

Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
Comments on Current
FY 2012 to FY 2017 Six Year Program and Development of the FY 2013
to FY 2018 Six Year Program
DRAFT: October 18, 2011

Good Evening Secretary Connaughton, Commissioner Whirley, Director Drake, and members of the Commonwealth Transportation Board, I am Marty Nohe, Chairman of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority. I am here to reiterate the Authority's position on the FY 2012 to FY 2017 Six Year Program, provide brief comments on the FY 2013- FY 2018 Six Year Program, and several other matters. NVTAs comments are as follows:

- We appreciate the Kaine and McDonnell Administrations, VDOT and the CTB working with NVTAs to allocate the regional American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding. The region's ARRA funded projects are under construction and all of the funding is expected to be expended by the February 2012 deadline. Without this federal funding, it would not have been possible for these projects to proceed at this time.
- Given the serious transportation problems in our region, we emphasize that construction projects that were previously funded must be implemented as originally scheduled.
- While we understand the difficult position that the CTB faces due to the lack of revenue, we are deeply concerned about the total elimination of secondary and urban construction funding. Not only will this mean that no new significant capacity improvements will be initiated unless locally funded, but simple, cost effective projects like signalizing new intersections, adding turn lanes and implementing pedestrian improvements will also be eliminated unless funded through other means. Secondary and urban road improvements are at a stand-still. This is unsustainable for urban areas like Northern Virginia. If not addressed, this

situation will seriously impact our economy and compromise the movement of people and goods to and from Northern Virginia and other parts of the Commonwealth.

- The Authority continues to oppose any legislative or regulatory moratorium on the transfer of newly constructed roads to VDOT for the purposes of ongoing maintenance.
- The Authority is strongly opposed to any unfunded mandate that would require the transfer of secondary road construction and maintenance responsibilities to Northern Virginia jurisdictions.
- On the transit side, the Authority requests that you continue to include the Virginia match for Federal dedicated funding for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. This represents a significant commitment to maintaining Metro's assets and ensuring that Metro can continue to safely and efficiently meet the region's transportation needs. Please continue to provide these funds, even if the Federal government does not provide their match, so long as Maryland and the District of Columbia provide their \$50 million each. If the Federal government does not provide its \$150 million, these non-Federal funds will be even more critical to Metro.
- We urge you not to reduce transit funding levels once they are approved. Since local government budgets and tax rates are set in April 2012, reducing the state assistance contracts mid-year (as has been done in two recent fiscal years) may result in service cuts and fare increases. At a time when transit usage has increased, and the region is relying on transit to reduce congestion, making such cuts is extremely counter-productive.
- NVTA continues to remain hopeful that new revenue sources for transportation will be implemented, consistent with NVTA's Eight Principles for Transportation Funding adopted in April 2008, attached. These principles are still valid,

including the need for stable, reliable, on-going regional and statewide transportation funds.

- In addition to addressing the foregoing major issues, NVTa requests that:
 - the CTB continue to provide the \$50 million in capital funds for Metro;
 - the CTB treat transit operating expenses like VDOT maintenance expenses and make these expenses a higher priority than new capital projects;
 - funding for VRE's track leases continue to be provided from federal funds;
 - environmental reviews for locally administered projects be simplified and shortened;
 - VDOT, DRPT and the CTB continue to work with Northern Virginia to fund the short and long term transit service plan and commuter parking plan recommendations for the I-95 High Occupancy Toll project.
 - the CTB, DRPT and VDOT support, promote, and encourage walking and bicycling as more viable modes of transportation, and in concert with Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood's policy direction, look for opportunities to enhance pedestrian and bicycle connectivity in the Northern Virginia.
 - the CTB support the policy that major transportation corridor studies related to facilities wholly within one VDOT construction district, should be managed by that construction district rather than the VDOT Central Office. Regional VDOT staff is better equipped to address the concern of the affected citizens and local governments.
 - the Commonwealth to adopt policies that streamline transportation project review by further delegating the design review process from VDOT to the local governments and by adopting a uniform timeframe for plan reviews that remain under VDOT jurisdiction. These efforts would save Virginia taxpayers money and simultaneously result in timely approvals of contextually appropriate projects.

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