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Final Transportation Plan Approved

RICHMOND- The Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) has approved the final Virginia Transportation Development Plan (VTDP). The plan specifies an estimated \$10.1 billion in funding allocations for transportation projects throughout Virginia over the next six fiscal years. The final plan was approved following the approval of a draft plan last month and statewide public hearings held in early December.

"The CTB and VDOT continue to build on an aggressive transportation improvement program," said Transportation Secretary Shirley J. Ybarra. "VDOT has an average of more than 600 construction and maintenance projects worth nearly \$3 billion under way at any one time."

The major projects in the final transportation development plan include: Virginia's side of I-95 Woodrow Wilson Bridge improvements, Springfield Interchange in Northern Virginia, and continued funding for I-64 widening in Richmond and Hampton Roads, I-81 safety improvements in the Shenandoah Valley and southwestern Virginia, and Route 58 improvements across southern Virginia.

The final VTDP is based on the latest official revenue forecasting projections made by the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles. The plan is also based on revenues allocated to projects through the Virginia Transportation Act of 2000 (VTA).

Under the VTA, the legislature designated additional funding to specific projects. More than one-third of those projects are either completed or under construction. Most of the remaining priority projects are either in the right-of-way or preliminary engineering phase.

The final transportation development plan is split in two categories. The Feasibility Plan lists projects at their most tentative state; these projects have not been advanced to the construction phase. The Capital Improvement Plan lists projects that are moving forward to construction. Based upon current cost estimates and revenue projections, construction on these projects is expected to begin in the next six years.

In other action, the CTB approved 65 construction and maintenance contracts worth \$48 million. Projects include the installation of electronic overhead message signs throughout the I-81 corridor to provide important travel information.

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