

# **Correspondence Section**



## Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

*The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia*

March 6, 2017

Mr. Nick Donohue  
Director, Office of Intermodal Planning and Investment  
600 East Main Street, Suite 2120  
Richmond, VA 23219

Reference: Northern Virginia Transportation Authority Comments on the Draft VTrans Multimodal Transportation Plan 2025 (VMTP 2025) Recommendations and the Draft Tier 1 Combined Needs Summary

Dear Director Donohue:

The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) appreciates the opportunity to review and provide comments on the Draft VTrans Multimodal Transportation Plan 2025 (VMTP 2025) Recommendations and the Draft Tier 1 Combined Needs Summary. The following bullets denote general comments that the Regional Jurisdiction and Agency Coordinating Committee (RJACC) and NVTA staff have regarding the draft VTrans Multimodal Transportation Plan 2025 (VMTP 2025) Recommendations and the draft Tier 1 Combined Needs Summary:

- Overall, the NVTA understands the complexity of this endeavor and the need to identify performance targets, priorities and projects that can help advance the VTrans2040 Vision. As more attention is being placed on performance based planning and programming, there is a strong need to highlight critical projects which will be implemented over the next ten years that address the VTrans vision, goals and objectives. The NVTA supports the inclusion of pipeline projects which have been previously approved by and which have received funding through the NVTA.
- The process of formulating pipeline projects, strategies, concepts and studies which meet the VMTP 2025 needs has included some complicated aspects which at times were not well communicated to stakeholders. Although one regional forum on the VMTP 2025 Consolidated Needs/Recommendation was held in Northern Virginia and hosted by the NVTA in May 2016, it was not clear how the overall goals, intent and resulting outcomes from this forum would lead to the development of draft recommendations for Northern Virginia without any additional follow-up and feedback from others who were unable to attend such forum.
- Regarding the process of selecting pipeline projects, strategies, concepts and studies, has such been fully documented and articulated within a specific document or on the Vtrans website?

- Consolidated Needs are classified into three tiers; however, it is not completely clear what differentiates the tiers outside of the “High, Medium, and Low” rating, and notes that each tier is based on local input and data. Both local input and the type of data utilized for each tier should be explained and made transparent.
- The NVTA is currently in the process of developing its long-range transportation plan, TransAction, which will include projects that reduce congestion, help in obtaining a sustainable multimodal transportation system, improve the quality of life, and support economic development in Northern Virginia. As TransAction is expected to be adopted by the NVTA in the fall of 2017, will the final VMTP 2025 be updated to include potential pipeline projects from TransAction?
- As Northern Virginia’s population and employment continue to grow and as congestion continues to increase, there is a strong need to capture reverse commuting options, other non-traditional travel patterns and behaviors, and adapted freight patterns in the region. Northern Virginia is a complex environment that is no longer dominated by a traditional commute into the District of Columbia.
- In general, new project ideas within Northern Virginia should include more projects, strategies, concepts and studies for: improved travel reliability; ITS and ICM improvements; freight; and a regional connected high capacity transit network that links to regional activity centers.
- Will there be coordination with localities and regional agencies on identified new project ideas, recommendations and strategies that target a specific Consolidated Need? Such will be necessary to move projects forward.
- The maps which depict Consolidated and Tiered Needs are difficult to understand (legend, arrows, colors, etc.). Consider revising to communicate this information better to the public.
- NOVA03, “WMATA-Identified Pedestrian and Bicycle Project Priorities,” should be expanded to include bike and pedestrian access studies to transit stations that localities have conducted.
- NOVA13 should reference bike plans which have been adopted by localities.
- NOVA 47 notes, “Express Lanes on I-66 in Reverse Peak Direction,” as a pipeline project. Is this particular project different from the noted “Funded Projects” I-66 projects?
- What are the next steps and will the Draft VMTP recommendations and Draft Tier 1 Consolidated Needs Summary be revised based on the comments received?

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide feedback on the Draft VTrans Multimodal Transportation Plan 2025 (VMTP 2025) Recommendations and the Draft Tier 1 Combined Needs Summary.

If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at (703) 642-4650.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Monica Backmon", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Monica Backmon  
Executive Director

Cc: Northern Virginia Transportation Authority Members