

## NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Chairman Martin E. Nohe and Members  
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

**FROM:** Monica Backmon, Executive Director

**SUBJECT:** Testimony for the CTB's Draft Fiscal Year 2017-2022 Six-Year Improvement Program

**DATE:** April 25, 2016

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**Purpose:** Provide testimony to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority's comments on the CTB's Draft FY2017-2022 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP).

**Recommendation:** Approval of the testimony on the CTB's Draft FY2017-2022 Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP).

**Suggested motion:** *I move approval of the testimony on the CTB's draft FY2017-2022 Six-Year Improvement Program (Attachment I).*

**Background:** As was done in previous years, the Secretary of Transportation and the CTB will be conducting public hearings throughout Virginia to solicit public comment on the Draft FY2017-2022 Six-Year Improvement Program.

During the 2014 Session, the General Assembly passed HB 2 which provides for the development of a prioritization process for projects funded by the CTB. The HB 2 process must be used for the development of the SYIP starting this year.

A total of 321 applications were submitted across the Commonwealth, and 287, were scored using the HB 2 methodology, requesting a total of \$7 billion in funding requests. The State estimates that approximately \$883 million will be available for this round of funding for High Priority Projects and \$883 million for the District Grants Program, with approximately \$183 million of the District Grants Program provided to Northern Virginia. In January 2016, the Virginia Secretary of Transportation's Office released the scores, along with a recommended scenario for funded projects. At the March CTB meeting, a revised scenario was released with modifications to a small number of projects. At its April meeting, the CTB discussed additional modifications to the recommended scenario throughout the Commonwealth and then adopted a resolution to utilize the HB 2 Recommendations for Preparation of the Draft FY2017-2022 SYIP, including the proposed modifications.

The DRAFT testimony includes updates to requests previously made by the Authority, as well as comments pertaining to HB 2 and HB 1887. Specifically, changes from the testimony approved by the Authority in 2015 include:

- Updating the language regarding coordination between the Commonwealth and the Authority to include references to the Authority developing its Draft FY2017 Program.
- Adding language noting that the Authority passed a resolution stating its willingness to consider funding projects directly or indirectly related to the Transform I-66 Outside the Beltway project, as the Authority submitted the project to the HB 2 process.
- Adding language noting the need to study the HB 2 process to ensure that it can effectively rate projects of all modes.
- Updating the State of Good Repair language to reflect updated road condition information.
- Adding language stating that it may be important to have the opportunity to comment on the DRAFT SYIP, once it is released.
- Removing language related to counting Metrorail ridership in regards to the Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee (TSDAC), as that issue has been addressed.
- Removing language asking CTB to reconsider its prohibition on allowing Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement (CMAQ) Program funds to be used for hybrid vehicles, as the CTB passed a resolution in 2015 noting that it “rescinds its policy of prohibiting allocation of CMAQ funds for the purchase of hybrid vehicles for municipal use and hereby adopts a policy relating to motor vehicles, authorizing allocation and expenditure of CMAQ funds for locality fleet vehicles (1) for the purpose of converting vehicles to alternative fuels vehicles and (2) to address the additional vehicle purchase costs attributable solely to a vehicle’s classification as an alternative fuels vehicle.”
- Removing the comments related to the VTrans 2040 Draft Vision, Goals & Objectives, and Guiding Principles. Last year’s public hearing was also a forum to receive comments on those VTrans documents, which have since been approved by the CTB.

The scheduled public hearing date for Northern Virginia is Monday, May 2, 2016, at 6:00 p.m. in the Potomac Conference Center at VDOT’s Northern Virginia District Office, located at 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA, 22030.

**Attachments:** DRAFT Testimony for the Draft FY2017–2022 Six-Year Improvement Program

**Northern Virginia Transportation Authority**  
**DRAFT Comments on**  
**Draft FY 2017 – 2022 Six-Year Improvement Program**  
**May 2, 2016**

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Good Evening Secretary Layne, Commissioner Kilpatrick, Director Mitchell, and members of the Commonwealth Transportation Board. My name is Martin Nohe and I am Chairman of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority. I am here to present the Authority's comments on the draft FY 2017 – 2022 Six-Year Improvement Program as well as comment on several other matters. The Authority's comments are as follows:

- **The Authority continues to work diligently to implement the regional components of HB 2313 (2013). In coordination with the Authority, VDOT and DRPT are continuing to work on the congestion-related evaluation process required by Virginia law and VDOT is also implementing several projects the Authority has funded. Continued coordination and cooperation with the Commonwealth is essential to ensuring that we are able to fully utilize the resources provided to implement the necessary improvements to Northern Virginia's transportation infrastructure.**
- **It will be essential to continue the collaboration between the Commonwealth and the Authority, as projects will need to be evaluated by both HB 2 and the Northern Virginia congestion-related evaluation process (HB 599/SB 531, 2012) to receive the local and regional funding they may need to move forward. As you may know, the Authority is in the process of developing its FY 2017 Program, and numerous projects have been submitted for funding to both NVTA and the Commonwealth. It is essential that coordination occur as these programs are developed, this year and in subsequent years. Local, regional, state-wide, and federal funds are all a part of the solution for addressing the long-term transportation needs of the Commonwealth, and it is essential that we all work together to ensure these needs are met.**
- **One project that has components that are being evaluated through the CTB and Authority processes is I-66 Outside the Beltway, which the Authority submitted to the Commonwealth for consideration under HB 2. In addition, we have adopted a resolution that notes the Authority's willingness to consider funding projects directly or indirectly related to Transform I-66 Outside the Beltway. Among the projects being considered for funding in our FY 2017 program is the I-66/Route 28 interchange, which was submitted by Fairfax County.**
- **Due to the large role that VDOT and DRPT have in the implementation of HB 2, HB 1887, HB 2313, HB 599/SB 531, as well as project implementation, it is essential that VDOT has sufficient resources needed to participate in this effort.**
- **As the HB 2 process evolves, the Authority also believes that the impacts on funding for multimodal projects should continue to be studied to ensure that the HB 2 process can effectively rate projects of all modes.**

- **As the HB 2 process continues, please be mindful of the language in HB 2313 that states that Northern Virginia’s regional funds cannot be used to calculate or reduce the share of local, federal, or state revenues otherwise available to participating jurisdictions.**
- **The Authority continues to be concerned that Northern Virginia is only expected to receive 10.6 percent of State of Good Repair funds. While 83 percent of roads in Northern Virginia are in Fair or Better Condition, according to VDOT’s Dashboard, our secondary pavement conditions are the worst in the Commonwealth. Only 31 percent of these roads in Fair or Better Condition, which is far less than the Commonwealth’s average of 60 percent and far from the Commonwealth’s 82 percent target. Millions of people drive on our roads every day and these deteriorated pavements will only get worse until something is done to address them.**
- **The Authority also remains concerned about the substantial decrease in funding for the Revenue Sharing program over the next six years. This program significantly leverages state transportation funds by encouraging local governments to spend their own money on transportation projects. This program has been a success in Northern Virginia, where our localities regularly apply for these funds, several for the maximum amount allowed. By design, the Revenue Sharing program has allowed more projects throughout the Commonwealth to move forward through the leveraging of funds from local sources. Reducing this funding will only slow the efforts to improve our transportation system.**
- **While these comments are based on the information provided as part of the HB 2 process and other information that has been released, the Authority believes that it may also be important to have the opportunity to comment on the DRAFT SYIP once it is released.**
- **In addition to addressing the foregoing major issues, the Authority also wishes to comment on the following:**
  - **Thank you for continuing to include the Virginia match for Federal dedicated funding for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority and we ask that the Commonwealth continue to provide these vital funds. We appreciate this significant commitment to help WMATA bring its system into a state of good repair and restore safe and reliable operations. Support of WMATA’s rebuilding efforts is vital, as the system is critical to meeting the region’s needs today and in the future.**
  - **In regards to the Transit Service Delivery Advisory Committee (TSDAC), concerns remain over the change to how state transit capital assistance participation is calculated, i.e. “net” versus “gross” costs, which results in an outcome where Northern Virginia is the only region that must increase local support for its capital projects. We stand ready to continue to work on this issue and ask that you remember the importance of transit in the region and the impact any change in funding may have in the region.**

- **The Authority continues to be concerned by provisions in the State Code that provide VDOT and the CTB the ability to decide whether a local transportation plan is consistent with the Commonwealth's priorities. If VDOT and the CTB decide that a local plan is not consistent, the CTB can withhold funding for projects. While efforts to better coordinate local and state transportation planning are appreciated, these provisions essentially transfer the responsibility for land use planning, as it relates to transportation, from local governments to the Commonwealth. Our localities work diligently with our residents, property owners, and the local business communities on our land use and transportation plans. These provisions could inhibit development and redevelopment efforts throughout Virginia.**
- **The Authority remains opposed to any policy that would require the transfer of secondary road construction and maintenance responsibilities to counties and specifically, Northern Virginia jurisdictions. Unfunded mandates of this magnitude would result in dire consequences to localities.**
- **The Authority thanks the Commonwealth for its continued partnership in funding VRE's track leases and requests the CTB continue to assist with funding necessary capacity improvements to the system.**
- **The Authority requests that the CTB, DRPT and VDOT support, promote, and encourage walking and bicycling as more viable modes of transportation and look for opportunities to enhance pedestrian and bicycle connectivity in the Northern Virginia.**
- **The Authority supports 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 Authority believes the CTB should adopt policies that simplify and shorten environmental reviews for locally administered projects and 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.**
- **We request that this testimony be made part of the Draft Six-Year Improvement Program public hearing record, and that full consideration be given to these comments in preparing the FY 2017 – 2022 Six-Year Improvement Program. Thank you again for the opportunity to speak today. Please let me know if I can provide any clarification regarding the Authority's testimony.**