



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **I-66 OUTSIDE THE BELTWAY DESIGN CONCEPT APPROVED BY COMMONWEALTH TRANSPORTATION BOARD**

*Reflects public input received at more than 160 public meetings*

**VIRGINIA BEACH, Va.** - The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) approved today the recommended design concept, known as the "Preferred Alternative," for the I-66 Outside the Beltway Project, as well as a phased implementation approach. The preferred alternative is a combination of various alternatives that were evaluated over the past year to improve 25 miles of I-66 from I-495 in Fairfax County to Route 15 in Haymarket. These multimodal improvements, which reflect extensive public input received at nearly 200 public meetings held since January 2014, are expected to move more people throughout the I-66 corridor, reduce hours of congestion per day, and reduce cut-through traffic on local roads.

The preferred alternative consists of two express lanes alongside three regular lanes in each direction, with space in the median for future transit; dedicated express lanes access points; safety and operational improvements at key interchanges throughout the corridor; new transit services such as new and expanded park and ride lots and bus service; and corridor-wide bikeway, trail, and sidewalk improvements. Due to the cost and complexity of the proposed improvements, the CTB has approved a phased implementation approach. Phase 1

extends the express lanes for 22 of the original 25 miles, from 495 to Gainesville, (University Boulevard), and then transitions to a traditional HOV lane in each direction. Phase 1 also proposes retaining existing ramps and bridges, and converting them to express lanes access points, at Monument Drive and Stringfellow Road, rather than rebuilding these interchanges. Future phases, which include extending the express lanes to Route 15 in Haymarket and rebuilding the Monument Drive and Stringfellow Road interchanges, would be implemented in the future as funding becomes available and demand warrants.

The design concepts have been evaluated in a draft Environmental Assessment, which was presented at public hearings in May and June 2015. The concepts reflect design changes that are largely based on public input, including:

- Reductions in *potential* residential relocations from 35 to 11
- Elimination of major impacts to Stenwood Elementary School
- Reconfiguration of the I-495 Interchange to reduce property impacts
- Refinements of design for Route 28 Interchange and I-66 to reduce impacts to parks

The final environmental document is expected to be completed, along with a decision on the procurement approach, by the end of this year. VDOT, as well as its private partner or contractors, will continue to evaluate specific design alternatives, and anticipate doing so under an upcoming Alternative Technical Concepts (ATC) process. This would include roadway elements, as well as proposed park and ride lots that are part of the project.

The public again will have an opportunity to provide formal comments and input into the project's design at a Design Public Hearing in early 2017. Throughout the project's development, outreach with the public, technical experts from affected localities, transit partners, and other key stakeholder groups, will continue to be robust. Construction of the project is slated to begin in 2017, with the improvements open to traffic in 2021.

For more details, visit [www.Transform66.org](http://www.Transform66.org).

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