

Comment Overview--Citizen Information Meetings

January 31, 2012 — Sheraton Four Points, Manassas

February 2, 2012 – VDOT Northern Virginia District Office, Fairfax

The Citizen Information Meetings were held to solicit input from area residents and commuters to further define the transportation problems in the corridor and to refine the Purpose and Need statement for the study. The preliminary Purpose and Need was based on input received at previous public and agency meetings, transit and traffic data from various sources and other information about the existing transportation network.

Participants identified a wide number of problems and potential solutions. Additional transit options was noted as the most effective congestion solution within the corridor. Specifically, many urged for Metro Rail extension and more public transportation options out to the Manassas, Gainesville and Haymarket areas. In addition to improved transit access, prime concerns among respondents included congestion, overall travel time and improved safety along the corridor. Additionally, many urged improvements to the current HOV lanes by adding more lanes, increasing the number of passengers required, opening the shoulders permanently and/or increasing law enforcement of HOV restrictions. Ensuring safe pedestrian access throughout the corridor was mentioned a number of times, including better access for bicycles and options to cross over I-66.

COMMENT OVERVIEW

- While not a scientific survey of public opinion (due to the small sample size and self-identification of respondents), comments received as of February 29th provided an indication of public sentiment from the **114 people who submitted written comments**. Comments from the public were collected via comment forms provided at the Citizen Information Meetings and on the project website and general comments or observations not limited to the comment sheets sent via mail or e-mail.
 - 48 comment forms were collected from attendees at the two meetings and received via mail and/or e-mail
 - 57 general comments were received via e-mail/mail
 - Nine oral comments were transcribed by the verbatim recorder during the Citizen Information Meetings
- A **summary of the most common requests** noted throughout all comment forms and e-mails include:
 - ✓ More public transit options
 - ✓ Metro Rail extension

- ✓ Noise improvements/abatement
 - ✓ Improved bus service and access
 - ✓ Improve Route 28 and I-66 Interchange
 - ✓ Increased law enforcement along the I-66 corridor
 - ✓ Improved pedestrian and bicycle access
- The comments confirmed the I-66 corridor is primarily used for commuting. Sixty-one percent of respondents ***use I-66 more than five times as week*** during morning and late afternoon/evening commute times and 70 percent of respondents said they drive solo on I-66.
 - Over 70 percent of respondents indicated that ***on I-66 they normally experience*** heavy congestion. Most of that is felt during the morning and late afternoon/evening commute times.
 - While many are looking for ***expanded transit opportunities***, 77 percent indicated they would ***not use a Park and Ride lot to carpool*** if there was one close by.

SUMMARY OF COMMENT FORM RESPONSES

The following highlights responses from the comment sheet.

Question 1: The main reason for my traveling the I-66 corridor is:

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF COMMENTS
Daily Commute to/from work	23
Business	10
Shopping/Errands	15
Recreation	6
School	1
Other	7

Question 2: The section of the I-66 corridor that I travel most often is (check all that apply):

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF COMMENTS
Route 15 to Route 234	6
Route 234 to Route 29	14
Route 29 to Route 50	18
Route 50 to I-495 (Capital Beltway)	37

Question 3: I travel the I-66 Corridor _____ days a week:

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF COMMENTS
Less than 5 days per week	17
5 days or more per week	27

Question 4: I normally travel in the I-66 corridor during (check all that apply):

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF COMMENTS
4:00 AM – 9:00 AM	30
9:00 AM – NOON	13
Noon – 3:00 PM	8
3:00 PM – 6:00 PM	24
6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	22
9:00 PM – MIDNIGHT	5

Question 5: During my travel on I-66, I normally experience:

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF COMMENTS
No traffic congestion. There is traffic on the road but it does not slow me down significantly.	1
Minor traffic congestion. There is traffic on the road but it does not slow me down significantly.	1
Moderate congestion. I sometimes have to slow down due to congestion. Any accidents, even minor accidents, typically cause traffic to slow down even more.	11
Heavy congestion. I routinely must slow down well below the posted speed limit, or even come to a full stop.	33

Question 6: I experience the heaviest traffic congestion during (check all that apply):

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF COMMENTS
4:00 AM – 9:00 AM	27
9:00 AM – NOON	6
Noon – 3:00 PM	2
3:00 PM – 6:00 PM	21
6:00 PM – 9:00 PM	19
9:00 PM – MIDNIGHT	0
Weekdays	15
Weekends	7

Question 7: When you travel I-66, how many people are typically in your car?

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF COMMENTS
1	32
2	10
3 or more	4

Question 8: Would you use a Park & Ride lot to carpool if one was located close to you?

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF COMMENTS
Yes	10
No	34

Question 9: Do you use public transit when traveling in the I-66 corridor?

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF COMMENTS
Yes—Bus	6
Yes—Metro Rail	13
No	28

Question 10: If there were expanded transit opportunities in your area (more bus routes, more frequent bus service, expanded Metro Rail service), would you consider using transit for some of your trips?

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF COMMENTS
Yes	32
No	11

Question 11: I feel improvements are needed in the I-66 corridor to address the following factors. Rank those factors you believe are important with “1” being the highest importance.

RESPONSE	NUMBER TIMES LISTED	No. 1 RANKINGS
Congestion/Travel Delays	27	20
Roadway Deficiencies	23	1
Economic Development	21	2
More Public Transit Options	30	5
Safety	26	3
Park & Ride Lots	17	0
Other	13	4

Question 12: Please provide us with any comments or suggestions you may have for the study’s preliminary purpose and need as drafted below. The purpose and need will provide a focused definition of the transportation challenges we will address and the goals of the study.

Improve multimodal mobility along the I-66 corridor by providing diverse travel choices in a cost effective manner. Enhance transportation safety and travel reliability for the public along the I-66 corridor.

The goal of this question was to receive specific feedback on the draft Purpose and Need statement of the study to determine if residents/citizens agreed with the goals of the study and if additional considerations were necessary to include. Responses to this question included the following:

- I agree with the above statement.
- This statement is fine.
- Inclusion of bicycle and pedestrian access and safety should be included as part of the multimodal mobility options across and along I-66.
- Multimodal is prejudiced as the study team should be open to improving mobility in whatever way fixes the problem in the most cost-effective manner.

- Cost should not be a factor in making decisions regarding improvements.
- Providing diverse travel choices in a most cost effective manner does not necessarily indicate that you will fix the corridors problems—all it does is indicate there will be more congested non-solutions.
- The Purpose and Need statement should include mention that most travel within the corridor is home to work travel and to destinations outside of the corridor.
- Include mention of reducing noise for the residential areas.

Question 13: Please provide us with your thoughts on additional transportation needs in the corridor:

RESPONSE	NUMBER OF COMMENTS
Noise Improvements/Abatement	8
More public transit options	7
Improved pedestrian and bicycle access	6
Improved bus service and access	5
Metro Extension	5
Improve Route 28 and I-66 Interchange	4
Tolling	2
No additional taxes, tolls, HOV or HOT	2
Widen Lanes	2
Sensitivity to Historic Property	2
Concerns over property infringement	1
Raise the gas tax to pay for transportation improvements	1
Additional HOV/HOT lanes	1