



*Multimodal Solutions - 495 to Haymarket*

**June 2017 Public Information Meetings  
Public Comment and Response Report  
August 8, 2017**

**State Project: 0066-96A-297, P101 / Federal Project: NH-066-1(300) / UPC: 105500**

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and its private partner, I-66 Express Mobility Partners (66 EMP), held three public information meetings to inform the public and seek input on plans to transform Interstate 66 between the Capital Beltway and University Boulevard in Gainesville. The latest project plans and information were displayed and presented at the meetings and remain available [here](#).

Approximately 441 individuals attended the public information meetings and 1,157 comments (416 individual comments and 741 form letter comments) were submitted. VDOT and 66 EMP have reviewed the comments and are considering the input as the project design advances. The public information meetings were held on:

- **June 12, 2017** at Oakton High School in Vienna. About 300 people attended,
- **June 14, 2017** at Stone Middle School in Centreville. About 85 attended.
- **June 15, 2017** at Piney Branch Elementary School in Bristow. About 56 attended.

Comment themes and responses are as follows:

**Bike-Pedestrian Trail (981 comments; 240 individual comments and 741 form comments)**

- Opposition to locating the trail on the highway side of noise barriers. Specific concerns:
  - Unpleasant cycling or walking experience
  - Safety exposure in the event of vehicular crashes
  - Exposure to debris and emissions
  - Reduced access from communities
- Support for locating the trail on the highway side due to safety and privacy concerns of homeowners

**Response:** VDOT and 66 EMP are working closely with Fairfax and Prince William counties, bike advocacy groups, homeowners associations and local residents to provide a high-value trail along the physically-constrained I-66 corridor. [Click here](#) for full details on the trail.

**Trucks (32 comments)**

- Opposition to allowing trucks to use the express lanes
- Opposition to allowing trucks to access Vaden Drive

**Response:** Large trucks are allowed to use the I-66 Express Lanes. [Click here](#) and select “trucks” for more information.

The region’s Transportation Planning Board, in response to a recommendation from Fairfax County, recently took action to restrict heavy truck access on proposed express lanes ramps at Vaden Drive in the region’s long-range transportation plan.

**Project as a Whole (23 comments)**

- Opposition to the project in its entirety
- Opposition to privatizing I-66
- Opposition to high tolls
- Opposition to no increase in general purpose lane capacity

**Response:** Informed by extensive public input, VDOT's study of I-66 over several years showed the most effective solution to move more people in the I-66 corridor is a combination of two express lanes alongside three general purpose lanes in each direction, along with new park-and-ride lots, and funding to provide increased commuter bus service.

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 secondary roads.

The project will give commuters new choices to travel with less congestion and greater reliability. If they choose to pay the toll, they can drive solo in the congestion-free express lanes. If they carpool or use transit, they will travel toll-free in the express lanes. If they drive solo 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. 66 EMP was selected in an open and competitive bid process because of their demonstrated ability to deliver projects similar to I-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 I-66.

**Design (18 comments)**

- Request general purpose access to/from Stringfellow Road and express lanes access to and from the west
- Support for Route 28 changes eliminating traffic signals

**Response:**

The access at Stringfellow Road (and also at Monument Drive) will be converted to a two-way, 24/7 access when 66 EMP begins tolling in mid-2022. Vehicles meeting the HOV-3 requirement will be able to use the access for free. This approach is consistent with other HOV ramp conversions to HOT ramps at Monument Drive as well as in the I-95/I-395 corridor.

Additional express lanes access to and from the west is not included in the project based upon low traffic demand.

**Construction Noise and Noise Barriers (10 comments)**

- Request noise barriers be built before construction
- Concern about night-time construction noise
- Concern that the project will increase noise impacts on neighboring communities

**Response:** Residential properties where highway traffic noise is predicted to be 66 decibels or greater are eligible for noise protection. Impacted residents will have the opportunity to decide whether their community desires a noise barrier and may have input on the appearance of the barrier.

Wherever possible, 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 comes first. Construction of new barriers that are replacing existing barriers are to be completed within 240 days from the start of demolition of the existing barriers.

Lane closure hours on I-66 are limited to off-peak hours in order to keep traffic moving. Night-time construction activities are anticipated throughout the construction period, but will be minimized whenever possible.

**Transit (9 comments)**

- Concern about preserving right-of-way for future transit
- Support for upgrading transit instead of building express lanes

**Response:** The project preserves space in the center median to extend the Metro Orange Line or provide another transit facility to Centreville, as well as between Manassas and Gainesville. This approach 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, high frequency bus service, and bicycle and pedestrian access.

**Construction-Related Traffic Impacts (5 comments)**

- Concern about construction worsening traffic conditions

**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

While construction will be underway throughout the 22.5-mile corridor, no lane closures will occur during rush hours.

Public outreach will keep travelers informed about construction activities, such as temporary lane or ramp closures, that could impact traffic. The goal of the communications initiative is to empower travelers with information to help them avoid construction-related congestion, where possible.

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