

# Agenda Item 14-E Handout Correspondence of Interest

## FY 2014-2019 Draft SYIP: Virginia Beach Public Comment Submittal

Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization

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June 20, 2013



# City of Virginia Beach

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June 13, 2013

Aubrey L. Layne, Jr.  
Hampton Roads District  
Commonwealth Transportation Board  
10858 Warwick Boulevard, Suite A  
Newport News, Virginia 23601-3741

**Subject: Fiscal Year 2014-2019 Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP) Draft**

Dear Mr. Layne: *Dubney*

Thank you very much for arranging the meeting between VDOT programming staff, City of Virginia Beach staff and the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization staff. The two hour discussion was well worth the investment as it helped us understand the complex programming issues faced by the Commonwealth Transportation Board and VDOT in incorporating the new HB 2313 funding to address long term transportation issues.

Our City staff analysis was developed using the FY13-18 SYIP as the baseline of comparison to the FY14-19 SYIP. We acknowledge that this baseline SYIP reflected a significant increase in transportation funding for the Hampton Roads district as compared to previous SYIPs due to programming for Dominion Boulevard, the Mid-Town Tunnel and the Governor's Transportation Plan projects in Virginia Beach. Our concern was that no new funding was evident in the FY14-19 SYIP and therefore, the additional funding generated by HB 2313 was not reflected in the document. Ms. Reta Busher, VDOT Chief of Planning and Programming, did an excellent job explaining that when Route 460 funding (80% apportioned to the HR district) is added to the HR District's \$1.7 billion programming, the combined total swells to \$2.699 billion. This reflects a full return of all additional transportation funding generated by HB 2313 back to the Hampton Roads District. We expect this will meet our citizens' expectations the new transportation revenues are being used to tackle our regional transportation issues.

A second major point of concern was an understanding of VDOT's retention of \$5.3 billion of the \$11.6 billion SYIP. It was surprising to learn that only two major projects were funded within this amount: Route 460 (\$1.247 billion) and the NOVA I-95 Hot Lanes (\$780 million). The remaining +\$3 billion is to be distributed amongst a myriad of programs of which the \$1.5 billion Revenue Sharing Program receives the greatest share. We look forward to receiving an edited chart explaining the distribution of the Statewide Program funding so that our City and regional leaders, as well as our citizens, can better understand the programming challenges VDOT's Statewide Program faces in trying to resolve the transportation issues of the Commonwealth.

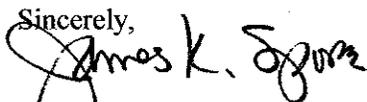
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A third concern was the reprogramming of the Lesner Bridge Replacement project. As we are on the eve of advertising the project we will need a reassurance document that reimbursement funding for the construction is available. The current FY14-19 SYIP reflects funding beyond our current construction window. As stated in my June 5<sup>th</sup> letter to the VDOT District Administrator Utterback, we intend to proceed with the project so as to award the fall.

We would appreciate any attention which the CTB and VDOT can lend toward addressing the absence of funding throughout the SYIP for the regional I-64/I-264 Intersection Improvement Project and the three legacy urban projects of Virginia Beach about to reach the 20 year FHWA expiration limit (Indian River Road, Elbow Road, Laskin Road Phase I). Following our meeting and VDOT's explanation, we recognize there are no funds available at this time for the programmers to apply toward these four critical projects. Nonetheless these four projects are critically important to improving our safety and congestion issues.

In closing, I recommend that the CTB relook VDOT's process of the SYIP review and public hearings. The timeline is extremely tight and forces cities who wish to actively engage in trying to understand the Commonwealth transportation program to commit tremendous staff effort in evaluating this very lengthy document. I would recommend that an executive summary be prescribed that contains explanative charts and tables to better illustrate the distribution of all revenues and provide district comparables and historic trends. I also recommend that there be a section in the executive summary to address new projects and to better explain unique programming actions contained within the SYIP document.

Thank you once again for your time and the City of Virginia Beach looks forward to continuing working as a partner and investor to improving the transportation network of our City, the Hampton Roads District and the Commonwealth.

Sincerely,  


James K. Spore  
City Manager

JKS/DLH/s

Attachment

c: The Honorable Mayor William D. Sessoms, Jr. and Members of City Council  
Commonwealth Transportation Board Member Shep Miller  
Commonwealth Transportation Board Member Hollis Ellis  
Gregory A. Whirley Sr., VDOT Commissioner  
Charles A. Kilpatrick P. E., VDOT Chief Deputy Commissioner  
Reta Busher, VDOT Chief of Programming and Planning  
Dwight Farmer, Executive Director, HRTPO  
David L. Hansen, Deputy City Manager  
Phillip A. Davenport, Interim Director of Public Works  
Robert Matthias, Assistant City Manager

**VIRGINIA BEACH COMMENTS**  
**Delivered by DCM Dave Hansen**

**CTB – June 5, 2013**

Secretary Connaughton, Members of the Commonwealth Transportation Board, and Commissioner Whirley. Good evening, my name is Deputy City Manager Dave Hansen and this evening I am here representing the City of Virginia Beach and will be reading a prepared statement approved by our Mayor, William D. Sessoms, Jr., and City Manager James K. Spore.

I would like to begin by sincerely thanking the members of the Virginia General Assembly and Governor Bob McDonnell for their steadfast efforts to provide a long term funding strategy for improving transportation in the commonwealth. Their efforts in this year's session will go a long way to continuing to make our state a national leader for business, tourism and quality of life.

My appearance before the CTB tonight is to address VDOT's proposed FY14-19 SYIP. Unfortunately, after a concerted review on a very short timeline, it is our belief in the City of Virginia Beach that VDOT's proposal does not meet the intentions of our state's legislators or the administration; nor does it meet the expectations of citizens of Hampton Roads. Simply stated, the numbers contained in the VDOT proposal result in the citizens of Hampton Roads paying more and getting less. They will be paying more in accordance with the funding formulas used to support HB 2313 and will be receiving less than was in the previous FY13-18 SYIP. We found the 1,200 page document to be significantly lacking in comparisons between districts and took great care in evaluating this very complex programming document. The Virginia Beach analysis was corroborated by the Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization's (HRTPO) staff analysis. These two independent reviews clearly reflect that of the nine VDOT districts within the state, six of them have increases, one remains the same, and two of them have decreases as compared to the previous SYIP. Hampton Roads receives 2.1 percent less in funding with this proposal than we were programmed for in last year's SYIP.

We believe this is certainly not what the General Assembly intended. This is certainly not what the HRTPO expected. This is certainly not what the City Council of Virginia Beach expected and it is certainly not what the citizens of Virginia Beach expected. We also determined that VDOT state-wide programs retained \$5.4 billion which is 46% of the entire \$11.6 billion transportation program. At the end of last week, the City of Virginia Beach has shared their findings with VDOT leadership and surfaced our concerns with other transportation leaders in an effort to make them aware of what the 1,200 page VDOT SYIP contains. We have received no confirmation that our two independent analyses contain misinformation. We have been advised that Hampton Roads will receive additional funds to support the Route 460 project. This \$1.25 billion project will be coming from the statewide section of the SYIP. We would encourage VDOT programmers to work diligently to prepare an apples-to-apples comparison before utilizing this response to increase funding allocated to the Hampton Roads District. Route 460 funding allocation should be proportionately divided according to VDOT District boundaries (Hampton Roads and Richmond), and the remaining \$4.1 billion of state wide program allocation, should be apportioned to the respective districts so that a comprehensive comparison at the district level can be made of the entire Virginia Department of Transportation program.

One might see the amount allocated to the Hampton Roads District as sizably more than any of the other VDOT districts. We caution leaning too heavily on this because for two decades the Hampton Roads District has patiently waited for VDOT to complete critical investments needed in the Northern Virginia and the Bristol districts. Long term promises on the part of the CTB and VDOT were met with long term patience on the part of the HRTPO, and only recently has the funding finally begun to swing back towards the Hampton Roads District to begin to address the multitude of intense transportation issues faced by our citizens, businesses and visitors. We cannot allow the promises of the past to be forgotten because we are unable to wish away the transportation issues we face today.

In 2007, the CTB was no longer able to provide VDOT new construction funds for localities via the Urban Road Program. As a result, many locality's road construction

programs dried up. This was not the case in Virginia Beach. The City Council of Virginia Beach remained steadfast in responding to their constituents' number one concern - transportation congestion and safety. The City of Virginia Beach has, since that time, dedicated over \$140 million in new construction funding to keep our critical projects moving forward. We have also obtained significant levels of competitively obtained funding be it through the CMAQ or RSTP and Revenue Sharing programs or through the American Recovery and Revitalization Act Stimulus Funds. Much of this competitively obtained funding was possible because of the proactive investment made by our City Council on behalf of our Virginia Beach citizens.

Faced with significant urban roads and strategic bridge issues, Governor McDonnell provided substantial transportation funding two years ago to ensure the Commonwealth's largest city could continue to meet the demand established by its two largest industries, the military and tourism, while struggling to adjust to the impacts of the Great Recession. We acknowledge that the CTB was unable to fund all seven projects in Virginia Beach recommended by the Governor's Transportation Plan – and reduced that list to only four projects. The proposed FY14-19 SYIP with the expected new funding adds no additional dollars to any of Virginia Beach's road projects that were awaiting funding and whose criticality has only grown in importance. Additionally, the proposed VDOT SYIP actually shifts funding from our City's most critical transportation project, the Lesner Bridge Replacement. The project goes from being fully funded in FY14 to reprogramming funding two years beyond the currently scheduled completion date of the bridge replacement. As part of our efforts to bring this to the attention of CTB leadership, we have been assured that this reprogramming will be corrected. Based upon those assurances, Virginia Beach will proceed as currently scheduled to initiate advertisement within the next 90 days. This will result in a contract award this fall and an NTP issued to start construction in January of 2014. VDOT's FY14-19 SYIP must be adjusted to reflect a sufficiency of funds available for construction as we are scheduled to complete the construction not later than the spring of 2017. Current VDOT programming has funding extended into FY17 and FY18.

In City Manager Jim Spore's letter, we address our top five critical transportation needs the first being the Lesner Bridge Replacement. The second critical transportation need receiving no additional funding in VDOTs proposed SYIP is the I-64/I-264 Interchange Improvement Project. The City of Virginia Beach has long collaborated with VDOT leadership to encourage them to program this \$300 million project into phases. The first phase is what we refer to as the Greenwich Road Flyover. VDOT has graciously continued to develop the design and has now reached the 60% level. We encourage VDOT to relook at their SYIP and to provide funding for Phase I of this important interstate safety improvement project so that design and right of way acquisition can be completed and so that the Greenwich Flyover is fully funded through construction in the FY14-19 SYIP. This project retains its objective TPO ranking as the number two most viable interstate project in our region.

Critical items three, four and five in Mr. Spore's comments, address three legacy urban road new construction projects. All three are reaching their FHWA 20-year-term-limit for execution. Not one dollar is provided for any of these three projects in the new SYIP. All three of these projects retain their criticality and their certification within the Long Range Plan. All three of these projects were originally recommended in the Governor's Transportation Plan. All three of these projects were removed by the CTB and VDOT due to lack of funding in the previous SYIP. It is unexplainable why, with new monies, these three projects are not addressed – that additional funding was not added and that the expectation of our City Council and our citizens was not met. Indian River, Elbow and Laskin Roads all demand attention and commitment of new funding for projects that are about to expire and incur reimbursement penalties by the Federal Highway Administration. We consider the absence of additional funds programmed in the FY14-19 SYIP to be a serious omission. The City of Virginia Beach should not be saddled with the reimbursement requirements which FHWA demands because VDOT programmers failed to get the projects funded. The sadness of all this is that our citizens, businesses and visitors continue to suffer the transportation impacts due to lack of funding for the urban road program. Our expectation was the new HB2313 funding would begin to address these outstanding issues beginning with those

Governor's Transportation Projects which the CTB could not accommodate in years past and was forced to remove them from the previous SYIP.

We realize these statements this evening are not a glowing affirmation of VDOT's programming efforts to implement new transportation funding. As a taxpaying homeowner of the Commonwealth, I certainly expected more than this programming document presents to address the pent up transportation issues in our Hampton Roads Region. This document falls significantly short in meeting the promises of the past and the hope of the future for our region. The City of Virginia Beach looks forward to receiving amended documents reflecting allocations of funding toward both our regional interstate projects as well as our municipal urban road projects because without amending this document, the VDOT FY14-19 SYIP will not satisfactorily meet expectations.

This respectfully concludes my remarks.