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September 23, 2015

The Honorable Aubrey L. Layne, Jr.
Secretary of Transportation
Commonwealth of Virginia
1111 East Broad Street, Room 3054
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Reference: Fairfax County Comments on the I-66 Inside the Beltway Multimodal Improvement Project

Dear Secretary Layne:

Thank you for your leadership in seeking improvements to I-66 inside the Beltway. As you know, this portion of I-66 is extremely congested in both directions during the morning and evening peak periods. The Fairfax County Board of Supervisors appreciates your willingness to pursue solutions to address this congestion.

While the Board has not taken a formal position on the project, on September 22, 2015, the Board endorsed the following concerns about the project:

- The multimodal projects supported by the toll revenues should address transit operating costs, including service to and from the Dulles Corridor;
- Addressing negative impacts on the adjacent and parallel roadway network should be high priorities for toll road revenues, and to the extent possible, these projects should be completed before tolling is implemented;
- The impacts of tolling I-66 on local roadways should be monitored regularly and these impacts should be considered in the decision making process for widening I-66 inside the Beltway;
- The timing of widening I-66 Inside the Beltway should be flexible;
- Impacts on Washington Dulles International Airport traffic should be addressed;
- Viable free options to using I-66 during the peak periods should be provided, particularly in the counter-flow direction;
- The impact of widening I-66 without implementing the other multimodal improvements should be modeled for comparison purposes; and
- More data on the impacts of tolling traffic in the counter-flow direction, particularly eastbound I-66 in the evening, should be provided before final votes on the framework agreement for the project are taken.

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These comments and concerns are discussed in more detail in the attachment to this letter. The Board wanted to formally transmit these concerns to you, so that they can be considered and addressed as you develop this project.

Thank you, again, for your leadership in pursuing multimodal improvements to I-66 that will benefit the residents, businesses and visitors of the region. In addition, thank you for including us in the process of selecting the multimodal projects that will be supported with the toll road revenues. We appreciate your collaborative approach to this effort!

If you have any questions or need additional information, please call Tom Biesiadny, Director of Fairfax County's Department of Transportation at (703) 877-5663 or me at (703) 324-2321.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sharon Bulova". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sharon" being more prominent than the last name "Bulova".

Sharon Bulova
Chairman

Cc: Members, Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
Edward L. Long Jr., County Executive, Fairfax County
Robert A. Stalzer, Deputy County Executive
Catherine A. Chianese, Assistant County Executive
The Honorable Nicholas Donohue, Deputy Secretary of Transportation
Helen Cuervo, Administrator, Northern Virginia District, Virginia Department of
Transportation
Renee Hamilton, Deputy Administrator, Northern Virginia District, VDOT
Amanda Baxter, Project Manager, VDOT

Fairfax County Comments about the I-66 Inside the Beltway Multimodal Improvement Project
September 22, 2015

Multimodal Projects should Address Transit Operating Costs, including service to and from the Dulles Corridor

The list of multimodal projects that might be implemented with the toll road revenues includes a variety of capital and operating projects, such as intersection improvements on roadways near I-66; bus and Metrorail car purchases; transit operating support; and bike and pedestrian projects. There has been some uncertainty about whether or not transit operating expenses can be funded with the toll road revenues. Staff believes that providing support for transit operating costs is one of the most cost-effective ways to increase person throughput in the corridor and reduce congestion. As a result, transit operating costs should be considered for toll road revenues. Drivers in the Dulles Corridors are already paying multiple tolls, and this project will add another one. Consequently, some of the toll revenues should be used to support additional transit service in the corridor to provide an attractive alternatives for these drivers.

Addressing Impacts on the Adjacent and Parallel Roadway Network should be High Priorities for Toll Road Revenues, and to the extent possible, these projects should be completed before tolling is implemented

There have been concerns about the impact of tolling I-66 on the adjacent and parallel roadway network. In some cases, the tolls might result in High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV-2) vehicles shifting away from I-66 to the adjacent roadway network in the future; however, the ability for Single Occupant Vehicles (SOVs) to pay to use the facility and increased transit service might also attract users to the facility. In the absence of complete updated toll and revenue study information, the Board recommends that addressing any negative impacts of tolling on the adjacent and parallel roadway network should be a high priority for the toll road revenues. Recognizing that transportation infrastructure projects can take years to implement, every effort should be made to complete these projects before tolling begins, and before the conversion from HOV-2 to HOV-3. Otherwise, the negative impacts of diversion on specific intersections could be substantial.

The Impacts of Tolling I-66 on Local Roadways should be Monitored and should be Considered in the Decision Making Process for Widening I-66

In theory, congestion pricing should ensure that traffic on I-66 inside the Beltway operates at 55 miles per hour. This could result in extremely high tolls, but not demonstrate the need for widening when looked at in isolation. However, these tolls could push some travelers to use parallel roadways. In assessing the impact of the tolls, the local and parallel roads should be monitored regularly, and any negative impacts on these roads should be considered in the decision making process for widening I-66.

The Timing of Widening I-66 Inside the Beltway should be Flexible

Toll revenues are being considered for the widening of I-66 from the Dulles Connector Road to Fairfax Drive. The Constrained Long Range Plan project submission approved by the Transportation Planning Board for I-66 Inside the Beltway includes this widening after other multimodal improvements have been implemented and their impacts have been assessed. The Board believes that the timing of this widening should remain flexible. If multimodal investments are made, and these investments do not relieve congestion on I-66 inside the Beltway, the widening of the roadway, particularly eastbound from the Dulles Connector Road to Fairfax Drive, should occur as soon as possible.

Impacts on Washington Dulles International Airport Traffic should be Addressed

Currently, SOV traffic to and from Dulles Airport is allowed to use I-66 inside the Beltway even during the restricted HOV time periods. This policy has been important to ensuring reasonable access to the airport from Arlington, the District of Columbia and Maryland at all times. Unfortunately, the policy has also lead to a significant number of violators and difficulty enforcing HOV restrictions east of the Dulles Connector Road entrance to I-66. These factors have contributed to congestion on I-66 inside the Beltway. VDOT is proposing to toll all users of I-66 inside the Beltway, including those with origins and destinations at Dulles Airport, if they are not HOV-2 initially or HOV-3 in the future. While this change in policy should improve travel times to and from Dulles Airport during these peak periods for all users, VDOT should continue to work with the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority to ensure that this change in policy does not discourage travelers from using Dulles Airport or discourage workers from taking jobs at Dulles Airport.

Viable Free Options to Using I-66 during the Peak Periods should be Provided, particularly in the Counter-flow Direction

While I-66 inside the Beltway is currently restricted to HOV-2 and higher during the peak period in the peak direction, there is no such restriction on travel in the opposite direction. Adding tolling in both directions will ensure 55 mile per hour speeds for HOV-2 and greater initially and HOV-3 in the future, and it will allow people who currently cannot use I-66 at these times to pay to use the facility. However, in the reverse direction, it will mean tolling SOV trips that are currently free. As a result of these proposed new tolling requirements, parallel routes should be improved through techniques such as intersection improvements, enhanced signal timing, increased transit service and improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities to provide viable alternative for SOVs who decide not to pay the toll.

The Impact of Widening I-66 Without Implementing the Other Multimodal Improvements should be Modeled

The traffic modeling work that VDOT is undertaking assumes that multimodal improvements are implemented before I-66 is widening; however, the results do not demonstrate in impacts of widening I-66 inside the Beltway without the multimodal improvements. It would be helpful to see this analysis to ensure that the most cost effective solutions are being implemented.

More Data on the Impacts of Tolling Traffic in the Counter-flow Direction should be Provided

The impacts of tolling the counter-flow traffic on I-66 inside the Beltway, particularly on eastbound I-66 in the evening peak period remain unclear. Intuitively, it does not seem that an average toll of \$1.00 to \$2.00 would be sufficient to address congestion on eastbound I-66 east of the Dulles Connector Road in the evening peak period. Additional efforts should be made to verify this information before final decisions about the project are made.