

Resolution Regarding the Virginia Department of Transportation's Transform66: Inside the Beltway Project and Memorandum of Agreement Between the Commonwealth and the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission

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Adopted November 19, 2015

WHEREAS, the I-66 corridor is a crucial regional multimodal corridor in Northern Virginia, including the Metrorail Orange and Silver Lines, Arlington Boulevard, Lee Highway, and other important facilities; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) 2012 I-66 Multimodal Study proposed tolling, transit, and other multimodal options for improving I-66, including the explicit recommendation that VDOT implement a broad range of multimodal improvements prior to pursuing widening I-66; and

WHEREAS, VDOT now proposes to implement the 2012 study with a multi-phase construction project called Transform66 Inside the Beltway, consisting of dynamic tolling, conversion from HOV-2-to-HOV-3, multimodal transit and bicycle/pedestrian improvements, and, no sooner than 2025, widening I-66; and

WHEREAS, for decades Arlington has consistently opposed widening the I-66 roadway due to the negative effects widening would have upon the community, including an increase in regional traffic, noise, pollution, and more; and

WHEREAS, Arlington recognizes the value of the Transform66 project's multimodal components, which are crucial to the community; and

WHEREAS, revenue from the tolling component of the Transform66 project will fund these crucial multimodal improvements; and

WHEREAS, on October 21, 2015 the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board adopted the Constrained Long Range Plan for the Washington metropolitan area, which includes the Transform66 project, subject to the following condition: "that the Commonwealth Transportation Board adopts a policy that: (1) ensures toll revenues are used to support multimodal improvements that benefit the users of the corridor, and; (2) that the widening component of such project would only take place after an evaluation of the effectiveness of the tolling and multimodal components, and the performance of the facility including parallel roadways, to be conducted no sooner than two years after conversion to HOV-3"; and

WHEREAS, the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) will determine the specific multimodal improvements to be implemented, following adoption of a memorandum of agreement with the Commonwealth; and

WHEREAS, the Arlington Transportation Commission reviewed the Transform66 project on October 29, 2015, and voted 9-2 to recommend the Arlington County Board support the project overall, but cited a number of ongoing concerns and specific recommendations for the project's implementation; and

WHEREAS, a number of unresolved issues with VDOT's Transform66 proposal, including the need to widen I-66, mitigation of any diversion of traffic from I-66 to local roads, the process for identification of

specific multimodal and transportation demand management projects by NVTC, still exist and must be addressed in the memorandum of agreement between NVTC and the CTB; and

WHEREAS, after the implementation of changes to I-66, including tolls, conversion to HOV-3, and multimodal improvements, such changes need time to mature, and travelers need time to adjust to them, before they can be reasonably measured;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT THE ARLINGTON COUNTY BOARD:

1. Endorses the goals of the Commonwealth's Transform66: Inside the Beltway project, to (1) move more people, (2) enhance transportation connectivity, (3) improve transit service, (4) reduce congestion, and (5) increase transportation options; and
2. Endorses in concept the implementation of weekday, peak-period, peak-direction, dynamic tolling on I-66 inside the Beltway, with toll revenues over and above the basic cost necessary to implement, operate, and maintain the tolling infrastructure being used for multimodal project components in the I-66 inside the Beltway corridor; and
3. Endorses in concept a memorandum of agreement between the Commonwealth Transportation Board, the Virginia Department of Transportation, and the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission for NVTC to select and administer a program of multimodal investments in the corridor, using toll revenue.

The Board will pursue, to the maximum extent achievable, the following goals for the implementation of the Transform66: Inside the Beltway project:

1. That the Commonwealth shall work cooperatively with affected local jurisdictions to monitor and mitigate the effects of traffic diversion onto the local road network, with a particular focus on mitigating effects during construction, and effects of the eventual conversion of I-66 from HOV-2 to HOT-3; and
2. That toll revenues shall not supplant existing VDOT funds for the maintenance of I-66 or other facilities in the corridor; and
3. That the project provides a predictable source of funding to NVTC for multimodal investments over the proposed 40-year life of the memorandum of agreement, and that the agreement be structured to facilitate NVTC's use of the funding for the issuance of bonds for larger scale multimodal improvements such as purchase of Metrorail rolling stock, buses, and Metrorail station access improvements; and
4. That the Commonwealth shall work cooperatively with all jurisdictions in the affected corridor to plan and implement a comprehensive multi-year transportation demand management strategy for residents living near and workers using the corridor, which strategy shall provide multimodal traveler information and encourage travel by non-SOV modes, including supporting the formation of a car-pool/slug culture that would increase vehicle occupancy; and
5. NVTC shall follow a fair and equitable multimodal project selection process, and the Commonwealth Transportation Board shall approve NVTC's project selections provided that

NVTC complies with the criteria for eligible projects established by the memorandum of agreement; and

6. VDOT shall not pursue any widening of I-66 inside the Beltway until after a meaningful evaluation of the effectiveness of the project's tolling, HOV-3, and multimodal components.
 1. Such evaluation shall at a minimum assess the I-66 facility itself as well as the impact of diversion to parallel roadways, and shall be conducted no sooner than four years after conversion to HOV-3, and no sooner than four years after opening of multimodal projects that significantly increase the transit capacity of the corridor.
 2. Any consideration of widening must include a thorough environmental documentation of potential impacts according to federal NEPA and 4(f) evaluation criteria (the 4(f) criteria regard potential impacts to public parklands such as the Custis Trail and Four Mile Run).
 3. In conducting said evaluation, VDOT shall not recommend widening I-66 inside the Beltway unless between Sycamore Street and the Fairfax Drive exit the average eastbound vehicle operating speed drops below 45 miles per hour for more than 10% of the toll period, despite implementation of dynamic toll rates that specifically attempt to manage vehicle volume during periods of congestion.
7. VDOT shall use the most cost-effective technology available to reduce illegal use of I-66, and to ensure compliance with high-occupancy and tolling requirements. If there is any legal obstacle to deploying these technologies, all parties shall advocate for the authority necessary to use this technology.
8. VDOT shall appoint an Ombudsman for the Transform66: Inside the Beltway project.