



*Protecting and restoring the lands and waters of the Virginia Piedmont,
while building stronger, more sustainable communities*

March 24, 2025

Commissioner Stephen C. Brich, P.E.
Virginia Department of Transportation
1401 E Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

RE: I-66 EB & WB Superstructure Replacement over Broad Run (0066-030-543 and DHR File 2023-0072)

Dear Commissioner Brich,

The PEC concurs in principle with the proposed bridge replacement if VDOT analysis shows it to be the most cost- effective option over the life cycle as opposed to replacing the superstructure of the existing structure. Our reservation and main concern has to do with the proposed width of the now-proposed new bridge. This appears to be an extensive and costly overbuild. It increases:

- Initial construction costs
- Future maintenance costs because of the larger structure
- Future inspection costs

We believe that maintenance of traffic is a challenge, but with modern wayfinding in almost every vehicle, we offer a more cost-effective alternative:

- Use Rapid Reconstruction techniques to rebuild the bridge in six weeks.
- Contractually schedule and incentivize early completion for the least traffic time of year – likely summer.
- Coordinate with regional governments, American Automobile Association, industry and trucking associations for planned detours on Route 55 and Route 7 or other routes based on origin-destination data available from cell phones.
- Plan on one lane each direction at the project during that six- week period.
- Evaluate feasibility and cost effectiveness of a temporary barrier deployed by a Road Zipper to run traffic two lanes in the predominant direction against one lane in the opposite direction. This could ensure two lanes in the predominant direction during morning and evening peak hours as well as Sunday afternoon/evening peak for much (perhaps all) of the project duration. It would involve additional temporary grading,

Main Office PO Box 460 Warrenton, VA 20188 (T) 540.347.2334 (F) 540.349.9003


pavement, and reduced speed. It also has the potential to simplify permanent construction and cut costs through reduced mobilizations and phases for that same permanent construction.

- Communicate with media extensively over the two preceding years so that it is planned for by those impacted.

In a time of increasing public concern over costly and excessive public expenditures, and when VDoT has struggled to secure and sustain maintenance funds for new construction brought into the system, it would seem that reducing the scope of this project would be an excellent place to manage the costs of today, and for tomorrow.

In conclusion, we believe the outside width limits of the existing bridge structures can be maintained or possibly only exceeded by a foot or two. This would minimize impact on nearby resources and save valuable Commonwealth construction and future maintenance funds to apply to the many other much-needed improvements. In our view, the Section 106 impacts amply documented elsewhere highlight the necessity of these cost stewardship actions that should be taken.

Sincerely,



Christopher G. Miller, President
Piedmont Environmental Council
PO Box 460
Warrenton, VA 20188

CC: Members, Commonwealth Transportation Board
Raymond Ezell, District Archeologist, VDoT