



Media Advisory

For Release: Dec. 9, 2015

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Statement of the NVTC Chairman Pertaining to the Commonwealth Transportation Board's Action on I-66

Arlington, VA – In response to the Commonwealth Transportation Board's decision today to execute the Memorandum of Agreement for the *Transform 66: Inside the Beltway Project*, which designates the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) as the organization responsible for selecting and funding multimodal improvements in the corridor, NVTC Chairman David F. Snyder issued the following statement:

NVTC looks forward to forging a strong partnership with the Commonwealth as it implements this innovative and comprehensive solution for improving transportation along this vital corridor. While there are many divergent views about how to address congestion in the I-66 corridor, this project – with its investments in transit; technology upgrades; roadway, intersection and park-and-ride lot improvements; as well as carpools and vanpools – will provide real congestion relief. In fact, we will achieve many times over the measurable benefits, including the number of people able to travel quickly and reliably on I-66 and the surrounding roads.

This agreement puts decision making about multimodal investments in the hands of the region. As my colleague, Del. Tom Rust, put it: “NVTC and the region are in the best position to make decisions about what investments are most important to the region. It gives NVTC the opportunity to set standards about how projects are chosen.”

It also ensures that we are talking about addressing congestion in the entire corridor – both on I-66 and the adjacent streets. We understand that transportation in this corridor is a system with many parts. Communities along I-66 have justifiably been concerned about the effect tolling will have on streets. The agreement takes congestion on arterials into account, allowing for investments in transit and roadway improvements on arterials. Through NVTC, local leaders will control the spending of toll dollars to improve mobility in the corridor, which includes Routes 29, 50 and 7, Wilson Boulevard, and other highly traveled roads.

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This agreement ensures that we are using all the available tools to address congestion, including transit, park-and-ride lots, carpools and vanpools, roadway improvements that help both transit and cars, technology, and more. As NVTC Commissioner and Fairfax County Supervisor Jeff McKay noted: “No amount of widening can do enough to move people through the area. Transit must be part of the solution. The agreement locks this down and makes sure it happens. And that is something did not happen didn't happen on I-395.”

Those of us who regularly travel this corridor know that it is unique. At one end is a virtual wall called the Potomac River and beyond it very limited roadways that will not expand and indeed are contracting for cars. It is also marked by traffic lights at almost all exit ramps and already heavily congested local roads. For these reasons, I believe that the true long-term solution for this corridor lies not in focusing precious resources primarily on more lanes for cars, as that will simply speed a few more people into the inevitable gridlock caused by these unchangeable realities. Instead, we should focus most of our investments on providing safe, reliable and attractive alternatives to driving alone, useful for people wherever they live and work.

NVTC, the region's premier transit organization, works to ensure that Northern Virginia businesses and residents have access to a network of high-quality transit systems in order to sustain the region's economic competitiveness and quality of life. NVTC – which funds and promotes transit in the counties of Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church – supports DASH, ART, CUE, Fairfax Connector, Loudoun County Transit, and Metrobus bus systems as well as Metrorail and the Virginia Railway Express. For more information, visit www.NoVaTransit.org or call 703-524-3322.

NVTC