



APPENDIX E

RESPONSES TO PUBLIC COMMENTS

on

I-66 CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS

TIER 2 DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

I-66 CORRIDOR IMPROVEMENTS

TIER 2 FINAL ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

State Project: 0066-96A-297; UPC 105500

From: US 15

To: I-495

Prince William and Fairfax Counties, Virginia

Federal Highway Administration
Virginia Department of Transportation
Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation

The text in this appendix is unchanged from what was presented in the Tier 2 Revised EA. New substantive comments (i.e., those on the Tier 2 Revised EA) are addressed in Appendix G of the Tier 2 Final EA.

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| <u>PUBLIC COMMENT</u> | | <u>RESPONSE</u> |
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| OVERALL STUDY / PROCESS: | | |
| 1 | Tier 2 EA demonstrates that the Project will have significant impacts on the environment and communities in northern Virginia. Therefore, FHWA and VDOT should prepare a Tier 2 Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). | The comment does not provide any substantive information on which impacts are considered “significant” or the basis for that assertion. FHWA’s regulations implementing NEPA identify the types of actions that normally require an EIS (23 CFR 771.115(a), e.g., a highway project of four or more lanes on new location). The I-66 Tier 2 project is not a type of action that normally requires an EIS under that regulation. Instead, this project, which is along the existing I-66 corridor, falls under the category of actions for which an EA is the appropriate document type (23 CFR 771.115(c)). If, at any point during the EA process, significant environmental impacts are identified, then an EIS would be prepared at that point. There are no impacts identified for the Preferred Alternative that would be considered “significant” in the context of NEPA. |
| 2 | Tier 2 EA does not discuss or analyze cumulative impacts of the recently announced I-66 Inside the Beltway Project. | The cumulative effects discussion has been augmented in the Tier 2 Revised EA to account for the Inside the Beltway project. In addition, the traffic analysis for the 2040 No-Build Alternative was updated to account for the Inside the Beltway project, and the Preferred Alternative traffic analysis for design year 2040 was also completed assuming the Inside the Beltway project was in place. |
| 3 | If managed lanes are not successful on 495 and 95, why will they be different on I-66? | It is not clear on what basis the commenter considers the managed lanes on I-495 and I-95 to be “not successful.” In contrast, available data show that those managed lanes systems are indeed successful and carry tens of thousands of vehicles per day, including numerous transit buses that now experience far more reliable travel times than in the past. |
| 4 | Explain the cost-benefit analysis completed for this project. | A cost-benefit analysis has not been completed for this project, nor is one required under NEPA regulations. |

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| PURPOSE AND NEED: | |
| <p>5 The primary objective of the improvements is to relieve congestion. How can you relieve congestion by eliminating a lane from a 12-mile stretch of road? Under the proposed plan, half of the distance of Route 66 will be reduced to three lanes with the fourth lane being converted to a toll lane.</p> | <p>Three general purpose lanes would continue to be available on I-66 within the project limits, and the existing HOV lane, together with a new lane to be added along the corridor, would serve as express lanes, one of many strategies being pursued to move more people along the corridor. HOV traffic would continue to travel for free in the express lanes, as would enhanced transit services.</p> |
| ALTERNATIVES ANALYSIS / COMPARISON: | |
| <p>6 VDOT should consider a transit first alternative and expand I-66 outside of the existing right of way only if that fails. Such an alternative could include bus rapid transit, Metrorail extension, and extension of the Virginia Railway Express, while investing in safety improvements, communications and technology. Such an alternative could also involve improvements within the right of way to address existing chokepoints, such as the chokepoint at Route 28.</p> | <p>The Tier 1 EIS, a precursor to Transform I-66 Outside the Beltway, evaluated 10 improvement concepts, independently as well as in combination with one another. The improvement concepts included adding general purpose lanes, adding managed lanes, Metrorail and VRE extensions, light rail and BRT. The Tier 1 EIS concluded that no one improvement could meet all the travel demand in the corridor. Of the four highest performing improvement concept combinations, adding two managed lanes, which would be free of charge to HOV-3 and transit vehicles, was the only improvement concept common to all four. Managed lanes would also benefit existing transit riders as well as the new transit service planned as part of the project.</p> <p>At this time, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), the operator of the Metrorail system, is focusing on ensuring that equipment and facilities are in a state of good repair, increasing system capacity by purchasing and implementing eight-car trains across the system, and improving core capacity. WMATA does not anticipate any extensions of the system until these priority projects are completed. For more information, see the Metro 2025 plan at http://www.wmata.com/momentum/2025.cfm</p> <p>The Haymarket rail extension is envisioned in Phase II of VRE's System Plan, which is 2021-2030. It is a \$295 million project that is not currently funded in the region's financially constrained Long Range Transportation Plan. VRE is working on a planning and project development study for the Gainesville-Haymarket extension that is expected to last three years beginning in mid-2015. For more information, see VRE's System Plan available at http://www.vre.org/about/strategic/strategic_plan.htm.</p> |

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| <p>7 Consider the Do No Harm Alternative in the NEPA analysis. The Do No Harm Alternative would entail ending the I-66 toll lanes between Chain Bridge Road and Nutley (instead of extending them to I-495) and offering 5 general purpose lanes through to 495.</p> | <p>A traffic operations sensitivity analysis was completed to test the operations of an open section along I-66 eastbound and westbound under this configuration, which assumes that the I-495 interchange would remain as it is today and direct ramp connections would not be provided from the express lanes on I-495 to those proposed on I-66. The open section (non-barrier separated lanes with no restrictions) would extend approximately 1.2 miles, and within this section, vehicles would potentially have to weave across multiple lanes to access their respective destination lanes. In some cases, vehicles may be required to make up to five (5) lane change maneuvers in this section.</p> <p>The independent traffic microsimulation study was conducted to test the operations for this section using the VISSIM microsimulation modeling approach that was used for the NEPA traffic operations study. The results of the traffic operations analysis show that this alternative would result in substantial operational and safety issues along the mainline of I-66 in both directions. In the morning in the eastbound direction, the additional lane changes required for vehicles to position themselves to access the ramps at the I-495 interchange would result in a breakdown of traffic operations in the segment between VA 243 and I-495 interchange. Similarly, in the PM peak in the westbound direction, the traffic operations are impacted by the additional lane changes required for vehicles to position themselves to access the I-66 express lanes and the VA 243 ramps.</p> <p>Additional details on the traffic operations analysis completed for the Open Section Alternative (suggested by citizens as the “Do No Harm” Alternative) are provided in the Tier 2 Revised EA and Transportation Technical Report.</p> |
| <p>8 Focus should be on alternatives that minimize impacts of takings and the effect on properties. Also, how does VDOT go about these takings and relocations?</p> | <p>Conceptual plans for the Preferred Alternative have been developed to minimize impacts to homes; however, given the scale of the project, there would be some impacts to adjacent properties along the corridor. Refinements to the conceptual plans between the Public Information Meetings from January/February 2015 and the Public Hearings May/June 2015 resulted in reduction of residential relocations. Specifically, Alternative 2A was reduced from 35 to 15 relocations, and Alternative 2B was reduced from 32 to 11 relocations. The Preferred Alternative that was developed subsequent to the May/June 2015 hearings would displace 11 homes. VDOT is committed to minimizing, or eliminating where possible, impacts to adjacent land and facilities.</p> |

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| | <p>Property to be acquired by VDOT for project right of way would be purchased at fair market value as determined by qualified appraisers. VDOT follows the acquisition and relocation laws and regulations required by the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisitions Policies Act of 1970 (as amended), Titles 25.1 and 33.2 of the 1950 Code of Virginia (as amended), along with all applicable local and Commonwealth laws. In the case of a residential relocation, the VDOT relocation agent would search the local market for properties that closely match the characteristics of the property to be acquired and then provide a variety of comparable properties to the displacee for consideration. A variety of relocation costs would be paid by VDOT, including moving costs, price differential of selected property, increased mortgage interest, and certain incidental expenses. VDOT's relocation agent would assist the displacee through each step of the relocation process until the displacee has been relocated to another suitable property. Please review VDOT's "A Guide for Property Owners and Tenants" located at http://www.virginiadot.org/business/resources/property_owners2006.pdf for more detailed information.</p> |
| <p>9 The Fairfax County comprehensive plan calls for a future extension of the Metrorail in the I-66 corridor and only one of the current two alternatives reserves median space for this extension.</p> | <p>As shown in the Preferred Alternative drawings, most of this alternative has an open median space, similar to Alternative 2A, for the future extension of the Metrorail or other transit. Recognizing the cost and complexity of the proposed improvements, VDOT has recommended that the project be implemented in phases. Phase I reserves space in the median for future transit in the eastern portion of the corridor, with an ultimate goal of providing a dedicated transitway in the median throughout the corridor at some point in the future.</p> |
| <p>10 Consider a rapid bus transit project with bridges and stations built in the center of I-66 and have bus routes with five minute headways or similar headways as the orange line currently during rush hour. Consider using the outside lanes for buses only.</p> | <p>Investment in enhanced bus service in the corridor would be an integral part of the overall I-66 Outside the Beltway project. The project anticipates new bus service from Manassas, Gainesville, and Haymarket to employment centers in Fairfax County, Arlington County, and Washington, DC. The transit service would access the Express Lanes via direct or nearly direct access from the park-and-ride facilities and travel in the Express Lanes, providing a reliable travel time.</p> <p>There are several issues with the suggested option to dedicate the outside lanes for buses only, along with entry/exit traffic. First, the weaving of traffic entering and exiting these lanes at every interchange would impact the speeds and operations of the buses. In addition, buses would still have to use the same congested crossroads and interchange ramps to get on and off I-66 as the rest of the general traffic. Finally,</p> |

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| | | the enforcement throughout the length of the corridor of a bus only lane on the right would be extremely difficult due to (1) the number of entry and exit points on the corridor where general purpose traffic would be weaving from the right, and (2) the difficulty that general traffic would encounter clearing the bus-only lane and getting into the next open lane when traffic is highly congested. |
| 11 | HOV 3 is not practical in Fairfax and Arlington Counties. Consider HOV 2. | Even without the project, HOV-3 would be implemented by 2020, which is consistent with the region's Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP). The additional lanes added to I-66 outside the Beltway would include two express lanes for transit, HOV-3, and tolled vehicles, which would provide a more reliable trip for those traveling between points in Fairfax and Prince William Counties and the Capital Beltway. The traffic model assumes an HOV-3 requirement inside the Beltway by 2020 as well, consistent with transportation planning for the region. |
| 12 | Consider smaller projects such as improving interchanges and improving transit rather than a huge project to expand the highway. | See comment 6 regarding the steps leading to the identification of the Preferred Alternative. |
| 13 | VDOT made revisions to Alternative 2B in regards to the area at 2677 and 2675 Prosperity Ave, but a revised drawing has not been released to explain these changes. | The Preferred Alternative was presented at the October 2015 public meetings and these updated concept plans were also posted on the project website: http://outside.transform66.org . |
| 14 | VDOT has yet to explain why it would propose to change HOV lanes to HOT lanes when there are no federal or state laws that require it to do so. | Existing traffic volumes and forecasts for design year 2040 confirm the need for additional capacity in the corridor. There is not enough money to build enough capacity keep up with growth, and there is also not enough room to widen the highway to add more general purpose lanes. Converting the HOV lane to express lanes is one of many strategies being pursued to move more people along the corridor. Express lanes offer a new choice to highway drivers, utilize additional HOV lane capacity, encourage carpools and vanpools, and provide more reliable travel times. |
| 15 | VDOT is encouraged to look at Washington State's Commute Trip Reduction program and what Texas has done with their variable toll lanes because they have been very successful. | The Washington State Legislature passed the Commute Trip Reduction (CTR) Law in 1991 to call on employers to encourage their workers to drive alone less often, reduce carbon emissions, and keep the busiest commute routes flowing. In 2006, legislators passed the CTR Efficiency Act , requiring local governments in urban |

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| | <p>areas with traffic congestion to develop programs that reduce drive-alone trips and vehicle miles traveled per capita. State and local governments, transit agencies, regional transportation planning organizations and employers collaborate to make CTR programs convenient, efficient, and rewarding. In the Washington metropolitan area, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments manages the Commuter Connections program, a regional network of transportation organizations with a similar mission. Commuter Connections provides information on all commute options and helps employers establish commuting benefits and assistance programs, including telework/telecommute programs, for their employees. In much the same way as Washington State, state and local governments, transit agencies, and employers collaborate and offer services similar to the CTR programs throughout the region.</p> <p>The express lanes proposed for I-66 Outside the Beltway, which are similar to those that currently operate on I-495 and I-95, are similar to the variable toll lanes in Texas: the TEXpress Lanes are toll lanes that are built within an existing highway, expanding capacity to accommodate more traffic. Prices for the Texas toll roads change based on the level of traffic in the corridor in order to maintain a minimum of 50 mph speed of travel.</p> |
| <p>16 Since it does not appear Metro Rail will be extended to Centreville before 2040, if ever, please consider a park-and-ride lot in this area.</p> | <p>Potential locations of park-and-ride lots along the corridor were identified in close coordination with the Transit Technical Advisory Group (TTAG), which is comprised of numerous transit providers in the region. The Preferred Alternative has a park-and-ride facility located on Stringfellow Road, which is the closest to Centreville. While a new park-and-ride lot at Centreville has not been included in the Preferred Alternative, such a lot would not be precluded either and a lot at Centreville could be developed independently if a suitable site could be identified at a justifiable location.</p> |
| <p>17 The Route 28 / I-66 interchange is the most important intersection along the highway and should be planned to provide all turning movements.</p> | <p>As shown in the Preferred Alternative drawings, the Route 28 / I-66 interchange provides all turning movements from both the general purpose lanes and the express lanes.</p> |

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| 18 | It appears that there is no access from Stringfellow park-and-ride to the proposed bus rapid expressway. What is the point of expanding the park-and-ride if there is no access? | As shown in the preferred alternative drawings, there would be a direct access to the Stringfellow Park-and-Ride from the westbound lanes and direct access from the Stringfellow Park-and-Ride to the eastbound lanes. |
| LAND USE / RIGHT-OF-WAY: | | |
| 19 | Use existing infrastructure for the Stringfellow and Monument ramps to save \$100 million. | Recognizing the cost and complexity of the proposed improvements, VDOT is recommending that the project be implemented in phases. The proposed first phase extends the express lanes for 22 of the original 25 miles, from I-495 to Gainesville, (University Boulevard), and then transitions to a traditional HOV lane in each direction. Phase 1 also proposes retaining existing ramps and bridges, and converting them to express lanes access points, at Monument Drive and Stringfellow Road, rather than rebuilding these interchanges. Extending the express lanes to Route 15 in Haymarket and rebuilding the Monument Drive and Stringfellow Road interchanges would be implemented in the future as funding becomes available and demand warrants. |
| 20 | An I-66 parallel bike trail would provide significant connectivity to the Northern Virginia Transportation Trail Network. VDOT should seek to reduce requiring additional right-of-way by fitting as much of the trail within the existing project right-of-way. | Based on substantial public interest, and in close coordination with local government staff, a corridor-wide bikeway and pedestrian plan was developed. Community impacts and other environmental constraints along the corridor were considered in developing the plan. The alignment proposed as part of the Preferred Alternative is a combination of a parallel facility and improvements to other roads adjacent to the project (see Preferred Alternative concept plans for locations of proposed shared-use paths and sidewalks in the project area). Incorporating a regional shared-use path that ran parallel to the entire corridor would have required additional right of way impacts to adjacent property owners; therefore, elements of the design that can be constructed within the proposed or existing right of way of the project will be constructed as part of the Preferred Alternative. Improvements to adjacent roads will be built by others based on coordination with the local governments. Additional details are provided in the Preferred Alternative discussion in Chapter 3, Alternatives, of the Tier 2 Revised EA. |

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| TRAFFIC: | | |
| 21 | The EA overstates the benefits of the project by using arbitrary modeling data regarding High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes instead of real-world data that involves actual usage of these lanes. | The modeling was conducted with state-of-the-art modeling technology using the best available assumptions and scientific data. It is not clear how real-world data for the HOT lanes could be used since the lanes do not currently exist. |
| 22 | This document overestimates future traffic demand because it does not take into account technological developments, such as connected vehicles and increased utilization of telecommuting, which will reduce traffic congestion before 2040. | Connected vehicle technology is still in the research and development stage and it is not possible at this time to predict exactly when or how it may become fully operational, or how it may affect travel demand. Notwithstanding, the I-66 corridor already is being used as a test track for research into connected vehicle technology. Moreover, the Preferred Alternative would provide communications infrastructure that would facilitate further research and adaption to connected vehicles and other future technical innovations, as outlined in the Operations Concept Technical Report. Finally, even connected vehicles need an adequate road to run on. With respect to telecommuting, the travel demand management measures to be implemented as part of the project include promotion of telecommuting. |
| 23 | Add more general purpose lanes instead of more toll roads. | Existing traffic volumes and forecasts for design year 2040 confirm the need for additional capacity in the corridor. There is not enough money to build enough capacity keep up with growth, and there is also not enough room to widen the highway to add more general purpose lanes. With the Preferred Alternative, three general purpose lanes would continue to be available on I-66 within the project limits, and the existing HOV lane, together with a new lane to be added along the corridor, would serve as express lanes, one of many strategies being pursued to move more people along the corridor. HOV traffic would continue to travel for free in the express lanes. |
| 24 | Will the shoulder lane ("X lane") be used on weekends? | After the managed lanes are constructed, the shoulder lane ("X lane") would not operate in the same way as it does now. After construction is complete, there would be an auxiliary lane in between ramps for traffic entering and exiting the freeway. The shoulder would only be opened in locations without an auxiliary lane, only for lane-blocking incidents and only for traffic to get around the incident. Currently, that is limited to locations at Route 123 and Nutley Street. Specifics on how the shoulder lane would be operated in those areas are still being determined. |

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| 25 | The traffic on Route 66 from Haymarket to I-495 is stopped at 3 intersections, which are Manassas Rt. 234, Centerville Rt. 29 and Rt. 50. If there were separate exits or ramps for these intersections to merge with Route 66, then the traffic can flow smoother. | A detailed sensitivity analysis was performed to determine the optimal access locations along the corridor. Based on the results of over 25 different access scenarios, it was determined that the best direct access ramp locations would be at Balls Ford Road (approximately 2,500 feet west of Route 234 Business), Route 28 (approximately one mile east of Route 29), Route 50, and Monument Drive (approximately one mile west of Route 50). For more information, please refer to the Alternatives Development Technical Report (Section 6.4.3 - Results of Access Location Sensitivity Testing). |
| 26 | Consider opening the right side rush hour lanes at all times. | The shoulder lanes are open to traffic during severe congestion as part of the new Active Traffic Management (ATM) System in the corridor. For more information on the ATM project, please visit http://www.virginia.gov/projects/northernvirginia/i-66_atms.asp . |
| SOCIOECONOMICS / RESIDENTIAL: | | |
| 27 | Noise wall must be erected / maintained to protect residences and businesses from noise pollution. | Locations of feasible and reasonable noise walls were identified as part of the noise analysis completed for the Tier 2 Draft EA. Preliminary decisions regarding both recommended and non-recommended noise barriers may change between the environmental document and final design as a result of changes in the project design, design year traffic, or the level of detail the design contained at the time of the preliminary report. Final decisions on whether to provide noise abatement measures would be made during the design stage of the project and would take into account design feasibility, cost, and the opinions of property owners impacted by the noise. |
| 28 | The nine flyovers that rise up as high as eighty feet, well above any sound barrier, will affect the surrounding community as well as impact this area from a visual aspect. | The heights of proposed flyovers were accounted for in the preliminary noise analysis that was completed for the build alternatives. The noise analysis will be updated during final design of the Preferred Alternative as a result of changes in the project design, design year traffic, or the level of detail the design contained at the time of the preliminary report. In the Preferred Alternative, the heights of proposed interchange ramps have been reduced. |
| PARKS, RECREATION, AND PUBLIC FACILITIES: | | |

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| <p>29 The EA acknowledges that the project will have effects on the environment, park lands, and historic properties, taking large parts of properties protected under Section 4(f). This alone suggests that it would be inappropriate to issue a FONSI for the project. Yet the EA provides no analysis of the intensity or practical consequences on these protected resources.</p> | <p>The Tier 2 Draft EA thoroughly assessed impacts to the built and natural environment by the alternatives, including the potential impacts to historic properties and Section 4(f) properties and indirect and cumulative effects (technical reports and memoranda on these topics and others were prepared in support of the Tier 2 EA; a complete list is included in the Table of Contents of the Tier 2 Draft EA and the documents are posted on the project website). Since the completion of the Tier 2 Draft EA, VDOT has determined that the Preferred Alternative would have no adverse effect on historic properties. The Virginia SHPO concurred with that determination on December 2, 2015.</p> <p>The Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation provided extensive discussion of potential impacts to Section 4(f) properties, including avoidance alternatives. Subsequent to the completion of the Tier 2 Draft EA and Draft Section 4(f) Evaluation, the design team continued to develop an alternative that would avoid and minimize uses of Section 4(f) properties by the project, and the Preferred Alternative now impacts only a small portion of one such property, Random Hills Park. The de minimis Section 4(f) impact at Random Hills Park is documented in Appendix A of the Tier 2 Revised EA. (A de minimis impact is one that, after taking into account avoidance, minimization, mitigation and enhancement measures, results in no adverse effect to the activities, features, or attributes qualifying a park, recreation area, or refuge for protection under Section 4(f).) The Fairfax County Park Authority has concurred that the Preferred Alternative would not adversely affect activities, features, and attributes of Random Hills Park.</p> |
| <p>30 Consider alternatives that would avoid or minimize impacts to Stenwood Elementary School and other Section 4(f) properties, such as a transit-first alternative and the Do No Harm Alternative. If impacts to Section 4(f) properties cannot be eliminated, VDOT should provide sufficient information to allow the community (and a reviewing court, if necessary) to determine whether VDOT “reasonably believes that there are no feasible or prudent alternatives or that alternatives have unique problems or unusual factors.”</p> | <p>In response to concerns raised about the impacts to Stenwood Elementary School and communities around the I-66/I-495 interchange, the project team developed a new alternative (Alternative 2D), which has been incorporated in the Preferred Alternative. The new alternative eliminates the impact to the recreational facilities at the school (the baseball field and track).</p> <p>Also see response to comment #29 above.</p> |
| <p>31 The EA significantly understates the impacts to the environment. For example, Fairfax County estimates that the project will result in the</p> | <p>As reported in the Tier 2 Draft EA, for Alternative 2A, approximately 74 acres of “forest” in proposed right of way may be impacted; for Alternative 2B, approximately 55 acres of “forest” in proposed right of way may be impacted. There are</p> |

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| <p>destruction of between 130 to 150 acres of forest cover/potential habitat. The EA merely states that 70 acres will be taken. Also, the impact on the air quality will be tremendous.</p> | <p>approximately 76 acres of “forest” within the existing VDOT right of way within the project limits. So, potentially, up to approximately 150 acres of “forest” lie within the total potential impact area (existing plus proposed) of Alternatives 2A and 2B. The Preferred Alternative would impact approximately 40 acres of “forest” within proposed right of way in addition to approximately 77 acres of “forest” within existing VDOT right of way. This does not necessarily mean that all trees within these areas would be clear-cut – this is a worst-case estimate. The project team has refined the concept plans to reduce the overall project footprint. These refinements are expected to result in reduced impacts to “forested” acreage. As the project moves forward into more detailed design, VDOT would require that the design continue to be refined in a way that reduces the overall project footprint, and for the contractor to construct the project in a way that preserves trees where possible.</p> <p>The effects of the proposed project on wildlife habitat would not be substantial. Habitat loss would generally occur within small isolated habitat patches or along edges of habitats that are already considerably fragmented. No potential movement corridors would be substantially disrupted because impacts would take place along the existing I-66 roadway.</p> <p>The assessment of air quality completed as part of the Tier 2 Draft EA and this Tier 2 Revised EA indicates that the project would meet all applicable air quality requirements of NEPA and federal and state transportation conformity regulations. As such, the project will not cause or contribute to a new violation, increase the frequency or severity of any violation, or delay timely attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) established by EPA. The temporary air quality impacts from construction are not expected to be significant. Emissions may be produced in the construction of this project by heavy equipment and vehicle travel to and from the site. Earthmoving and ground-disturbing operations would generate airborne dust. Construction emissions are short term or temporary in nature. In order to mitigate these emissions, all construction activities are to be performed in accordance with VDOT’s current Road and Bridge Specifications. These specifications are approved as conforming to the State Implementation Plan (SIP) and require compliance with all applicable local, state, and federal regulations. With respect to long term impacts, the assessment indicates that the project would meet all applicable air quality requirements of NEPA and federal and state transportation conformity regulations. As such, the project would not cause or contribute to a new violation, increase the frequency or severity of any violation, or delay timely</p> |

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| | | attainment of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards established by the US Environmental Protection Agency to protect public health and welfare. |
| SAFETY: | | |
| 32 | Consider reducing the twelve foot lanes on the bridges to ten feet, to save money and improve pedestrian / cyclist safety. | The Preferred Alternative is being designed to meet federal and state design standards for facilities, signing, and pavement markings to ensure driver safety. In addition, bike and pedestrian improvements are also included at cross streets along the corridor where the existing bridges are being reconstructed. |
| 33 | Gainesville park-and-ride is close to the 66 off ramp. This is a safety concern for pedestrians that are in the area because it is a walking community. | The existing park-and-ride lot in Gainesville near an I-66 off-ramp is located within the Route 234 Bypass interchange that would not be considered a walking community. The proposed park-and-ride lots in Gainesville include an expansion of the lot within the Route 234 Bypass interchange and a new lot adjacent to the Route 29 interchange off of University Boulevard (also not near a walking community). Appropriate pedestrian crossing features are being included in the designs where applicable. |
| 34 | Construction activity on or near the Stenwood school grounds presents danger to the children during outdoor school activities and on their walk to and from school and home. Even after construction, it will be more dangerous with all of this new traffic near the school. | During construction, all appropriate safety and warning devices would be implemented to protect the safety of school attendees. Construction management personnel would also coordinate regularly with school staff to address issues during construction. Pedestrian crossing features would be included in the designs for the school entrance and the Cottage Street intersection. The existing noise barrier separates the school property from I-66 and this barrier would be replaced. |
| OTHER: | | |
| 35 | <p>Include the private sector in this procurement process to get their creativity and financing to get this road out of people's backyards.</p> <p>Where is the public sector money coming from? Is it coming from our NVTVA money that we need for other projects? How are they saving \$500 million over the private sector?</p> | <p>VDOT and DRPT are evaluating the best method to deliver the project, and are currently considering both publicly financed options and privately financed options. A preliminary draft outlining possible contract terms has been developed that preserves the ability to extend Metrorail in the future and that helps to fund improved bus service in the 66 corridor. This document, along with other information about a possible public-private partnership, is available for review at http://www.p3virginia.org/projects/interstate-66-corridorimprovements/.</p> |

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| 36 | Stormwater retention is not adequate for I-66 and it should not have been given up to reduce the number of homes being taken from this design change. | As stated in the Tier 2 Draft EA, stormwater management measures would be implemented in accordance with federal, state, and local regulations to minimize potential water quality impacts. Coordination with federal, state, regional, and local entities would also continue to occur throughout the design process. |
| 37 | Consider alternative location for the stormwater management pond currently proposed to be behind Collin Chase Place. | As the project moves into detailed design, all potential locations identified for SWM basins would be evaluated and the design would look to further reduce impacts where possible. Innovative solutions to the treatment of stormwater would be encouraged where reasonable and feasible. |
| 38 | In lieu of the currently planned ponds, consider underground stormwater management structures since there is plenty of space beneath the roadways. | The current concept includes surface ponds as a worst case impact. As the design progresses, underground treatment and other options would be considered as allowed by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality's Stormwater BMP Clearinghouse (http://www.vwrrc.vt.edu/swc/). |
| 39 | Everyone's taxpayer monies are going into building these toll roads, but not everyone can afford to use these toll roads. | With the Preferred Alternative, three general purpose lanes would continue to be available on I-66 within the project limits, and the existing HOV lane, together with a new lane to be added along the corridor, would serve as express lanes, one of many strategies being pursued to move more people along the corridor. HOV traffic would continue to travel for free in the express lanes. |
| 40 | How are hybrid vehicle owners who drive on I-66 affected by this plan? | Clean Special Fuel plates do not grant an exemption from the vehicle occupancy requirements on the future I-66 Express Lanes. In order to use these lanes for free, vehicles must carry 3 or more people and be equipped with an E-ZPass Flex set to "HOV" mode. Otherwise, a toll must be paid to access the lanes. |

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