

COUNTY OF CAMPBELL



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November 27, 2007

Pierce R. Homer
Secretary of Transportation
Office of the Secretary of Transportation
PO Box 1475
Richmond, Virginia 23218

Re: Proposed Secondary Road Acceptance Standards

Dear Secretary Homer:

On behalf of the Campbell County Board of Supervisors I would like to offer several comments regarding the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and the proposed revisions to the Secondary Road Acceptance Standards.

Campbell County strongly supports an effective statewide transportation plan and encourages the Commonwealth to maintain a unified transportation system within the state. The VDOT district office and residency serving Campbell County do an excellent job and the County opposes any mandate to non-voluntarily shift current transportation responsibility back to the local level. It appears that the proposed Secondary Road Acceptance Standards begin to set expectations that will eventually force some transportation oversight back to the localities. It seems somewhat ironic that the area that VDOT seems to do the best with, local maintenance issues, is the area that is garnering the most attention for devolution.

Campbell County supports the efforts of the General Assembly and state agencies in developing ways to maximize state transportation funding effectiveness and believes a comprehensive statewide transportation plan is fundamental to that goal. The County does not believe that cost shifting from the Commonwealth to the localities either addresses the need for adequate long term planning nor is it particularly cost effective in serving the best interests of the citizens.

We understand the mandates from the General Assembly to revise current practices; however, we can't emphasize enough that the focus should be on the production of an effective and efficient set of standards, not on an arbitrary deadline or desire to reduce the cost burden to the Commonwealth in providing transportation services.

RESPECTING THE PAST, ATTENDING THE PRESENT, CONCENTRATING ON THE FUTURE

Toward that end Campbell County does not believe the current draft has been circulated and explained sufficiently to be ready for distribution for public comment. We would like to suggest that VDOT develop a comparison presentation showing the existing standards compared to suggested changes in relatively short, understandable reading points. More complex issues could then be explained further in a separate section – for example the Connectivity Index and Links and Nodes process. Once that document was made available VDOT representatives should present that information to the various MPOs and Planning Districts throughout the Commonwealth. Localities could then provide feedback for revision consideration prior to general distribution for public comment. Unfortunately at this point there are a limited number of people who fully understand the current proposal. Along these lines we have requested the Region 2000 MPO to ask Richmond VDOT staff to attend our January meeting to more fully explain the proposed changes.

Any consideration and influence you may have in providing the various localities of the Commonwealth an opportunity to adequately review a concisely presented proposal, including comparisons, before it is distributed for general comment would be greatly appreciated.

Please feel free to let me know if you have any questions or would like any additional information.

With kind regards, I am

Respectfully,

R. David Laurrell
County Administrator

C: Campbell County Board of Supervisors
Ken White, Commonwealth Transportation Board
Gary Christie, Region 2000 Local Government Council
Ted McCormack, Virginia Association of Counties