

## TRIP identifies Virginia's 50 most-needed transportation projects

### Report ranks the projects needed to provide Virginia with a transportation system that can support economic growth

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In order to adequately support Virginia's existing industries and provide for additional economic growth, the state will need to make numerous improvements to its surface transportation system. This is according to a new report released by TRIP, a Washington, D.C.-based national transportation research organization.

TRIP's report, "The Top 50 Surface Transportation Projects to Support Economic Growth in Virginia," identifies and ranks the projects needed to provide Virginia with a transportation system that can support the increased movement of people, goods and resources throughout the state. The most needed surface transportation improvements in Virginia include 36 projects to build, expand or modernize highways, six projects to improve public transit and eight projects to improve the state's rail system. These improvements would enhance economic development opportunities throughout the state by increasing mobility and freight movement, easing congestion and making Virginia an attractive place to live, visit and do business.

TRIP ranked each transportation project based on a rating system that considered the following: short-term economic benefits, including job creation; the level of improvement in the condition of the transportation facility, including safety improvements; the degree of improvement in access and mobility; and the long-term improvement provided in regional or state economic performance and competitiveness.

According to the TRIP report, the most-needed projects for the state's economic growth are as follows:

1. Widening I-95 between Washington, D.C., and Richmond;
2. Hampton Roads Bridge Tunnel Expansion;
3. Widening I-64 from New Kent to Hampton to six lanes;

4. Construction of HOT lanes and transit improvements on I-95/I-395 in northern Virginia;
5. Hampton Roads Third Crossing/Patriot's Crossing;
6. Widening I-64 in the city of Chesapeake and replacing High Rise Bridge;
7. Widening I-66 in Prince William County, Fairfax and Vienna;
8. Adding two lanes to multiple sections of I-81;
9. Extending Metrorail from Fairfax County to Dulles Airport and beyond to Ashburn; and
10. Widening portions of Rte. 29 and adding two lanes to the Eastern Bypass in Warrenton.

"The TRIP report provides a blueprint for the commonwealth's economic future," said Whittington Clement, chairman of the Virginia Chamber of Commerce board of directors and former Virginia secretary of transportation. "Making needed improvements to Virginia's surface transportation system will support future economic growth and competitiveness and help ensure that Virginia remains an attractive place to live, visit, work and do business."

"Virginia can't get where it wants to go—in both a literal and an economic sense—without an efficient transportation system," said Will Wilkins, executive director of TRIP. "It is critical that Virginia's transportation system is adequately funded at the local, state and federal level. Thousands of jobs and the state's economic well-being are riding on it."

**Source: TRIP February 8, 2011**