

# CHAPTER 1: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Route 29 has a unique role to play in the transportation infrastructure of the Commonwealth of Virginia. As Central Virginia's primary north-south roadway, it spans communities that have vastly different characters and objectives for future growth. Unfortunately, as a shared transportation resource, the corridor has and continues to be exploited at the expense of long term goals. Mobility and safety have fallen victim to growing congestion and decreased capacity on the roadway. Rural character, scenic vistas, and historic features have sometimes been compromised to accommodate development pressures. As such, at the request of Virginia's Commonwealth Transportation Board in response to requests from members of the General Assembly representing areas in the corridor, as well as local elected officials, this study was initiated to examine the functionality of the roadway through the 219 miles extending north from the Virginia/North Carolina line to Interstate 64 at Gainesville over the next twenty years. As a multi-modal transportation study, it takes into account not only the numerous transportation resources available in the corridor, but also the rail corridor running parallel to it, and the land uses that interact with it.

The study lays out the background and need for transportation improvements; defines a vision for the Route 29 corridor; presents a means of getting to the vision, through planning tools and concepts; recommends application of the vision to



particular geographic areas along the corridor; and suggests next steps, including policy changes and financing solutions that could be pursued in the implementation of recommendations.

The vision for the Route 29 corridor is to improve the transportation functionality of the roadway so it can meet the needs of all who use it. This will be achieved through the use of both transportation and land use solutions that maintain the roadway's scenic and historic qualities, while promoting multi-modal transportation and nodal, mixed-use, transit supportive development, where appropriate. Planning tools, including



distributed networks, access management, and environmental protection, are emphasized throughout the recommendations, and recommendations are tailored to be context sensitive. Policy options to improve transportation functionality are presented: these range from voluntary to mandatory. Funding options that include local, regional and corridor-wide programs are also explored for their potential to meet financing needs in the future.

As the result of this study, it is requested that the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) as well as local governments and regional agencies (Planning Districts and Metropolitan Planning Organizations) adopt resolutions accepting the study. Following the adoption of the study, an ongoing dialogue should begin with respect to policy options and regulatory requirements. It is further recommended that VDOT and DRPT develop a corridor implementation program (or Master Plan) in cooperation with localities, MPOs and planning districts. A combination of short, mid, and long-term actions by the General Assembly, CTB, VDOT, DRPT, regional agencies, and local governments will ultimately serve to implement the recommendations of this study, in the interest of protecting and maintaining the Route 29 corridor as a scenic, historic, and multi-modal thoroughfare.

