

## Measuring Regional Performance in the Competitive World of Regional Transportation

TABLE A

<b>Comparison of the Hampton Roads' and Northern Virginia's In-Year and Out-Year Regional Transportation Funding Allocations in the new FY 2010-2015 State Transportation Improvement Program (SYIP) as approved on June 20, 2009</b>						
	In-Year Allocations (000's)		Out-Year Allocations (000's)		All Six Year Allocations (000's)	
	<b>FY-10</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>FY 11-15</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent</b>
<b>Statewide</b>	1,097,477	--	4,927,926	--	6,025,534	--
<b>Northern Virginia 31 % of population</b>	342,419	<b>31.2</b>	1,024,548	20.8	1,366,967	22.9
<b>Hampton Roads 21 % of population</b>	126,683	<b>11.5</b>	677,853	13.8	804,536	13.4

### A. Background.

1. Table A above compares and depicts the planned and “programmed” allocation of transportation funds to the two largest metropolitan regions in the Commonwealth—Hampton Roads and Northern Virginia.
2. The funds allocated in the table above include all transportation funds available from every source—federal, state, stimulus, roll-over, and local.
3. An MPO slide presentation provided to the HRTPO Board on June 17, 2009 showed that Hampton Roads had been allocated an average of 16.6 percent of funding available for Interstate Roads over the past 12 years compared to a 57.8 percent allocation for Northern Virginia.
  - a. This important data point is certainly something that warrants close examination, a critical review of planning and programming procedures in place, and possibly an MPO Resolution that seeks to address this “fair share” issue externally to higher authorities as well as, internally, to the MPO Staff.
4. The table above goes beyond the comparison of Interstate funding allocations. The data in the table above is of greater concern because it portrays the overall fair share results
5. Tables B-1 and B-2 at the end on this paper depict in more detail the planned and programmed allocation of transportation funds to the different categories of roads in Hampton Roads and Northern Virginia. All data in these tables has been taken from the SYIP Data Base found at <http://syip.virginiadot.org/>

## **B. Comments, Questions, Lessons Learned:**

1. The SYIP is a Transportation PROGRAM.
  - a. Transportation Programs depict and allocate both budget and programmatic dollars including, for the first four years of the Program, federal Obligated Dollars.
  - b. For MPO organizations, Transportation Programs such as the SYIP are where “the rubber meets the road”. This is where we begin to talk about and make real plans with programmed and budgeted transportation funds.
2. An MPO is responsible for developing its regional Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in a proper and persuasive manner such that state programming officials acknowledge and incorporate much of the region’s input.
  - a. For an MPO or for a region, skilled transportation programmers pay very special attention to their In-Year programmed allocations. In-Year allocations are “birds/dollars in the hand” funding—very important. The data above shows that Hampton Roads obtained 11.5 % of the In-Year funding allocation.
  - b. They also pay attention to total funding allocations and how these funding results stack up against what should be the region’s “fair share” of funding allocations.
3. What is “fair share” for Hampton Roads? Per state and federal legislation, fair share is driven (a) by Need, (b) by key parameters such as Population, Vehicle-Miles-Traveled (VMT) data and by existing Lane Miles and (c) by national transportation planning factors such as, for example, Safety, Security, Accessibility and Economic Vitality matters.
  - a. Hampton Roads has 21 percent of the state’s population and much Need. It is the region with the most complex set of tunnel and bridge transportation requirements. With its ports and tourism, Hampton Roads is one of the state’s top economic engines, and Hampton Roads is home to one of the nation’s largest arrays of defense and national security installations.
  - b. I would say that our MPO with state collaboration needs to mathematically compute what “fair share” is for Hampton Roads. Certainly, it is above 11 to 13 percent. Some suggest it is 21 percent, or because of the economic vitality factor and defense/security drivers, fair share for Hampton Roads should be 23 to 24 percent.
  - c. There is also a Part B to this question. In addition to seeking fair share In-Year and Out-Year funding allocations on the front end, skilled programmers also pay attention to outcomes. The best programmers in the world never obtain what they tactically pursue in terms of allocations because of project delays that can occur in dozens of ways or because they were trumped by more competitive or more ready proposals elsewhere. Thus, when thinking about MPO performance factors, one should benchmark the front end (allocations) results and the back end (outcomes) results. What are our performance measures?

4. In the tables above, one sees that Hampton Roads obtains 11.5 percent of In-Year funding allocations and a mere 13.8 percent of available transportation funding allocations for the ensuing next half-decade.
  - a. Why does Hampton Roads obtain such a low percentage of statewide funds?
  - b. Why has this occurred consistently over the past decade, and why is this projected to continue annually through the life of the new Six-Year Transportation Program?
5. I have postulated two reasons for this:
  - a. Our MPO organization simply needed to import MPO Best Practices and to undergo reform as was recently directed by a federal audit. Impressively, that reform process is well underway. Many truly major reforms have been adopted and other reforms are being implemented as we speak.
  - b. Our MPO needs to completely revamp its basic regional transportation planning and programming procedures so as to develop Transportation Plans and Programs that contain projects that are prioritized by road type based on objective-based and regionally-driven projection selection criteria. These selected projects then need to be programmatically sequenced through their development cycles and balanced as to types of roads when approved and advanced as the region's Transportation Program.
6. Others say that one or both of the above reasons are not valid, but if that is so, then just exactly "What are the reasons?" Indeed, I am the first to recognize that there may be one or more other reasons.
7. It is more important for the Hampton Roads MPO to take the time required to assess, analyze and produce the reasons for our past and continuing low funding rates.
  - a. After that, it is essential for our MPO to then develop and publish its "corrective actions" as well as a standard method for measuring regional performance and regional effectiveness in the highly competitive world of Regional Transportation.
  - b. Making the public aware of the resultant "MPO lessons learned" and "MPO corrective actions" will engender public awareness, public understanding and public support.
8. Will we work on these tasks?
  - a. If so, when? If so, how?
  - b. Do we need a Regional Retreat? Do we need new regional training? Do we need a professional regional programming consultant? Do we need to convene joint VDOT Central Office and Hampton Roads MPO conferences? What is the state's explanation? Can the state provide advice and recommendations?

**TABLE B-1: Funding Allocations for the Hampton Roads MPO (the HRTPO)**

<b>Transportation Funding Allocations for Hampton Roads MPO in the Final FY 2010-2015 State Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP)</b> (Values in thousands of dollars)			
<b>Project Categories</b>	<b>FY-2010 Allocation (In-Year)</b>	<b>FY 2011-2015 Allocations (Out-Years)</b>	<b>Total FY 2010-2015 Allocations</b>
Interstate	12,311	155,512	167,823
Primary	27,190	88,641	115,831
Secondary	4,711	10,456	15,167
Urban	58,459	224,661	283,120
Public Transportation	19,494	7,488	26,982
Rail	41	16	57
Miscellaneous	4,282	190,523	194,805
Enhancements	195	556	751
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>126,683</b>	<b>677,853</b>	<b>804,536</b>
<b>Percent of Total Statewide Allocations</b>	<b>11.5 %</b>	<b>13.8 %</b>	<b>13.4 %</b>
<b>Percent Population</b>	<b>21 %</b>		

**TABLE B-2: Funding Allocations for the Northern Virginia MPO (the TPB)**

<b>Transportation Funding Allocations for Northern Virginia (Values in thousands of dollars) in the Final FY 2010 to 2015 State Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP)</b>			
<b>Project Categories</b>	<b>FY-2010 Allocation (In-Year)</b>	<b>FY 2011-2015 Allocations (Out-Years)</b>	<b>Total FY 2010-2015 Allocations</b>
Interstate	206,305	614,773	821,078
Primary	79,081	128,042	207,123
Secondary	35,003	18,828	53,831
Urban	8,678	784	9,462
Public Transportation	8,358	0	8,358
Rail	0	0	0
Miscellaneous	4,958	262,121	267,079
Enhancements	36	0	36
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>342,419</b>	<b>1,024,548</b>	<b>1,366,967</b>
<b>Percent of Total Statewide Allocations</b>	<b>31.2 %</b>	<b>20.8 %</b>	<b>22.9 %</b>
<b>Percent Population</b>	<b>31 %</b>		