

## NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY

MEMORANDUM

**TO:** Chair Phyllis J. Randall and Members  
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

**FROM:** Monica Backmon, Executive Director

**DATE:** February 6, 2020

**SUBJECT:** NVTA Endorsement of INFRA Project Application

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1. **Purpose:** To seek Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) endorsement of Prince William County's and the Department of Rail and Public Transportation's application for the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Discretionary Grant Program.
2. **Suggested Motion:** *I move Authority Endorsement of Prince William County's Route 15 Improvements with Railroad Overpass and DRPT's Long Bridge Expansion Project for the INFRA Discretionary Grant Program funding.*
3. **Background.**
  - On January 13, 2020, U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT) Secretary Elaine L. Chao announced the latest round of the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) discretionary grant program, which makes available more than \$900 million for American infrastructure investments.
  - The INFRA program is expected to award \$906 million to significant projects that support the Administration's focus on infrastructure improvements.
  - INFRA advances a grant program established in the FAST Act of 2015 to help rebuild America's aging infrastructure.
  - INFRA utilizes selection criteria that promote projects with national and regional economic vitality goals while leveraging non-federal funding to increase the total investment by state, local, and private partners. The program also incentivizes project sponsors to pursue innovative strategies, including public-private partnerships.
  - INFRA promotes the incorporation of innovative technology, such as broadband deployment and intelligent transportation systems that will improve our transportation system. INFRA will also hold recipients accountable for their performance in project delivery and operations.

- The Department will make awards under the INFRA program to large and small projects. For a large project, the INFRA grant must be at least \$25 million. For a small project, the grant must be at least \$5 million. For each fiscal year of INFRA funds, 10 percent of available funds are reserved for small projects.
- The Department will award at least 25 percent of INFRA grant funding to rural projects, which often play a vital role in supporting our national economic vitality.
- INFRA grants may be used to fund a variety of components of an infrastructure project, however, the Department is specifically focused on projects in which the local sponsor is significantly invested and is positioned to proceed rapidly to construction.
- Eligible INFRA project costs may include: reconstruction, rehabilitation, acquisition of property (including land related to the project and improvements to the land), environmental mitigation, construction contingencies, equipment acquisition, and operational improvements directly related to system performance.
- To be eligible for an INFRA grant, a project must be:
  - a highway freight project carried out on the [National Highway Freight Network](#) (23 U.S.C. 167)
  - a highway or bridge project carried out on the [National Highway System](#) (NHS) including projects that add capacity on the Interstate System to improve mobility or projects in a national scenic area
  - a railway-highway grade crossing or grade separation project; or
  - a freight project that is:
    - an intermodal or rail project, or
    - within the boundaries of a public or private freight rail, water (including ports), or intermodal facility, is a surface transportation infrastructure project necessary to facilitate direct intermodal interchange, transfer, or access into or out of the facility, and will significantly improve freight movement on the National Highway Freight Network. For these projects Federal funds can only support project elements that provide public benefits.
- NVTa received a request from Prince William County to support the Route 15 Improvements with Railroad Overpass Project application for up to \$42 million.
- NVTa received a request from DRPT to support the Long Bridge Expansion Project application for \$100 million.
- Both projects are in TransAction, the region's Long Range Transportation Plan.
- NVTa endorsement is consistent with the Authority's mandate to:

- i. Recommend to federal, state, and regional agencies regional transportation priorities, including public-private transportation projects and funding allocations.

**4. Next Steps.**

The deadline to submit an application for the INFRA Transportation Discretionary Grants Program is February 25, 2020.

**Attachment A:** Letter of Request for Support from Prince William County

**Attachment B:** NVTA Endorsement Letter for Prince William County

**Attachment C:** Letter of Request from DRPT

**Attachment D:** NVTA Endorsement Letter for DRPT



February 5, 2020

Monica Backmon  
Executive Director  
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA)  
3040 Williams Drive  
Fairfax, VA 22031

RE: Request for NVTA Endorsement of Prince William County's INFRA Grant Application for the U.S. Route 15 Improvements with a Railroad Overpass

Ms. Backmon:

I am writing to request NVTA's endorsement of Prince William County's application under the U.S. Department of Transportation's Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) Discretionary Grant Program for the U.S. Route 15 Improvements with a Railroad Overpass project. Prince William County will be requesting up to \$42 million in INFRA funding for this project.

The Route 15 Improvements with Railroad Overpass project is part of TransAction (TransAction ID 250) and a key component of improving segment 9-3 of the US 15 corridor.

The U.S. Route 15 Improvements project will provide a 4-lane section with median and asphalt shared use path on a 0.6-mile-long stretch of Route 15 and construct an overpass over the existing Norfolk Southern Railway (NSSR) tracks. These improvements will make this segment of the roadway consistent with sections north and south of the railroad tracks, eliminating the current bottleneck and creating a uniform four lane section with pedestrian/bicycle facilities for six miles from Route 234 to Route 682. This small segment, while capital-intensive, is a key element in making Route 15 a safer and more reliable road. This project improves the network for: commuters, commercial traffic, freight, pedestrians, bicyclists and potentially the Virginia Railway Express. Therefore, the project is a truly a multimodal, congestion-relieving safety improvement.

An INFRA grant would greatly facilitate construction of this project and we thank you for your time and assistance with this request. If you have any questions or comments regarding this request, please contact me at (703) 792-6825.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Ricardo Canizales".

Ricardo Canizales  
Director of Transportation

# Attachment B.



## Northern Virginia Transportation Authority *The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia*

February 6, 2020

The Honorable Elaine Chao  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Reference: Prince William County, Virginia's INFRA Grant Application: U.S. Route 15  
Improvements with Railroad Overpass

Dear Secretary Chao,

On behalf of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) we express support for Prince William County's application for the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) discretionary grant program funding for the Route 15 Improvements with Railroad Overpass Project. NVTA is responsible for setting regional transportation policies and priorities, developing the region's long-range transportation plan, known as TransAction, and for improving mobility and reducing congestion in the Northern Virginia. The Route 15 Improvements with Railroad Overpass Project, is included in TransAction and a key component of improving the U.S. 15 Corridor.

The U.S. Route 15 Improvements Project will provide a 4-lane section with median and asphalt shared use path on a 0.6-mile-long stretch of Route 15 and construct an overpass over the existing Norfolk Southern Railway (NSSR) tracks. These improvements will make this segment of the roadway consistent with sections north and south of the railroad tracks, eliminating the current bottleneck and creating a uniform four lane section with pedestrian/bicycle facilities for six miles from Route 234 to Route 682. This small segment, while capital-intensive, is a key element in making Route 15 a safer and more reliable road. This project improves the network for: commuters, commercial traffic, freight, pedestrians, bicyclists and potentially the Virginia Railway Express. Therefore, the project is truly a multimodal, congestion-relieving safety improvement.

An INFRA grant would greatly facilitate construction of this project. We thank you for your consideration of the Prince William County Route 15 Improvements with Railroad Overpass application.

Sincerely,

Phyllis J. Randall  
NVTA Chair



## COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Jennifer L. Mitchell  
Director

DEPARTMENT OF RAIL AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION  
600 EAST MAIN STREET, SUITE 2102  
RICHMOND, VA 23219-2416

(804) 786-4440  
FAX (804) 225-3752  
Virginia Relay Center  
800-828-1120 (TDD)

February 6, 2020

Ms. Monica Backmon  
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority  
3040 Williams Drive  
Fairfax, VA 22031

RE: Long Bridge - Request for NVTA INFRA Grant Letter of Support

Dear Ms. Backmon:

I am writing to request a letter of support for a \$100 million INFRA Grant application that Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is preparing for the Long Bridge Project (Project). The Long Bridge project identified in the 2018 version of NVTA TransAction 2040 as Project ID 297.

Per NVTA staff's request, a brief description of the Project details are below.

Project Name: Long Bridge Expansion (TransAction Project ID 297 Widen Long Bridge)

Project Description: This Project would permit a new independent separated two-track rail bridge to be constructed north of the existing two-track Long Bridge. This Project will allow separation of passenger and freight rail service in the rail corridor and the new bridge will be in public ownership, and will be owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Long Bridge expansion will double capacity in what is now a railroad bottleneck for the east coast, and allow for service expansion for the entire mid-Atlantic region. The Long Bridge Project will allow Virginia to double Amtrak state-supported service and VRE service over the next decade, and will allow for future MARC service to Virginia. The additional daily commuters who will use the new two-track Long Bridge will create over \$6 billion in annual economic activity in the Metropolitan Washington region, a nearly 95% increase from today. Freight fluidity in the region will greatly benefit from the Long Bridge, which will allow passenger rail to be separated from freight rail movements, and remove the need for 1 million freight trucks from the I-95 corridor. The INFRA Grant request is for \$100 million.

If you have any questions or if you would like to talk in more detail about anything, please feel free to contact me at [jennifer.mitchell@drpt.virginia.gov](mailto:jennifer.mitchell@drpt.virginia.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jennifer Mitchell'.

Jennifer Mitchel



## Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

*The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia*

February 6, 2020

The Honorable Elaine Chao  
Secretary of Transportation  
U.S. Department of Transportation  
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Reference: Department of Rail and Public Transportation's, Virginia's INFRA Grant Application:  
Long Bridge Project

Dear Secretary Chao,

On behalf of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA), we express support for the Department of Rail and Public Transportation's application for the Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) discretionary grant program funding for the Long Bridge Expansion Project. NVTA is responsible for setting regional transportation policies and priorities, developing the region's long-range transportation plan, known as TransAction, and for improving mobility and reducing congestion in the Northern Virginia. The Long Bridge Expansion Project, is included in TransAction and a key component of improving the I-95/I-395/US 1 Corridor.

**Project Description:** This Project would permit a new independent separated two-track rail bridge to be constructed north of the existing two-track Long Bridge. This Project will allow separation of passenger and freight rail service in the rail corridor and the new bridge will be in public ownership, and will be owned by the Commonwealth of Virginia. The Long Bridge expansion will double capacity in what is now a railroad bottleneck for the east coast, and allow for service expansion for the entire mid-Atlantic region. The Long Bridge Project will allow Virginia to double Amtrak state-supported service and VRE service over the next decade, and will allow for future MARC service to Virginia. The additional daily commuters who will use the new two-track Long Bridge will create over \$6 billion in annual economic activity in the Metropolitan Washington region, a nearly 95% increase from today. Freight fluidity in the region will greatly benefit from the Long Bridge, which will allow passenger rail to be separated from freight rail movements, and remove the need for 1 million freight trucks from the I-95 corridor.

An INFRA Grant would greatly facilitate construction of this project. We thank you for your consideration of the Department of Rail and Public Transportation's application.

Sincerely,

Phyllis J. Randall  
NVTA Chair