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Top Virginia transportation needs

By PETER BACQUÉ

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Widening Interstate 95 between Washington and Richmond and widening Interstate 64 from New Kent to Hampton are among the state's top road and transit needs, an industry group says.

"Making needed improvements to Virginia's surface transportation system will support future economic growth and competitiveness," Virginia Chamber of Commerce Chairman Whitt Clement said.

Those investments also would "help ensure that Virginia remains an attractive place to live, visit, work and do business," Clement, a former state transportation secretary, said in a statement.

The report, to be released today by TRIP, formerly known as The Road Information Program, lists the top 50 surface transportation projects needed to support economic growth in Virginia. The Washington-based national transportation research organization is sponsored by transportation-related businesses and organizations.

TRIP's study outlined 36 projects to improve the state's highways, six to improve public transit and eight to improve the rail system.

The report called for high-speed passenger rail service between Richmond and Washington, and Richmond and Norfolk, at a total estimated cost of \$2.4 billion. It backed development of rapid transit for Richmond's Broad Street corridor, though it did not have an estimate of the price.

The top 10 projects and their estimated costs:

- widening I-95 between Richmond and Washington, \$2.4 billion;
- expanding the Hampton Roads Bridge-Tunnel, \$2.4 billion;
- widening I-64 to six lanes from New Kent to Hampton, \$1.9 billion;
- building high-occupancy toll — HOT — lanes and transit improvements on I-95 and I-395 in Northern Virginia, \$1.4 billion;
- building the Hampton Roads Third Crossing, \$5 billion;
- widening I-64 in Chesapeake and replacing the High-Rise Bridge, \$11 billion;
- widening Interstate 66 in Prince William, Fairfax and Vienna, \$761 million;
- adding two lanes to sections of Interstate 81, \$1.6 billion;
- extending Metrorail to Dulles International Airport and Ashburn in Northern Virginia, \$3.2 billion; and
- widening sections of U.S. 29 and adding two lanes to the Warrenton's eastern bypass, \$849 million.

pbacque@timesdispatch.com

(804) 649-6813