



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

1601 Orange Road
Culpeper, Virginia 22701

Charles A. Kilpatrick, P.E.
Commissioner

October 14, 2016

The Honorable Christopher N. Granger
Chairman, Board of Supervisors
County of Fauquier County
10 Hotel Street
Warrenton, Virginia 20186

Dear Mr. Granger:

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), with assistance from Fauquier County staff, law enforcement agencies, and the Virginia Trucking Association, recently conducted a public information meeting regarding a project to establish a truck safety rest area on Interstate 66 westbound. The project entailed the use of an existing paved area that was originally built to serve as a safety rest area when I-66 was constructed in the late 1970's. A significant shortage of truck parking spaces was identified along the I-66 corridor as a result of a statewide comprehensive Truck Parking Study conducted by VDOT in 2015. VDOT had also received a 2013 request in the form of a resolution from the Fauquier County Transportation Committee in support of the project.

The purpose of the project is to enhance safety along the I-66 corridor by providing safe parking for trucks traveling the corridor. The project utilizes an existing VDOT safety rest area, built with the interstate during the 1970s, that is accessible from the WB lanes of I-66 and is located at Mile 17.2 in Fauquier County.

Citizens who attended the Public Information Meeting were able to view several multi-disciplinary exhibits describing the needs and concerns for the project. In total, six (6) "stations" were prepared for citizens to observe and interact with the representatives at each station. The subject matter at these stations included Maintenance, Lighting/Safety Rest Area Program, Environmental, Virginia Truck Parking Study, Virginia Trucking Association, and Law Enforcement.

A total of 84 people attended the Public Information Meeting, as indicated by the meeting sign-in sheets. A total of 90 comments were received (not counting duplicates) during the comment period that ended on September 10, 2016. This includes letters of comment or concern received prior to the Public Information Meeting. Of the 90 comments received, 19 comments (21%) indicated that they supported the project, 69 (77%) of comments indicated that they did not support the project and 3 (3%) made no indication.

The Honorable Christopher N. Granger
October 14, 2016
Page 2

The major concerns of those opposing the project include cost; suitability of the Markham location for a safety rest area; environmental impacts to the area, including air quality, wildlife and Goose Creek; potential brightness of the proposed lighting and how it will affect the area; and a concern that the proposed safety rest area is too small to make a difference.

After an extensive review of the comments received as a result of the public information meeting, VDOT will suspend project development efforts for the truck rest area in Markham and review other alternatives to providing safe parking for trucks travelling the I-66 corridor including legislative and technology solutions.

This decision should in no way be taken to indicate the Department does not consider the truck parking shortage a serious public safety issue and opening of the truck rest area remains one of the viable solutions to solving the parking shortage. The Department plans to proactively consider in more detail other recommendations for managing the truck parking shortage. These recommendations include partnering with private industry and local governments to increase capacity and related improvements and provide accurate and real-time information about truck parking supply. If upon completion of these strategies, the situation does not improve, VDOT will consider the safety benefits and cost effectiveness of adding truck parking spaces at State owned facilities including the I66 location in Markham.

The consideration and implementation of these additional recommendations will require the involvement and input from a variety of stakeholders both public and private. Some of the recommendations may be implemented more easily, quickly, and cost effectively than others but all alternatives will be considered. Our point of contact for this effort will be Dean Gustafson, Division Administrator for Operations.

We appreciate Fauquier County's interest in this important public safety issue and know you will continue to partner with us to develop strategies that will improve and enhance safety along our transportation facilities.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss this further, please call me at 540-347-6443.

Sincerely,



D. Mark Nesbit, P.E.
Warrenton Resident Engineer

cc: Commissioner Kilpatrick
Ms. Alison DeTuncq
Mr. Scott Kasproicz