

A Partnership With:



Introduction

In 2003, the General Assembly modified Section 33.1-23.3 of the *Code of Virginia* to open the way for a city or town in the Urban System to manage their own construction program, known as the Urban Construction Initiative. After a successful first year, the initiative continues to move forward in Fiscal Year 2006 with the addition of the City of Charlottesville to the program. The Cities of Hampton, Richmond and Virginia Beach, completed their second year of participation after beginning in Fiscal Year 2005. These four cities now lead the way in firmly establishing this new way to partner with the Virginia Department of Transportation to achieve their transportation goals.

Implementation

With the Initiative moving into its second year, focus has shifted from initial implementation of the financial aspects to program and project management. To assist the cities currently in the initiative, those interested in joining, and VDOT personnel, quarterly meetings consisting of technical sessions and presentations have been conducted and new guidance and training resources are being developed. The City of Charlottesville, gaining through discussions and communications with the other participants, quickly moved into the areas of program and project management. Now, with the completion of the second year, the commitment of Urban Construction Funds, including the reimbursable federal funds and state funds paid directly to the participating municipalities have grown. The total commitment to date is shown on the following table.

09/22/2006									
URBAN CONSTRUCTION INITIATIVE FINANCIAL SUMMARY									
	CITY / TOWN	URBAN CONSTRUCTION ALLOCATIONS		PREVIOUS FUNDING on ACTIVE PROJECTS		PAST PROJECT RECONCILIATION		ANNUAL TOTALS	
		FEDERAL FUNDS (for Reimbursement)	STATE FUNDS (Quarterly payment)	FEDERAL FUNDS (for Reimbursement)	STATE FUNDS (Quarterly payment)	FEDERAL FUNDS (for Reimbursement)	STATE FUNDS (Quarterly payment)	FEDERAL FUNDS (for Reimbursement)	STATE FUNDS (Quarterly payment)
	FISCAL YEAR 2005	\$2,781	\$2,268	\$54,277	\$29,612	\$6,353	\$26,563	\$63,411	\$58,443
F Y 2 0 0 6	HAMPTON	\$1,228	\$4,171					\$1,228	\$4,171
	RICHMOND	\$481	\$1,607					\$481	\$1,607
	VIRGINIA BEACH	\$2,430	\$0					\$2,430	\$0
	CHARLOTTESVILLE	\$1,342	\$200	\$3,391	\$2,948	\$227	\$1,125	\$4,960	\$4,273
	FY2006 TOTALS	\$5,481	\$5,978	\$3,391	\$2,948	\$227	\$1,125	\$9,099	\$10,051

NOTES:

1. Figures in thousands (1,000).
2. Figures shown for FY06 and Previous Funding on Active Projects are based on allocation commitments made in FY05 Program.
3. Federal Funds are paid to localities on a reimbursable basis.
4. State Funds provided to localities as Quarterly Payments and are to be used for state funded projects and/or for local match on Federally Funded Projects.

COMMITMENT TOTAL

\$141,004

Accomplishments

During the first year, a key accomplishment was the relationship that developed between the cities and VDOT through cooperative development of this program. Much of the focus of the initiative was placed on financial aspects of the program and establishing processes and procedures. Now, after the completion of the second year of the initiative, we are beginning to see completion of major project phases. While there are still “legacy projects” being administered by VDOT in Virginia Beach, Richmond, and Charlottesville, overall program management continues to successfully shift to the participating municipalities. Over the past year, the participating cities have expressed a greater understanding of what VDOT does and has accomplished. The municipalities also realize that their ownership of the program is beginning to end, or cradle to grave, for each project. As the local ownership of projects expands, the expectations by the local governing body and communities are also increasing.

In addition to working with our partner cities, the program has continued to expand to include new municipalities. Throughout the course of FY2006, VDOT and local staff worked with the City of Harrisonburg and the Town of Bridgewater to prepare them for joining the initiative. This guided preparation included one-on-one meetings, workshops and technical sessions. Both municipalities executed programmatic agreements and joined the initiative on July 1, 2006. Another year of growth and preparation is underway as the City of Lynchburg has submitted a resolution of intent to join the Initiative on July 1, 2007.

Project Level Activities

Some of the major project accomplishments this year included:

City of Hampton

- Armistead Avenue Phase 1A – Construction underway.
- Armistead Avenue Phase 1B - Right of Way acquisition nearing completion and construction is scheduled to begin in the Fall of 2006.
- Commander Sheppard Phase 1 - Right of Way acquisition to begin in the Fall of 2006.

City of Virginia Beach

- Indian River Road & Elbow Road – Right-of-way acquisition is underway on over 200 parcels
- Kempsville/Princess Anne/Witchduck – Location and Design Approved by the Commonwealth Transportation Board in the Summer 2006 and is ready to proceed to the Right of Way phase.

City of Richmond

- Manchester Bridge Rehabilitation - Selected engineering consultant.
- Maintenance Program - Initiated Urban Paving Program for 62 miles of roadway, rehabilitation of existing sidewalks and construction of new sidewalks, upgrades of signal controls with construction to begin in the Fall of 2006
- Jennie Scher Road – Assumed responsibility for construction phase as part of the Local Partnership Fund. Advertised project for construction.

City of Charlottesville

- Route 250 Interchange - Selected engineering consultant.
- Hillsdale Drive Extension - Selected engineering consultant.
- Belmont Bridge Project - Revised scope of project to a reconstruction rather than a rehabilitation project.

Lessons Learned

With a second year behind us, there continue to be many opportunities to improve program implementation in terms of delivering projects and establishing workable processes. There is a need to evaluate our processes – federal, state, and local – to identify ways to streamline project development while still adhering to all applicable laws and regulations. Priority needs to be placed on working as a group, with the Federal Highway Administration, to identify streamlining measures and to continue the education process of how to work within the federal system.

Significant focus was placed this year on the Federal Strategy and obligation of funds. By working cooperatively and focusing on consistent communication, we have been able to meet the federal obligation for all Urban Construction Initiative projects this year. As the number of projects in the initiative grows, we will rely more on our partner cities to meet the obligation.

Both VDOT and the cities continue to work to document the benefits and value added through participating in the initiative. The cities continue to express the need to expand the program to include other funding sources available to municipalities, not just the urban system construction dollars. This would enable municipalities to take advantage of the streamlining measures that have been identified for this initiative and utilize the same project delivery process for all of their locally managed projects regardless of funding source. Over the next year, we need to work cooperatively to better document program accomplishments through performance measurement and to identify streamlining measures which would improve the program.

Goals for Fiscal Year 2007

- Performance Measurement - develop and establish a methodology to document program accomplishments.
- Revamp Quarterly Meeting concept to focus on technical sessions/training
- Integrate and involve the consultant community in the initiative.
- Focus on Program Management – development of a training program to enhance local competencies.
- Identify and implement process streamlining measures.
- Incorporate other funding programs into programmatic agreement.

Long Term Vision / Goals

- VDOT transitions to an oversight role – much like FHWA
- Local Certification Program

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