



City of Alexandria, Virginia
301 King Street, Suite 2300
Alexandria, Virginia 22314



William D. Euille
Mayor

March 21, 2011

City Hall: (703) 746-4500
Home: (703) 836-2680
Fax: (703) 838-6433
william.euille@alexandriava.gov

The Honorable Sean T. Connaughton
Secretary of Transportation
Virginia Department of Transportation
1401 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Secretary Connaughton:

I am writing as a follow-up to our conversation the morning of March 17, 2011, when we discussed the VDOT proposed HOV/Transit Ramp at I-395 and Seminary Road. At a City of Alexandria BRAC-133 Advisory Group meeting on March 16, a number of our residents in attendance expressed their belief that the appropriate level of environmental documentation for this project should be a full Environmental Assessment (EA) from the outset. Several meeting participants perceived that a full Environmental Assessment from the outset would not result in any threat to the \$80 million in VDOT funding for the project.

The understanding I took away from our discussion is that, should the City insist on pursuing the Environmental Assessment process for the HOV/Transit Ramp project from the outset and VDOT and FHWA consent, it would constitute a very real threat to the newly available funding, as any delay would open opportunities for this funding to be redirected to various unfunded Interstate improvement projects around the State for which there is great demand.

As we discussed, there are implications of pursuing an Environmental Assessment in lieu of a Categorical Exclusion (CE) for the proposed HOV/Transit Ramp. You advised that FHWA is the ultimate arbiter with regards to the appropriate level of environmental documentation, and that we can expect a determination within the next 10 days or so. I also understood that if, at any point during the CE process, any significant impacts are found, the EA process would be triggered.

My intent in writing this letter is to confirm my understanding of our conversation on these critical issues. I appreciate your responsiveness as I am sure this will be a point of discussion at the next City Council meeting on March 22, 2011.

Sincerely,

William D. Euille
Mayor

cc: The Honorable Bob McDonnell
The Honorable Members of City Council
James K. Hartmann, City Manager
Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager
Richard J. Baier, P.E., Director, TES
BRAC-133 Advisory Group

"Home Town of George Washington and Robert E. Lee"