in each direction and that I 66 outside the beltway be widened 4-5 lanes in each direction all the way to Haymarket.
- I have been an Arlington resident since 1994, having lived near East Falls Church from 1994-2003 and currently living near the Arlington Courthouse. I think adding a THIRD WESTBOUND LANE is a terrific idea.
- One possible short term, even long term solution, in addition of adding a NEW LANE, is open shoulder for traffic during high traffic hours. This has already done outside beltway 66.

- I would support ADDITIONAL LANES on I-66 if that expansion were coupled with improvements to the poor pedestrian and parking situations near the East Falls Church Metro station which have a direct relationship to I-66 access and egress.

- Well done, you found the obviously needed solution: WIDEN the road. I-66 is hideously small at 2 lanes each way. I believe the new, third lane should be available for use by all, not just HOV riders. A 3rd lane will add enough capacity to make HOV totally irrelevant. If you make the 3rd lane HOV-only, it will never be used, and you'll have spent money to widen a highway and not improved traffic (since the 2 non-HOV lanes will be the only ones with cars in them).

- I believe the data demonstrates that WIDENING I-66 is warranted. As the report indicates, significant improvements would result from the completion of Metrorail in the Dulles Corridor and the reestablishment of HOV-3 at peak periods. I-66 should have been constructed this wide to begin with and it is time we quit wasting taxpayer dollars disputing the issue. Additionally, with the ever growing construction of housing, in and about the metropolitan area--Traffic Relief is desperately needed. Widening I-66 and increasing the number of trains for the metro is inevitable and we need to simply get it done.

Impacts on parkland and the Custis and W&OD Trails-

Widening I-66, will allow traffic volume to pass through more quickly and we should eventually see an improvement in the growth of our beautiful vegetation. As it is now, traffic volume creeps along I-66 as well as through our community.

I request that you stop wasting money on continued studies and simply start widening I-66. It needs to be done and put behind us.

- I would like to add my comments to the idea that Rt. 66 needs to be WIDENED, in both lanes within the Beltway. The volume of traffic spills over onto the side streets like Washington Blvd. making it impossible for those of us who live on Washington to get in and out of our driveways. I think the problem will only get worse and widening Rt. 66 is a good first step. The Dulles Access Road spills into Rt. 66 making it a choke point going east. This needs to be fixed as well as the Westward lane which seemingly the only widening that is being currently considered.

- I am writing to endorse the efforts to WIDEN I-66. I only wish that this had been done long long ago and we could be spending our time more wisely.

Please complete the project and Widen I-66 all the way through Arlington County to the Potomac river.

- I-66 inside the Washington DC Beltway was under designed the day it was opened. The entire length needs to be WIDENED to accommodate the needs of the citizens. Currently the only interstate access to Washington DC from the south by truck is I-395.

Please use some common sense concerning the traffic needs in this area. Expansion of I-66 inside the beltway should be achieved as early as possible.

- Please seriously consider WIDENING Route 66 east and west bound inside the Beltway. Traffic congestion in Northern Virginia is our number one problem. It is affecting the quality of life in this region and needs to be addressed immediately.

- As a native Arlingtonian since 1967 who frequently gets trapped in I-66 congestion no matter the time of day, I wholeheartedly support WIDENING of I-66 inside the Capital Beltway.

Whether sophisticated traffic modeling or garden-variety common sense, all objective evidence is crystal clear. The four-lane I-66 configuration was a consciously adopted blueprint for gridlock. In the two-plus decades since the highway opened, the mistake of under-building has become evermore clear.

It is time to move forward with purpose in specifically defining and designing the widening and getting it built. Additional "paralysis by analysis" only serves those who wish to stop the improvement at all costs, not the larger public genuinely interested in mobility, prosperity and overall quality of life. Further, an additional lane is critically need in BOTH directions, not just westbound.

With regard to I-66 inside the Beltway, the question for the Governor, other elected officials and the Virginia Department of Transportation is this:

Will you continue the misery or will you summon the will to address it? The enlightened course could not be clearer.

- Interstate 66 is a traffic nightmare and inside the Capital Beltway it is one of Northern Virginia's worst transportation bottlenecks. When you have stop and go traffic almost continually throughout the day you've got a major problem.

The recently completed FHWA-VDOT Study confirms that congestion is bad and getting worse in BOTH directions. ADDING A LANE in BOTH directions makes the most sense. If adding just a westbound lane can be done now then by all means do it! Take action now, don't delay any longer. When someone is killed due to road rage then it will be too late. How long can the public stand for these congested roads?

I strongly encourage the Commonwealth Transportation Board to authorize the commissioning of an Environmental Impact Study or other assessment of the corridor in BOTH directions to improve mobility and protect adjacent neighborhoods from cut-through traffic.

We have a traffic congestion problem in Northern Virginia. Delays in decision making only make matters worse. Please start seriously addressing the I66 issues and other congestion issues of Northern Virginia now.

- I-66 inside the Capital Beltway is a major source of traffic congestion in the Washington Metropolitan region. Based upon observation of this transportation corridor over a period of about twenty years, it is time to recognize that congestion on this arterial is worsening by the year and it should be addressed. A LANE of capacity should be ADDED in both the westbound and eastbound directions. It appears that the land is available in the right of way and that the geometry of the highway would accommodate an additional lane in each direction with relatively limited modifications.

I recommend that the Commonwealth Transportation Board to authorize the commissioning of an Environmental Impact Study or appropriate environmental assessment of the corridor in both directions to improve mobility and protect adjacent neighborhoods from cut-through traffic.

- Eight hundred thousand dollars have been spent studying the I66 congestion inside the beltway. The studies have shown that ADDITIONAL LANES are the best solution to the transportation issues. Please move on to the next step by starting an EIS or similar study so we can get on with it. The problem isn't getting any better and it's time to move forward.

- I-66 inside the Capital Beltway is an absurd problem languishing because the responsible parties will not do what is necessary and obvious,...ADD A LANE BOTH WAYS. It is one of Northern Virginia's worst transportation bottlenecks.

The recently completed FHWA-VDOT Study confirms that congestion is bad and getting worse in both directions. The Study also confirms adding a lane is the most effective multi-modal solution and that such widening is feasible with only minimum spot design exceptions. And what is most eye-opening is that Zero Dollars of the \$1 million went to an engineering firm to execute a physical study of the widening alternatives. It all went to test the "people issue", a law firm's public relations arm. As Chair of the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, 2004 I repeatedly wrote and spoke out about the half-logic that perpetuates the current problem. EAST BOUND TRAFFIC HAS NO PROBLEM EAST OF BALLSTON, PERIOD, THEREFORE ADD A LANE FROM BELTWAY TO BALLSTON, NOT ENTIRE LENGTH.

I strongly encourage the Commonwealth Transportation Board to authorize the commissioning of an Environmental Impact Study or appropriate environmental assessment of the corridor in both directions to improve mobility and protect adjacent neighborhoods from cut-through traffic.

- Widen.

- The recently completed FHWA-VDOT Study tells everyone what has already been known for a long time: congestion is bad and getting worse - in both directions. The Study also confirms ADDING A LANE is the most effective multi-modal solution and that such widening is feasible with only minimum spot design exceptions.

[We] strongly encourage the Commonwealth Transportation Board to authorize the commissioning of an Environmental Impact Study or appropriate environmental assessment of the corridor in both directions to improve mobility and protect adjacent neighborhoods from cut-through traffic. It seems rather obvious to us that what goes in (out) must go out (in). This solution provides the greatest good for the greatest number of citizens – regardless of jurisdiction.

- Please WIDEN I-66 before more drivers start to drive around the congestion of I-66 and tie up local traffic in Arlington, Falls Church and Fairfax County.
- As you can see, growth is outpacing our transportation network. This is why I believe it is critical to WIDEN I-66 westbound inside the Capital Beltway from the Rosslyn Tunnel to the Dulles Connector Road. The lane can be added within the existing right-of-way and no homes need to be taken.

With the population surge we are experiencing, the longer we delay this project the worse the traffic congestion will become. I urge you to act now to move the I-66 widening project forward.

➤ Extend the Metro along I-66 to Manassas/Centreville.

➤ Why did we need a study when we were proceeding in the right direction years ago – get on with it and build a lane in either direction.

➤ I-66 inside the Capital Beltway is only one of several of Northern Virginia's transportation bottlenecks.

The recently completed FHWA-VDOT Study confirms that congestion is bad and getting worse in both directions. The Study also confirms ADDING A LANE is the most effective multi-modal solution and that such widening is feasible with only minimum spot design exceptions.

I strongly encourage the Commonwealth Transportation Board to authorize the commissioning of an Environmental Impact Study or appropriate environmental assessment of the corridor in both directions to improve mobility and protect adjacent neighborhoods from cut-through traffic. (Twelve individuals provided same comment)

➤ It is unbelievable that a major metropolitan area like DC/N. VA has such an inadequate surface transportation system.....that 66 has not been WIDENED is unacceptable and needs to be remedied as soon as possible.

The DC/MD/NOVA region has produced jobs and been a bright light in the nation's economy. Companies will not want to locate offices here if the traffic problems are not addressed ASAP. Furthermore, quality of life is being very negatively affected by the amount of time people waste sitting in traffic.

Please move forward quickly to widen I-66.

➤ PLEASE TAKE ACTION HERE. NO MORE STUDYING.

I-66 inside the Capital Beltway is one of Northern Virginia's worst transportation bottlenecks. And it is not just awful at rush hour. It is awful all of the time, and in both directions.

Please do something here, and don't just fall into the comfortable, analysis-paralysis mode where nothing good happens.

- The report's recommendation and my review of the data demonstrates that WIDENING I-66 is most warranted.

Traffic congestion on I-66 increases air pollution as cars sit idling in gridlock rather than efficiently cruising at highway speeds, as interstate highways are intended. Moreover, vehicles sitting in gridlocked traffic are getting ZERO miles per gallon, exacerbating our fossil energy demand.

- I am writing to request that you do what it takes to ensure that I-66 is WIDENED as soon as possible.

As a resident who lives about two blocks away and uses the highway frequently, I must say it is constantly congested, this is not just during rush hours, but also at night and on weekends. I use the bike trail along the highway frequently, and am usually forced to choke through the smoke of idling cars that are sitting in the I-66 parking lot.

The neighborhood streets in Cherrydale then are forced to endure added stress because of the commuters trying to avoid the traffic jams on I-66.

I recommend that you widen the highway in conjunction with trying to develop better public transport methods. In an ideal world, we could have slowed the growth of the outer counties, but since they've "already come, we must build it".

- Please expedite a well-designed, environmentally sensitive WIDENING of I-66 in both directions. There are several bottlenecks that, if removed, would expedite the flow.

- I support ADDING one or two LANES within the existing route corridor.

- To say that I-66 inside the Capital Beltway is one of Northern Virginia's worst transportation bottlenecks is to state the obvious.

I strongly encourage the Commonwealth Transportation Board to authorize the commissioning of an Environmental Impact Study or appropriate environmental assessment of the corridor in both directions to improve mobility and protect adjacent neighborhoods from cut-through traffic.

Let's please destroy the much-too-often gridlock that paralyzes transportation decisions for Northern Virginia and get on with what is best for this region.

- As a regular traveler to DC from Vienna I am well aware of the problems of I-66. If its not HOV it's a bottleneck even on non working days.

I don't need the recently completed FHWA-VDOT Study to confirm that congestion is bad and getting worse in both directions, I live it. The Study however does confirm ADDING A LANE is the most effective multi-modal solution and that such widening is feasible.

I strongly encourage the Commonwealth Transportation Board to authorize the commissioning of an Environmental Impact Study or appropriate environmental assessment of the corridor in both directions to improve mobility and protect adjacent neighborhoods from cut-through traffic.

- We actually support WIDENING both lanes of I-66 inside the beltway to alleviate bottlenecks where three lanes become two.

By improving traffic flow; i.e., reducing stop-and-go as well as low-speed traffic, especially during peak times, this will improve air quality.

- This message is from an Arlington resident who heartily supports WIDENING I-66 inside the Beltway in both directions. One morning or afternoon rush hour on or around this road makes the need so obvious that the \$800K spent on the study (to conclude that westbound widening is necessary) would better have been spent as a drip into the bucket of funds needed for the actual work. And of course, the longer we postpone the work, the more it costs. Having a too-small road merely traps all those folks inside our county and our air for a longer period each day.

The traffic is not going away, not with 2/3 of the area's residents living outside the Beltway. Those folks have to go through the interior communities such as Arlington to go between their homes and their work. The Metro is almost at capacity, with years before possible expansion, even if it could pick up some of the 80% of commuters who presently use the roads.

Please let's move on with the obvious, the widening of I-66 inside the Beltway.

- I support the WIDENING of I-66, as well as the establishment of a western transportation corridor, in order to alleviate traffic and promote commerce and a better living environment in Northern Virginia.
- The I-66 situation inside the Beltway is inexcusable-something must be done to address the daily gridlock. It is by far, one of the worst transportation bottlenecks in Northern Virginia. The recently completed FHWA-VDOT study confirms that congestion is bad and getting worse in both directions. ADDING A LANE in both directions is the obvious solution.

I strongly encourage the CTB to authorize the commissioning of an Environmental Impact Study or appropriate environmental assessment of the corridor in both directions to improve mobility and protect adjacent neighborhoods from cut-through traffic.

- Please do everything in your power to WIDEN I-66 in BOTH directions. This critical piece of transportation infrastructure is approaching meltdown and deserves to be analyzed for action ASAP.

- [We] wish to endorse the need to expand the capacity of I-66 westbound and eastbound between the Dulles Corridor and the Potomac River.

Since we commented on November 5, 2004, new information from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments' regional model has come to hand showing that by 2030 it will take more than 45 minutes to reach Dulles Airport from points east of Tysons Corner. The capacity limitations on I-66 inside the Beltway are an obvious part of the problem.

Today's core employers serve global markets and locate where they have good airport access. Unfortunately, if as a region we do not sustain broad flowing access to Washington Dulles, companies will tend to focus their expansion upon the areas adjacent to Washington Dulles – the region's international gateway. I-66 has become one of the major chokepoints inhibiting access to Dulles.

As...

- the right-of-way exists;
- the cost benefit should be relatively high; and
- the funding could be provided through HOT lane or similar technologies;

...the Commonwealth Transportation Board has a golden opportunity to move decisively to eliminate this chokepoint just as it recently showed decisive leadership in its decision to raise the tolls on the Dulles Toll Road.

- I am writing in favor of handling our growing transportation gridlock on I-66 inside the Capital Beltway.

Although I live and work within Arlington County, I am fully aware of the problems of traveling via I-66, at almost any time of the day or night. The recently completed FHWA-VDOT Study confirms that congestion is bad and getting worse in both directions. The Study also confirms ADDING A LANE is the most effective multi-modal solution and that such widening is feasible with only minimum spot design exceptions.

I do not feel we will solve our high density road problems merely by paving more ground in Arlington, but we must address this problem that will greatly worsen. Northern Virginia has several transportation bottlenecks and this is just one of them.

I strongly encourage the Commonwealth Transportation Board to authorize the commissioning of an Environmental Impact Study or appropriate environmental assessment of the corridor in both directions to improve mobility and protect adjacent neighborhoods from cut-through traffic.

- I encourage you to consider adding not one, but two lanes westbound from the Ballston/Glebe Road exist to the Dulles-Toll/I-66 split, one additional west bound lane should otherwise address the problems.

- I completely support the recommendations in the study. Surface streets can no longer support the increased daily traffic demands, and emergency evacuation requirements both support I-66 EXPANSION westbound without delay.

- Expenditure of at least \$800,000 has documented the obvious:
 - a) It is feasible to WIDEN the westbound lane.
 - b) An additional lane is the most flexible, and effective multi-modal solution.

Study data also makes clear that congestion is heaviest in the eastbound direction leading to the obvious conclusion that the next step should be an Environmental Impact Statement, or appropriate environmental document, assessing solutions and impacts of widening the corridor for BOTH west- and eastbound directions.

- I totally agree that I-66 should be WIDENED. I have been a resident of Arlington County since 1986. It was needed back then too. Also, weekend traffic on I-66 in Arlington is horrible. Opponents argue more traffic and pollution. What about the thousands of cars creeping along I-66 creating more pollution because they are moving so slow? Please WIDEN I-66.

- The problem on I-66 is primarily restricted to the portion of the road between Fairfax Drive in Ballston and the Toll Road. The attempt to merge two solid lanes of traffic from Fairfax Drive into two solid lanes of west bound traffic on I-66 creates long backups, often stretching all the way back to the Spout Run/Lee Highway entrance ramp. Once the traffic reaches Sycamore Street, and a third lane becomes available, it is already substantially improved (even though that entrance is generally jammed with people, like me, who've chosen to drive Lee Highway or Washington Blvd through Arlington rather than take I-66). Once I-66 passes the toll road, it is ALWAYS wide open until the beltway traffic joins the westward trip.

The most effective and least-cost solution to the current problem is simply ADDING one more LANE, in BOTH directions, from Fairfax Drive in Ballston to the Toll Road. There is already ample space available within the existing right of way, with only one or two very small and short exceptions. Likewise, there are probably only three or four bridges that would have to be expanded.

This really strikes me as a no-brainer. It's relatively cheap, it could be quickly done and would make a HUGE difference. It would address the existing bottle necks, it would get the through traffic off an increasingly congested Lee Highway in Arlington and would probably address the I-66 congestion issues for another 10 - 15 years. No other solution proposed, including massively expanded mass transit, would buy us any more time than that. I just can't understand why this has not been an option put forward by Idea 66.

- I'm writing to comment on the I-66 Inside-the-Beltway Feasibility Study that was recently conducted by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

I am a long term resident of Arlington and use Route 66. There are very few options for getting to and from Arlington and not having adequate roads does not make cars go away. The report's recommendation demonstrates that WIDENING I-66 is warranted.

Traffic congestion on I-66 increases air pollution as cars sit idling in gridlock wasting countless hours and harming the environment for those of us who live here and those who use the adjacent bike trail. It also forces aggressive traffic onto Lee Highway and adversely effects our residential neighborhoods.

Northern Virginia is the economic engine of Virginia. We need to make sure that we make the necessary updates to this major transportation artery to keep that engine operating.

- I am very much IN FAVOR of widening 66. Not only do I suffer cut-throughs on my street by commuters, but the backups on the Glebe Road exit area of 66, which occur throughout the day, increase the noise and pollution that enters my community. Please do not assume that the noisy antigrowth, anti-widening group are anything but a minority in Arlington. With their street narrowings, dangerous speed bumps, and unnecessary stoplights at unused intersections, they merely seek to make life hell for anyone who wants to or must drive here. Ask the ambulance drivers.

- I am writing in my capacity as Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to endorse the recommendations of the "Idea-66" study relating to Interstate 66 inside the Beltway. The study recommends that the Roadway Widening Concept, including various managed lane types and advanced system management techniques be further studied as part of a Location Study, as outlined in the National Environmental Policy Act and in accordance with VDOT guidelines. Transit elements that fit in with the concept recommended by the Idea-66 study should be included in the NEPA study evaluation.

I would also suggest that additional study of transit improvements in this corridor is also warranted, and should be conducted by the appropriate state and federal transit agencies. (See Appendix D)

- The report's recommendation demonstrates that WIDENING I-66 is warranted. There are very few options for getting to and from Arlington and not having adequate roads does not make cars go away. Relying on living where you work and public transportation while laudable as a goal will not solve the problems caused by the lack of adequate highway capacity on I-66.

Traffic congestion on I-66 increases air pollution as cars sit idling in gridlock and it increases traffic on the adjacent neighborhood streets. The net result is countless hours being wasted and the environment being harmed for those of us who live here and those who use the adjacent bike trail.

- I am writing to comment that I believe from my perspective as an Arlington resident of 27 years that I-66 needs to be WIDENED by one lane in each direction from at least Glebe Road to the Dulles Connector. I would also comment from my perspective as a professional planner that I believe that adding a lane in each direction is the best solution for a seriously congested highway. At a minimum, one lane should be added in each direction between Glebe Road and the Dulles Connector/Rt 7.

- I strongly support improvements to the I-66 roadway inside the Beltway, including spot improvements and WIDENING of at least some segments in the area considered by the study. It is clear from the study (and my personal experience) that the capacity of I-66 needs to be increased. In some zones the traffic results in an "F" rating and speeds are as slow as 20 mph during some rush hour periods. Further, traffic congestion is a seven day a week problem and users regularly experience congestion and slow traffic. It is also clear from the traffic analysis that the most severe congestion problems are at the west end of the studied area. That is, congestion tends to start in the zone between the Sycamore exit and the Dulles Toll Road exit and then back up to Ballston and beyond. Thus, the greatest need for roadway improvements is in this zone.

In the longer run, it appears that some widening will be necessary and cost-effective. The best option seems to be adding a lane dedicated to HOV/HOT and buses. This seems to be the only option that would both reduce congestion on I-66 and on substitute roadways. Widening also seems to be cost-effective. Data in the study seem to suggest that additional I-66 capacity could provide up to 1/3 the capacity as the Orange Line at less than 1/10 the cost being discussed for Metro expansions. The I-66 capacity would be heavily used 7 days a week, but Metro would mainly affect rush-hour.

Opposed to Widening I-66

- WIDENING I-66 IS NOT A GOOD IDEA. Here's why: There are thousands of people who've paid exorbitant amounts of money for their homes in the affected area that will not civilly tolerate getting awakened by bulldozers, blasting, and other destructive contrivances. If you think getting a normal highway project done is tough, you haven't seen anything yet. Don't expect bouquets and kisses!
- As an Arlington County homeowner who would be directly affected by any change in I-66 usage I STRONGLY OBJECT to any government entity's EFFORTS TO PHYSICALLY WIDEN I-66 beyond its present footprint in Arlington. More road just equals more cars and congestion!

- I wish to be added to your list of those favoring the transit concept.

Concerning the Roadway WIDENING Concept, along with the great majority of Arlington County residents, I oppose it as unnecessary and not likely to seriously improve the existing congestion. However, I do believe that specific spot improvements on some entrance and exit ramps would be helpful. I would particularly support having the ramps lengthened entering and leaving Glebe Road. Although the east ramp is some distance from Fairfax Drive, your brochure lists the configuration as "Fairfax Drive."

Another intersection would involve the entrance into I-66 from Washington Boulevard which must handle both Sycamore St. and Lee Highway traffic. For some reason your brochure does not mention this crucial entrance which is situated east of the Sycamore Street exit which you do include.

- We need creative solutions to the problems of congestion WITHOUT WIDENING. I would like to see a combination of: (1) All HOT lanes or HOV-2 from 6:30 am to 8 pm; (2) Express BUS Service along 66 and 50; and (3) RAMP improvements at Glebe, Fairfax, and Sycamore
- I do find it hard to believe that many people who actually live between the two exits listed favor WIDENING I-66. We continue to OPPOSE this. For those who don't have to deal with the construction, the overflow of cars onto local streets, and the increased noise I'm sure it seems like a great idea. Looking at 495, does it really seem that more lanes will equal less congestion?
- I believe that 66 should not continue to be WIDENED within the beltway. It must remain within the existing State-owned right-of-way on I-66 as was agreed to years ago, when I-66 was built.

- To widen roads only encourages more traffic within areas that could and can utilize public transportation solutions already in place. In heavily populated areas, the environmental impacts are significant, as the number of vehicles on the highways during rush hour continues to rise. Raising the number of car pool passengers would also help with congestion during peak traffic periods. Let's encourage the use of metro or carpooling more, NOT WIDENING ROADS that will only increase vehicles for commuting.

- When I-66 was extended inside the beltway, it was not built to modern interstate standards. It was designed to squeeze through established neighborhoods. The curves and turns do not and will not allow traffic to flow at an interstate flow level. ADDING ANOTHER LANE will not change the engineering realities of the highway. Don't take my word for it. Ask your own traffic engineers. Ask them about flow patterns and how turns and curves slow traffic regardless of the number of lanes. Additional lanes WILL NOT SOLVE THE PROBLEM. Additional lanes are an abuse of the trust and the promise made to the neighborhoods in the late 1970's. Additional lanes get us no closer to meeting the public transportation demands of the major metropolitan area we have become.

- WIDENING Route 66 is NOT the SMART solution to NOVA traffic problems. Not only is it clearly stated in the Coleman document under "#6 : no construction of any highway lanes in right-of-way beyond the 4 lanes" but it also common fact that more lanes will not solve NOVA traffic problems. No soon will the westbound lane be added than it will be filled to capacity. It is also true that NOVA does have the luxury to "do nothing." What the really question that needs to be studied is not the question of ignoring an agreement with Arlington County citizens by widening 66 but to find other solutions to the traffic including looking at improving Route 50, improving Public Transportation, focusing on smart growth in the high growth suburbs, adding gasoline taxes to discourage dependence on the public commuting by car, etc. There are other solutions that have not been given a chance because the focus has been solely on dishonoring an agreement with an community by widening a Highway that split the fabric of Arlington in half. The state leaders are taking the easy solution out of a tough problem but it is not the right solution. We need Strong Visionary Leaders who can take us to the right long term solutions.

- I agree with the majority of Arlingtonians that other options BESIDES ROAD WIDENING should be explored.

- The content of the full report confirms ACST's suspicion that the primary objective of the Idea-66 study was to demonstrate that ADDING a third westbound travel LANE is "feasible" (i.e., little or no extra right-of-way is needed and construction would cost less than \$125 M), not to determine the most effective strategy for managing I-66 or to seriously consider any "community" input. Simply put, this is completely unacceptable, and no follow-up NEPA study is warranted. VDOT and FHWA have destroyed any trust in the community involvement process.

- I am very disappointed with VDOT's recommendation to WIDEN 66. I think widening 66 will waste large sums of tax dollars, disrupt communities, and in the end, will not be a long (or even short) term solution to traffic.

- I don't believe that WIDENING is the most cost-effective way to deal with congestion along the I-66 corridor. We should implement less costly measures before the road is widened. Also, I'm not convinced that widening won't lead to other problems. What happens to the traffic at the end, when it reaches the bridge to DC? A major bottleneck, that's what. And, do you really think that one additional lane will ameliorate traffic, should evacuation be necessary? Using evacuation as a rationale is dishonest. It appears that this study was initiated with a predetermined conclusion in mind. This study was a waste of taxpayers' dollars, and road widening will constitute an even bigger waste of money.

- Is there anyone there that doesn't doubt that if we build MORE LANES that they will just get filled in a few years? When are we going to look at improving metro by removing seats?

- I will FIGHT against WIDENING. Why not try cheaper methods FIRST - HOV-3 and ramp/metering improvement? IF that failed, then I would SUPPORT widening.

- I am a bicyclist and a pedestrian/athlete who frequents the trails along I-66 all summer long. It would be a huge MISTAKE TO WIDEN I-66 inside the beltway. It won't solve the traffic problems and will bring further pollution and destruction to our park system and our trails. I urge that widening I-66 is a very bad idea, for children, for animals, for clean air, for clean water- -for the betterment and future of the District of Columbia and Arlington VA.

- I do not support WIDENING of I-66. There are other alternatives which are not being pursued. Let's put the money into public transportation. Metro subway could be expanded. Light rail could be established. Carpooling can be promoted.

- Despite the study's recommendation, a review of the data demonstrates that WIDENING I-66 is NOT warranted. As the report indicates, significant improvements would result from the completion of Metrorail in the Dulles Corridor and the reestablishment of HOV-3 at peak periods. Widening options would do little to change volumes in the corridor, "making less than a 4% change in roadway volumes." (see pg. 6-8).

The report clearly shows that non-widening alternatives—specifically high-occupancy vehicle requirements and toll-lane options—provide the most benefit for the least cost, without significantly impacting neighborhoods or breaking the promise to Arlingtonians that I-66 would never be widened. Enhanced management of existing lanes combined with the spot improvements would improve conditions on I-66 and is the best overall solution.

Specifically, the recommendation to add a third westbound lane is problematic for several reasons (7 Reasons Cited)

We are disappointed that VDOT and FHWA are supporting the unnecessary and ineffective addition of a third westbound travel lane, rather than using this study to evaluate more effective, cleaner, less expensive, and more enduring alternatives. Better management of all four existing I-66 lanes with greater HOV restrictions and/or the application of automated tolling technology would be capable of significantly reducing congestion on I-66.

We ask that VDOT undertake a second phase of the I-66 feasibility study to develop a realistic and broadly accepted management plan for operating all four existing lanes of I-66 more effectively. A Location Study for adding one or more travel lanes to I-66 is clearly not warranted at this time. (Twenty-three individuals provided same comment)

- Despite the report's recommendation, a review of the data demonstrates that WIDENING I-66 is NOT warranted. As the report indicates, significant improvements would result from the Dulles Metrorail Extension and the reestablishment of HOV-3 at peak periods. Widening options would do little to change volumes in the corridor, making less than a 4% change in roadway volumes. (see pg. 6-8). The report clearly shows on page 6-35 that non-widening alternatives--specifically high-occupancy vehicle requirements and toll-lane options--provide the most benefit for the least cost, without significantly impacting neighborhoods or breaking the promise to Arlingtonians that I-66 would never be widened. Enhanced management of existing lanes, spot improvements, and resistance to new growth and development in the Washington Metropolitan Area will improve conditions on I-66. This is the only possible solution. The recommendation to add a third westbound lane is misguided for the following reasons (7 Reasons Cited).

Widening I-66 in the eastbound direction would be even worse, as it would severely degrade adjacent urban parkland. Further, it may destroy people's homes. Further, widening I-66 in the eastbound direction will accomplish nothing. Traffic will back up behind the Rosslyn tunnel and the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge. It is not possible to widen the Rosslyn tunnel without destroying some very expensive real estate. It is not possible to widen the Roosevelt Bridge without extensive Federal involvement and funding. Further, widening I-66 or extending Metrorail to Tysons Corner and Dulles Airport would greatly stimulate new development in Arlington County and elsewhere in the Washington Metropolitan Area. The only way to stop this vicious cycle is to stop development completely, whether it is near or far from existing public transportation. The only "smart growth" is "no growth". Building streets, roads, highways, transit systems, etc., always stimulates development.

- I have lived here since before I-66 opened and I remember the deal – no more road after this one intrusion. Well, it seems this is the same deal that governments made with American Indians. You are back again. Or more correctly, some politicians farther out are back here again. No, ADDING A LANE is wrong for many reasons, which I will cite below. However, it is fundamentally a break in faith from the Commonwealth to the folks of this community that were split by I-66 to begin with and now are asked to endure further road making.

I'm writing to comment on the I-66 Inside-the-Beltway Feasibility Study that was recently conducted by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

With respect to the report's recommendation, a review of the data demonstrates that widening I-66 is NOT warranted. As the report indicates, significant improvements would result from the Dulles Metrorail Extension and the reestablishment of HOV-3 at peak periods. Widening options would do little to change volumes in the corridor, making less than a 4% change in roadway volumes. (see pg. 6-8).

- We OPPOSE WIDENING I-66 primarily because it would not be a long-term solution to the congestion and it would be very detrimental to air quality, aggravating asthma and other respiratory ailments which have become more common in our area (and has afflicted our 2 year old son this year as well). Adding more metro capacity and subsidizing it to be cheaper than commuting by car would be a much smarter long-term solution. Extra metro stations and lines would reduce the westbound congestion permanently and improve air quality.
- Your own studies show that WIDENING will only have a marginal effect on reducing "the commute". And even then, I seriously doubt for very long and at what cost?! I completely reject the concept that I-66 can be an evacuation route. How would people even get on I-66 from DC? And then where would they go? A single accident would tie up the entire roadway. Help reduce stress. Spend money and your creative talent enhancing smart travel. Like biking, buses and using the metro. Metro is in bad need of funding. Improve cars, stations and WIDEN THE ORANGE/BLUE line tunnel under the river. Widen the shoulder for emergency vehicles if you must. But adding another lane violates earlier commitments and makes no real sense. Don't encourage people to use their cars. It's a dead end for us all!

- As a long time VA resident , who travels I-66 frequently at different times of day, I feel that WIDENING of rt.66 would not improve the traffic issue.

Metro rail and HOV 3 at peak times along with Use of toll roads and HOV would better serve the needs of our area, without impacting neighborhoods or breaking the promise to Arlingtonians that 66 would never be widened.

Metrorail to the outlying suburbs is the answer. More commuters would use Metro...if it were available ..but the stupidity of adding lanes to accommodate the frustrated commuters only shows that bad public transportation is lose- lose for us all.

It does not encourage smart growth, smart environmental use or show any sense of the big or long term picture that the citizens want.

- The I-66 Inside-the-Beltway Feasibility Study, which was recently conducted by VDOT and FHWA, clearly demonstrates that WIDENING I-66 will not have a positive impact on the region or our neighborhood, and will cost millions of precious taxpayer dollars.

Though some in the neighborhood support widening, the vast majority are concerned that widening will not reduce traffic on our local streets and will simply increase the number of cars and the amount of traffic on I-66 through Arlington. The study itself concludes that the proposed widening will make "less than a 4% change in roadway volumes."

As residents, we are concerned about the proposed expansion "within the existing right of way" and whether that would have an impact on the heavily used bicycle path, parkland, or neighboring homes. This has not been explained to us in any satisfactory manner.

We are disappointed that VDOT and FHWA are supporting I-66 widening despite the fact that the study's findings suggest this widening would have little positive, long term impact. We should be evaluating cheaper, cleaner, and more long-lasting alternatives that do not involve simply putting more cars on our region's overtaxed automobile network.

We ask that a true study be undertaken to evaluate effective I-66 management which does not involve adding a new lane. To many of us here in Arlington, this study's findings seem to have been politically motivated and pre-ordained. We ask that the state conduct a fair and evenhanded approach to I-66 management.

- WIDENING I-66 at the expense of bike trails makes no sense and violates VDOT's existing policy on bicycling and walking. VDOT should reject the "Roadway Widening" option and any other option that permanently or temporarily disrupts the WO&D Trail, the Martha Custis Trail, Spout Run Parkway and Westover Park.

- No mention is made in the Overview of the clear negatives that would result from any roadway WIDENING- negatives that would adversely affect our neighborhood. We urge that a truly open feasibility study of the interstate within the Beltway be conducted. It would be a travesty for the state's Commonwealth Transportation Board to order a NEPA study of the roadway. The recently issued feasibility study has not lived up to its charter to assess all transportation modes and the broader impacts of any changes in I-66 configuration. The study offers a thinly disguised argument in favor of roadway widening to the exclusion of other options that would benefit the transportation corridor and this neighborhood.

- I am disappointed that VDOT and FHWA are supporting the ADDITION of a third westbound travel LANE, which is unnecessary and ineffective. It would be better to use this study to fully evaluate more effective, cleaner, less expensive, and more enduring alternatives. Better management of all four existing I-66 lanes with greater HOV restrictions and/or the application of automated tolling technology could effectively, permanently, and best eliminate congestion on I-66. The study's recommendation does not make any sense given the costs and controversy of widening and the availability of effective, efficient alternatives. VDOT should conduct a second phase of the I-66 feasibility study to develop a realistic plan for operating all four existing lanes of I-66 more effectively. A Location Study for adding one or more travel lanes to I-66 is clearly not warranted at this time. Despite the report's recommendation, a review of the data demonstrates that widening I-66 is NOT warranted. As the report indicates, significant improvements would result from the Dulles Metrorail Extension and the reestablishment of HOV-3 at peak periods. Widening options would do little to change volumes in the corridor. The report clearly shows that non-widening alternatives--HOV vehicle requirements and toll-lane options--provide the most benefit for the least cost, without significantly impacting neighborhoods or breaking the promise to Arlingtonians that I-66 would never be widened. Enhanced management of existing lanes combined with the spot improvements would improve conditions on I-66 and is the best overall solution. There are seven major issues with the recommendation to add a third westbound: --Precludes adding Metrorail tracks in the I-66 median. --Has virtually no benefit; almost negligible increase in capacity --Impacts eastbound I-66; will worsen eastbound congestion which is already more severe. --Narrows safety shoulders and travel lanes, in spite of report noting need for continuous wide shoulders for improved traffic safety, --Reduces the feasibility of spot and ramp improvements. --Decrease Metrorail patronage and ridesharing. --Degrades parkland and the Custis and W&OD Trails.

- I do not believe that a review of the data proves the need for WIDENING I-66. Other options – completing Metrorail in the Dulles corridor and raising the HOV lanes to three during peak periods – are certainly preferable. Even if I-66 were widened, the volume of traffic will increase by less than four percent. Non-widening alternatives, such as high-occupancy vehicle requirements and toll-lane options, are more cost-effective and would not significantly affect neighborhoods or break the promise that I-66 would never be widened.

I oppose adding a third westbound lane (7 Reasons Cited)

- I am opposed to the proposal to WIDEN I-66 by adding an additional westbound lane. I believe this would only complicate traffic movement rather than improve it, and would hamper future metrorail development. It also would add to pollution and have detrimental effects on adjacent parkland and existing bicycle trails such as the W&OD trail. As an alternative, I believe it would be smarter to employ transit-oriented development in the Dulles Corridor and to also make use of appropriate HOV lanes during peak-period use.

- The recommendation to ADD a third westbound LANE is a bad idea for a host of reasons:
 - 1) No expansion of Metro tracks in the median.
 - 2) As a commuter, I can assure that when there are no safety shoulders, any fender bender causes huge delays that take hours to fix. The report calls for narrower safety shoulders and travel lanes. A very bad idea.
 - 3) Price adjusted automated tolls could keep I-66 congestion free for decades.
 - 4) One more westbound lane might improve westbound traffic, for a few weeks, but it would worsen eastbound congestion. Adding a travel lane will add pressure for widening Constitution Avenue because the East bound lane will get pressure.
 - 5) Any thought of removing the Custis and W&OD Trails will spark region wide anger that will snuff out any political career.

- I strongly feel that ADDING LANES to I-66 in either direction is not a good thing to do. As soon as you add more lanes, they fill up (see what happened with 270 in Maryland). We need to focus on alternative modes for handling this issue. I attended the meetings on this issue and many great ideas were proposed, e.g. more support for Metro (including more cars on the trains and parking space!) and encouraging business to allow telecommuting. We should also proceed with the low level changes to I-66 (ramp improvements, etc) and assess the problem after those changes have been made. I agree that without I-66, our local roads would be much more crowded but this must be balanced against turning 66 into a 395 or 270.

- I am commenting in opposition to the concept of ADDING A westbound LANE to I-66 inside the beltway in Arlington County. The recent feasibility study by VDOT and FHWA recommends that course of action but it should not be adopted. A new lane will only further delay the necessary mass transit solution to traffic in the northern Virginia/Metro D.C. area. The feasibility study itself clearly shows the very limited long term benefit more vehicular traffic lanes will produce.

The proposed westbound lane will adversely impact the excellent walking and bike commuting pathways in the area.

- Clean air and smart growth development are key concerns of the Group; thus we have a particular interest in the present call from some groups for roadway WIDENING of I-66 inside the beltway in Virginia. In this respect, our Group concludes that the study's recommendation to add a westbound lane is NOT warranted.

- Though some neighborhood representatives may support a WIDENING of I-66 within the Beltway, the majority oppose going forward with environmental studies when the case for widening has clearly not been made. Like the County Board, we urge VDOT to undertake a second phase of the I-66 feasibility study to develop a more realistic and broadly accepted management plan for operating all four existing lanes of I-66 more effectively, using validated models and comprehensive data collection and analysis techniques. We ask that the Commonwealth Transportation Board firmly oppose a Location Study or any other study for adding one or more travel lanes to I-66 through Arlington. Additional detailed roadway widening study for I-66 through Arlington and Falls Church is clearly not warranted at this time.

- With regards to the proposed WIDENING of I-66, I encourage you to look for solutions aside from simply adding more lanes. When more lanes are added, congestion will be temporarily relieved, however new traffic that did not use the highway before will eventually eliminate the initial reduced congestion.

- The report's conclusion recommending a NEPA study on the addition of one or more westbound lanes is simply unsupportable. Our own review of the study data demonstrates that WIDENING I-66 is NOT warranted at this time. As the Idea-66 report indicates, significant improvements would result from the completion of Metrorail in the Dulles Corridor and the reestablishment of HOV-3 at peak periods. By contrast, widening options would do little to change volumes in the corridor, "making less than a 4% change in roadway volumes," according to the report.

Additionally, the report's recommendations are fundamentally flawed in that the study team considered widening options in combination with HOV, HOT, and transit but fails entirely to consider combinations of non-widening options.

Despite holding two public meetings, an open house, and numerous stakeholder dialogues, it is now clear that citizen input played no role in shaping the study's problem statement, which the study team relied heavily upon in reaching its conclusions. Instead, the study team adopted a problem statement drafted by Congressmen Frank Wolf and Tom Davis that does not fully reflect Arlington's priorities for transit-oriented development or recognize the role of I-66 as part of a regional transportation network. Future studies of I-66 must begin with a balanced problem statement that emphasizes maximizing person throughput, instead of easing congestion.

- WIDENING I-66, as proposed by the Virginia Department of Transportation in deference to congressman Wolfe, is unsafe, unnecessary, and will do nothing to alleviate the traffic problems in the Northern Virginia region. It will mess up metro, and contribute mightily to the destruction of livability in the region. As long as sprawl remains totally uncontrolled in this region, there is no quick fix, such as this one that is being rammed down our throats.

- Your conclusions for WIDENING (as demonstrated in Figure 6-15. Summary Matrix) are based on limited combinations of improvements that most often include widening. There should be more multi-modal concepts developed that include combinations of transit, improved management of existing lanes, and interim improvements. It appears that this study started with the conclusion that widening would be part of the solution. I do not support the study in its current form, and suggest that any recommend solution should not have a negative impact on the multi-use trail, which already does its part to relieve congestion on I-66 by providing a means for citizens to commute by bicycle or walk to the nearest transit. I suggest that the study be revised to include more multi-modal concepts which do not include widening, before any location or environmental study is initiated.

- WIDENING I-66, as proposed, would ultimately do little, if anything to ameliorate vehicular traffic congestion, but would significantly negatively impact not only the neighborhoods adjacent to the highway, such as mine, but also what might be left of the Custis Trail that runs along I-66 and provides a commuting route for large numbers of cyclists, walkers, and others.

There are other, less drastic, alternatives to the addition of more pavement for more vehicles and the reduction of the greenspace buffer that would result from the proposed widening. For example, the report notes (p. 6-8) that extension of the Dulles Metrorail and the reestablishment of high occupancy HOV-3 requirements during traffic periods would offer major improvements, while widening options would amount to less than a 4% change in traffic volume. The most benefit for the least cost is indicated on page 6-35 of the report to be achieved by alternatives to widening, specifically toll-lane options and high occupancy vehicle requirements.

- I am writing to state plainly that, as a long time resident of Arlington, I didn't want I-66 built in the first place and do not want I-66 WIDENED in any form or fashion.

- The Woodmont Civic Association resolves that further preliminary study of alternatives other than widening is required before accepting specific recommendations to study their environmental impacts.

➤ I feel that it is essential that other options are implemented for reducing volumes of traffic and for emergency egress out of Washington D.C. other than WIDENING I-66. Proposals for solutions that offer alternatives to widening I-66 help both the residents of Arlington as well as provide better environmental and economical long range solutions to the traffic and density problems. The most effective measures are through a combination of public transportation solutions. I agree with the comments that have been distributed based on the reports recommendations and the data demonstrates that widening I-66 IS NOT WARRANTED!

➤ The vast majority of my neighbors oppose going forward with environmental studies for WIDENING the highway when the case for widening has clearly not been made. To make this point, my civic association voted by a strong majority two weeks ago to oppose any widening of I-66 inside the beltway.

➤ Despite the information in the study I still oppose the WIDENING of I-66 inside of the Beltway. I am concerned about the reduction of walking and bicycle paths in the vicinity of the treasured W O & D Trail which intersects I-66 at many points.

➤ The data contained in the report itself and other major metropolitan areas' experiences with wholesale highway widening projects show that WIDENING I-66 is NOT a long-term solution to the problem of automobile traffic. Worse, spending money on such a project would reduce other options that provide higher short-term returns and greater long-term benefits.

The report clearly shows on page 6-35 that non-widening alternatives--specifically high-occupancy vehicle requirements and toll-lane options--provide the most benefit for the least cost, without significantly impacting neighborhoods or breaking the promise to Arlingtonians that I-66 would never be widened.

➤ WIDENING 66 is Unnecessary, Ineffective and Unwise. Beware undo influence of \$ in public decision making.

➤ Although I fully appreciate the need to address the region's growing mobility crisis, the IDEA-66 study represents a missed opportunity to evaluate alternatives to highway WIDENING that could better serve our region for the long-term.

For example, the study team failed to consider HOV, HOT, and transit as options distinct from widening. This is particularly troubling because the report clearly shows that non-widening alternatives like HOV and HOT lanes provide the greatest benefit for the least cost. In fact, the report shows that widening would achieve less than a 4 percent change in roadway volumes, a truly negligible outcome in light of the cost, disruption to neighborhoods, and loss of good will associated with a unilateral breach of the Coleman Agreement.

HOV/HOT

- My main concern is with the HOV/HOT concepts presented. As a very environmentally focused consumer, I would prefer to carpool or use public transportation given the option. The problem is that I am in a position where my hours fluctuate and are unpredictable, making it virtually impossible for me to share rides with others. In addition there is no public transportation convenient to my office. As a result, I, and several thousand other people in a similar situation, drive on 66 every day in an empty car. Given that there are so many people in this unavoidable situation, I feel that instituting a HOT system would do nothing to ease the capacity problem, it would simply add another tax for the commuter who is already paying exorbitant taxes and fees for owning a vehicle in Virginia or DC.

- More transit concepts, spot improvements and HOT lanes.

HOT lanes are the forefront for solving our transportation problems.

- I am particularly shocked to see a proposal that involves making I 66 west HOV 2 all day until 8 p.m. Again, you don't live in my neighborhood which will see a FLOOD of cars going to Tysons mall for instance who can't use I 66 and must use local roads. Our local roads are already crowded enough -- come see for yourself. What about cab drivers going out to pick up a fare? They will be single passengers all through local neighborhoods until they can get on I 66 to go to the airport. Does this make sense to anyone? Why not restrict it as the east bound lanes are restricted?

But here is a better idea: try ENFORCING the current HOV restrictions. This does not happen. Sit on a metro train any day of the week from 4:30-6 and you will see that more than 1/2 of the cars on the road contain a single passenger. The enforcement here is so terrible there isn't any reason to fear receiving a ticket at rush hour. Once again, publish the number of tickets written in your next newsletter if you're truly interested in understanding and exposing our traffic problem.

- After reading the recent article in the POST on HOV lanes and the high frequency of cheating, I think serious consideration should be given to converting ALL eastbound and westbound I-66 lanes within the beltway to HOT LANES. What a chance to try something new without widening!
- The report clearly shows on page 6-35 that non-widening alternatives--specifically HIGH-OCCUPANCY VEHICLE requirements and TOLL-LANE options--provide the most benefit for the least cost, without significantly impacting neighborhoods or breaking the promise to Arlingtonians that I-66 would never be widened. Enhanced management of existing lanes combined with the spot improvements would improve conditions on I-66 and is the best overall solution.

- It is questionable whether construction of an additional I-66 lane would be legally permissible in light of the region's air quality non-attainment status, unless that lane were devoted to high occupancy vehicles (HOV) only. HOV enforcement for such a lane, without physical barriers separating it from the other travel lanes, would be difficult at best. Without effective compliance measures, much of the transportation modeling used in the study is of little value as a predictor of future traffic volumes.

- The study states that simply adding a new westbound lane to I-66 will have only a nominal impact on traffic flow in the region over the long-term [through 2030]. The biggest impact seems to be simply adjusting the HOV rules. Based on the Study's analysis it's hard to understand the recommendation to build a third westbound lane. It would seem that making adjustments to HOV rules and as well as enforcing HOV would provide enough needed relief, as opposed to spending hundreds of millions of dollars adding a lane to about 6 miles of highway.

- A critical issue that does not seem to have been addressed in this study is that of enforcement of whatever usage rules are adopted. It is no secret that a noticeable percentage of vehicles on the HOV lanes during the morning and afternoon rush hours have only a single occupant. HOV enforcement at present occurs only at exit ramps along the corridor. As a result, drivers commuting from well outside the Beltway into the District face little risk of an HOV violation charge. The "No Build" option as discussed in the study is particularly attractive and would result in positive improvements in the movement of vehicles on I-66. Another apparent finding of the study is that if an additional lane is built on I-66, its utilization for unconstrained vehicle traffic in the morning hours would yield the least benefits in terms of reducing long-term traffic congestion. The study suggests that a far better benefit would be achieved by using any new lane for dedicated bus service or limiting its use to HOV and/or HOT vehicles. We would raise again the issue of how these usage restrictions could be practically enforced.

- I do not believe that, based on the evidence in the feasibility study, the conclusion that only concepts involving adding a third lane are worth considering further is supportable. There are concepts that do not involve adding a third lane that perform equally well and are a lot less costly than those requiring the addition of a third lane.

One concept that I find particularly appealing is instituting reverse-commute HOV, something that should have been done a decade ago to respond to outbound peak-hour congestion in the morning and inbound peak-hour congestion in the afternoon.

- One of the study's recommendations is an additional HOV lane. HOV enforcement for such a lane, without physical barriers separating it from the other travel lanes, would be difficult at best. In fact, the transportation modeling used in the study is of little value without knowing how any new lane management rules will be enforced. This is not clear from the study report.

The issue of HOV enforcement along I-66 within the Beltway is even more complicated by the Dulles Airport access road. Because all passenger vehicles on legitimate airport travel are allowed on I-66 east of the access road at any time, daily commuters can always claim they are "Dulles traffic" to avoid enforcement penalties. Thus, HOV enforcement on I-66 within the Beltway has been, and will remain, seriously compromised.

Right of Way

- The study did not define exactly what the existing public RIGHT-OF-WAY is. Please further clarify and map to the existing I-66 infrastructure.
- The RIGHT-OF-WAY issues are not clearly defined, as well as the impacts on adjacent parkland and multi-use trail, and its users. In your recommended actions, you state that the concept could be accommodated within the existing right-of-way, but in section 6.4.8 (Multi-use Trail, Public Land and/or Parkland Impacts) you state that in the worst case scenario you would sever the trail or impact 5 or more acres of park lands. Figures 6.2.a and 6.2.c (Comparison of Concepts to 2030 CLRP) indicate that all the widening scenarios would have a negative impact on the multi-use trail and parkland.

I-66 Eastbound

- Why are you only studying westbound? The traffic goes BOTH ways!! It is just as bad in the reverse commute direction going EASTBOUND as any other. It makes no sense to spend all this time and money on a partial fix.. Look at both directions please.

- I don't understand why no concern has been raised over the situation of I-66 EASTBOUND. It seems like a large chunk of the time, and even on weekends, there are backups that extend from where the Dulles Connector Road joins up with 66 East to the exit for Glebe Road. I take 66-West from Exit 69 to the Dulles Connector Road (to get to the beltway) every morning around 8:15 am and rarely have problems once I get on 66. I will mention though that the line to get on 66-West from that exit in the morning does back up a little.

- I believe that, should road-widening occur, it should also occur on the EASTBOUND lanes. Adding a lane between exit 69 and the Lee Highway/Spout Run exit would prove a vast improvement.

- Why didn't the Project study the inbound movement (especially the merge area from the toll road to EASTBOUND 66).

- Anyone who seriously thinks that the I-66 congestion problem only exists in one direction (Westbound) is absolutely delusional. Is this the kind of analysis those of us in the private sector have to put up with when living in this area?

As someone who has lived near Tysons Corner for over 10 years, I can tell you that IF I-66 is to be expanded within the beltway, then it ONLY makes sense to speed traffic flow in both directions.

Have any officials seen the backup going towards Washington, DC in the AM and PM - at the point where 4 lanes (2 from I-66 and 2 from the toll road/ airport expressway) are reduced to 2?

Where do you think the backup goes?

Answer: The people who cannot stand the EASTBOUND backup converge on the streets of Falls Church and Arlington! ... Obviously, the choke points are different, depending on whether a driver is going East or West. Not only must another lane be added in BOTH directions, but the choke points must be mitigated.

PLEASE, let's do an intelligent analysis - not a shortsighted, politically motivated one.

Finally, those that complain should remember that we in Virginia are quite fortunate to have an expressway through Arlington at all! Remember, there really is NO expressway from Maryland to downtown DC.

➤ I was disappointed, no shocked, to learn that you are only considering improvements to I66 westbound. The problems on the highway are equally onerous EASTBOUND, especially from the toll road merge to Ballston (Fairfax Dr. exit). I live within 1/2 mile of I66. I travel (and avoid) this clogged traffic "artery" multiple times each day. The "problem" clearly exists in BOTH directions and is generally restricted to the few miles between Ballston & the toll road. If you could just add one lane on each side of the highway from Ballston to the toll road, that would certainly eliminate over 90% of the current congestion in both directions and would probably buy us another 10 years. It would also make a huge impact on the increasingly congested Lee Highway corridor that is filled to the gills with traffic trying to avoid I66 along this same stretch. It would probably also cost less than trying to start all the way down at the Roosevelt Bridge and only widen the west bound side, without addressing at all the increasingly impossible "inbound" situation. This is such an obvious problem and such an obvious solution. I just can't understand why it is not part of the recommendations...

➤ The EASTBOUND I-66/US50 interchange is a major problem in the evenings. This time we can construct a bypass (being in sync with our heart failure analogy). Just set the lane controls (again another terrible idea) to on during the same time westbound control signals are on!

➤ Widening options only addressed the Westbound. I feel that the EASTBOUND also needs to be widened.

Specifically, the recommendation to add a third westbound lane is problematic because it fails to account for impacts on eastbound I-66. Adding one westbound lane might improve westbound traffic in the short term, but it would worsen eastbound congestion which is already more severe. Both directions need to be widened.

➤ The EASTBOUND merge point at Falls Church restricting traffic flow to Ballston is certainly one such bottleneck. East of Ballston traffic flows much smoother.

➤ I strongly encourage the Commonwealth Transportation Board to authorize the commissioning of an Environmental Impact Study or appropriate environmental assessment of the corridor in BOTH DIRECTIONS to improve mobility and protect adjacent neighborhoods from cut-through traffic.

➤ EASTBOUND, likewise, at least one additional line the entire length, but 2 additional lanes from where the Dulles-Toll split joins (near West Falls Church metro) to the Ballston exit.

- While it is economically and politically most expedient (if that's the right word to use in the case of any transportation project in this area) to widen I-66 on the Westbound side only, it is imperative to widen the EASTBOUND lanes as well. If a homeland security argument doesn't apply in this case, how about the plain facts:
I-66 Eastbound is gridlocked most of the day in the Falls Church area, particularly with "reverse" commuters during the evening rush hour. One lane should be added to each side as one complete, comprehensive project.

- I-66 westbound expansion without considering EASTBOUND is illogical. If an evacuation were necessary, we'd do the same as New York did post 9/11: convert ALL lanes to westbound, including eastbound asphalt. It does not make sense to increase I-66 westbound capacity under the flimsy Homeland Security premise. Further, if I-66 westbound is expanded, it would surely create more problems in the eastbound direction.

- The EASTBOUND traffic starts backing up where two packed lanes of the toll road try to merge into three, then two lanes of packed I-66. The worst of the back up occurs when the fourth lane must merge into the third and then the third must exit onto Lee Highway/Washington Blvd. From that point, heavy, stop-and-roll traffic continues until the exit for Fairfax Drive into Ballston. From that point onward, the traffic flows very freely until it hits Roosevelt Bridge.

- Additional study of EASTBOUND I-66 should also be considered, either along with or after the next stage of consideration of westbound I-66. The eastbound congestion seems to go only as far as Ballston. After Ballston, the existing lanes seem sufficient.

Public Involvement

- While I know that the I-66 widening issue has been under consideration for some time and that there have been COMMUNITY OUTREACH EFFORTS, I am disappointed that the opportunity to comment via the web was not widely publicized. Now, such an opportunity is almost meaningless with the final report only a month away. The few ordinary citizens chosen to submit comments by the task force cannot truly represent the many opinions regarding the issue. By limiting public input, ideas that could improve traffic flow and reduce costs are lost. It also seems that the January flyer, and, if memory serves me correctly, previous flyers, are little more than vehicles for road-widening promotion. I am not particularly against cost-effective road-widening but the manner in which the survey results are reported and the various concepts are described leads one to believe that road-widening is both the most desired outcome (closer examination of the data suggests that bus/rail is such) and is the most effective method (favorable adjectives used in the Roadway Widening Concepts section are notably absent in the No-Build and Transit Concepts).

- The PUBLICATION is a welcome effort to explain proposed solutions to our traffic problems, but it is certainly the least understandable publications put out by a government agency not involved in the collection of taxes or zoning.

The problem is that the streets described in the four "Roadway Widening Concepts" in the right column of page 3 can't be located on the map on page 5

- "Scott Street to Dulles Airport Access": How many miles is this proposed work? No Scott Street on the map.

- Lee Highway (Route 29 @ Spout Run) to Dulles Access: I find Lee Highway/Route 29, but no Spout Run. Again, no indication of length of proposed work.

- Fairfax Drive to Dulles: Again, no such street as "Fairfax Drive" on the page 5 map, or an indication of length

- Scott Street to Sycamore Street: At this point VDOT is zero for three in identifying streets, and in this fourth location two street names are provided, NEITHER of which is indicated on the map. That makes the total 0 for 4, well short of a winning record.

- The SURVEY is biased to draw the conclusion that widening is supported by "stakeholders." The study says "this research is designed to assess stakeholder perceptions of traffic congestion in the Westbound I-66 Corridor." But by construction it only surveyed auto commuters. Only people who commute along I-66 three times a week were asked for their responses. Many people who do not commute by car are also stakeholders, by any reasonable definition of that term. Why not survey them as well? Why not survey people who travel primarily by metro? Or by bike? Or people who do not commute at all? Of course people who commute by car along I-66 would support widening I-66. You hardly needed a survey to show that. What a real unbiased survey of all stakeholders could have shown was what an average resident of the area thinks of the different options under consideration.

- In reviewing your STUDY, I see some bias built-in by the "inside" and "outside" study areas. There is a lack of definition around "inside" beltway "carrier" routes. Please define this term and why a larger footprint was not used in sampling citizen concerns inside the beltway.

- I am writing to urge the Commonwealth Transportation Board to establish a 60-day period for receiving reviews and comments on the VDOT Idea-66 Report before taking any action or making any decisions on the report. There has simply not been enough time for proper consideration of this important document. In addition, the supporting information on which the report is based has not been made available.

- The phone further seemed to target are narrow set of "inside beltway" property owners and a larger set of "outside the beltway" property owners. Why the disparity? How was the sample size and sample population selected?

- NEVER have I been asked what road improvement would help me. WHY, pray tell, do you not SURVEY the road users to find out where they are going in order to determine what roads to built. It seem to me that the squeaky wheel gets the oil...not all the folks stuck in cars who can not make it to your meetings...2 hours each way to go 38 miles is OUTRAGEOUS...you need to do something before I go broke buying gas!

- Let me say one thing about the TELEPHONE SURVEY as part of that study. I wrote you earlier to complain that the CANADIAN firm that was doing the calls (under sub-contract to a Richmond company) had no idea what it was asking. The survey seemed obviously biased to me, in fact. So, I am not pleased that this effort was outsourced, and then, that the survey was flawed and biased to boot. I do not believe that I heard back from you on that complaint.

Other

- I am writing to suggest enhancements to the Dulles Toll Road, Dulles Toll Road Connector and Interstate 66 in Northern Virginia.

First, I have seen new signs about to be placed for the Eastward main toll plaza on the Dulles Toll Road. These signs are much clearer than current signs but will not help alleviate the traffic problems usually faced at the main toll gates. The Smart Tag website states that over 3/4 of transactions during rush hour use the Smart Tag system; if such a high percentage of cars use the great toll collection system, why are there not more Smart Tag Only lanes? From my daily commuting experience, I know that the traffic backs up in the leftmost lane because so many cars prefer to use the Smart Tag Only lanes. In order to encourage more people to use the system, as well as alleviate traffic, I would like to suggest that at least two more Smart Tag Only lanes be added to the main toll plazas in each direction.

Second, why is there an 'Authorized Vehicle Only' exit off the Dulles Toll Road Connector Eastbound (just before the merge on to Interstate 66) to the West Falls Church Metro station? From the Toll Road, there is no easy way for autos to get to any Metro station; I would think that VDOT would like to encourage the use of mass transit by making it easy to pick up spouses, friends, etc. from Metro. Why do you not open that exit up to all traffic? It is so lightly used by buses that it seems like a waste of an exit.

Third, I would like to suggest that exits 68 (Westmoreland St.) and 69 (Lee Highway and 237) on Interstate 66 Eastbound be eventually combined into a single exit. The exits are only 1/4 of a mile apart and exit 68 is always backed up with cars. Additionally, the merge of cars coming off I-66 and trying to turn right onto Lee Highway (US-29 South) is a very dangerous situation. With all the building planned for that area, traffic will only get worse; VDOT should close exit 68 and use exit 69 as the primary exit. Passengers can turn left onto Westmoreland street from exit 69 and will be at exit 68 in 1 minute.

- Suggestion: While the debate is going on to widen Rt 29 through the Manassas battlefield, let's make both lanes of that part of Rt 29 one-way towards Fairfax in the morning (say 6-9am) and one-way towards Gainesville in the evening (say 4-7pm). I think that would alleviate much of the rush-hour traffic congestion and also emphasize to the NIMBY's that change is certain. Thank you for providing this forum.
- Thank you for promptly posting the Idea-66 Summary Report on the project website, as you are required to do under state and federal open- government laws. Here's my quick feedback: 1) I-66 Problem Statement: Rep. Frank Wolf has asked Gov. Warner to add a westbound travel lane to I-66 through Arlington. 2) Technical Analysis and Recommended I-66 Improvement Concepts: Only concepts that add a westbound travel lane are consistent with the above problem statement, so all other ideas must be summarily rejected for further study, regardless of technical merit and community opinion. 3) Community-Based Planning and Public Involvement: Totally irrelevant to developing the recommended concepts, except to provide a false veneer of legitimacy the study. 4) Context-Sensitive Solutions: Rep. Frank Wolf has supplied the context. 5) Overall Conclusion: A total waste of the taxpayers' money. You all should be ashamed of yourselves.

- This is a whitewash! You guys did a pathetic job -- all dross and no creative thinking.

- I-66 has been a sore spot in northern Virginia traffic for years. It needs major work but some relief can be expected with interim, low-cost measures. This will show that government can work and get something obvious done. The sooner the better for everyone.

- Perhaps a solution similar to what was used in San Diego for the Coronado Bay Bridge might work. During morning rush hour, use one westbound lane for eastbound traffic - HOV only. During evening rush hour, use an eastbound lane for westbound traffic. Use barriers to separate the incoming/outgoing traffic.

- If the point of this study was to complete an economic analysis of alternatives, please disclose your methodology of determining the public value (cost and benefits) of the alternatives selected.

- I like the website you have assembled. I am an everyday traveler of I-66 (DC to Manassas) and I have noticed a few things that would drastically improve traffic on the road as an interim solution before anything major is done. Before I begin I would like to mention that this all could have been avoided if the Commonwealth would have scaled the highway back from eight to six lanes instead of eight to four. So everyone is paying much more for mistakes made in the beginning: Arlington for complaining too much and the Commonwealth/Feds for being over ambitious. Also there is NO complete solution to the problem. The highway was built incorrectly and unfortunately we all have to live with it. VDOT is strapped for cash, as you probably well know, and repairing the damage done in the 70's will take hundreds of millions of dollars and the eviction of hundreds of citizens. I believe telecommuting is the only real solution, but that is another subject entirely. Now to the "simple" patches. The trouble begins at Exit 67 (VA267) . Merging a two lane highway into a two lane highway was an even worse idea than scaling down I-66, but because we all know this, the problem is a flow issue mainly by illegal merging and over cautious driving. I-66 has congestive heart failure and because we can't construct a bypass we have to reduce the plaque. Solution 1, a physical barrier. Instead of a painted solid white line, a concrete divider or the plastic reflector sticks would stop 267 drivers from merging way before they are supposed to. Ideally until the merge becomes one lane, so their battle to merge won't affect the I-66 traffic. The same for Exit 71 (VA120). Solution 2, two signs posted along the stretch: "Maintain 55MPH" and "Slower Drivers Move Right" to remind our drivers what they are supposed to be doing anyway. These are posted around VA234 in Prince William, why not in Arlington? As I have said, I believe these are two simple patches that will help ease the congestion. Unfortunately DC is a blockage in the system (could have been fixed with the planned I-266 spur) which further adds to the lack of a complete solution to I-66. But with these simple patches, I believe traveling the road would be much better for everyone.

- The views (qualitative and quantitative data) of those who live in Arlington should be analyzed separately from all those who live inside the beltway. How about HOV 3 to help ease congestions the way it once was? A serious consideration of mass transit and metro alternatives needs to be examined. Keep building McMansions all the way to West Virginia and yes the highways will fill up again. (What a surprise!)

- I request that this study be rejected and sent back for further work. I think it is severely flawed by virtue of two problems: (1) it arrives at the wrong conclusion to the question it asks; and (2) it asks the wrong question.

Please undertake a second phase of the I-66 feasibility study to develop a realistic and broadly accepted management plan for operating all four existing lanes of I-66 more effectively. A Location Study for adding one or more travel lanes to I-66 is clearly not warranted at this time.

- Anyone who is interested in knowing what will happen if I-66 is widened, should consider what occurred after Route 50 was widened between the DC Beltway and Annapolis 15 years ago. Ten years after Route 50 was widened from 4 to 8 lanes, rush hour traffic congestion was so bad that HOV lanes were installed. Today, several years after HOV lanes were installed rush hour traffic is stop-and-go for miles on Route 50.
- Even the small business owner such as myself notes the challenges faced in order to get supplies on time, meet client deadlines and just physically travel from point A to B—it takes longer and longer. All that effects the bottom line and the tax dollars that feed the state's needs.
- Before considering any recommended course of action regarding approaches to transportation in the Commonwealth, I would like to urge you to consider the availability, type and cost of future energy sources that will be present in your planning horizon. Particularly as how these parameters might affect mode choice, mode efficiency and desired land-use policy. There is really too much detail to convey in this format but I request that you at least see a recent presentation to the US House by Rep Bartlett (R) from Maryland and a US DOE report released this February.
- Arlington County Board Resolution, Revised April 19, 2005 submitted an eight-part request including: a second phase of the Idea-66 study to conduct a multi-modal feasibility analysis prior to moving to a NEPA process; cite right-of-way boundary anomalies; requesting VDOT implement operational solutions; conduct an emergency evacuation analysis; include changes to the problem statements and priorities; and providing a continuous shoulder and every day emergency and incident response capabilities. (See Appendix D)

- Humorous Comment: I am hereby making fun of Fairfax Commuters, so don't take this personally: I am a long term resident of Fairfax Virginia and use Route 66. There are very few options for getting to and from DC via Arlington other than METRO, METRO BUS, Bicycling, and car-pooling. Not having adequate roads does not make cars go away. Adding Metro Cars does. But that's not what we want to hear. Your report's recommendation demonstrates that widening I-66 is warranted mostly so that people like me, who live in Fairfax, can buzz thru Arlington on our way to and from work.

Traffic congestion on I-66 increases air pollution and harms the environment for those who live in Arlington and those who use the adjacent bike trail. But hey, we're bigger than Arlington. And what's a promise made 25 years ago anyway?

Look, I wanted a really big house with more land, so I bought way out in Fairfax. Now, I know that development out here is what drives the traffic problem on 66 thru Arlington, but hey, I want my cake and then some. Sure, you could run more Metro lines thru Fairfax, but HEY, that might be thru MY back yard. I sure don't want that. So I'd like to convince you to widen 66 in Arlington, despite that old promise that you wouldn't. I really don't believe that 10 years from now, when gas prices are at \$5 a gallon, that fewer of us will drive. Nor do I believe money put into Metro lines would be money better spent. Nor do I believe that at some point SUVs will be too expensive to drive. I want to get to work faster, I want to drive, and I want to drive alone. (Sure, I wish I'd bought in Arlington back in '99 but I didn't so now I can't.) So help us out in Fairfax! Get us thru Arlington faster.

- Although I live a little closer to the Sycamore/East Falls Church on-ramp going East, I choose to drive to the Glebe Road on-ramp to go East to Washington, D.C.

Even though I drive a little out of my way I STILL am not in favor of changes to the I-66 corridor because it would affect the area I live in. Not for the short (hah, short!) time the construction would involve widening the road but the impact of the widening on my neighborhood. Enough is enough. If people want to continue to use the road, OK, but it will just bring even more people to my area, which means more tearing down of the small (affordable) houses in my neighborhood to construct huge, ugly houses, or worse yet construct new townhouses or McMansions on park land, lots and the last of the green spaces in Arlington and Falls Church. All because you're widening the highways.

- Expand 66 up NOT out! This would double the amount of lanes on each side without using more land. Upper roadway would also help cover lower one during bad weather Also note that icing prevention would be same, but snow removal would be less. Metro rail could be expanded the same way.

- The summary recommendations do not seem to reflect the underlying data. The problem statement chosen for the study was limited to a car-dependent view of transportation, with all elements focused on vehicle-related congestion on I-66 or parallel roadways. The problem statement was not context-sensitive and virtually ensured that the study results would concentrate on how to move more cars within the I-66 right of way rather than moving more people. The I-66 study exhibits an unacceptably limited scope that presupposes the outcome--in direct violation of the earlier guidance provided by Virginia Governor Mark Warner.

- It was our understanding that there was agreement between all parties concerned in the prior highway deliberations that the highway would not be widened. The current highway configuration represents a compromise that took into account the needs of the local Arlington community and the highway users. Therefore, it came as quite a shock to learn that efforts are underway to widen I-66.

To date, the I-66 Inside-the-Beltway Feasibility Study:

- 1) does not make a convincing case that adding a third westbound lane is the only alternative worthy of further consideration;
- 2) does not give adequate consideration and weight to alternatives to adding a third westbound lane;
- 3) does not give sufficient weight and consideration to the negative impacts adding a third westbound lane would have on the people living along the I-66 study corridor.

- In our view, the report is insufficient in its analysis, it makes arbitrary assumptions that have not been adequately studied, it discards effective options for improving the I-66 corridor that could avoid the costly and wasteful construction of a westbound third lane, and fails in its effective communication and dialogue with the thousands of affected citizens that live along the roadway.

· It appears that the IDEA-66 report recommended only widening alternatives for further study. Why weren't there alternatives to widening, such as combining managed lanes with transit, thus skewing NEPA analysis in favor of widening-only options?

· The study evinces a presupposition to widening, in that the "problem statement" of the study was lifted directly from a letter to VDOT provided by U.S. Representatives Wolf and Davis. Doesn't this prejudge the outcome of the study?

· Right of way boundaries appear to have been imprecisely measured and references to acquisition of private land are scattered throughout the report without further elaboration.

- Overly Narrow Problem Statement Yields Ineffective Solution. Extremely myopic in its focus, the study's problem statement is oriented exclusively toward expanding an already unmanaged limited access highway—in only one direction through an urban core community—rather than more broadly focused on how to better manage the existing infrastructure.

- * The landmark Coleman Decision was an effective compromise that established a truly multi-modal corridor with managed highway lanes and Metrorail.

- * The segment of I-66 under consideration will soon connect directly to an extensive network of tolled and managed limited-access highways, including the Dulles Toll Road, the Dulles Greenway to Leesburg, four proposed Capital Beltway HOT lanes, and via a connection on Route 110, a major reversible HOV and proposed HOT lane facility on I-395/I-95 that will soon extend to the south of Fredericksburg, VA.

- * Arlington's Rosslyn-Ballston and Jefferson-Davis corridors have matured and grown considerably into vibrant, pedestrian centered, high-density, transit oriented urban-core communities.

- * Technical Evaluation Matrix Does Not Support Recommended Widening.

- * I-66 Widening Leaves No Room for Metro Expansion.

- * Widening Option May Leave No Money For Transit.

- * VDOT Conducted Biased Telephone Survey.

- * Stakeholder Briefings Overlooked Arlington-Based Groups.

- * VDOT Should Consider Better Management of All Existing Lanes.

- From my perspective as a professional planner, the construction of Metro and I-66, coupled with the forward thinking of the Arlington community in the planning of the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor, are all important factors in the success of this area in setting a model for the country in coordinating land use development and transportation investment. The Year 2000 Plan that was adopted by the region in 1960s called for radial corridors with both transit and freeways in each and connected by a series of circumferential freeways. Only one of the radial corridors in that 40-year old plan has been implemented – the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor with the Orange Metro line, I-66, and development concentrated at the Metro stations.

- Sixteen page comment received on Study, including comments on the Comment Period; Overview of the Study; The Wolf/Davis and Warner Letters; The Coleman Decision; Technical Analysis; Do-Nothing Finding; Assessment of the Corridor; Geometric Deficiencies and Crashes; Traffic Volumes; Transit; Other Impacts; and The Conclusion.

- The baseline for the analysis made it difficult to evaluate how much improvement would be obtained from the various options. The baseline included too many changes (reverse HOV and Orange Line extension to Dulles) to make comparisons. In addition, the only reference date was 2030, which is too far in the future for reliable projections (2020 would have been better).



Imagine the Possibilities

Appendix D
Comments from Arlington and Fairfax Counties



TONI COPELAND
CLERK TO THE
COUNTY BOARD

ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY BOARD

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April 21, 2005

Mr. Pierce Homer
Secretary of Transportation
Ninth Street Office Building
202 North 9th Street – 5th Floor
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Mr. Homer:

On behalf of the Board, attached please find the Resolution on Idea 66 I-66 Inside the Beltway Feasibility Study unanimously adopted by the Arlington County Board at our April 19, 2005 Recessed Meeting. The resolution outlines the history of I-66 within Arlington, as well as the Board's concerns with both the technical aspects and the recommendations of the study. The Board requests the following actions be taken before the Commonwealth Transportation Board initiates the National Environmental Policy Act process:

- The Virginia Secretary of Transportation and Virginia Department of Transportation work with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, in concert with the Federal Transit Administration, to conduct a second phase of the Idea-66 study to complete the multimodal feasibility analysis;
- Transit alternatives including rail expansion be studied in combination with management alternatives;
- In the interim, prior to funding larger capital improvements, VDOT implement relatively low-cost, traffic-operation solutions such as High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV)-3, reverse-commute HOV, HOV enforcement and transportation-demand-management programs;
- The U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Arlington County's Fire, Police, and Emergency Rescue Departments conduct an emergency evacuation feasibility analysis as part of this second phase;
- This second-phase effort correct and clarify the right-of-way boundaries that are critical to determining the physical feasibility of roadway shoulders, Dulles rail, and any widening within the space available, as stipulated by Governor Warner;
- Future I-66 corridor problem statements and priority criteria emphasize maximizing person throughput, versus easing congestion;

- Future I-66 corridor problem statements and priority criteria emphasize enhancing community livability and broader economic viability, in addition to the Dulles Corridor; and
- Future I-66 corridor problem statements and priority criteria emphasize providing a continuous shoulder and every-day-emergency-and-incident-response capabilities, in addition to, or in lieu of, planning for a possible evacuation.

It is the Board's position that the best and most cost-effective approach to moving people safely, effectively, and efficiently in the I-66 corridor, and in our region in general, is one that is informed by thorough analysis and that implements a combination of mobility strategies. The preferred systems approach would emphasize transportation demand management, transit service, traffic operations, incident response and Intelligent Transportation Systems prior to investments in road-widening solutions. In addition, it is imperative that all future studies analyze the current and future role and requirements of Metrorail in the I-66 corridor.

Sincerely,



Jay Fisette
Chairman

Attachment

cc Senator John W. Warner
Senator George Allen
Representative James P. Moran
Governor Mark Warner
Senator Patsy Ticer
Senator Mary Margaret Whipple
Delegate Marian Van Landingham
Delegate Albert C. Eisenberg
Delegate Robert H. Brink
Delegate Adam Ebbin
Honorable Jennifer L. Dorn, Federal Transit Administration
Honorable Michael Chertoff, Department of Homeland Security
Julia A. Connally, Commonwealth Transportation Board
Katherine K. Hanley, Commonwealth Transportation Board
Robert E. Sevila, Commonwealth Transportation Board
Karen J. Rae, Department of Rail and Public Transportation
Philip Shucet, Commissioner Department of Transportation
Dennis Morrison, Virginia Department of Transportation

ARLINGTON COUNTY BOARD

RESOLUTION ON IDEA-66 **I-66 INSIDE THE BELTWAY FEASIBILITY STUDY**

Revised April 19, 2005

WHEREAS, 30 years ago, the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) did not approve the Commonwealth of Virginia's proposal to build a six-and-eight-lane I-66 between I-495 and Rosslyn; and

WHEREAS, in 1977, the USDOT reversed its earlier decision that I-66 should not be built between I-495 and Rosslyn, by authorizing under the "Coleman Decision" the construction of a four-lane multimodal facility, with management controls and other improvements; and

WHEREAS, almost immediately after I-66 opened to traffic in 1982, I-66 experienced congestion during non-High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) hours; and

WHEREAS, in the 1980s, the segment of I-66 between the Dulles Connector and East Falls Church was widened from two to three lanes in each direction, yet this widening did not resolve congestion; and

WHEREAS, the absence of congestion during current hours of HOV incentives demonstrates the effectiveness of these incentives in terms of easing congestion; and

WHEREAS, in 2003, Governor Warner, at the request of Representatives Wolf and Davis, directed the initiation of the Idea -66 I-66 Inside the Beltway Feasibility Study of westbound I-66 between the Rosslyn Tunnel and the Dulles Connector; and stipulated that recommended improvements be located within existing right-of-way; and

WHEREAS, the study contains obvious errors in depicting the right-of-way boundaries, showing in the vicinity of North Adams Street and McCoy Park virtually the entire existing highway outside the right-of-way, and showing the National Park Service's Spout Run Parkway (a National Park) right-of-way as I-66 right-of-way; and

WHEREAS, the inaccurate right-of-way boundaries shown in the study render it impossible to determine whether widening and a continuous shoulder for emergency response can be accomplished within the limits of existing right-of-way, as Governor Warner has stipulated; and

WHEREAS, in the wake of 9/11, ensuring rapid emergency response capabilities is critical to public health and safety and the study did not demonstrate whether the recommended alternatives provide the additional capacity needed for an emergency evacuation; and

WHEREAS, the presence of a continuous eight-to-twelve-foot shoulder for emergency and breakdown vehicles is preferred for traffic operations; and

WHEREAS, the three priority criteria as recommended by the study (easing congestion, supporting the economic viability of the Dulles Corridor, and emergency evacuation) do not reflect the broad range of criteria that the public process and telephone survey generated, nor the priorities of the Arlington community that makes up most of the study corridor; and

WHEREAS, the recommended alternatives are not responsive to the public's top-choice solution to congestion according to the study's customer poll: to implement bus and/or rail transit improvements; and

WHEREAS, rail to Dulles has been promoted as a key to Dulles corridor viability, yet the study does not address physical and right-of-way compatibility with Metro's future plans; and

WHEREAS, the economic viability of the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor and livability of Northern Arlington are important criteria, just like the economic viability of the Dulles Corridor; and

WHEREAS, the five favored alternatives, all of which feature road widening, and only one of which specifies transit priority, do not provide the multimodal emphasis consistent with reasonable transportation planning alternatives; and

WHEREAS, the Idea-66 technical analysis concludes that the congestion-relief benefits of already planned improvements such as HOV-3 and Dulles Rail are much greater than the congestion-relief benefits of widening I-66 westbound for 6.5 miles; and

WHEREAS, the five recommended alternatives cost an estimated \$112 million - \$233 million that could be used for multimodal improvements;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE COUNTY BOARD OF ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA, HEREBY:

- Requests that the Virginia Secretary of Transportation and VDOT, before initiating the National Environmental Policy Act process, work with the Department of Rail and Public Transportation, in concert with the Federal Transit Administration, to conduct a second phase of the Idea-66 study to complete the multimodal feasibility analysis;
- Requests that transit alternatives including rail expansion be studied in combination with management alternatives; and,
- Requests that in the interim, prior to funding larger capital improvements, VDOT implement relatively low-cost, traffic-operation solutions such as HOV-3, reverse-commute HOV, HOV enforcement and transportation-demand-management programs.
- Requests that the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and Arlington County's Fire, Police, and Emergency Rescue Departments conduct an emergency evacuation feasibility analysis as part of this second phase;

- Requests that this second-phase effort correct and clarify the right-of-way boundaries that are critical to determining the physical feasibility of roadway shoulders, Dulles rail, and any widening within the space available as stipulated by Governor Warner;
- Requests that future I-66 corridor problem statements and priority criteria emphasize maximizing person throughput, versus easing congestion;
- Requests that future I-66 corridor problem statements and priority criteria emphasize enhancing community livability and broader economic viability, in addition to the Dulles Corridor;
- Requests that future I-66 corridor problem statements and priority criteria emphasize providing a continuous shoulder and every-day-emergency-and-incident-response capabilities, in addition to, or in lieu of, planning for a possible evacuation.



GERALD E. CONNOLLY
CHAIRMAN

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April 29, 2005

Ms. Theresa DeFore, Project Manager
Virginia Department of Transportation
14685 Avion Parkway
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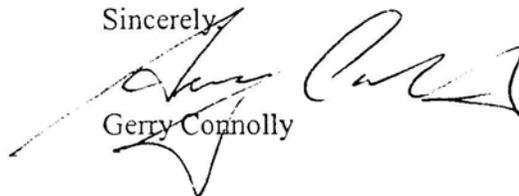
Dear Ms. DeFore:

I am writing in my capacity as Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to endorse the recommendations of the "Idea-66" study relating to Interstate 66 inside the Beltway. The study recommends that the Roadway Widening concept, including various managed lane types and advanced system management techniques be further studied as part of a Location Study, as outlined in the National Environmental Policy Act and in accordance with VDOT guidelines. Transit elements that fit in with the concept recommended by the Idea-66 study should be included in the NEPA study evaluation.

I would also suggest that additional study of transit improvements in this corridor is also warranted, and should be conducted by the appropriate state and federal transit agencies.

Thank you for your attention to this matter and your continued efforts to improve transportation in one of Northern Virginia's most important corridors.

Sincerely,



Gerry Connolly

GEC/jsp

cc: Members, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
Katherine K. Hanley, Commonwealth Transportation Board
Julia A. Connally, Commonwealth Transportation Board
Young Ho Chang, Director Fairfax County Dept. of Transportation

