

Evaluating Significant Projects that May Ease Congestion in Northern Virginia DRAFT Interim Progress Report #11

January 1, 2018

This progress report provides information on the tasks underway since the July 2017 Interim Progress Report #10 and integration of the Ratings Study (Chapter 768) 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/FY2017-Program.-Adopted-7.15.16.pdf>

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

http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/northernvirginia/evaluating_significant_projects.asp.

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

<https://law.lis.virginia.gov/vacode/33.2-257%20/>

This Interim Progress Report #11 serves as an update on tasks in progress and new activities commenced since July 2017.

Update on tasks from Interim Progress Report #10 – July 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 - 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 statute states that VDOT may rely on modeling work done by others, including the NVTA, provided that such modeling is in accord with the statute.

The NVTA Board adopted the long range regional transportation plan, TransAction, on October 12th, 2017. VDOT has been fully engaged as part of the committee overseeing the development of TransAction. The NVTA, in consultation with VDOT and the Secretary of Transportation's office, integrated the Ratings Study process into their TransAction planning effort. VDOT entered into an agreement with the NVTA whereby VDOT will provide funding to the NVTA for this purpose. The same consultant and model used for the earlier Ratings Study evaluations are being used for NVTA's plan and rating system.

NVTA has developed numerical ratings for major corridors and segments as part of the TransAction Planning Process. In developing the ratings, VDOT staff had discussions with the NVTA staff on the measures of effectiveness that would be used and the methodology to develop the rating for individual projects based on the corridor and segment ratings. To validate the methodology, it was agreed to develop and provide project rating scores for a sample of projects of different sizes and modes. VDOT reviewed the ratings and the methodology and will arrange a meeting to discuss the results with the NVTA staff.

After adopting the TRANSACTION Plan, the NVTA initiated the development of its FY19-24 Six Year Improvement Program by issuing a call for projects. The programming process

began in December 2017. NVTA, VDOT and DRPT will further refine the project ratings process during the programming process in order to ensure compliance with the requirements of § 33.2-257. There was a call for projects for the NVTA Six Year Program from October 12th to December 15th. A list of projects to be scored has been under development and will be posted in February, 2018.

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

- List of projects to be posted – February 15th, 2018
- Post project rating results on the project website – March 15th, 2018