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- [Another Step Toward a Solution for I-66:](#) VDOT just released a Request for Information which will allow the private sector to submit solutions for one of our most congested corridors. I believe this request for information gives us the opportunity to build on the success of the I-495 Express lanes, leverage the private sector and provide quick relief to the almost 24 - 7 congestion on I-66.
- [New Child Care Regulations Good But Not Good Enough:](#) The Board took several small steps to help the 400 existing state licensed child care providers comply with new state regulations and our zoning laws. However, they will still be forced to go through a complicated and expensive zoning process. My fear is that many of these day care providers, that have largely operated without incident, will drop children, go out of business, or worse yet operate unlicensed.
- [Two More Pieces of Good News on the Transportation Front:](#) Two more announcements from the Governor's office this week - opening the shoulder lanes on I-495 between Old Dominion Drive and the George Washington Parkway during peak traffic, and also raising the speed limit on the I-495 Express Lanes to 65mph.
- [Countywide Transit Network meeting:](#) FCDOT will be presenting information about their "High Quality Transit Network" plans. Found out where and when below.

Another Step Towards a Solution for I-66 Congestion

Earlier today, the Virginia Department of Transportation released a request for information ([click here](#)) regarding the future of I-66; one of our most congested corridors. This request marks a pivotal point in I-66's history, as it allows the private sector to submit comments, ideas, and solutions directly to VDOT to address this congestion.

I believe this request for information gives us the opportunity to build on the success of the I-495 Express lanes, leverage the private sector and provide quick relief to the almost 24 - 7 congestion on I-66. An "Express Lanes" like solution would also open this corridor to reliable time advantaged mass transit and carpooling, extend a growing network of lanes dedicated to mass transit and carpools, and ease congestion on I-66 and surrounding roads.

Since I first took office in 2007, I have made addressing I-66 congestion a top priority - from extending HOV hours, to opening the ramps at Monument and Stringfellow, to use of the shoulder lanes during periods of congestion (coming in late 2014/early 2015). One of my first actions as Supervisor in January 2008 was to ask the Board of Supervisors to request that VDOT revive the I-66 Environmental Impact Study (EIS). Restarting the study was one of the first actions Secretary of Transportation Sean Connaughton took when he became Secretary in 2009. The expected completion of the EIS by the end of summer is the primary reason why we are here today - looking at solutions.

I would like to thank Governor Bob McDonnell and Secretary of Transportation Sean Connaughton for their continued leadership and commitment to bring real, timely solutions to address I-66 congestion. Fixing I-66 is a top priority; the effects of I-66 congestion are felt throughout the region and impact the quality of life of our residents and our businesses.

New Child Care Regulations: Good But Not Good Enough

At last Tuesday's Board of Supervisors meeting the Board took several small steps to help child care providers comply with new state regulations. While the steps were good, I don't believe they were good enough. Over 400 (of the 500) child care providers that have been providing quality child care in Fairfax County, largely without complaints or incidents, will now be forced to go to the Board of Zoning Appeals (BZA) for a Special Permit, or in some cases before the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors for a Special Exception. My fear is that many of these licensed day care providers will drop

children, go out of business, or worse yet operate unlicensed rather than go through a complicated and expensive zoning BZA process.

These providers have been providing services with state licenses for many years with little to no issue. However, due to a change in the state permitting process, they must now prove they are in compliance with local zoning law-this means a trip to the BZA if they have more than 5 children in a townhouse or 7 in single family home. This forces them into a complicated and expensive process that will require significant County staff resources and will flood the BZA with applications that will take over a year to get through. I am not sure the County nor the BZA can handle this influx without significantly impacting their current workloads. Additionally, in a 7-3 vote with Supervisors Cook, Frey, and I opposing, the Board voted to have child care providers in the PDH, PDC, PRM, or PTC zoning districts go through a more expensive (\$16K filing fee alone) Special Exception process that includes hearings before both the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors instead of the \$435 fee and a BZA hearing.

I did however vote for the final measure because we were able to significantly reduce the application fee from \$1,100 to \$435, streamline the application process, raise the number of children that can be cared for to the state license number and create a short term ombudsman position to assist the providers. Supervisor Hyland and I attempted to significantly reduce the number of providers that would need to go through this process and attempted to find an administrative process but the motion and efforts to change the requirements were unsuccessful.

There will no doubt be confusion with these new changes, so in order to assist providers in navigating this complex new process, I am co-hosting a town hall with Chairman Bulova on Saturday, July 20th in the Board Auditorium at the Fairfax County Government Center starting at 10am. Information will be presented by the Department of Planning and Zoning, the Office for Children, and staff from the Board of Zoning Appeals to explain the changes in detail and outline the process to attain a special permit. I invite all interested parties to attend. The County has also updated its webpage dedicated to child care facilities at <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpz/zoning/homechildcarefacilities/>.

Two More Pieces of Good News on the Transportation Front

Governor McDonnell and Secretary Connaughton released two more pieces of good news for commuters this week by announcing that the shoulder on I-495 between Old Dominion Drive and the George Washington Parkway interchange would be open to traffic during rush hour, and also that the speed limit on the I-495 Express Lanes would be raised to 65mph.

The shoulder lanes project will rebuild the left shoulder of I-495 North so it can be converted to an additional travel lane. The lane will only be open during afternoon peak travel times and will be lane-controlled by overhead signals. There will remain a safety shoulder on the right side through this stretch of I-495. The existing shoulder will be reconfigured to accommodate the change, and improvements are not expected to impact local bridges or overpasses. Construction is scheduled to start in mid-2014. The new lane will be open to traffic by late 2014.

In regards to the Express Lanes, the speed limit is now 65mph effective immediately. VDOT and the Express Lanes team of Transurban-Fluor conducted safety studies to ensure that increasing the limit was safe - the results came out positive as the new speed limit is proportional to the speeds seen on the regular lanes, and allows for safe merging and lane changing.

My thanks again to the Governor and Secretary Connaughton for their common sense approach to our traffic problems, and their resolve to improve the quality of life for our citizens and businesses.

Countywide Transit Network Meeting

The Fairfax County Department of Transportation (FCDOT) will be hosting the third round of public meetings on the Countywide Transit Network on July 10. My hope is that this effort will lead to the development of a cost effective interconnected network of mass transit operating in semi-dedicated corridors throughout the region. FCDOT will be providing an update on this project and based on further analysis of the different alternatives discussed at prior meetings will be discussing their proposed "High Quality Transit Network." I hope to see you there.

The meeting will be held will be an open house format held in meeting rooms 4 and 5 at the Fairfax County Government Center,(12000 Government Center Parkway) from 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m., with a twenty-minute presentation at 7:00 p.m.

[Visit the project website](#) for the most up to date news on this project.