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5. Project Benefit/Compatibility

This Corridor Improvement Project brings a number of both near term and long-term benefits to local communities, the region between the Tidewater area and Petersburg/Richmond, and to the Commonwealth of Virginia. Indeed, enhancing the infrastructure of an area brings prosperity and presents opportunities for development and economic expansion to all of those fortunate enough to be situated near the project corridor.

One of the obvious benefits of this project is the relief from the congestion, frequent accidents, heavy truck traffic, and associated delays typically encountered by motorists along the existing I-64 and US 460 corridors. This 460 Toll Road will serve as an alternative to ease congestion and enhance the safety of the traveling public through the region. Additionally, the Hampton Roads area is a focal point for international port traffic and military traffic. This 460 Toll Road will be designed to accommodate truck and military transportation, offering a safer and more time-efficient access for these vehicles to major north/south and east/west interstate routes. Finally, this proposed facility will generate opportunities for economic growth and development to communities along the corridor, and especially those located adjacent to the interchanges by enhancing the attractiveness of the entire region for prospective business, industry, and commercial development.

5.1. Significant benefits to the community, region or state

Describe the project's significant benefits to the community, region or state. Identify any state benefits resulting from the project including the achievement of state transportation policies or other state goals and compatibility with existing and planned multi-modal facilities.

Regional economic benefits of this project will initially include employment opportunities and generation of income for construction labor, equipment, and materials, and operation of the toll facilities, much of which could accrue to local residents and businesses during the construction period. Continuing economic benefits will be realized as this Corridor Improvement Project enhances the attractiveness of the Region and Communities for prospective business and industry and promotes the associated growth and prosperity with commercial development.

This project will provide opportunities for economic expansion and development along the entire corridor, both in initial employment opportunities during construction, and enhanced access in the region for industrial and business growth. This project also addresses significant and well documented concerns about the safety of the existing Rte 460. Specifically, in 2001, the Virginia General Assembly passed HJR 684 that established a 460 Communications Committee. The Committee was tasked with receiving feedback from the localities on how best to improve the Route 460 corridor. This Committee laid the groundwork for the corridor study, the selected CBA 1, and the current PPTA proposal. Cintra understands the importance of the Corridor and the Commonwealth's concerns about safety and congestion. This proposal addresses those concerns by providing a safer roadway, designed to current standards, serving as an alternate access between the Richmond and Hampton Roads regions.

5.2. Significant benefits to the state's economic condition

Describe significant benefits to the state's economic condition to include steps taken for coordination with local land use and comprehensive plans. Discuss whether this project is critical to attracting or maintaining competitive industries and businesses to the state or region. What is the impact upon local economy, jobs and job market?

Several communities along the corridor have openly expressed their desire for improvements to the Route 460 corridor. The localities see the improvements as an opportunity to encourage business development. Cintra has reviewed the individual long range plans for each locality long the toll road corridor. Additionally, Cintra has reviewed the long term growth plans for the Port of Virginia. The proposed toll road can serve as a mechanism to create access to tracts of land that can support larger intermodal facilities to serve the expanded ports. The Virginia Port Authority conducted a study that estimates the number of containers moving through the Port will triple by 2030. The proposed toll road is viewed by many as an excellent opportunity to create employment opportunities for each of the localities along the Corridor by supporting business and industry to service the expansion of the Port Authority.

5.3. Coordination with local land use and comprehensive plans

Describe how the project has been coordinated with local land use and comprehensive plans. Indicate the steps taken with local officials to coordinate land use plans and the proposed transportation facility. Demonstrate that the project improves safety, reduces congestion, increases capacity, and enhances economic opportunity.

5.3.1. Describe how the project has been coordinated with local land use and comprehensive plans.

The local jurisdictions involved during this project's development have shown the need for upgrading Route 460 in their comprehensive plans primarily to move "Regional Goods" and improve commuting to Eastern Hampton Roads. The new facility would open the area to commercial and / or industrial economic development. It would also encourage moderate growth and "accessibility to major thoroughfares". Accessibility, according to several jurisdictions "Land Redevelopment Plans" is crucial for industrial development. The tax base for some of these rural jurisdictions would also benefit, adding to economic vitality. All jurisdictions collectively stressed the need for a safe facility coupled with efficient modes of transportation and managed growth. This managed growth envisions concentrating the commercial, industrial, and residential development near the towns and cities along the corridor. This concentration of development would help preserve the rural character of the corridor.

5.3.2. Indicate the steps taken with local officials to coordinate land use plans and the proposed transportation facility.

Several meetings were held with local officials to coordinate plan development and explore how the project would impact existing and future land use planning.

Pertinent activities include:

- Two public Scoping meetings were held in August 2003
- Two citizen information meetings were held in February 2004

- The Route 460 Communication Committee was established by the 2001 General Assembly. This Committee linked the citizens and businesses with lawmakers, VDOT, Planning District Commissions, Virginia Environmental Agencies, Port Authorities, and other affected stakeholders. The Committee met four times between September 2003 to January 2005.
- Many additional local meetings were held for all of the study area. Attendees included towns, chamber of commerce, boards of supervisors, civic clubs, counties, local administrators, and planning commissions. The purpose of these meetings was to ensure existing and proposed land use plans were incorporated as an integral part of the corridor redevelopment process.

Future activities should include partnering with localities to assure continued coordination with their land planning programs. Community involvement is also necessary to maintain the outreach established by the Committee.

5.3.3. Demonstrate that the project improves safety, reduces congestion, increases capacity, and enhances economic opportunity.

The project will:

- Address existing roadway deficiencies by providing relief from the congestion, frequent accidents, heavy truck traffic, and associated delays typically encountered by motorists along the existing I-64 and US 460 corridors.
- Improve safety, by providing a controlled access facility specifically designed for anticipated heavy truck traffic between the Tidewater area and major north/south and east/west interstate routes.
- Accommodate the forecasted freight shipments due to the anticipated expansions at the Port of Virginia.
- Reduce travel delay currently experienced on existing route 460 due to capacity limitations (traffic signals) and the lack of access control by providing a four-lane limited access facility with a design speed of 70mph.
- Provide additional effective hurricane evacuation capability for the Hampton Roads communities.
- Improve strategic military connectivity by providing a controlled access facility to replace existing Rte 460 and supplement existing I-64. [Route 460 is currently a part of the Strategic Highway Network (STRAHNET)].
- Meet local jurisdictions economic development plans and priorities as related to transportation improvements by developing this proposed corridor in a manner which complements, to the degree possible, each justification's long-range land use and economic development plan.