



# Alternatives for Improving Roadway Services in Fairfax County

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*Board Transportation Committee Meeting*

*March 1, 2011*



## Response to Questions Raised about Primary and Secondary Roads

- VDOT classifies roads in two ways:
  - Administrative classifications: interstate, primary, secondary, and urban.
  - Functional classifications: freeway, major arterial, minor arterial, collector, and local.
- Administrative classifications generally are used to define funding allocations and responsibilities.
- Functional classifications identify a roadway's use.
- VDOT has specific criteria for transferring a road from the secondary system to the primary system.



## Implications of Transferring a Secondary Road to the Primary System

- Unclear if there are any benefits to the County.
- Transferring a road to the Primary System does not necessarily mean more funding will be available to the road.
- VDOT places special emphasis on maintaining the statewide system of primary roads.
  - VDOT is ultimately responsible for setting construction priorities for the primary system.
- Construction priorities for the secondary road system are set by the local county Boards of Supervisors.
- No explicit provisions within Virginia Code for a county to assume responsibility of the primary roads within its jurisdiction.



## Recap

- Staff presented draft report to Board members at the November 30, 2010, Board Transportation Committee.
- Staff met with Transportation Advisory Commission (TAC) to hear comments.
  - TAC members will provide a summary of their comments to Board members.
- Study reviewed several options:
  - Enhance select maintenance activities.
  - Assume various responsibilities for the secondary system only.
  - Assume responsibilities in select geographic areas under provisions for *Urban Transportation Service Districts*.
  - Assume responsibility for entire primary and secondary system within the County.
- Staff visited several jurisdictions in Virginia who currently maintain their roadway system.



## Study Conclusions

- Significantly improving levels of service (more mowing cycles, more frequent repaving) requires more funding.
  - Assuming responsibility in itself may or may not improve levels of service.
- No clear financial benefit for assuming more responsibilities.
- Assuming responsibility provides benefits in:
  - Transportation decision-making.
  - Local responsiveness and accountability.
  - Flexibility in establishing priorities and standards.
- Changing form of government unlikely to provide more funding for road maintenance by itself.
- State funding levels are likely to continue downward trend without new funding sources.



## Considerations

### How does the County want to improve roadway services?

Areas for improvement	Possible actions that would address improvement		
	More funding (federal, state, and/or local)	Improve coordination with VDOT	Assume responsibilities from VDOT
Improve levels of service <i>More frequent mowing, more frequent repaving</i>	●	○	◐
More responsiveness to local requests <i>Modifying signal timings, changing speed limits</i>	○	◐	◐
Flexibility in establishing standards <i>Ability to set more urban design standards for certain areas of the County</i>	○	◐	●
More control in setting priorities <i>Ability to reallocate resources to changing needs of County</i>	○	○	●

○ Minimally effective      ◐ More effective      ● Most effective



## Considerations

- ***What is the long-term vision for the County's transportation network?***
  - Where does the County wish to be in 20 or 30 years?
- ***What role can the County play in implementing this vision?***
  - How might current arrangements change in the future to better position the County?
- ***What additional studies can be done to prepare for this vision?***
  - Significant additional effort will be needed before taking any definitive actions.
    - Identification of specific costs attributable to specific Fairfax County activities.
    - Concentrated studies on particular alternatives.
    - Development of County-State agreement to transfer responsibilities.



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## Staff Recommendations

- Work with VDOT to track specific maintenance expenditures in Fairfax County. For example:
  - Mowing: How many acres? How many cycles per year?
  - Paving: How many lane miles?
- Identify low risk activities that the County wishes to improve and work with VDOT to enhance.
- Begin studying in more detail Urban Transportation Service Districts
  - What areas in the County would be suitable candidates?
  - Refine cost estimates.