



News Release

www.VirginiaDot.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 25, 2006

Contact: Joan Morris

703 383-2465; 571 238-5030

VDOT Advances Study for I-66 Westbound Spot Improvements inside Beltway

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is moving into the next phase of its Idea66 Study on improving traffic flow and safety on westbound I-66 inside the Capital Beltway in Arlington and Fairfax counties.

During this phase of the study, VDOT will

- begin preliminary engineering on extending acceleration lanes;
- identify locations for HOV enforcement;
- study the feasibility of providing continuous shoulders;
- examine an upgrade of the ramp metering system;
- address locations with site distance problems; and,
- survey right of way boundaries.

Approximately \$9.6 million is available for this preliminary engineering work. The first phase of the Idea66 Study, completed last spring, recommended extending the acceleration lanes to give motorists additional time and space to move from the on-ramps to the travel lanes. The acceleration lanes would be extended from Fairfax Drive to Sycamore Street (1.5 miles); from Washington Boulevard to the Dulles Connector Road (1.6 miles); and from Lee Highway/Spout Run to Glebe Road (1 mile).

Any improvements to westbound I-66 would be constructed within the existing right of way and be coordinated with the Dulles Metro Rail project as well as regional emergency evacuation plans. Public meetings for community input will be held although dates have not been determined.

The spot improvements will help ease congestion until long-term, multimodal projects, including adding a third lane for high occupancy vehicles (HOV), high occupancy tolls (HOT) and/or an express bus lane and rail, can be studied. Funding for a long term study must first be included in VDOT's Six-Year Improvement Program.

More information is available on the I-66 Feasibility Study www.Idea66.com

#

NR06-4