



NOVEMBER 2017 DESIGN PUBLIC HEARINGS COMMENT SUMMARY (November 13, 14, and 16, 2017)

I-66 Outside the Beltway Project *Between U.S. Route 29 in Gainesville and I-495/Capital Beltway in Fairfax County* State Project: 0066-96A-297,P101 / Federal Project: NH-066-1(300) / UPC: 105500

Under a 50-year Comprehensive Agreement with the Commonwealth of Virginia, I-66 Express Mobility Partners is designing, building, operating and maintaining 22.5 miles on I-66 between I-495/Capital Beltway and U.S. Route 29 in Gainesville. The project, which is scheduled to be complete in 2022, will result in three general purpose and two express lanes in each direction, shoulders, auxiliary lanes, major intersection improvements, expanded park and ride lots, and multiple segments of a shared use path. The project will also preserve a median for future mass transit expansion in a phased approach.

The Virginia Department of Transportation, I-66 Express Mobility Partners (EMP), and FAM Construction (FAM) held design public hearings on Monday, November 13 at Oakton High School in Vienna; Tuesday, November 14 at Stone Middle School in Centreville; and Thursday, November 16 at Piney Branch Elementary School in Bristow. The meetings were held from 6:00 - 8:30 p.m. each night, and featured an open house period for citizens to review plans and ask questions, followed by a formal presentation with a project video at 7 p.m. and a public comment period.

Design plans were posted to the Transform66.org project website on October 13, 2017. Additional information was made available to the public on the project's website and at public libraries and buildings. The public was invited to submit comments at the hearings in writing, individually to a court reporter, or verbally during the public comment period. Additionally, comments were received by VDOT through the comment period by email, online or mail. The public comment period ended on November 29, 2017.

Comments Provided at Hearings:

- A total of 69 comments were received either in writing or via the court reporter at the three Design Public Hearings.

Comments Provided Online, Mail, and Email:

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- 359 comments were received through regular mail, email or online.
- An online petition signed by over 450 people was received expressing project concerns around Stenwood Elementary School.

Meeting Attendance:

Oakton High School in Oakton on November 13, 2017: 176 people signed the attendance sheet and 13 people spoke at the meeting. Elected officials in attendance included Senator Petersen, Delegate Keam, Delegate Simon, Fairfax County Supervisor Herrity, and aides to U.S. Representative Comstock, Delegate Boysko, and Fairfax County Supervisor Hudgins.

Stone Middle School in Centreville on November 14, 2017: 79 people signed the attendance sheet and four people spoke at the meeting. Elected officials and/or aides attending included Fairfax County Supervisor Kathy Smith and an aide to Representative Comstock. News media in attendance included *Fairfax Times* and WDVM TV Station.

Piney Branch Elementary School in Bristow on November 16, 2017: 63 people signed the attendance sheet and seven people spoke at the meeting. Elected officials in attendance included Haymarket Vice Mayor Pasnell and an aide to Prince William County Chairman Stewart.

Support and Neutral Comments

Received at Design Public Hearings:

- “I very much appreciate the multiuse trail being included in the project.”
- “Like the plan because it should help address congestion.”
- “Thank you for the public hearings and comment opportunities. The project is very welcome and I believe will help with sustainable growth in Fairfax County.”

Received through emails:

- “Widening I-66 outside the Capital Beltway is of great importance to the region and it’s important that it be done right. I commend VDOT and its private sector partners for working with the public and area elected officials to design and fund a project of immense benefit.”
- “As a business located in Gainesville, Va. we look forward to the early completion of these direly needed infrastructure improvements, which will afford our workers to get to the job in a timely manner.”

GENERAL COMMENTS ABOUT THE PROJECT (42 comments):

- Opposition to expanding I-66

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- Opposition to privatizing I-66
- Opposition to high tolls
- Questions regarding HOV-2 to HOV-3 conversion.
- Concerns over elimination of special clean fuel tag exemption for HOV lane use.

Response:

Informed by study of I-66 and extensive public input over several years, VDOT moved forward with a combination of improvements that would effectively move more people in the I-66 corridor. The improvements include two express lanes alongside three general purpose lanes in each direction, new park-and-ride lots, funding to provide increased bus service, and trails for pedestrians and bicyclists.

When the project is complete, forecasts show that traffic will move more efficiently not only in the express lanes but also in the general purpose lanes. The analysis also shows that increased capacity on I-66 results in reduced congestion on parallel roads.

The project will give commuters new choices to travel with less congestion and greater reliability. If they carpool or use transit, they will travel toll-free in the express lanes. If they choose to pay the toll, they can drive solo in the express lanes. If they drive in the general purpose lanes, they will benefit from the project's improvements to those lanes.

VDOT evaluated several project delivery options and in December 2015 determined that engaging a private partner to design, build, finance, operate and maintain the express lanes is in the public's best interest. EMP was selected in an open and competitive bid process because of their demonstrated ability to deliver projects similar to Transform 66 and because their proposal provides the best value to Virginia taxpayers, requiring no public funds to provide over \$3 billion of transportation improvements to the I-66 corridor.

SHARED USE PATH AND BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ACCESS COMMENTS (274 comments plus Stenwood Elementary online petition signed by more than 450 individuals)

- 255 comments expressing a preference for the path to be outside of the noise wall
- 8 comments plus 450 signatures on a petition submitted in support of the trail inside of the noise wall due to safety and privacy concerns of homeowners
- 11 requests for the height of the shared use path (SUP) barrier wall to be increased to 42 inches when SUP is inside of the noise wall
- Concerns about the impact of air pollution on trail users when the SUP is inside of the noise wall
- Requests for additional access points to the shared use path from neighborhoods
- Requests to extend the shared use path along I-66 across Bull Run and in Prince William County

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- Requests for additional connections at eastern end of the shared use path to connect to the W&OD trail through the neighborhood east of Gallows Road or through improvements on Gallows Road
- Requests for improved pedestrian and bicycle access across Route 28

Response:

VDOT and EMP have been working with the cycling community and adjacent neighborhoods to balance the interests of all parties as it relates to the shared use path location inside and outside the noise wall. This dialogue has reduced the amount of trail located inside the noise wall from five miles down to approximately three miles. As the design is finalized, we continue to look for opportunities to improve trail connectivity and locations inside and outside the noise wall, to benefit future trail users and adjacent communities.

VDOT and EMP continue to assess barrier design height concerns where the shared use path runs inside the noise wall.

Several commenters, including Prince William County, have requested the shared use path run adjacent to I-66 through Prince William County. This facility is not in the County's transportation plan and would likely impact historic and environmental resources. Instead, a parallel trail network is proposed along Balls Ford Road and other streets. A portion of this network is being built as part of this project. Additional segments are proposed to be built as part of other projects, potentially funded through the I-66 concession fee.

The eastern terminus of the shared use path at Gallows Road will allow access to the W&OD trail through sidewalks and bike lanes on Gallows Road. Users can access the Stenhouse neighborhood to the east by crossing Gallows Road at the Cottage Street traffic signal.

DESIGN COMMENTS (43 comments)

- Comments about the height of the ramps and lighting at the I-66/I-495 interchange
- Concerns about the Route 28 interchange and ramps with I-66 and Walney Road
- Concerns over the elimination of the Saintsbury Drive ramp
- Questions about traffic signal coordination at new interchanges (Nutley Street, Route 123)
- Comments about the need for proposed flyover ramps east of Nutley Street and east of Sudley Road
- Concerns with the access road and sound walls for EC Lawrence Park

Response:

I-66/I-495 Interchange

In response to public input, the maximum height of the I-66/I-495 interchange was reduced by one level (approximately 28 feet) during the concept development phase of the project. This modification has been maintained in the approved conceptual design of the interchange.

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Roadway lighting at the interchange has not been finalized. VDOT policy requires lighting systems to be designed in accordance with current Illuminating Engineering Society of North America standards and recommended practices. The policy requires the lighting system to “utilize fixtures that minimize glare, light trespass, and skyglow, all as defined by the IESNA, while still providing a comfortable, visually effective, safe, and secure outdoor environment in a cost-effective manner over the life cycle of the lighting system.”

Route 28/Walney Road/I-66 Interchanges

The project removes traffic signals along Route 28, connects Walney Road and Braddock Road with a new bridge, and uses a network of new ramps to reduce congestion and improve overall connectivity for vehicles, bikes and pedestrians. Improvements include several new movements from Braddock Road and Walney Road to Route 28 southbound and I-66 general purpose lanes and express lanes.

The right turn from Walney Road to Route 28 north will be eliminated. Based on field observations and traffic collection survey, the majority of this existing traffic makes a u-turn at the EC Lawrence Park traffic signal and goes south on Route 28 or to I-66 which is now provided as a direct connection to Walney Road, significantly reducing the demand for this movement. The interchange has several constraints, including EC Lawrence Park and Big Rocky Run to the north and has been designed to avoid direct impacts to the park. Coordination will continue with Fairfax County Park Authority on not precluding connecting paths and trails to the segments of shared use path being constructed as part of this project, including a shared use path across the Braddock Road/Walney Road overpass bridge.

Saintsbury Drive Ramp Removal

The Nutley Street interchange is being reconfigured as part of the widening of I-66. The current barrier separated lane (collector-distributor road) on the south side of I-66 must be eliminated so that this can be done without significant impacts to the Vienna Metro Station. These changes leave insufficient room for the existing Saintsbury Road on-ramp, so it is being eliminated.

Signal Coordination at New Interchanges

Traffic signals at the new Route 123 and Nutley Street interchanges with I-66 will meet VDOT requirements for signal coordination and timing. Signal timing intervals for both vehicle and pedestrian clearances will be calculated based on VDOT standards.

Flyover Ramps

Flyover ramps east of Sudley Road and east of Nutley Street will increase the effectiveness of the Express Lanes, with corresponding reductions in traffic on the general purpose lanes as well

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as on nearby arterial roadways. Additionally, the ramps east of Nutley will provide users with direct access to the I-495 Express Lanes.

EC Lawrence Park Access

The design of the access road to EC Lawrence Park continues to be coordinated with the Fairfax County Park Authority and is consistent with the park's master plan. The park has conducted public outreach activities related to this master plan and changes to the park. The latest design shows the adjustments that have been made to the alignment of the roadway based on continued coordination with park staff. The sound wall heights and locations will be determined during the final noise analysis.

STENWOOD ELEMENTARY SCHOOL (14 comments plus online petition signed by over 450 individuals)

- Concerns about air quality at Stenwood Elementary School due to its proximity to construction.
- Concerns about preservation of tree-line at Stenwood Elementary School property.
- Concerns about construction noise during school hours at Stenwood Elementary.
- Requests to minimize land used from Stenwood Elementary School grounds.

Response:

VDOT and EMP have been working to reduce impacts to Stenwood Elementary School and to coordinate with school and community representatives. As a result of these efforts, the design has been further adjusted to minimize impacts to the school property. Stenwood's ballfields and the walking trail on school grounds will remain intact following completion of the project. The new shared use path along I-66 will be separated from the school by a noise wall.

In addition to the changes along I-66, recent design adjustments include shifting Gallows Road alignment to the east and away from the school, providing more buffer space between the school and Gallows Road, and adjusting the curve in Gallows Road in front of the school to be more gradual.

Construction activities that occur near and around Stenwood Elementary will be communicated to the school's leadership well in advance. Information will be provided in a format that can be disseminated to school families and stakeholders.

VDOT procedures for dust control and noise requirements will be followed during construction.

MANASSAS NATIONAL BATTLEFIELD PARK (12 Comments)

- Concerns about the two flyover ramps east of Sudley Road and their noise, light, and view shed impact

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- Requests for additional studies on visual and noise impacts to the park.

Response:

EMP has proposed two new elevated access ramps presented at the design public hearing within the view shed of the Manassas National Battlefield Park (MNBP) as an Alternative Technical Concept that enhances access to express lanes near Sudley Road (Route 234). The design concept of these elevated access ramps has been conditionally approved by VDOT pending the appropriate level of coordination with Federal Highway Administration, MNBP, and the project consulting parties as identified through the Section 106 process of the National Historic Preservation Act. This proposed change is currently being coordinated with the MNBP and consulting parties to determine the effects these ramps may have to the MNBP view shed. This proposed change will undergo additional analysis and will be documented prior to the final approval decision on the elevated ramps at this location.

CONSTRUCTION NOISE (2 Comments)

- Concern about night-time construction noise.

Response:

Night-time construction activities and traffic impacts are anticipated throughout the construction period, but will be minimized whenever possible in compliance with VDOT requirements for construction noise. Information will be proactively communicated to the public through a variety of channels including the project website, a mobile app, text alerts, notices to the media, social media, and direct meetings for residents and community groups.

NOISE WALLS (20 Comments)

- Request noise barriers be built before construction.
- Concern that the project will increase noise impacts on neighboring communities.
- Questions about the height of noise walls.
- Requests for noise walls in specific locations.
- Requests for further noise studies.
- Concerns about lack of noise walls on elevated ramps.

Response:

The design plans currently show noise wall locations and heights based on the preliminary noise study. A final design noise analysis is currently underway. Results of the analysis, including the 2040 design year noise levels, noise wall locations, and noise wall size (length and height), will be posted on the project website in spring 2018.

Communities that have a noise wall today will have a noise wall in the future. For areas where noise walls do not exist today, noise sensitive receptors including residential properties will be evaluated for highway traffic noise impacts. Where highway traffic noise levels are predicted to

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be 66 decibels or greater, noise wall construction will be evaluated for feasibility and reasonableness. If the study indicates a new noise wall is an option, residents will have the opportunity to vote on whether their community gets a noise wall. Final decisions on the construction of new noise barrier walls will be determined following completion of the analysis, public feedback, and concurrence from the VDOT Chief Engineer and Federal Highway Administration.

Where possible, new noise barriers will be built prior to demolishing existing noise barriers. In locations where that is not possible, construction of a new barrier will begin within 60 days of the start of demolition of the existing barrier or tree clearing, whichever occurs first. Construction of new barriers that are replacing existing barriers is to be completed within 240 days from the start of demolition of the existing barriers.

TRANSIT (2 Comments)

- Comments supporting preserving right-of-way for future transit.
- Questions about coordination of future transit extensions and services.

Response:

Traffic studies have shown that solving the transportation needs in the I-66 corridor require all modes of travel, and should include future transit facilities. Space will be preserved in the center median to extend the Metro Orange Line or provide another transit facility to Centreville, as well as between Manassas and Gainesville. New bridge construction on I-66 will be done to ensure that bridge piers and clearances will accommodate a future Orange Line extension. This work represents a substantial investment in making the necessary room for a future Metro facility, and is consistent with the transportation plans of both Fairfax and Prince William counties.

Additionally, the project includes a variety of transit and ride-sharing services, including 4,000 new park and ride spots, expanded commuter bus service, and bicycle and pedestrian access.

Currently, toll revenues are planned to support improving bus transit operations in the I-66 Corridor over the 50-year concession agreement. As the toll revenues begin in 2023, transportation staff will continue to evaluate available funds and the effectiveness of these transit services.

CONSTRUCTION-RELATED TRAFFIC IMPACTS (8 Comments)

- Concerns about construction worsening traffic conditions.
- Questions about potential traffic diversion onto neighborhood roads.
- Questions about construction timeline.
- Questions about tree removal.
- Concerns about pedestrian access to Dunn Loring and Vienna Metro Stations during construction.

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Response:

A transportation management program will be implemented to keep traffic moving as efficiently as possible during construction. The program will include strategies such as:

- Reducing fares for commuter bus services on I-66
- Increasing passenger capacity on commuter bus routes
- Adding new bus service from Front Royal to PRTC commuter bus parking lots
- Monitoring traffic on adjacent roadways and provide traffic mitigation strategies

Detailed construction schedules and timelines are still in development. The construction schedule will be communicated to the public on an ongoing basis throughout the project.

Tree loss will be minimized where possible. A corridor landscaping plan will be developed to provide replacement vegetation where feasible within VDOT right of way.

The project contract requires the contractor to maintain pedestrian access to Metro stations throughout construction.

Environmental Analysis (3 comments)

- Concerns about the project's environmental impact.
- Concerns about storm water runoff.
- Questions about the results of noise and air quality studies.

Response:

The project's environmental impacts were evaluated in the Tier 2 Final Environmental Assessment. The evaluations included a full range of human and natural resources, including homes, businesses, communities, minority and low-income populations, streams, wetlands, threatened and endangered species, wildlife and habitat, parks, historic properties, noise, and air quality. Various mitigation measures also were identified for unavoidable impacts. The Federal Highway Administration concluded that the environmental impacts would not be significant and issued a Finding of No Significant Impact in June 2016. The project developer has proposed several design changes that could change some of the environmental impacts. Such impacts will be subject to an environmental reevaluation prior to final approval.

A detailed air quality analysis technical report was prepared in conjunction with the Tier 2 Environmental Assessment. The analysis indicated that the project would meet all applicable federal and state air quality and transportation conformity regulations. As such, the project will not cause or contribute to a new violation of national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS), increase the frequency or severity of any violation, or delay timely attainment of the NAAQS established by the Environmental Protection Agency.

As part of the final design process, a Final Design Noise Analysis taking into account design details and changes will be completed during the project's final design phase. The analysis is

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intended to confirm (1) traffic noise impacts as documented in the Preliminary Design Noise Analysis and (2) the location and height of new noise barrier walls that are determined to be feasible, and reasonable. Existing noise barrier walls not physically impacted by the project will also be included in the analysis for noise abatement effectiveness. Results of the environmental reevaluations and the Final Design Noise Analysis will be posted to the project website (www.transform66.org) when available.

A storm water management analysis, outfall assessment and drainage layouts with preliminary assumptions and calculations for the entire project was prepared. The design plans show the locations of the proposed storm water management ponds.

Currently, the developer is advancing the storm water runoff analysis that includes the design of culverts, cross drains, ditches, open channels, storm sewer systems, channel and flood protection measures, storm water management facilities, and erosion and sediment control measures in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations.

Trucks (1 Comment)

- Opposition to allowing trucks to use the express lanes

Response: Allowing large trucks to use the I-66 Express Lanes will remove some truck traffic from general purpose lanes, making travel easier during off-peak periods and further removing trucks from communities adjacent to the general purpose lanes. Trucks will be tolled at a minimum of five times the regular toll rate for two-axle vehicles during peak periods, and will be tolled a minimum of three times the regular toll rate during all other times.

Right of Way (7 comments)

- Questions about specific Right of Way Impacts.

Response: VDOT and EMP have worked to minimize the right of way required for the project while maintaining the most effective and viable transportation solutions for the corridor. A total of 10 residential relocations and 292 partial acquisitions have been identified. No commercial relocations have been identified.

During the property acquisition process in 2018, right of way representatives will work directly with each impacted property owner throughout the corridor. Questions related to the right of way acquisition are being responded to on an individual basis.