

Evaluating Significant Projects that May Ease Congestion in Northern Virginia DRAFT Interim Progress Report #10

July 1, 2017

This progress report provides information on the tasks underway since the January 2017 Interim Progress Report #9 and integration of the Ratings Study (HB599) project evaluation process into the update of NVTA's TransAction.

Legislative Background

Chapters 768 and 825 of the 2012 Acts of Assembly amended the *Code of Virginia* by adding § 33.2-257, directing the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), in on-going coordination with the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB), the Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT), and the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA), to evaluate and develop a quantitative rating system for at least 25 significant transportation projects in and near the Northern Virginia Transportation District, to the extent funds are available for such a purpose. (The effort to develop the rating system and evaluate and rate the projects is hereinafter collectively referred to as the "Ratings Study" or "study.")

The enacting legislation directs that the project evaluation and rating be based on the project's expected effectiveness at easing congestion and, to the extent possible, the rating should also be based on the project's expected improvement in regional mobility in the event of a homeland security emergency. The evaluation and ratings are to be completed and published on VDOT's website every four years. Interim progress reports are to be published on VDOT's website every six months.

The first set of ratings for NVTA's FY15-16 Program were completed and posted on VDOT's website in January 2015. These ratings were used by the NVTA to select projects for funding in their FY15-16 Program. The projects selected for funding for FY15-16 by the NVTA can be found at:

<http://www.thenovaauthority.org/wp-content/uploads/FY2014-16-Program-Project-Updates.12.10.15.pdf>

The second set of ratings for NVTA's FY17 Program were completed and posted on VDOT's website in May 2016. These ratings were used by the NVTA in their scoring of projects for funding under the FY17 Program. The projects selected for funding for FY17 by the NVTA can be found at:

<http://www.thenovaauthority.org/wp-content/uploads/NVTA-FY2017-Adopted-Program-Press-Release-with-Project-List.pdf>

A description of the evaluation methodology and the ratings model, and both sets of rated projects are available at:

http://www.virginia.gov/projects/northernvirginia/evaluating_significant_projects.asp.

The full text of the *Code of Virginia* § 33.2-257 can be found at:

<http://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/title33.2/chapter2/section33.2-257/>

This Interim Progress Report #10 serves as an update on tasks in progress and new activities commenced since January 2017.

Update on tasks from Interim Progress Report #9 – January 2017

1. Conduct ongoing coordination with the CTB and the NVTA: VDOT continually coordinates with the Northern Virginia representatives of the CTB and with the NVTA.

Status – As noted earlier Code of Virginia section 33.2-257 requires VDOT to evaluate highway, transit and technology projects within the NOVA District and rate each project's effectiveness in reducing congestion and improving regional mobility in the event of a homeland security emergency, using computerized modeling and simulation techniques. The legislation states that VDOT may rely on transportation modeling performed by others, including the NVTA, provided the modeling is in accordance with the requirements of section 33.2-257.

VDOT staff had discussions with the NVTA staff on the measures of effectiveness for developing the ratings, and progress on development of ratings methodology to apply to projects. NVTA is in the process of updating their long range regional transportation plan, TransAction. VDOT has been fully engaged as part of the committee overseeing the development of TransAction. In consultation with VDOT and the Secretary of Transportation's office, NVTA has initiated a process whereby the Ratings Study process will be integrated into their TransAction planning effort.

VDOT and NVTA have entered into an agreement with the NVTA whereby VDOT will provide funding to NVTA for this purpose. The same consultant, measures of effectiveness and model used for the earlier Ratings Study evaluations are being used for NVTA's plan and rating system. NVTA is developing numerical ratings for major corridors and segments. Once the TransAction Plan is adopted the programming process will begin in December 2017. NVTA, VDOT and DRPT will further refine the project ratings process during the programming process to ensure compliance with the requirements of section 33.2-257.

Next steps - The following represents the next key steps and the anticipated schedule:

- Continue coordination with, and support of, the NVTA on the integration of the Ratings Study project evaluation process into the update of TransAction Plan to develop ratings for projects.
- Public Outreach for the TransAction Plan from June 9th to July 23rd.
- After the anticipated adoption of the TransAction Plan in October 2017, there will be a call for projects for NVTA's FY 18-23 six year funding program. Programming for the six year program is anticipated to begin in December 2017. During the programming process, NVTA, VDOT and DRPT will further refine the project ratings using section 33.2-257 compliant project ratings derived from the TransAction modeling. The NVTA's FY 18-23 Six Year Program is anticipated to be adopted in June 2018. VDOT will post the ratings on the VDOT website before the Public Hearing for the NVTA's Six Year Program, anticipated to be held in spring 2018.