

April 10, 2015

The following information is being provided in response to questions raised about the Transform 66 Outside the Beltway Project during the March 21, 2015 briefing held at the request of the Dunn Loring Village Homeowners Association. The information below can be read as a standalone document; references to the questions posed are indicated in parentheses.

Purpose and Benefits

The purpose of the Project is to improve multimodal mobility along the I-66 Corridor by providing new travel choices. The Project is also intended to reduce congestion, and enhance transportation safety and travel reliability.

Traffic studies show that today, during congested periods on I-66, a significant number of trips are not being met in the I-66 Corridor. During periods of congestion on I-66, these trips move to other parallel routes. Preliminary results from our traffic forecasts show that, in the future, this trend will increase if no improvements are made to I-66. The Project is expected to provide improved mobility, travel choices and reduced congestion, which will help to ensure that the region continues to be a vibrant community for people to live and work. Additional information regarding the traffic studies will be available at the May/June 2015 Environmental Public Hearings. (P1 and P4) These studies will also include analyses of traffic impacts to local roads in close proximity to access points. (T6)

Proposed Improvements

The Project team began a Tier 2 Environmental Assessment in July 2014 and is studying a combination of improvement concepts from the Tier 1 Environmental Impact Statement. Under the proposed plan I-66 would be improved to provide three general purpose lanes and two managed lanes in each direction, which would be an increase of one lane in each direction during peak periods. In addition, there would be a full shoulder adjacent to the three general purpose lanes in each direction. Traffic studies indicate free-flowing conditions in the 2040 build scenario during peak periods in the area between Nutley Street and I-495. (T1)

The three general purpose lanes that operate today during peak periods will continue as three lanes in the future. During off-peak periods, drivers will have access to three general purpose lanes in addition to the two express lanes. (T4) Under the proposed concept, there would be no loss of the green arrow lane between Route 50 and I-495. It is anticipated that this lane would function during periods of severe congestion on the general purpose lanes in the future. (T5)

Other improvements that are being considered include high-frequency bus service in the

express lanes with predictable travel times, enhanced commuter park and ride lots, and direct access between the express lanes and new or expanded commuter lots. Safety and operational improvements are also being considered.

At this time, there are no other alternatives moving forward into a Tier 2 Study. (P3) The other capacity improvement alternatives that were studied in Tier 1 and their current status are listed below:

- General Purpose Lanes – Tier 1 included the study of nine lanes in each direction, and various other combinations of general purpose lanes with other alternatives. The Tier 1 study concluded that a managed lane (or express lane) system would address projected demands in a more space-efficient manner than general purpose lanes.
- Metrorail Extension – Metrorail extension in the I-66 Corridor is not funded. As noted in Metro’s strategic plan, [Momentum](#), higher funding priorities include state of good repair, eight car trains, and core capacity.
- Light Rail Transit – Light rail service that would extend west from Vienna. Capacity is about 1/3 of Metrorail capacity, as reported in the Tier 1 Study. Not currently being studied.
- Bus Rapid Transit – Separate guideway bus rapid transit extending west from Vienna. Capacity is about ¼ of Metrorail capacity, as reported in the Tier 1 Study. Not currently being studied.
- VRE Extension – Currently under a separate [study](#) by VRE.

Existing and Proposed Infrastructure and Interchanges

The Project team is studying key interchanges to address recurring congestion at bottlenecks, safety concerns at hot-spot locations, bicycle and pedestrian access, and infrastructure needs.

I-66/I-495

The interchange concepts proposed for I-66/I-495 make maximum use of existing infrastructure. There are no proposed tear-downs of any bridged-ramps. In addition to the two alternatives that were shown at the January/February 2015 Public Information Meetings, the design team is working to identify whether other less costly alternatives would effectively address the traffic. (P7 and T7)

I-66/Nutley Street

The purpose of the proposed eastbound flyover east of Nutley Street shown in Alternative 2B is to allow carpools, vanpools, buses and paying vehicles to enter the express lanes without interfering with the operations of the general purpose lanes. While a slip ramp could provide access to the express lanes, traffic entering at Nutley Street from the right would need to weave across the three general purpose lanes to enter the express lanes. The design team is working to minimize the impact of this flyover through redesign efforts. (T2)

Active Traffic Management and Existing Infrastructure

The Active Traffic Management (ATM) System will provide immediate relief in this corridor and will also be used during construction. In addition, the Project team is evaluating if there is a need to reuse some or all of the infrastructure (sign panels, dynamic message boards, cameras, etc.) for the general purpose lanes in the future. The \$48 Million pavement rehabilitation project that was completed in 2011 was a major repair to the underlying concrete pavement between Route 50 and I-495. The I-66 Multimodal Project will reuse most of that rehabilitated pavement. (P7)

Stormwater Management

The design, construction and maintenance of the ponds will be done in accordance with VDOT standards and Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) guidelines, and in a way that maximizes the environmental benefits while minimizing mosquito breeding and other negative impacts. The treatment of stormwater quality and quantity is regulated under the Virginia Stormwater Management Act and the Clean Water Act, with DEQ serving as the Commonwealth's lead agency for developing and implementing these programs. (C11 and C12)

Bicycle and Pedestrian Connections

Existing pedestrian access and paths will be preserved or replaced. No existing trails will be eliminated as a result of the I-66 Project. (C13)

Express Lanes and Tolling

The proposed express lanes would be dynamically-priced toll lanes that are designed to provide a reliable, faster trip. Drivers traveling with three or more occupants would be considered high occupancy vehicles (HOV), and could use the express lanes free at any time.

Dynamically-priced tolls change based on traffic volumes and speed in order to manage the demand for the express lanes. When traffic volumes are heavy, tolls increase and when volumes are light, tolls decrease. Dynamic pricing works to ensure the lanes remain free-flowing at all times, so that HOV vehicles and toll-paying drivers have more predictable trips. At this time, toll rates have not been set. (P6)

495 and 95 Express Lanes

The Northern Virginia region has two express lanes facilities that are dynamically tolled, managed lanes similar to what is proposed on the I-66 corridor. These corridors have their own unique travel patterns and operational features. The 95 Express Lanes, which opened in December 2014, operate in one direction at a time, and are reversed to match the peak hour flows in the corridor. Barrier-separated HOV lanes had been operational in this corridor since the 1970s, with a well-established carpool community already using this system. The 495 Express Lanes, which opened in December 2012, have two lanes in each direction, and

represent the first time an HOV facility has been available in this corridor.

Both express lanes systems are considered to be in the “ramp up” period and travel patterns are still changing as a result of the new travel choices available to drivers. Recent traffic data on both the 495 and 95 Express Lanes corridors shows an overall improvement in travel times and reduced congestion since opening the express lanes. Our traffic and operations teams continue to monitor some localized areas of congestion, and to look for ways to address these issues. (VDOT is working to compile the requested traffic data.) (T3 and T8)

The scope of the I-95 Express Lanes project was modified based on numerous factors, including economic conditions at the time the project was being developed. With respect to the Transform 66 Outside the Beltway Project, a truncated plan for the express lanes in the eastern part of the corridor is not under consideration. (P9)

Transit

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) are coordinating closely with local jurisdictions and transit providers to study demands for transit options, identify needs for park and ride lots, and develop and evaluate high frequency bus service scenarios.

Bus plans are being developed for several service scenarios. Three transit service scenarios were presented to the public at the January/February 2015 Public Information Meetings. A recommended transit service scenario will be posted on the Project website prior to the May/June 2015 Public Hearings. (B1)

Rapid bus and commuter bus services are essential elements of the I-66 Outside the Beltway Improvements and would begin operating when the managed lanes open. The Bus Study assumes that the buses will be able to provide service on a roadway that is congestion-free and that provides direct access to park and ride lots. By providing a system that ensures easy access and consistent travel times, bus ridership is maximized and effective. The transit services are included in the overall project cost and will be provided in conjunction with the managed lanes. (B2 and B3)

DRPT funded bus purchases for I-95 commuter service from Fairfax and Prince William Counties in FY15 and PRTC service via a technical assistance grant in the Transit and TDM Plan Assistance. DRPT funded new Fairfax Connector from the Saratoga park and ride lot that will begin in May 2015. (B4)

Right of Way

VDOT is focused on minimizing the footprint and impact of the project, while determining the most effective and viable transportation solutions for the I-66 Corridor. It is too early in the

planning process to say definitively whether a home or business will be taken or impacted by construction.

Final 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.

With respect to potential impacts to schools and public properties, the Tier 1 document evaluated potential impacts for each of the build alternatives considered as stand-alone concepts. In Table ES-3 a Quantitative Summary of Potential Impacts shows that impacts to 4(f) properties (such as park and recreational lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites) ranged from 21 to 63 acres, and impacts to public parks ranged from 0 to 21 acres. Park acreage impacts included potential impacts to a federal park, a regional park, 6 local public parks and recreation areas, according to the Tier 1 document (see pages ES-9 and ES-10). (C9)

Construction, Noise Impacts and Mitigation

Construction hours will be prescribed in the construction contract. The contractor will be required to comply with local noise ordinances to the maximum extent practical. Where work needs to occur in the roadway, the majority of construction that impacts the lanes will take place either during daytime non-rush hours or during nighttime hours, as traffic volumes are generally lighter at these times. Creating safe work zones outside of traffic (separated by barriers, if possible) will be a priority for daytime operations. We are planning on having outreach efforts throughout the life of the construction project, in order to keep communities informed as to the project status and any significant activities which may affect them. The Contractor will be required to establish a hotline number for inquiries. (C4 and C7)

Community mitigation will include items such as sound walls and landscaping within the VDOT right of way. (C5) Landscaping will be provided as part of the overall project, where practical and effective. (C2)

The Contract will include a requirement to replace any impacted noise walls within a reasonable timeframe and to first construct new walls prior to removing old walls, where practical. However, there are likely to be locations where leaving the old wall up prior to building a new wall is not feasible. (C8)

The I-66 Outside the Beltway Project is considered a Type I project, therefore, design year noise levels will be predicted through the approved FHWA Traffic Noise Model (TNM). If noise impacts are predicted, noise mitigation will be evaluated for feasibility and reasonableness. To be feasible, the noise barrier must work acoustically and be able to be constructed in the proposed location. To be reasonable, the noise barrier must meet an acoustical design goal;

must be 1,600 (or less) maximum square feet per benefited receptor; and the benefited receptors must be in favor of construction of the proposed mitigation feature. For your reference, a short video and detailed guidance manual regarding [noise abatement](#) are available on VDOT's website.

According to the federal regulation, interior noise is evaluated for Noise Abatement Category D receptors. These include Auditoriums, day care centers, hospitals, libraries, medical facilities, places of worship, public meeting rooms, public or nonprofit institutional structures, radio studios, recording studios, schools, and television studios. Residential receptors are not considered for interior noise levels. For more detailed information about Category D receptors, refer to Section 7.3.5 in the Guidance Manual cited above. (C6)

Public Involvement and Input

Public involvement and input are critical elements in the development and delivery of transportation projects. VDOT strives to provide opportunities to the public to participate in public decisions on transportation projects and programs affecting them. We welcome suggestions and comments regarding the Transform 66 Outside the Beltway project. For more information or to provide input, please visit the [Project website](#), participate in the interactive community [discussion board](#), or contact the Project team at Transform66@VDOT.Virginia.gov. Please reference "I-66 Outside the Beltway" in the subject line of all correspondence.

The project team is working to address concerns by reviewing designs to reduce the Project footprint wherever possible. One design revision under consideration would eliminate the impact to one townhouse that was shown on the plans during the January/February Public Information Meetings. (C1) In addition, we are reviewing the stormwater management requirements and designs in an effort to reduce impacts. Pedestrian and bicycle facilities are being evaluated at crossing roads throughout the corridor and along I-66 in Fairfax County in accordance with local trail plans. (C10)

A list of community and other briefings is posted on the [Project website](#). To request a briefing for your community or service organization, please email Transform66@VDOT.Virginia.gov. (C3)

TRANSFORM 66 INSIDE THE BELTWAY

Inside the Beltway

Transform 66 Inside the Beltway is a multimodal project, focused on moving more people while minimizing impacts to the surrounding communities. The project includes a study of widening I-66 Eastbound from I-495 to Fairfax Drive near Ballston. The study will consider this widening with a horizon year of 2040, and will also test an interim year for this improvement. The exact timing of the future widening has not been determined at this time. For more information on this project, visit Transform66.org. (P2)

OTHER PROJECTS

Active Traffic Management on I-66

The Active Traffic Management on I-66 is primarily designed to address the non-recurring congestion, such as incidents, off-peak and weekend traffic surge, which is prevalent in this corridor. The system may also help reduce some impacts during the peak periods. The long-term congestion and capacity issues still need to be addressed using the Transform 66 Project. (P8)

Provisions in Other Comprehensive Agreements

The I-95 Comprehensive Agreement includes provisions for how to deal with the future expansion of Route 1. The Commonwealth has full authority to improve Route 1 under the terms of the Agreement. Route 1 can be expanded as currently planned in the Constrained Long Range Plan and consistent with future Transportation Plans in Fairfax and Prince William Counties. If Route 1 is expanded beyond what is currently planned, there may be a requirement to compensate the I-95 Concessionaire (currently Transurban) if they can demonstrate a revenue reduction on their facility. (P5) The I-95 Comprehensive Agreement also provides potential compensation if HOV vehicles exceed 40% under certain conditions. (P10)