



## PUBLIC COMMENT SUMMARY REPORT

### 2015 Public Information Meetings

#### I-66 Outside the Beltway Project

*Between U.S. Route 15 in Haymarket and I-495/Capital Beltway in Fairfax County  
State Project: 0066-96A-297,P101 / Federal Project: NH-066-1(300) / UPC: 105500*

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) held four public information meetings to inform the public and seek input on plans to transform Interstate 66, from U.S. Route 15 in Haymarket to I-495 (the Capital Beltway). Concept plans for the corridor, organized into two sets of alternatives (2A and 2B), were displayed and presented for public input.

Overall, the four public information meetings reached more than 600 people and garnered more than 120 written comments, which have been reviewed by VDOT and are being considered as the project is further developed. Meetings were held on:

**January 28, 2015** at Battlefield High School in Haymarket from 6:00-8:30 p.m. Nearly 100 people attended including Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) member Scott Kasprovicz and aides from the offices of U.S. Congresswoman Comstock, U.S. Senator Kaine and Prince William County Supervisor Candland.

**January 29, 2015** at the VDOT Northern Virginia District Office in Fairfax from 6:00-8:30 p.m. Approximately 130 people attended including Vice Mayor David Snyder of the City of Falls Church, CTB member Gary Garczynski, and aides from the offices of U.S. Congressman Connolly and Fairfax County Supervisor Cook. The meeting was streamed live with about 38 viewers.

**February 3, 2015** at Oakton High School in Vienna from 6:00-8:30 p.m. Nearly 270 people attended including an aide to Congresswoman Comstock, Fairfax County Supervisor Smyth and Town of Vienna Councilmember Attanasi.

**February 5, 2015** at the VDOT Northern Virginia District Office in Fairfax from 6:00-8:30 p.m. Approximately 100 people attended including aides to U.S. Senator Warner, Fairfax County Chairman Bulova and Supervisor Frey, and City of Fairfax Mayor Silverthorne and Councilmember Miller.

The project team is continuing to receive input from the public and will include commonly asked questions and responses on [www.Transform66.org](http://www.Transform66.org), under *Frequently Asked Questions*. In addition, comments and questions can be posted on the website's project discussion board, under *Provide Input*.

## SUMMARY OF COMMENTS AND RESPONSES

### DESIGN

Design-related comments include concerns about specific interchanges along the project corridor, including Route 15/I-66, I-495/I-66 and Nutley Road/I-66, as well as concerns about capacity and the proposed number of express and regular lanes.

#### *Comments Received:*

- Extend right lane to get on 29 (Gainesville) South on Rt. 15; add very long approach to get on 29 south - have railroad greatly improve crossover on 15 south.
- I think both Haymarket alternatives should be implemented. By implementing both options, Haymarket/Route 15 and points north and south movements onto/from the HOV lanes will be separate from the east/west I-66 movements, thereby creating less conflict.
- You are not adding any additional capacity for the vast majority of users. Three lanes are still three lanes. HOV-2 to HOV-3 will reduce usage already and yet you are doubling capacity. No solution to actual problem.
- There are currently three travel lanes for general traffic (non-HOV qualified) which gets very congested. Seems like there will still be three lanes - how will that improve traffic?
- I66/495 Interchange - it seems like you are redoing a lot of what you did with the 495 Hot Lanes. Please think this project through a little more. It seems like you are asking neighborhood concerns too lightly.
- No shoulder between HOT and main lanes in Alt 2A/2B.
- Provide access from Stone Road Park and Ride to managed lanes.
- Gallows Road/Dunn Loring - Traffic on Gallows extends from US-29 to Tysons but plans for six lanes stops at Cottage Street (Dunn Loring) which will create even greater gridlock than there presently is at rush hour. Note there is also an elementary school and bus stops right in that area where lanes reduce.

#### *Response:*

VDOT's I-66 Outside the Beltway Project Team is focused on refining the design concepts that were presented to the public at the January/February 2015 public information meetings. Traffic projections are being completed and modeled with the proposed roadway, access, and interchange alternatives to evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed alternatives, which will include the effectiveness of the proposed typical section with three general purpose lanes and two express lanes, along with access points and interchange improvement concepts. These results will be reported at the environmental public hearings in spring 2015.

The team will continue to refine the design of these options to ensure that the most effective, safe and least impactful alternatives are advanced. Minimizing the footprint of the project and potential impacts to nearby properties is also a key factor in refining the design of new access points and interchange improvements. Suggestions and concerns expressed from the public about particular design options are being reviewed by the project's engineers as part of their refinement effort.

## **EXPRESS LANES/TOLLS (HOV RULES/REGULATIONS)**

Comments related to the express lanes included concerns about the express lanes' high occupancy vehicle requirement and whether hybrids will be exempt from meeting these requirements.

### ***Comments Received:***

- Why will the HOV-2 change to HOV-3? Concern was expressed about this change, particularly as a lot of residents moved west of I-495 knowing they could take advantage of HOV-2. Now, people will have to find an extra person in order to get to work without significantly increasing their commuting costs. It was expressed that a lot of people will regret moving out here because of this.
- Will hybrids be allowed to take the HOV lane without additional charge?
- Flyover in Centreville: Tolls - I don't want to pay them in Centreville.

### ***Response:***

Consistent with other managed-lane facilities in the region, including the 495 and 95 Express Lanes, the HOV occupancy requirement on I-66 will be raised from HOV-2 to HOV-3. The current HOV-2 system on I-66 frequently breaks down, resulting in congestion and unreliable trips. To address this challenge, the region's current Constrained Long Range Plan, conducted by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, calls for all HOV lanes in Northern Virginia to be HOV-3+ by 2020. Only those hybrid vehicles that display a Special Fuel License Plate purchased prior to 2006 are currently exempted from the high occupancy requirement on I-66 today. This exemption will be discontinued when the express lanes become operational.

## **STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PONDS**

Comments related to stormwater management ponds include concerns about adding more ponds, and the potential property acquisition that would be necessary to accommodate new ponds.

### ***Comments Received:***

- We already have a mosquito problem from a pond. Near sewer pump but with adding more stormwaters near Rosenhaven will increase the mosquitos.
- Dunn Loring 2B & 2A stormwater management location. The proposal for both would take the communities playground and a well used bridge that connects the community to the Metro.

### ***Response:***

Stormwater pond locations are shown based upon conceptual designs that meet current stormwater management regulations. We recognize that the locations of these stormwater ponds have impacts on surrounding properties. Consequently, we are working with Virginia's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the localities to determine innovative approaches that might result in fewer and/or smaller ponds, reducing property impacts, while still effectively addressing future stormwater management needs. Discussions are ongoing and any changes will be reflected in our updated design plans and presented to the public.

More detailed right of way impacts will be determined in 2016. These impacts will be presented to the public at a design public hearing before the acquisition process begins, and right of way representatives will work with impacted property owners throughout the acquisition process.

### **BICYCLIST / PEDESTRIAN**

Many comments were received in support of providing improved and/or new bicyclist and pedestrian access as part of the I-66 Outside the Beltway Project. Comments include requests that a grade-separated, multi-use trail be built parallel to I-66, as an extension of the Custis Trail and bike facilities on bridges across I-66 when they are rebuilt. Questions were asked about specific locations.

#### ***Comments Received:***

- What additional Bike/Ped trails along I-66 are being planned?
- In addition to transit there need to be accommodations for bikes and pedestrians the entire distance. It will take just a small relative amount of property to accomplish this. Do it now. It will be much easier.
- For the planned modifications to the bridge over I-66 where Jermantown Road crosses it, I stress the need for additional planned modifications to better accommodate cyclists (i.e., dedicated bike lanes) as this route is a critical access point for cyclists from a large section of Western Fairfax to access key points east (i.e., Vienna Metro Station).
- No provisions for human-powered transportation along I-66 beyond 495. The Custis is very successful in Arlington and should be extended. Pedestrian and bike facilities should be added to all new overpasses.
- The multi-use trail, if not done now, will never happen. Please, for your grandchildren and mine, make it a priority.
- This project must include bike path/lane along the entire right of way. With expansion of suburbs west & growth of cycling and over-crowded roads already impacting the region, bike commuter access is critical. And it can be provided for relatively small money within the project. Please add it and connect to W&OD trail in the east.
- Alternative trail/sidewalk along the interchanges/bridges needs to complement missing links for Fairfax/Prince William County Trails and sidewalk plans.
- Please put a bike trail along 66, like the Custis Trail. We can't miss this opportunity. Also, Route 50 overpass needs improvement.

#### ***Response:***

The 66 design team is working closely with Fairfax and Prince William Counties on the bicyclist and pedestrian elements of the project, to ensure that all proposed improvements are aligned with the localities' master bicyclist and pedestrian plans. We are proposing to build new trails or better access at new I-66 bridge crossings that will be rebuilt as part of the project. We also will be looking at the feasibility of building a trail parallel to I-66.

### **FUTURE TRANSIT/METRO**

Comments were received expressing concern about whether transit was being considered as part of the I-66 Outside the Beltway project. Respondents expressed frustration that Metrorail is not

being extended to Prince William County, that VDOT is building improvements without space or plans for including public transit alternatives, the personal expense of paying tolls and fees, and the belief that managed lanes would not reduce congestion.

***Comments Received:***

- Seems to be a huge delay in getting Metrorail out to Prince William County. Loudoun County will get Silver Line.
- Building improvements without space or plans for including public transit alternatives.
- Wasting money on multimode transportation and infrastructure for mass transit.
- The personal expense of paying exorbitant tolls and fees. The restriction to two lanes of a potential Metrorail extension. A lack of preparation for light rail alternatives to Metro. Will the company allow construction of new projects after it is operating? Don't expect to see a reduction in congestion as a result because in 4 years, traffic will be heavier to any improvement with HOT lanes will keep us even with today.
- I am concerned that you do not eliminate the potential for continuing Metro west in the center median.
- Metrorail with elevated tracks would kill this area's charm. Impacts to local parks, historic areas/properties.

***Response:***

The extension of Metrorail within the I-66 right of way is included in the transportation plans of both Fairfax and Prince William Counties. The Tier 1 Environmental Document requires that projects moving forward into a Tier 2 Environmental Document not preclude other reasonably foreseeable improvements. The Tier 2 project VDOT and DRPT are proposing includes multimodal elements such as park and ride lots, improved commuter and rapid bus services, in conjunction with the managed lanes. In addition, the Tier 2 Environmental Document will include consideration of providing a wide median for future transit within the I-66 right of way.

**NOISE IMPACTS / SOUNDWALLS:**

Comments were received expressing concern that the I-66 Outside the Beltway project will worsen noise along the I-66 Corridor. Specific concerns were expressed about noise impacts on the Dunn Loring Village and Englewood Mews neighborhoods, and for homes located on Rosenhaven Street. Concern also was expressed regarding the proposed realignment of the Cedar Lane Bridge and what accommodations would be made to address noise impacts.

***Comments Received:***

- Noise and the stress on public transportation versus private vehicles.
- After reconfiguration of the intersection at Cedar Lane and Hilltop Road at Cedar Lane Bridge, a traffic light should be installed at intersection.
- We are very concerned about the proposed flyover in Alternative 2B on south side of I-66 at Dunn Loring Village (Merrifield area). The sound and traffic vibrations will wipe out the people in the housing of Dunn Loring Village of critical concern.
- As a resident in Centreville, very concerned about noise along I-66. Concerned this project will make it worse. Lived in the same house for over 20 years. Noise has become more intense. Need sound walls.

- The impacts to our neighborhood, Englewood Mews. There is an existing wall between our neighborhood and I-66. There are trees between the wall and I-66. And there is a hillside on our side of the wall that provides green spaces and sledding for children in the winter.
- The concern we have involves the re-alignment of Cedar Lane Bridge west of its present location. Will sound barriers be installed on each and all sides of the new bridge?
- Both 2A & 2B have this concern. 1. NOISE - Widening of the ramp & widening of the circle will increase the sound from the traffic for all houses located on Rosenhaven Street. Hence, requesting to extend the sound barrier wall all along Rosenhaven Street to Arrowhead Street.
- Newgate HOA area - Noise wall near me isn't sufficient now needs improvement.

***Response:***

As part of the Tier 2 Environmental Assessment, the project team currently is evaluating potential effects that the proposed improvements would have on noise and surrounding neighborhoods. The public will be invited to review the findings from this study at environmental public hearings in spring 2015. As part of the refinement of concepts, the team is working on showing potential locations for new soundwalls. Eligibility for new soundwalls is based on federal guidelines that determine whether noise impacts are exceeding a certain threshold, and whether a soundwall is reasonable and feasible.