



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
1401 EAST BROAD STREET
RICHMOND, VIRGINIA 23219 2000

Stephen C. Brich, P.E.
COMMISSIONER

October 4, 2018

The Honorable Charles W. Carrico Sr.
Senate of Virginia
P.O. Box 396
Richmond VA 23218

The Honorable David Yancey
Virginia House of Delegates
P.O. Box 1163
Newport News VA 23601

Dear Gentlemen:

I am pleased to submit this report in accordance with § 46.2-749.3 (A.3) of the Code of Virginia. Section 46.2-749.3 (A.3) directs the Commissioner of Highways to annually report the “traffic volumes on the HOV facilities that result in a degraded condition as identified in SAFETEA-LU or other applicable federal law and reported to the Federal Highway Administration”.

As set forth in 23 U.S.C. 166, a High Occupancy Vehicle or “HOV” facility is considered to be degraded if vehicles operating on the facility are failing to maintain a minimum average operating speed 90 percent of the time over a consecutive 180-day period during morning or evening weekday peak hour periods (or both). The minimum operating speed means (a) 45 miles per hour, in the case of a HOV facility with a speed limit of 50 miles per hour or greater; and (b) not more than 10 miles per hour below the speed limit, in the case of a HOV facility with a speed limit of less than 50 miles per hour (United States Code, Title 23, Section 166).

At this time, the only facility that meets the operating speed degraded condition continues to be Interstate 66 West (I-66W) outside of the Capital Beltway. A recent analysis revealed that varying levels of degradation exist along this corridor between the Capital Beltway and Route 234.

The traffic volumes of this HOV facility that are associated with a degraded condition vary by location. For this report, the volumes are provided for portions of the westbound I-66 HOV lanes between the Capital Beltway and Route 234.

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On the westbound lane in the afternoon HOV restricted period, speed degradation conditions exist. Near the western terminus of the HOV lane at MP 53.2 the average peak hour traffic volume is 1002 vehicles per hour. Near the Capital Beltway at MP 59.9, the average peak hour traffic volume is 740 vehicles per hour.

Federal law and regulations require that the state take steps to bring a degraded facility into compliance including, "limiting or discontinuing the use of the facility by the [clean special fuel] vehicles whenever the operation of the facility is degraded." The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has developed a plan that presents a phased approach to mitigate degradation in the I-66 Corridor which began with the General Assembly's limitation on use of I-66 HOV lanes by clean special fuel vehicles to those vehicles with clean special fuel licenses plates issued prior to 2011 (see Chapter 390 of the 2010 Acts of Assembly). The plan measures include: continued operation of Active Traffic Management along I-66; expanding the number of dedicated HOV lanes and converting those lanes to High Occupancy toll (HOT) lanes which incorporates a managed lanes concept of operation and will require vehicles using the lanes, including clean special fuel vehicles, to either satisfy an HOV requirement of three occupants or to pay a toll.

In December 2017, VDOT commenced operation of the HOT lanes on Inside I-66 from I-495 to U.S. Route 29 in Rosslyn. The Public-Private Partnership project for development and operation of the HOT Lanes on I-66 outside the Capital Beltway has been awarded and the project is expected to become operational in 2022.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me or Garrett Moore, Chief Engineer, at 804-786-4798.

Sincerely,



Stephen C. Brich, P.E.
Commissioner of Highways

Cc: The Honorable Shannon Valentine
Mr. Garrett Moore
Ms. Helen Cuervo
Mr. Ken Earnest
Mr. Paul Szatkowski