



GREATER WASHINGTON
Board of Trade

Statement of Robert Grow
Greater Washington Board of Trade
to the
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board
Honorable Catherine M. Hudgins, Chair
May 16, 2007

Chair Hudgins, members of the Transportation Planning Board. My name is Robert Grow and I am Director of Government Relations for the Greater Washington Board of Trade.

As you know, the Greater Washington region faces a future of increasing traffic congestion unless additional lanes of roadway, additional transit, new transit-oriented development, and better use of our existing infrastructure are accomplished. TPB's own forecasts demonstrate stop-and-go traffic on most of our region's major roads by 2030 unless there is significant construction of new transportation infrastructure.

Two projects to be considered today for air quality conformity analysis and later inclusion in the Constrained Long Range Plan are of critical importance to our region's mobility. They are: I-395 / I-95 / HOV / Bus / HOT lanes proposal and spot improvements to I-66 inside the Beltway.

One of the Board of Trade's top transportation priorities is a region-wide system of HOT lanes. The proposed HOT lane project will be built within the existing I-395 / I-95 right-of-way and will be financed by private investment and by tolls

from those who chose to use the new improvements. An added benefit is that excess revenues will be designated to the Commonwealth to use for transit improvements within this transportation corridor – including new Park & Ride lots, new buses and other transit improvements as designated by the government.

This project will retain the option for anyone to keep using the existing general purpose lanes at no cost if they choose to. Also, carpools, vans and busses of three or more riders – including sluggers – will use the new HOT lanes at no cost. The new HOT lanes will be kept congestion-free by charging variable toll rates.

The second project providing key relief to traffic congestion is to move forward with spot improvements on I-66 inside the Capital Beltway. Providing relief from regularly occurring congestion on this section of I-66 is important both for potential future HOT lanes as well as to alleviate backups that result in wasted time, fuel, unnecessary air pollution and diversion of I-66 traffic onto Arlington's neighborhood streets. This project is also key in providing emergency evacuation of the District of Columbia in the event of future threats to Homeland Security.

We respectfully urge you to examine these important projects for air quality conformity analysis and for later inclusion in the 2007 CLRP.

Thank you for this opportunity to comment.

TESTIMONY BEFORE THE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD

Presented by Rosa Carrillo, Member of the Language Access Coalition
Multicultural Community Service
May 16, 2007

Good afternoon. My name is Rosa Carrillo, and I am a member of the DC Language Access Coalition and of the Multicultural Community Service. I would like to thank the members of the council of government transportation planning board, members of the access for all language access subcommittee and all in attendance for giving me the opportunity to stand here and share my thoughts with you.

Five years ago, a group of community based organizations formed a coalition to address the growing needs of the Limited English Proficiency community in the District of Columbia. Today, the coalition is made up of about 20 organizations that provide services to LEP immigrant's communities; the work of the coalition is to ensure these communities have meaningful access to services in the District of Columbia.

Meaningful, equal and timely access to services is a right. Under Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act and Executive order 13116 which exposes the problems resulting from the absence of language assistant, mandate that all public agencies which receives federal fund from the Federal government prohibit discrimination based on national origin, including language.

Along these lines, it is vital to highlight the important role the LEP communities play in the life of this great capital city; the LPE communities live, work, commute and raise families in this city and they deserve equal access to services without any forms of discrimination including language.

Therefore, I, as a customer, as a daughter of LEP parents and siblings, and as member of the Advisory subcommittee, urge and encourage members of the Transportation Planning Board to endorse and approve the report and recommendations to improve Transit information for LEP customers. By implementing the language access recommendations WMATA, and the local government agencies will benefit by acquiring more customers who won't feel isolated neither fearful to use public transportation services because of language barriers, Furthermore WMATA will make its services more inclusive, and friendly to all customers.

Also safety is a number one priority for all of us, and in particular crime is a major issue for the Latino community, and lack of communication because language barriers endanger the life of many of them

The goal to overcome constraint and frictions among diverse communities is to breakdown language barriers then we have an effective and sustainable communication.

As member of the DC LAC and of AFA Advisory Subcommittee on Transit for Language English Learners, I commence the work the advisory subcommittee have done to identify the concerns of LEP customers and to draft the recommendations that address these concerns.

Also it is exciting to see the initiative WMATA staff has launched to reach and interview members of the AFA advisory subcommittee to hear their inputs and expertise on working with LEP communities.

Sarah Vilms – Individual and member of Arlington Coalition for Sensible Transportation

In Opposition to “Spot Improvements” on 1-66

While I applaud VDOT for trying to find a transportation solution, I strongly urge the TPB and VDOT to reject the proposed “spot improvement” (spot widenings) and instead complete the comprehensive regional and multimodal traffic study. There are a multitude of reasons supporting this:

“Widening 1-66 is like trying to combat obesity by loosening your belt.” -- Arlington County Board Member

1.) **VDOT Recommended Non-Widening Solutions** – VDOT’s own I-66 feasibility study report, issued March 2005, showed several non-widening, traffic management alternatives to be clearly superior overall to a third westbound lane.

2.) **Widening does not work, and does not solve the current problem** – VDOT is trying to solve a car problem by throwing more cars at the problem. This will not change the situation. All widening studies and widening experts in the past have shown that widening actually increases traffic congestion. The current solution will merely shift bottlenecks and congestion. This is because outside of the proposed “spot improvement” zones, the widened sections of I-66 clearly will merge back to 2 travel lanes. This is going to cause increased merging and unmerging frequency and confusion and more accidents.

3.) **Increases Accidents** – This widening will remove the current emergency break-down lane and hence will cause more accidents on 1-66. If cars have nowhere to move off the road, these cars will cause blockages, delays and more incidents. Emergency vehicles will not have the emergency lane to reach vehicles in distress. This causes more pain and more delays. This lane is necessary and needed as an emergency lane – as it was designated in the first place.

4.) **Other Solutions**-- What makes us the most incensed about VDOT’s proposed plan is that the plan has not considered any other options. But for VDOT to go forth with only one idea without considering any other ideas, in the age of new technology and solutions, resorting to age-old transportation, combined with increasing gas prices and pollution problems, this is not VDOT’s best idea or best use of time, energy or tax-payer dollars. With all the lessons learned and new ideas available to us in the 21st century, using an 18th century fix is just plain irresponsible.

We could run express bus routes on 1-66, we could have HOV hours on the west bound lanes (they work perfectly fine on the eastbound lanes), we could expand metro shuttles for those of us who would like to ride the metro but can’t. We could expand metro capacity to keep rider ship that already exists and not convert them to cars. There are many other options that would work, and some that have already proven to work in the other direction on 1-66, instead of rushing to a costly and environmentally detrimental widening project. If other options were fully considered and vetted, we could have an actual dialog on this issue.

- **Decreased Recreational Opportunities** – Hundreds of thousands of people use the historical Custis Trail, which links to the W&OD Trail, Four Mile Run Trail, and the C&O Canal Trail. These trails cover a distance of 4, 45, 9 and 184 miles respectively, three of which connect and run unimpeded for 233 miles from Purcellville, Virginia to Cumberland, Maryland. Millions of tax-payer dollars have been spent on creating these trails and these recreation opportunities for people of Virginia and Maryland and West Virginia. As urban areas increase, recreational areas have decreased and these stand as the last opportunities for people to exercise outside in urban environments.

9.) **Cost and Cost Overruns** – The cost of this has been projected to run more than \$150 million. Even with a governmental contribution, the majority of this burden will fall on taxpayer shoulders in the region. If we are going to spend this kind of money it might as well be a state-of-the-art solution. Returning to age-old transportation techniques that produced this problem in the first place is not the move we want to make. For the amount of money this will cost, we could run light rail up the middle of I-66 from DC to Centerville. There are better ideas out there, including some of VDOT's own, and we beg VDOT to use them. Please avoid age-old techniques that have proven not to solve the problem.

10.) **This Proposal is Not Part of Any Accepted Plan** – I-66 widening inside the Beltway is not part of any adopted local or regional transportation plan, including the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority's TransAction 2030 Plan. Moreover, it disregards clearly superior alternatives and the landmark 1977 Record of Decision by USDOT that established I-66 as four lanes.

11.) **Solution** - We beg VDOT to consider other options before considering this current detrimental plan of widening I-66, which will only add more cars to the road, increase pollution (both air and noise), decrease home values and other commuting options, and will not improve transportation in Virginia. We beg VDOT to review:

1.) VDOT's own I-66 feasibility study report, issued March 2005, shows several non-widening, traffic management alternatives to be clearly superior overall to a third westbound lane.

2.) Finish the comprehensive Regional and Multi-Modal Traffic study to be before considering this detrimental I-66 proposal.

4)

Presentation to the Transportation Planning Board, Washington Council of Governments,
May 16, 2006 Meeting

My name is Eric Ciccoretti. I reside with my family in the Maywood neighborhood of Arlington, adjacent to I-66. I ask that the board not consider spot expansions of I-66 without first conducting a full environmental review with public hearings and a full alternative analysis. I am concerned that thus far planning for the spot expansions has not adequately considered the community impact or transportation alternatives, such as future Metro expansion.

Because of our residence, we receive mailings from the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) regarding the proposed spot expansions of I-66, including IDEA66 mailings. The diagram in one mailing was striking: It showed only the existing lanes and the proposed spot expansions. But, missing from the diagram was any information about the surrounding community or transportation alternatives.

Missing from the diagram was the Custis bike trail that runs along that same portion of I-66. Missing from the diagram were the numerous parks alongside that same portion of I-66. Missing were Thrifton Hills park and Cherrydale Valley park, where my son and his first-grade class recently visited. Missing from the diagram were the schools that border that portion of I-66. Missing were Science Focus elementary school and Washington & Lee High School, adjacent schools that would be directly affected by any spot expansions and the car pollution they may bring. Missing was how an expansion of Metro would fit in the corridor.

Perhaps it was a function of graphic design that so much was missing; because the spot expansions would impact so much, to include it all would make for a busy graphic. But, I am concerned that the diagram reflected the planning of these spot expansions by VDOT; that the planners ignored the impact on the community and failed to consider alternatives to the spot expansions; that the planners – like the graphic designer – ignored the impact on the bike trail, ignored the impact on the parks, ignored the impact on the schools and failed to consider other alternatives to the spot expansions.

I urge the board not to do the same thing. You are charged not with a simple graphic design problem. You cannot edit out the impact of spot expansions. The board should consider the impact of your spot expansions on the community and consider the transportation alternatives to spot expansion.

I urge the board to make a decision on any spot expansions of I-66 only after a full environmental review with public hearings and a full alternative analysis, including Metro expansion.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

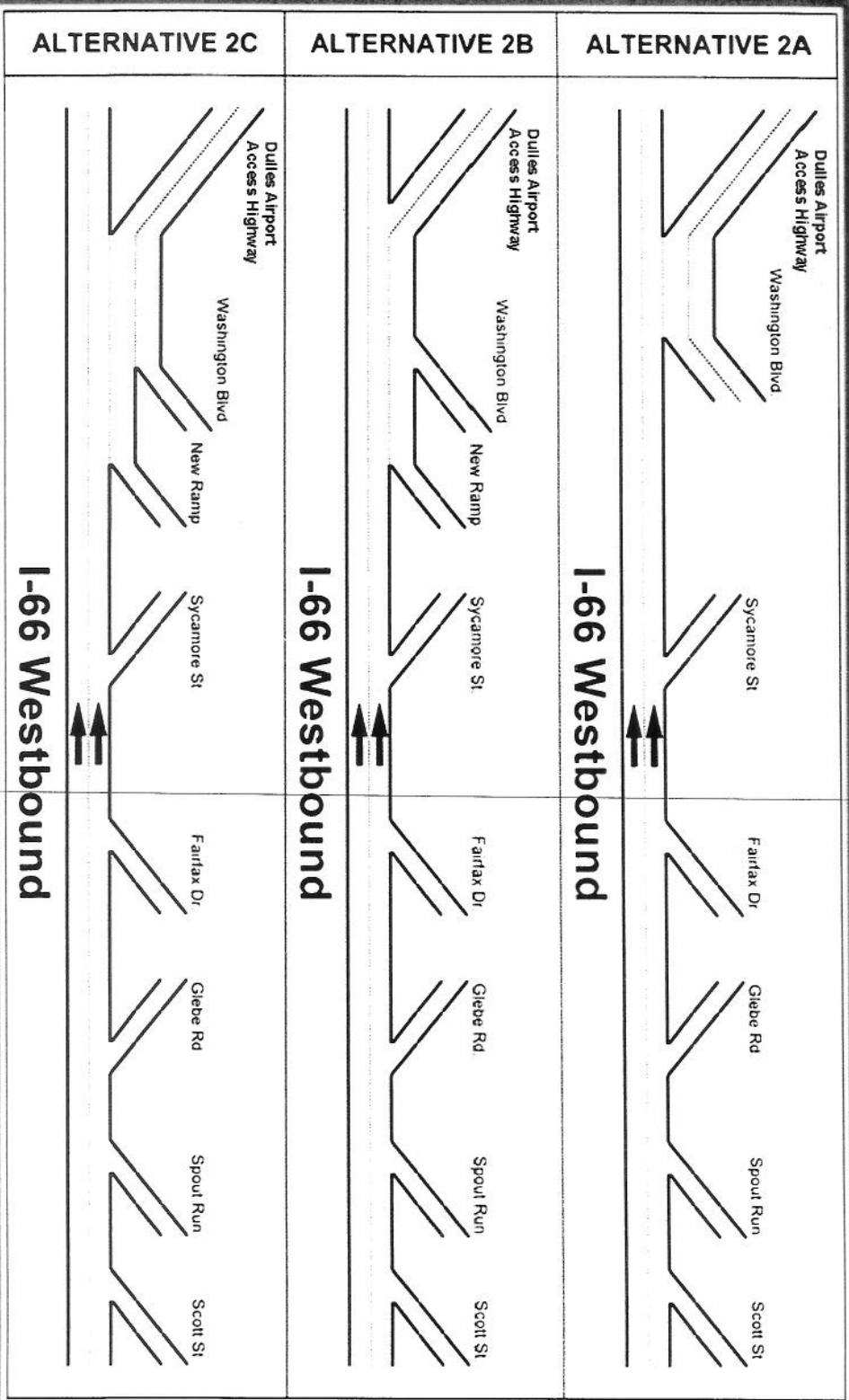
Eric Ciccoretti
3609 21st Ave N
Arlington, VA 22207



Idea-66

Imagine the Possibilities

Spot Improvements Analyzed



VDOT

Excerpt from ID2A66 Presentation, Jan. 10, 2005



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May 16, 2007

Statement of Audrey Clement To TPB On Behalf of Green Party of Virginia.

Hello, TPB members and staff. My name is Audrey Clement, and I am here on behalf of the Green Party of Virginia to express my opposition to VDOT's request for inclusion of I-66 Spot Improvements in the CLRP. In the Project Description Form that accompanied its request, VDOT certified that the project complies with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) stating:

"VDOT is in full compliance with all requirements of NEPA. VDOT recommended and FHWA concurred that a Categorical Exclusion (CE) is the appropriate level of NEPA document for the spot improvements. Work on the CE documentation is underway. The public will have the opportunity to review and comment on this document at the Public Hearing to be scheduled later this year."

No doubt VDOT believes that it's in compliance with NEPA because construction of on ramps along 4 miles of the 6.5 mile stretch of I-66 between Rosslyn and the Beltway falls under FHWA regulation 23 CFR 771.117 (d) (1) which allows a categorical exclusion with FHWA approval for: "Modernization of a highway by resurfacing, restoration, rehabilitation, reconstruction, adding shoulders, or adding auxiliary lanes (e.g., parking, weaving, turning, climbing)."

But what VDOT fails to acknowledge are the regulations at 23 CFR 771.111 (f) which require that states demonstrate that road projects connect logical termini, have independent utility, and do not preempt alternative transportation options. These regulations were not written in a vacuum. They reflect federal court rulings against prior attempts by states to circumvent NEPA by breaking a highway project up into smaller components, each of which is too small to trigger an environmental assessment that would otherwise have been required of the project taken as a whole.

VDOT argues that it is not preempting future transportation options, because any future option, e.g. express bus lanes or an additional Metrorail track,

will simply require re-striping the pavement once the on-ramps have been extended. But if as expected, the extended on-ramps merely move bottlenecks down the road, there is a serious question whether the extensions connect logical termini. The only way to get an objective answer to that question is to evaluate the results of the traffic modeling study that VDOT undertook to justify spot improvements. To date VDOT has not published the statistical outputs of that study, making it impossible to challenge the recommendations that flowed from it.

Furthermore both FHWA and VDOT may be in violation of 23 CFR 771.117 (b) (4), which requires FHWA to direct state transportation agencies to provide justification for a CE in cases where granting it might be inconsistent with "any Federal, State, or local law, requirement or administrative determination relating to the environmental aspects of the action." In this case spot improvements might conflict with Coleman Decision of 1977, the popular name for the EIS Record of Decision authorizing construction of I-66 some thirty years ago and requiring that it be limited to a four lane highway inside the Beltway.

The Coleman Decision was presumptively annulled several years ago when Congressman Frank Wolf got Congress to enact a rider to a transportation appropriation invalidating the decision. But the authority of Congress to override an administrative decision of such scope is open to question and could be challenged in court. In the event VDOT's cynical answer to the Coleman Decision is that extension of on ramps—even four miles of them--don't violate its proscription against widening I-66. So the question then turns on what VDOT plans to do after the extended on ramps are in place.

VDOT itself bills spot improvements as "interim", and opponents believe that they will not reduce congestion on I-66. So it seems that both sides agree on one thing, spot improvements are a temporary measure that will have to be replaced with a future permanent solution. It is increasingly evident that in creating traffic conditions that will justify the need for permanent widening, VDOT is flouting NEPA case law, which characterizes this approach as "segmentation"—compliance with NEPA by proceeding with a highway project in stages. While such a strategy might be successful with voters in the outlying suburbs and local elected officials, there is a growing consensus among opponents of widening that spot improvements are an ill concealed attempt to circumvent the National Environmental Policy act of 1969.

Statement by Anthony DiMeglio
May 16, 2007
National Capital Area Transportation Planning Board

My name is Anthony DiMeglio. I live in East Falls Church. I regularly attend Tysons Corner Land Use Task Force meetings, am a proponent of bicycling, and am currently pursuing my undergraduate degree in economics. I care deeply about the impact that land-use decisions have on our neighborhoods. Are we making them more walkable, are we promoting smart-growth development, are we helping small businesses grow?

The original plan for Metro's Orange line was to run along the median of Route 66. Fortunately, decision-makers had the foresight to change direction and instead paved the way for the Ballston-Rosslyn corridor. It is now a true model for urban planners, promoting a better quality of life for residents and promoting stronger commerce as well. Had our leaders not switched tracks, we would have lost out on the opportunities that the Ballston-Rosslyn corridor offers us.

I am here today to speak about the proposed Metrorail extension to Dulles and to ask our decision-makers to once again demonstrate a commitment to creating the best future for the people of this area – and not taking the political road of least resistance.

It seems that just about everyone agrees the tunnel would be the better option on the merits – it would encourage transit-oriented, mixed-use development; be less disruptive to businesses; cause fewer traffic headaches; be comparable in cost; and probably even be more appealing to riders.

Last year, Governor Kaine showed leadership in voicing support for the tunnel option. He has since indicated support for the above-ground proposal. But at the March 12th Fairfax County Board of Supervisors meeting, Supervisor Linda Smyth, who represents my district, noted comments the Governor made on February 27th on WTOP's *Ask the Governor*, regarding local governments' input on the above-ground proposal. "No, I'm not going to pursue that option over their objection. But, if they tell me to stop, I will."

I want to thank Supervisor Smyth for encouraging her colleagues to respond to the Governor's openness to listen to the people. We need our leaders not only on the Board of Supervisors, but here too, on the Transportation Planning Board, to speak up.

I respect that the Transportation Planning Board shows what is called "deference" to local jurisdictions in deciding their preferences on projects. The public also looks to leaders throughout our region who sit on the TPB in this room to make responsible decisions about our future by asking the necessary questions today. Deference is appropriate. I feel silence is not. In my opinion, the above-ground proposal contradicts the TPB's Vision Statement in several areas, including this objective for Goal 2: "efficient and safe movement of people, goods, and information, with minimal adverse impacts on residents and the environment."

The governor said he'd follow the lead of local officials. I am here today to ask for the Transportation Planning Board's support to declare officially what almost every official seems to be saying – the tunnel would be better – but which some officials seem to be reluctant to advocate because the Governor and now Board of Supervisors Chairman Gerry Connolly are backing above-ground. But which option do the people favor?

The Governor also said on WTOP, "It is still very much in the locality's hands." Our leaders corrected course on the Orange line in the past. Please do not remain silent while such a consequential decision is about to be made. I am asking you to raise your hands in support of the State of Virginia conducting an open competitive bidding process and responsibly reviewing the tunnel option.



<http://www.va-democrats.com/?q=node/105>

Prince William County Democratic Committee

Tue, 05/08/2007 - 6:55pm

The Prince William County Democratic Committee

Resolution

WHEREAS, the public debate regarding the tunnel vs. above-ground options for the Tysons Corner portion of the extension of Metrorail to Dulles Airport has continued inconclusively for a significant period of time, and this decision, once made with finality, will be largely irreversible and will affect the look, feel, and quality of life for Northern Virginians for decades into the future, and

WHEREAS, many independent studies regarding land use patterns, as well as the common sense of most Northern Virginians, make clear that well-designed, transit-oriented, pedestrian-friendly planning must be a part of any long-term solution to our transportation problems, and this function of the new rail line is as least as important, if not more important, than the function of getting rail service to the airport, and

WHEREAS, putting aside the question of money, it is beyond argument that the tunnel option is far superior to the above-ground option by any smart-growth measure and has the additional short term benefit that it will produce far less disruption during the construction phases of the project, and

WHEREAS, Governor Kaine, the central broker on this issue, has acknowledged publicly from the very beginning that, all else being equal, the tunnel is the preferred option and makes more sense for the future of Northern Virginia, and

WHEREAS, by analyzing their past and current behavior, it is clearly evident that the Airports Authority, to which much of the control and ownership of the project will be given, has a overwhelming and counterproductive bias in favor of getting rail service to the airport regardless of the consequences along other portions of the line, and

WHEREAS, while reasonable people can disagree over the comparative costs of the two options, it is clear that shifting cost projections and other unpredictable factors have made it impossible for any study to conclusively prove that the tunnel would cost more than the above-ground option and by how much, and, furthermore, whatever cost differences there may be, they are not so large that they should persuade Northern Virginians or Governor Kaine to abandon what we all agree is the best option for the future of Northern Virginia, and

WHEREAS, while it is understandable that concern over the possibility of losing federal money for the project would weigh heavily on the minds of our leaders who are responsible for making this project a reality, it must be remembered that (a) proper smart-growth planning will save Northern Virginians money in the long run by controlling the costs associated with poor planning and (b) the recent Democratic takeover of Congress provides a special opportunity for smart-growth leaders like Governor Kaine to begin a new dialogue on smart-growth at the national level and engage the new congress in this dialogue with the aim of modifying the factors that determine the basis for doling out federal transportation money to include factors relating to the long-term benefits of smart growth policies,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Prince William County Democratic Committee does hereby support the construction of a tunnel under Tysons Corner as part of the new Metrorail extension to Dulles Airport and urges Governor Kaine to adopt the same position in support of the long-term interests of current and future Northern Virginians.

Approved for REVIEW March 18, 2007
Approved by PWCDC on April 26, 2007

Statement of Jason Rylander

Member Arlington County Transportation Advisory Commission,
Arlington Coalition for Sensible Transportation,
and Waycroft-Woodlawn Civic Association.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is Jason Rylander, and I am an Arlington resident. The Arlington County Board has long been opposed efforts to widen I-66. As a member of the Arlington County Transportation Advisory Commission, which endorses and fully supports the County's position, I'd like to take a few moments to explain why.

I am also a member of the executive board of the Waycroft-Woodlawn Civic Association and a past president of the Arlington Coalition for Sensible Transportation. Each of these organizations is also on record opposing the widening of I-66.

First, VDOT's proposed spot improvements must be recognized for what they are, an effort to achieve piecemeal what it cannot achieve directly – a continuous third westbound lane on I-66, which was built with the explicit promise that the road would remain two-lanes in each direction, with ample space for metro-rail and bike facilities.

Second, as Congressman Moran's recent letter to you indicates, changes to I-66 must be considered in the context of broader regional goals, most notable plans to develop Metrorail to Dulles. I-66 right of way should be preserved to facilitate additional transit options, not simply to facilitate the use of single-occupancy vehicles. VDOT has not ensured that the spot improvements will not preclude a third rail or dedicated bus lines.

Third, VDOT has not yet demonstrated that widening can be achieved within the existing right of way without impacting any adjacent parkland or the Custis Trail. In addition, the proposed widening will degrade—not improve—incident management and emergency operations creating new bottlenecks and additional merge requirements at each off ramp where none now exist.

Fourth, and most significantly, VDOT's studies have not demonstrated how widening I-66 will address the regional transportation dilemmas. The I-66 feasibility study showed, in fact, that several non-widening options—utilizing expanded HOV, HOT lanes or other transportation management programs, for example— could alleviate west-bound traffic as well or better than these proposed spot improvements – for far less cost to taxpayers.

In short, while we recognize that traffic congestion is a significant regional problem, this proposal is not a solution. It is unfair to the people of Arlington, and it is both ineffective, unnecessary, and an unwise use of scarce resources.

I ask that the TPB deny this off-year CLRP amendment as premature, and require that VDOT perform additional analyses in a manner that furthers transparency and meaningful public participation. The case for I-66 widening has not been made and should not go forward until these concerns are addressed.

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Arlington Coalition for Sensible Transportation
PO Box 5574, Arlington, VA 22205, 703 271-0895, www.acstnet.org

Statement to the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board
by Allen Muchnick, President, May 16, 2007

I'm Allen Muchnick with the Arlington Coalition for Sensible Transportation (ACST). Please deny or significantly modify VDOT's I-66 "Spot Improvements" project. for its failure to honor TPB objectives, for its rejection of superior and more cost effective traffic-management alternatives, for its sham and ridiculous public process, for its grossly inadequate analyses of traffic and environmental impacts, and because it would worsen, not improve, regional traffic congestion, highway safety, incident management, emergency evacuation, transit ridership, and ridesharing.

The I-66 project involves neither "spots" nor "improvements", and changes of this nature were not even mentioned in the March 2005 final report of VDOT's Idea-66 Feasibility Study. Rather, this project was concocted in mid-2005 as a scheme to construct major segments of a third westbound I-66 travel lane, using Frank Wolf's federal earmarks, without considering any alternatives or any of the many adverse environmental or traffic impacts of this particular project.

Do not allow VDOT to continue misrepresenting this project as involving only operational improvements, and please require VDOT to conduct at least a proper Environmental Assessment for its proposed action. The true purpose of this unnecessary, counterproductive, and unwarranted project is to expand I-66 capacity for untolled, single-occupant vehicles. It would worsen traffic congestion on connected westbound highways, along eastbound I-66, and at nearby Arlington and Fairfax County intersections, but VDOT is purposefully evading meaningful traffic analyses. Moreover, this project would create two new westbound bottlenecks at the low-volume Glebe Road and Sycamore St exits, where three westbound lanes would drop down to two. Please at least require VDOT to report back to the TPB in early 2008 with fair and objective analyses of the impacts of this project on regional traffic and on the environmental mitigations, required under the Coleman Decision, to provide wetlands, wildlife habitat, and public open space within VDOT's right-of-way for I-66.

Claims that "spot improvements" would facilitate emergency evacuations are bogus; the added lanes and wide outside shoulders would be mandatory exits at Glebe Rd and at Sycamore St, and their construction would fail to provide a continuous wide inside shoulder and would likely narrow the existing inside shoulder. VDOT should be required to report to the TPB on a spot improvement alternative that would simply provide a continuous 12-foot wide inside shoulder along I-66 inside the Beltway.

Please require VDOT to report back to the TPB in early 2008 on the results of its current "spot improvements" study. At that time, the TPB should revisit the issue of whether the I-66 "Spot Improvements" project should remain in the CLRP and TIP.

**Time to get I-66 inside the Beltway traffic moving –
in at least one direction**
Statement of Robert O. Chase
To National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board
May 16, 2007

The letter “I” in the facility known as I-66 does not refer to Inter-neighborhood or Internal-circulator.

The letter “I” actually refers to *Interstate*.

Interstate 66 is a federal highway, a state highway, a regional highway.

It is *not* a local roadway. However, since it opened it has successfully induced traffic off and away from adjacent local roadways resulting in neighborhoods inside the Beltway having far less traffic and enjoying a far better quality of life.

Interstate 66 is a critical link to District of Columbia and Arlington employment centers. Failure to widen Interstate 66 in *both* directions only hastens the day when more District and Arlington employers move outside the Beltway to be closer to more of their workforce.

Interstate 66 is a fundamental regional evacuation route. Current constraints threaten the lives of tens of thousands of area residents in the event of a major attack.

And despite being one of the region’s most multi-modal of corridors, Interstate 66 is one of its most congested, not for lack of bike or rail capacity, but for lack of road capacity.

The Idea-66 study shows that neither Dulles Rail nor HOV-3 regulations are sufficient to handle future Interstate 66 volumes and that additional highway capacity is the most effective multi-modal solution. Common sense produces the same conclusion.

The average area resident would be dismayed to see the plethora of provisos affixed to this item before you that will add millions of taxpayer dollars to the cost of three basic spot improvements – and give new meaning to the expression, “Nothing is easy or cheap.”

The TPB is a regional body charged with advancing regional, big picture connectivity.

High current and future congestion levels in *both* directions are beyond dispute.

It’s time to get people moving in the Interstate 66 corridor ... *in at least one* direction.

The Alliance asks the TPB to fulfill its regional responsibilities and approve the Interstate 66 spot improvements for inclusion in the 2007 CLRP and 2008-2013 TIP.

P.O. Box 6149
McLean, VA 22106-6149
tel 703-883-1830
fax 703-883-1850
www.nvta.org



**Public Comments On TPB Procedures And Activities
Review of Comments Received And Approval of Project Submissions
for the 2007 Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP)
The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Transportation Planning Board
Wednesday, May 16, 2007**

**Submitted By
John B. Townsend II
AAA Mid-Atlantic Office of Public and Government Affairs
701 Fifteenth Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20005**

Good afternoon Chair Hudgins and Members of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board.

- Last month, during the public comment period, AAA Mid-Atlantic and other traffic safety advocates urged the Transportation Planning Board to take more time to review the comments and the concerns regarding the inclusion of the 1-95/395 HOT lane project in the Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP). AAA voiced this because we were concerned about safety and economic factors. The TPB graciously voted to delay approval for 30 days. We very much appreciate the board’s decision to do that.
- There is no question that we desperately need the additional highway capacity in that corridor, but it must not be done at the cost of more motorist lives.
- We are pleased to report to you today that in the interim we have had discussions with the Virginia Secretary of Transportation regarding our concerns. Subsequently, we have also had the opportunity to have a face-to-face meeting with VDOT District Administrator Dennis Morrison and staff from Fluor, Transurban, and COG on this matter.
- For us, it was 30 days well-spent. While we don’t yet have a lot of specifics about our concerns, we do have many assurances and promises that our concerns will be addressed. What is more, we also have an invitation from Secretary Pierce Homer to include AAA in the project review process going forward.
- We were assured that our concerns about losing shoulders and the safety implications will be fully and satisfactorily addressed. We were assured that our concerns will be addressed about creating a toll road that would be so expensive that it would create a de facto two-tier public transportation system where the well-heeled and well-wheeled will have the right of entry and the poor and the down-and-out driver will be priced-out.
- Although we don’t have the specifics yet, the assurances are good enough for us at this juncture. What is more, the need for additional capacity is so overwhelming, that today we urge you to approve this project—include it in the CLRP, and let’s move forward to the design/build phases as quickly as possible.
- Please be assured, however, that we will not go gentle into that goodnight. Should we have critical issues about either safety or the economic fairness of this facility, we will be back to you or others at the next critical junctures. But we hope and expect that will not happen. We are comfortable with the promises made, but like the doctrine so famously put forward by former president Ronald Reagan, we will Trust—but verify. Thank you.

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Ms. Catherine Hudgins, Chair

Transportation Planning Board

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

777 North Capital Street, NE, Suite 300

Washington, DC 20002-4290

May 16th, 2007

Dear Ms. Hudgins:

On behalf of the Westover Will age Civic Association, I wanted to take this opportunity to urge the Transportation Planning Board to reject the Virginia I-66 Spot Improvements project under consideration. Our Civic Association represents the Westover neighborhood in Arlington, a neighborhood which has I-66 as its southern border. One of the so-called 'spot improvements', the extension of the Fairfax Drive entrance lane to Sycamore Street, will cause a new lane to be created on the entire section of the highway bordering our neighborhood. This will affect the many members of our community whose homes are in close proximity to the highway, substantially increasing the noise and pollution that they experience from I-66. At the general membership meeting of the WCA, held on Tuesday, April 24th, our Civic Association **unanimously** adopted a resolution to oppose the Spot Improvements project as currently outlined, and to encourage the Transportation Planning Board to reject this project.

First, from the perspective of our neighborhood, this is anything but a 'spot improvement' to address traffic and safety issues - it really amounts to a widening of westbound I-66 through most of its length. The entire length of the lane being added for just this one 'spot improvement' is almost two miles of additional highway lane, while the overall project will add 4 miles of outbound lane to the 7 miles of highway between the Rosslyn Tunnel and the Dulles Access Road..

Another significant consideration for us is that our entire neighborhood has recently been recognized as an historic district, and has been listed in the National Register of Historic Places, as are the Cherrydale and Maywood neighborhoods also affected by the project. Our understanding from the Historic Preservation Program Coordinator of Arlington County is that federal statute requires that a formal review be conducted to determine whether a full Environmental Impact Statement needs to be prepared to assess the impact of any federally funded development on a Nationally Registered Historic Site, and to my knowledge, no such study has been planned or executed. Homes that are contributing structures in our historic district back out on I-66, within feet of the construction that would take place for this project.

Quite apart from the specific impact of the Virginia I-66 Spot Improvements project on Westover and the other neighborhoods bordering I-66 in Arlington, our membership objects to the project because, as we are frequent drivers on I-66 and know the highway extremely well, we therefore understand that the modifications being proposed will still leave significant bottlenecks to slow traffic and will not result in either a safer or more efficient highway.

As residents of an historic neighborhood which will be significantly affected by any expansion of I-66, we feel that we at least deserve that any such widening be well-planned, and part of a comprehensive regional transportation plan in which all options are considered. The current plan is neither, an ill-conceived, quick-fix approach to the critical regional transportation problems that we all face, and this type of approach, and this project, should be rejected.

Thank you for your consideration,

John Marsh