

Location Public Hearing

September 28, 2011

Welcome

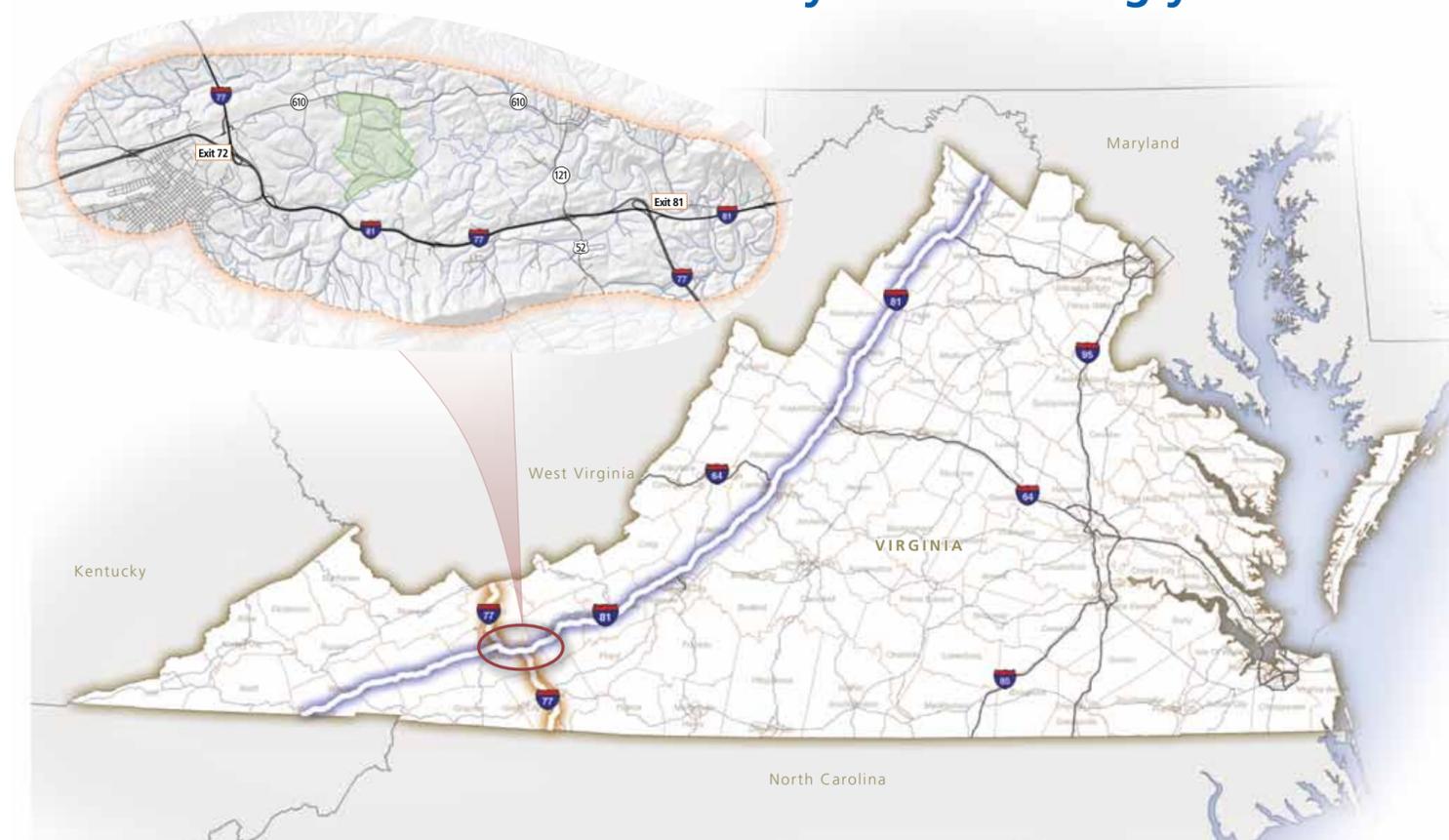
On behalf of the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT), we welcome you to this Location Public Hearing for the I-77/I-81 Overlap Study. The purpose of this I-77/I-81 Overlap Study is to increase roadway system capacity to address existing traffic volume and projected 2035 travel demand in order to improve the general operating conditions along this section of I-77/I-81 in Virginia.

Meeting Purpose

The purpose of this meeting is to share the findings of the study with you and receive your comments and/or suggestions on the proposed improvements and the Environmental Assessment that was prepared for the study. Representatives from VDOT and its consultants are here to answer your questions and listen to your thoughts and concerns.

We encourage and welcome your comments on the materials displayed and other issues you consider important to the project.

Thank you for sharing your time and comments!



Project Purpose

The purpose of this I-77/I-81 Overlap Study is to increase roadway system capacity to address existing traffic volume and projected 2035 travel demand in order to improve the general operating conditions along this section of I-77/I-81 in Virginia.

Project Needs

Improvements to the I-77/I-81 overlap section are needed to address existing and future transportation conditions:

Existing Transportation Conditions Along the I-77/I-81 Overlap Section

- ▶ Traffic volumes on the I-77/I-81 overlap section have more than doubled since 1978; and
- ▶ One of the ramp intersections operates below Level of Service (LOS)* C.

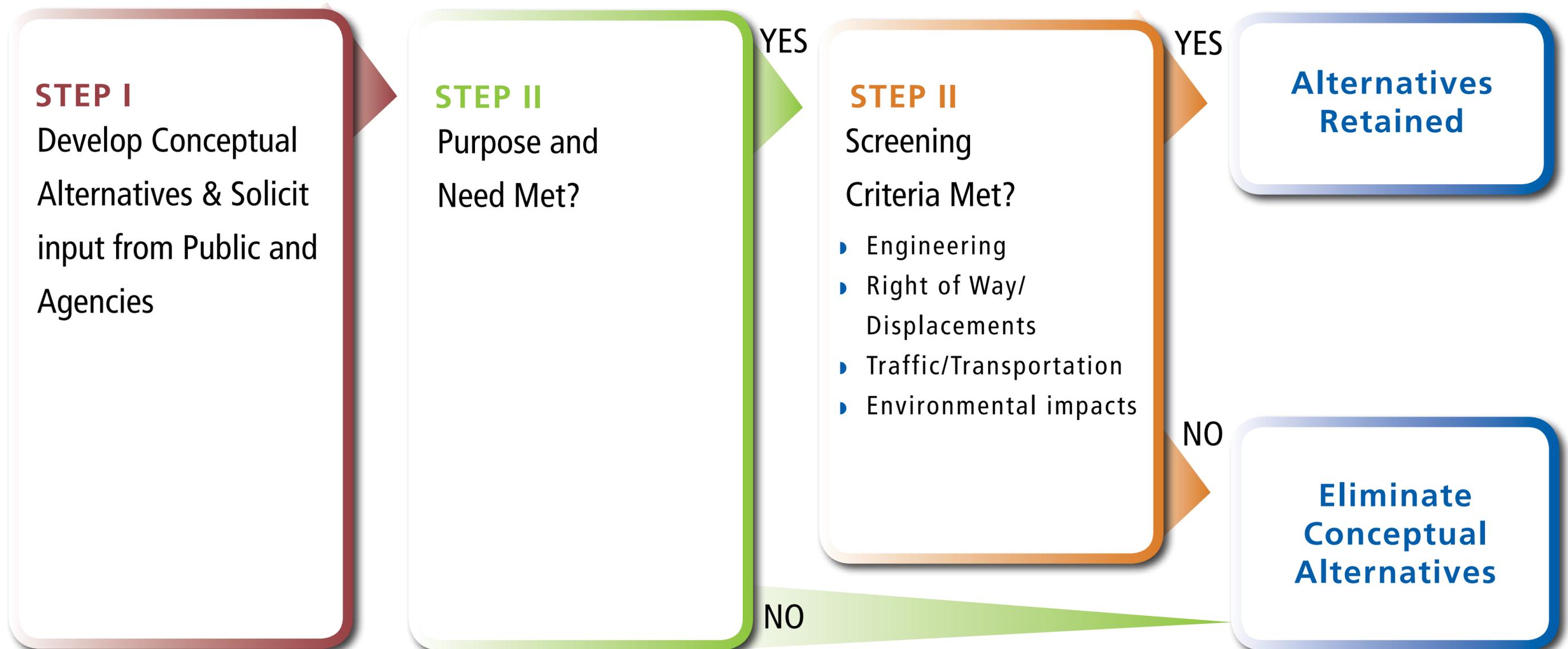
Projected 2035 Conditions

- ▶ Traffic volumes along the I-77/I-81 overlap section are expected to almost double by 2035.
- ▶ Truck traffic along the I-77/I-81 overlap section is projected to more than double by 2035.
- ▶ Five of the nine northbound miles and seven of the nine southbound miles of the I-77/I-81 overlap section will operate at worse than the Level of Service standard by 2035.
- ▶ All entrance ramps and most exit ramps are projected to operate at or below the level of service standard by 2035.
- ▶ All but one ramp intersection are projected to operate below the level of service standard by 2035.



*Level of Service (LOS) is a report card style designation of how well a roadway is operating. LOS A represents free flow conditions and LOS F represents extensive congestion. The FHWA considers LOS C an acceptable standard on interstates through urban areas.

Alternatives Development and Screening Process



Alternatives Development and Screening Process

Through the alternatives screening, several concepts and alternatives were eliminated from further consideration and not carried forward for detailed study. The chart below describes the alternatives eliminated and the reasons for their elimination.

Alternative	Description	Basis for Elimination
A-81	I-81 on new alignment "A" north of existing highway	Linear footage of stream crossings, impacts to wetlands, and prime farmland
A1-81	I-81 on new alignment "A" north of existing highway	Impacts to residential parcels
A2-77	I-77 on new alignment "A" north of existing highway	Acres of parkland involvement, impacts to battlefields. New roadway would require six lanes as opposed to four lanes
B-81	I-81 on new alignment "B" north of existing highway	Number of stream crossings required
B1-77	I-77 on new alignment "B" north of existing highway	Impacts to prime farmland and battlefields. New roadway would require six lanes as opposed to four lanes
C-81	I-81 on new alignment "C" north of existing highway	Impacts to business parcels
C2-77	I-77 on new alignment "C" north of existing highway	Acres of parkland involvement, impacts to battlefields. New roadway would require six lanes as opposed to four lanes
C3-77	I-77 on new alignment "C" north of existing highway	New roadway would require six lanes as opposed to four lanes
E-81	I-81 on new alignment "E" south of existing highway	Number of stream crossings required, acres of parkland involvement, impacts to battlefields
E1-81	I-81 on new alignment "E" south of existing highway	Number of stream crossings required, acres of parkland involvement, impacts to prime farmland
E2-81	I-81 on new alignment "E" south of existing highway	Acres of parkland involvement, impacts to prime farmland, battlefields, residential parcels, and business parcels
E3-77	I-77 on new alignment "E" south of existing highway	Number of stream crossings required, new roadway would require six lanes as opposed to four lanes
E4-77	I-77 on new alignment "E" south of existing highway	Number of stream crossings required, acres of parkland involvement, impacts to battlefields, residential parcels, and business parcels. New roadway would require six lanes as opposed to four lanes
E5-77	I-77 on new alignment "E" south of existing highway	Number of stream crossings required, acres of parkland involvement, and impacts to prime farmlands. New roadway would require six lanes as opposed to four lanes
F-77	I-77 on new alignment "F" south of existing highway	New roadway would require six lanes as opposed to four lanes. In addition, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers does not prefer the southern alignments because of the higher number of stream crossings. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has jurisdiction by law pursuant to their permitting authority under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act.
F1-77	I-81 on new alignment "F" south of existing highway	New roadway would require six lanes as opposed to four lanes



Alternatives Development and Screening Process

Candidate Build Alternative A

Candidate Build Alternative (CBA) A is an Interstate 81 designation on new location that is immediately north of the I-77/I-81 overlap section. The I-77/I-81 overlap section would then be designated as I-77 only. The new section of I-81 would be a four-lane highway designed to interstate standards. CBA A would include service roads and/or overpasses.

The length of the corridor is approximately 10 miles and the total area within the 500-foot footprint is approximately 460 acres. New interchanges connecting the new alignments at Exits 72 and 81 would encompass an additional 780 acres. The proposed alignment would follow rolling and mountainous terrain.

Candidate Build Alternative B

CBA B would add one travel lane (and additional left/right shoulder width) in each direction on the roadway section co-designated as I-77 and I-81 (the I-77/I-81 overlap section) thereby creating an eight-lane typical roadway section that meets interstate standards. This widening would occur between Exit 72 and Exit 81. To accommodate the widened section of roadway in this corridor, design improvements would be developed for the adjacent service roads, entrance/exit ramps at exits 73/77/80, and overpasses. In addition, an existing substandard horizontal curve would be corrected at approximately milepost 76.0, sight lines would be improved via a rock cut on the inside of a curve at approximately milepost 74.5, and substandard vertical clearances of structures would be corrected to meet standards.

The length of the corridor is approximately eight miles and the total area within the 500-foot corridor is approximately 450 acres (it should be noted that much of this acreage is within the limits of the existing corridor). New interchanges connecting the new alignments would encompass an additional 490 acres. The proposed alignment would generally remain as it exists today.

No-Build Alternative

A No-Build Alternative is under consideration and is being used as a benchmark to assess environmental impacts attributable to the proposed project. No-Build Alternative roadway conditions are reflective of expected corridor conditions (during the design year) if no improvements were made to the corridor beyond the minor modifications programmed in the Six-Year improvement program.



Schedule / Next Steps / Thank You

Project Schedule	Event
Through 2008	Scoping and Data Collection
Fall 2008	Refine Purpose and Need
October/ November 2008	Develop preliminary conceptual alternatives
December 4, 2008	Scoping/Citizen Information meeting
December 2008/ January 2009	Screening and identification of alternatives to be evaluated in the Environmental Assessment
Spring/Summer 2009	Develop Alternatives, perform environmental studies, and determine impacts
July 26, 2011	Complete Environmental Assessment and Approval by the FHWA
September 28, 2011	Location Public Hearing
Winter 2012	Commonwealth Transportation Board action
Winter 2012	Revise Environmental Assessment based on public hearing comments and Commonwealth Transportation board decision
Spring 2012	Final decision on the Environmental Assessment process by FHWA



Next Steps

The study team will review and evaluate the comments you provide tonight and during the comment period. The comments, along with other information developed during the study will be forwarded to the Commonwealth Transportation Board for consideration in reaching a decision on the alternatives.

Following the public availability period, the Environmental Assessment will be revised, as appropriate, to reflect changes in the proposed action or mitigation measures resulting from comments received on the Environmental Assessment or at the public hearing. It will then be submitted to the FHWA, along with a copy of the public hearing summary, the recommendation of the preferred alternative, and a request that a final decision be made by the FHWA.

Any further project development efforts, such as design, right of way acquisition, and construction, will depend on availability of funding and are not scheduled at this time.

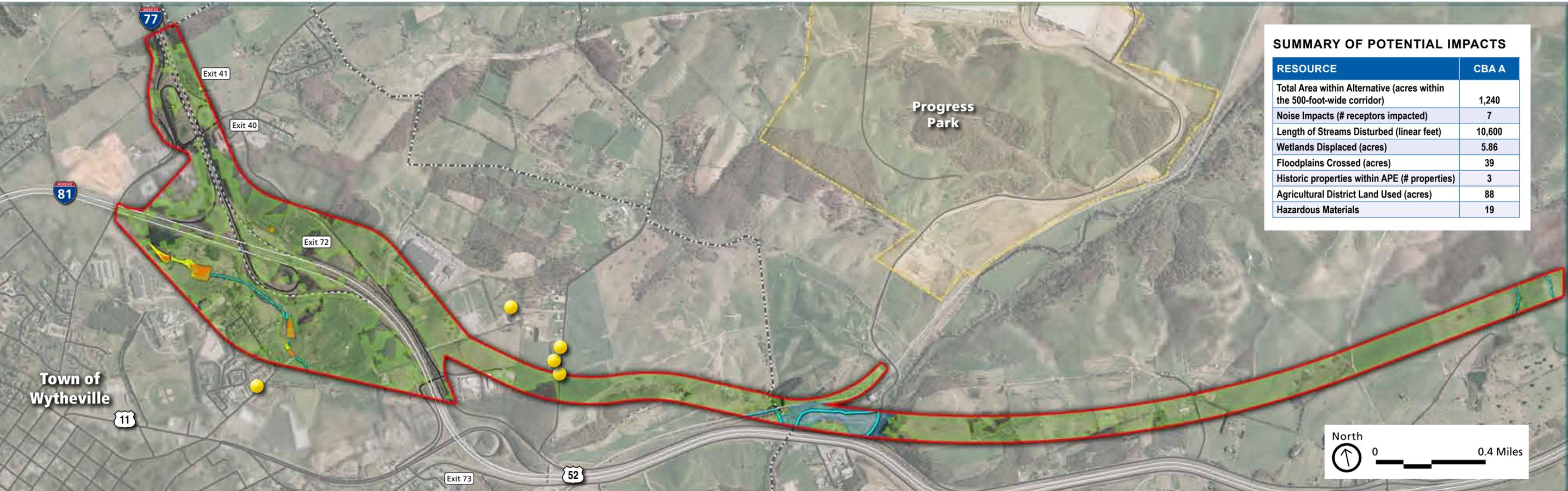
Thank you

Thank you for taking the time to review the material presented at this Public Hearing. Your comments are valuable and greatly appreciated. VDOT will carefully consider all comments received at this hearing and during the comment period.

Written comments must be postmarked or sent electronically no later than October 8, 2011 and may be submitted in three ways:

- ▶ **At this Hearing – Submit written comments or make a verbal comment to the hearing recorder**
- ▶ **By Mail – Submit written comments to:**
Mr. Nicholas Nies
Environmental Division
Virginia Department of Transportation
1401 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219
- ▶ **Comments via the web –**
Bristolinfo@vdot.virginia.gov

Candidate Build Alternative A

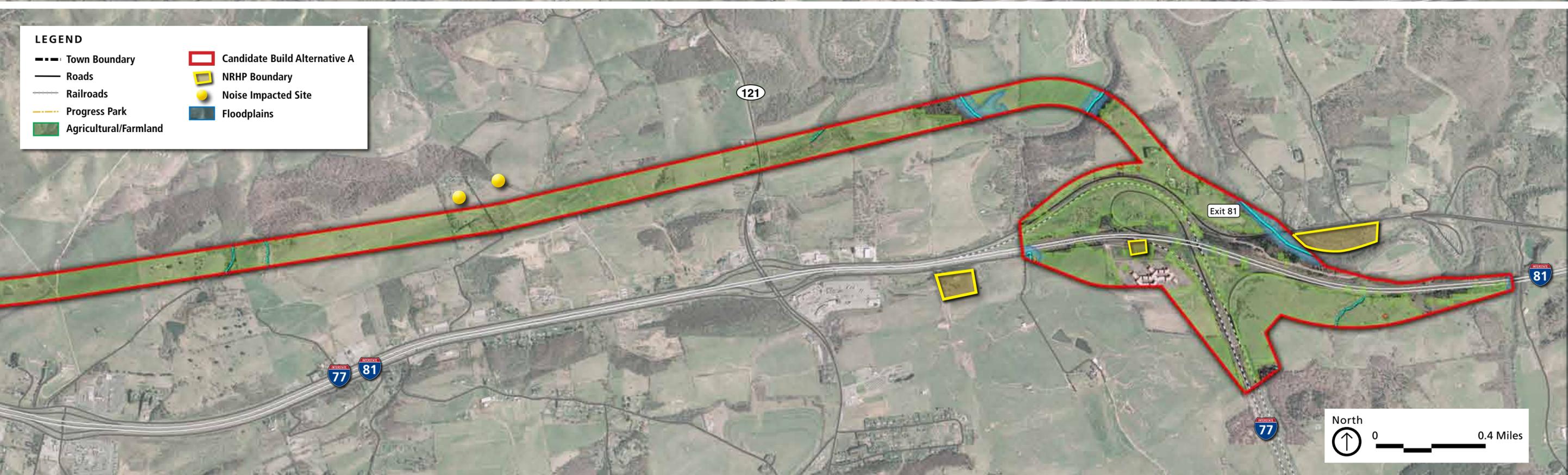


SUMMARY OF POTENTIAL IMPACTS

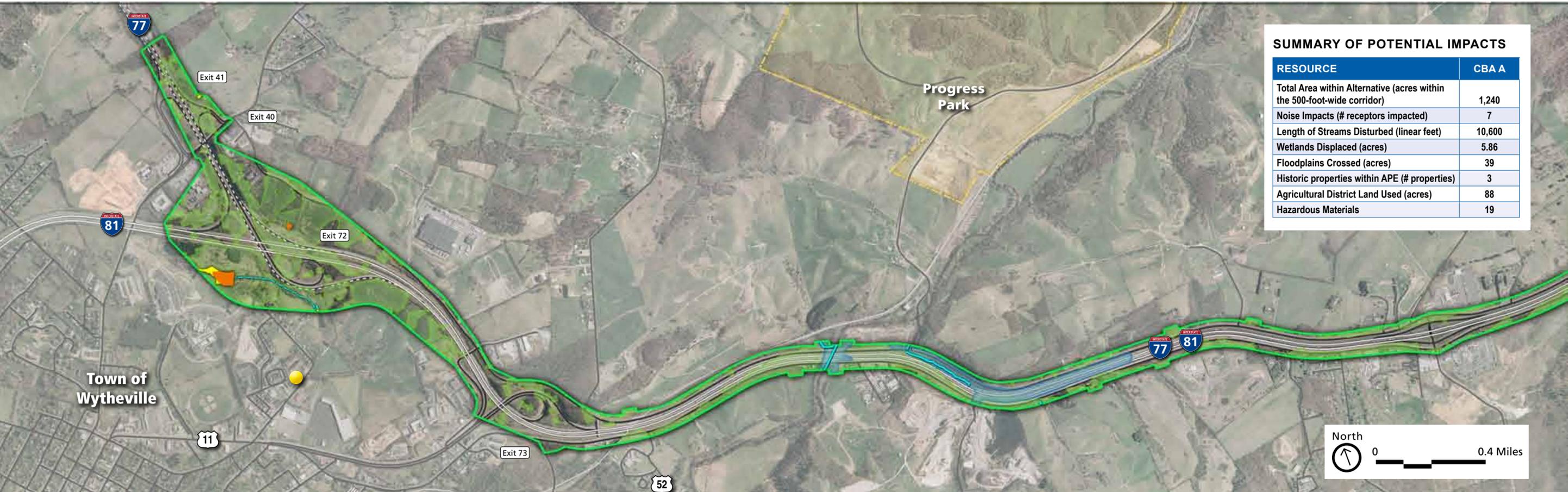
RESOURCE	CBA A
Total Area within Alternative (acres within the 500-foot-wide corridor)	1,240
Noise Impacts (# receptors impacted)	7
Length of Streams Disturbed (linear feet)	10,600
Wetlands Displaced (acres)	5.86
Floodplains Crossed (acres)	39
Historic properties within APE (# properties)	3
Agricultural District Land Used (acres)	88
Hazardous Materials	19

LEGEND

--- Town Boundary	Candidate Build Alternative A
— Roads	NRHP Boundary
— Railroads	Noise Impacted Site
--- Progress Park	Floodplains
— Agricultural/Farmland	



Candidate Build Alternative B



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LEGEND	
	Town Boundary
	Roads
	Railroads
	Progress Park
	Agricultural/Farmland
	Candidate Build Alternative B
	NRHP Boundary
	Noise Impacted Site
	Floodplains

