COMMISSIONER’S MESSAGE

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) held its annual round of meetings for residents to learn about projects funded through the Six-Year Improvement Program (SYIP). The program allocates money to improve roads, bridges, sidewalks, bike paths, rail and transit across the state.

Following this year’s General Assembly passage of House Bill 2 (HB2) — which created a new process for a standard set of priorities for most new transportation projects — the current 2015-2020 SYIP is being adjusted to incorporate this new selection formula. The process will determine critical transportation priorities through a fair and objective analysis. Following public comment, the Commonwealth Transportation Board will vote on the revised 2015-2020 program in November.

Public participation is also key to the success of several projects aimed at reducing congestion along the U.S. 29 corridor in Albemarle County, just north of Charlottesville. A committee of area leaders has been meeting twice monthly to advise VDOT during the projects’ design phase and will continue to do so during construction. The projects include rebuilding a major intersection with an underpass for through traffic.

Charles Kilpatrick, P.E.
VDOT Commissioner

U.S. 50 interchanges open in Arlington

VDOT teamed with Arlington County to reconstruct two 1950s-era interchanges on U.S. 50 (Arlington Boulevard) for better capacity, access and safety for vehicles, bicyclists and pedestrians. The $40 million project included rebuilding the bridges over U.S. 50 at 10th Street and Courthouse Road. It also separated local and turn vehicles from through traffic and improved bike trails along the corridor.

Adding dedicated acceleration and deceleration lanes on Arlington Boulevard improved traffic flow by managing the merge of entering and exiting vehicles. Signalized intersections also improved access from eastbound Arlington Boulevard at both interchanges.

Statewide Construction Quality Compliance

Construction quality, as evaluated by VDOT’s Construction Quality Improvement Program (CQIP), measures project compliance with contract quality requirements. A checklist of more than 1,100 construction quality checkpoints guides this critical assessment. The results show VDOT’s commitment to building quality roads and bridges, while seeking the opportunity for continuous improvement. FY 2015 compliance continues to meet the 91 percent target at 93.3 percent, as compared to FY 2014’s rating of 93.7 percent for the same period.

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ALL CONTRACTS COMPLETED ON TIME AND WITHIN BUDGET

Of the 73 construction and maintenance contracts planned for completion by the end of the first quarter of fiscal year 2015, 44 (83 percent) were completed on time.

Of the 74 construction and maintenance contracts actually completed by the end of the first quarter of fiscal year 2015, 69 (93.2 percent) have been completed within budget to date.

SCHEDULED CONTRACTS COMPLETED ON TIME

Of the 26 construction contracts planned for completion by the end of the first quarter of FY 2015, 21 (80.8 percent) were completed on time.

Of the 27 maintenance contracts planned for completion by the end of the first quarter of FY 2015, 23 (85.2 percent) were completed on time.
Completed projects
Sycolin Road overpass, Loudoun County: The $17 million overpass traverses the Route 7/U.S. 15 bypass.
Fairfax County bridges: New structures, each costing $1 million and taking two months to complete, opened on Towlston Road in Great Falls and on Twin Lakes Drive in Clifton.

Gloucester Parkway extension begins
Work began to extend Gloucester Parkway 0.8 miles between Loudoun County Parkway and the intersection of Pacific and Nokes boulevards. When completed in 2016, the $40 million project will improve the connectivity of the road network in eastern Loudoun County.

Grant awarded for passenger ferry
VDOT was one of five transportation agencies to get funding through the Passenger Ferry Grant Program, part of MAP-21, the current federal transportation authorization. The $3.38 million will help VDOT implement a commuter passenger ferry between Alexandria and Joint Base Anacostia-Bolling in southeast Washington, D.C.

2 intersections safer for bikes, pedestrians
VDOT worked with the city of Charlottesville to improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians at two busy intersections near the University of Virginia. The first, at Rugby Road and University Avenue, involved painting a new type of markings to create “waiting areas” – or “bike boxes” – for cyclists wanting to turn left. The other, at Jefferson Park Avenue and Emmet Street, partially supported through MAP-21’s Transportation Alternatives Program, added a dedicated bike lane, new crosswalk and wider sidewalks.

Recycled pavement on I-81 performs well
The 3.6-mile section of southbound Interstate 81 in Augusta County that VDOT rehabilitated in 2011, using three pavement-recycling methods, is performing “well” after three years of high-volume truck traffic, according to a new report from VDOT’s research division, the Virginia Center for Transportation Innovation and Research (VCTIR). The environmentally friendly paving methods saved millions of dollars by recycling existing road material back into the pavement structure. The project also reduced the estimated construction time by about two-thirds.

I-64 wildlife study to improve safety
VCTIR is conducting a three-year study to identify strategic locations where VDOT can implement measures to reduce animal-vehicle collisions. The project is analyzing a section of Interstate 64 on Afton Mountain in Albemarle, Nelson and Augusta counties, due to the high number of such crashes in that area. The study will be completed in late 2015.

Awards and honors
Commonwealth of Virginia Innovative Technology Symposium (COVITS): VDOT’s secure external portal for agency business partners and vendors – OutsideVDOT – received a Governor’s Technology Award in the category of “IT as Efficiency Driver – Government to Business” at the annual COVITS meeting.