

Tolling, Trucking and the Interstate 81 Corridor in Virginia

Fred C. Altizer, Jr., P.E.

Assistant to the Chief Engineer/I-81 Program Manager

Virginia Department of Transportation

February 1, 2007

- What Makes I-81 Unique?
- Truck-Toll Proposal
- NEPA Study and Tolling Application
- Freight Rail Study



What Makes I-81 Unique?



Strategic Location





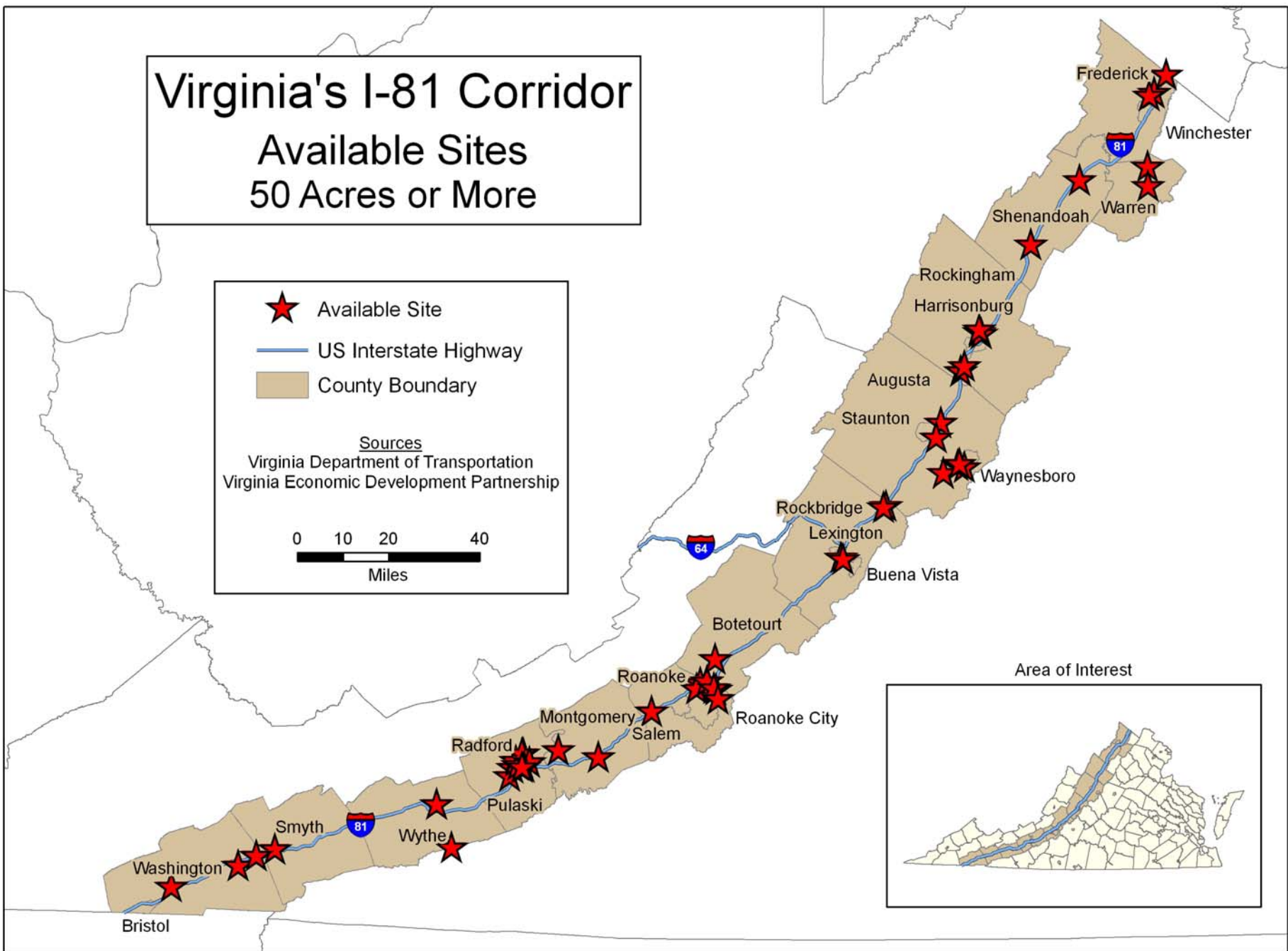
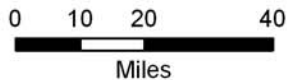
- Mostly rural, with rolling and mountainous terrain
- Designed for 15% trucks; now 30%-40%
- International link from southern U.S. economic hubs and Mexico to the northeast states and Canada

Virginia's I-81 Corridor

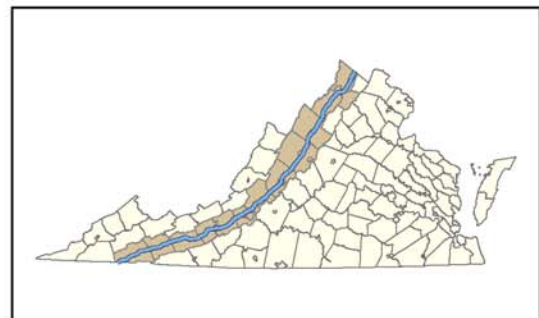
Available Sites 50 Acres or More

- ★ Available Site
- US Interstate Highway
- County Boundary

Sources
Virginia Department of Transportation
Virginia Economic Development Partnership

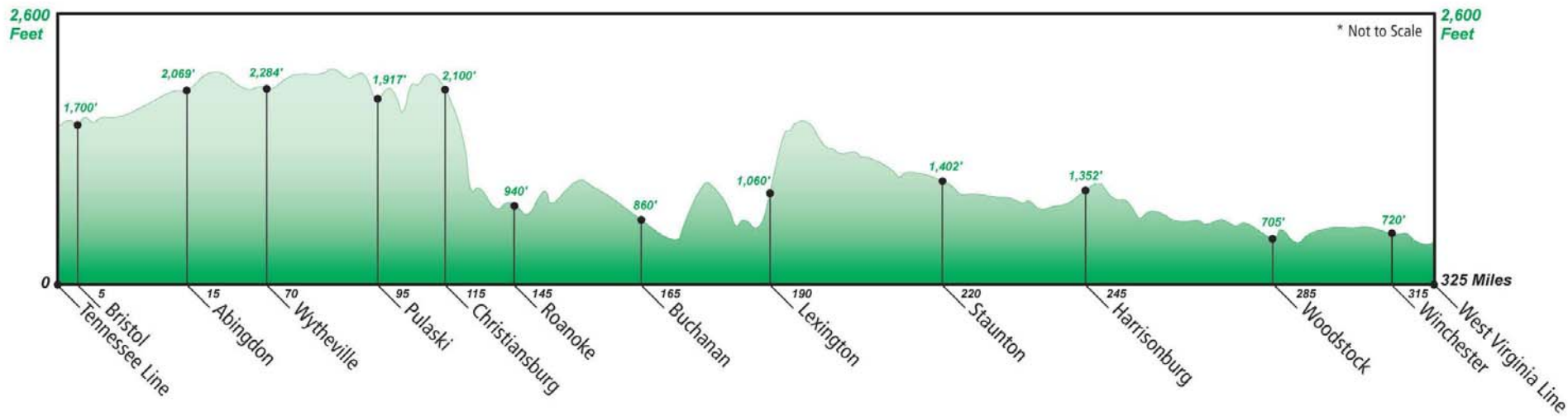


Area of Interest



- 5 MPOs – only 2 before last census
- Only 25% of population included in MPO
- One million population
- More than 8,000 businesses in Roanoke, Harrisonburg, Wytheville metro areas alone

The terrain of I-81 from Tennessee to West Virginia



Public Private Transportation Act of 1995

- Law allows solicited and unsolicited proposals
- Early 2002 – private consortium, STAR Solutions, proposed building separate truck lanes and partially financing them with electronically-collected tolls on trucks
 - Toll revenues would support revenue bonds



TRUCKS
ONLY

CARS
ONLY

Was the proposal feasible? What does I-81 need?

- March 2003 – applied to FHWA for tolling (TEA-21)



- January 2004 – launched I-81 Corridor Improvement Study (NEPA)



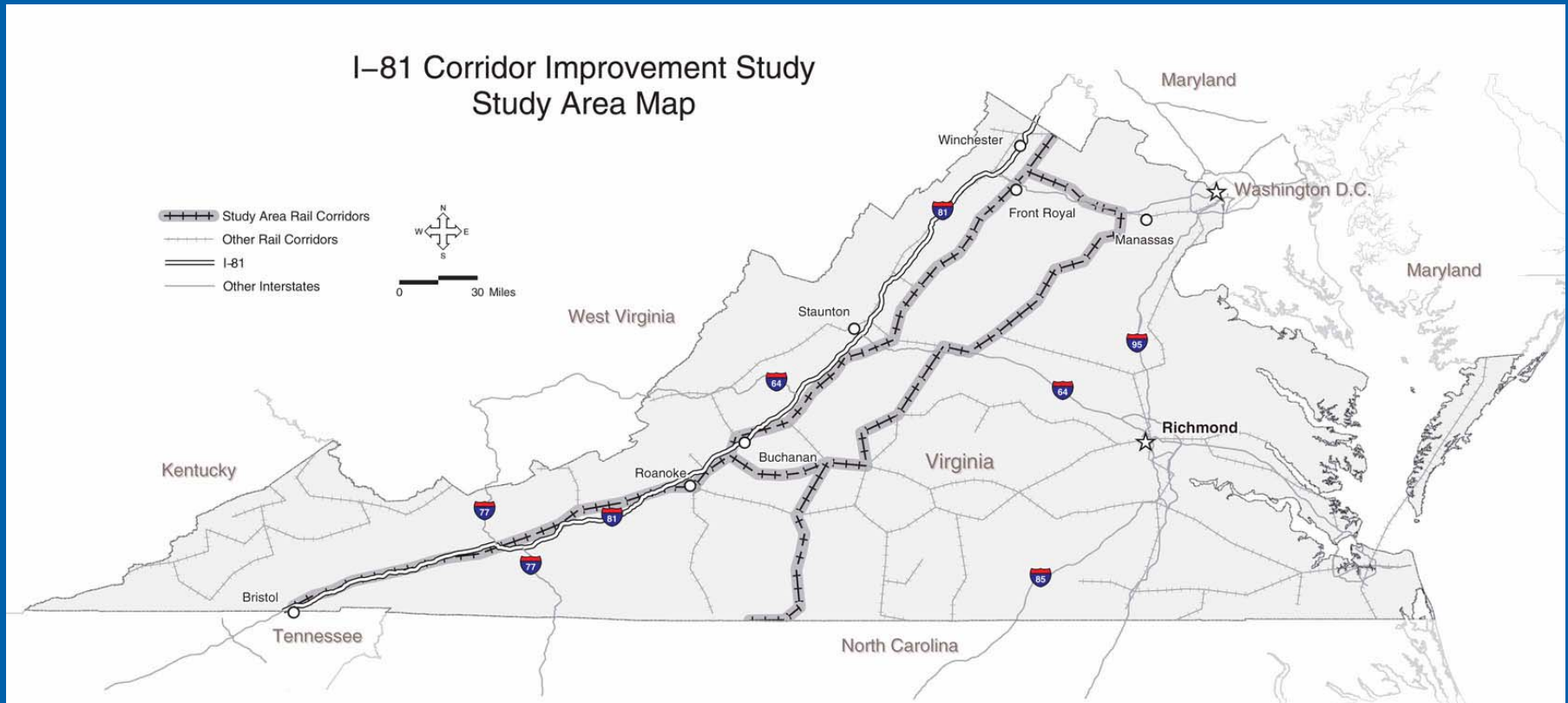
- NEPA process helps determine what to build, not private proposal
- FHWA/VDOT agreed on a tiered NEPA study
- VDOT worked on tolling application requirements



- How many lanes will I-81 need?
- Does truck separation work?
- Are rail improvements the answer?
- Is tolling feasible as a funding source?



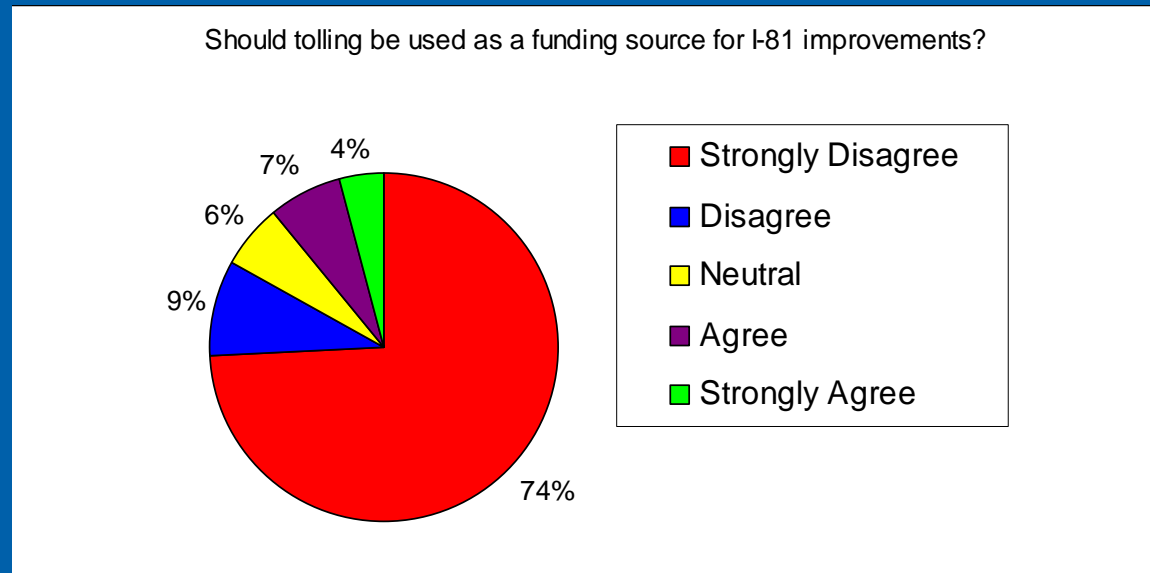
- Included Road and Rail in Virginia



- Completed Tier 1 DEIS in November 2005

- Truck separation doesn't work because it provides too much capacity
- Rail alone does little to meet future needs
- Traffic volume will nearly double by 2035
- In 2035, 37% needs one more lane in each direction; the rest needs more
- With tolling, truck diversion is fairly low

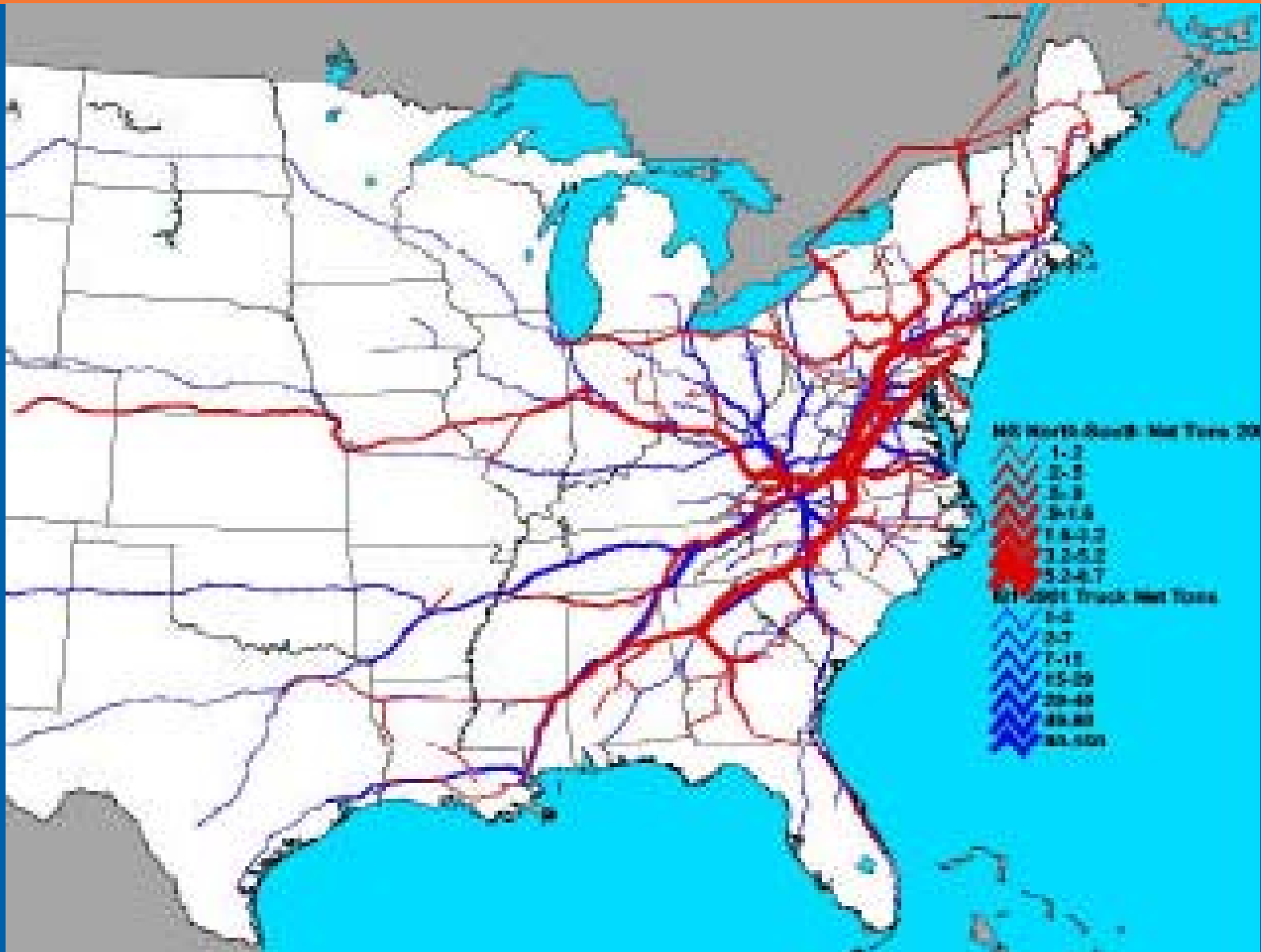
- Coordination with MPOs and PDCs
- Presentations to hundreds of groups
- Public hearings held in April 2006
- About 3 in 4 responders were strongly opposed to using tolls on I-81 as a funding source



Virginia's transportation policy-making body, the Commonwealth Transportation Board, took action in October 2006 by directing:

- VDOT to complete Final EIS with concept to build not more than one or two lanes in each direction
- VDOT to continue tolling application for possible funding source and/or way to manage traffic (SAFETEA-LU continues toll pilot program)
- Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) to launch a multi-state freight rail study

- Tier 1 DEIS projected traffic to nearly double by 2035, with truck volume growing fastest
- With Virginia-only rail improvements, just 3-6% diversion of trucks to rail possible
- What will it take to divert more freight to rail and relieve stress on I-81?



- Public agency (DRPT) working with private sector (Norfolk Southern)
- Study will extend at least 500 miles into Pennsylvania and Tennessee
- Achieves truck-competitive transit times
- Includes roll on/roll off and other rail technologies
- Considers options of new rail ROW

- Final Tier 1 EIS to FHWA in early 2007
- Possible Record of Decision from FHWA in first quarter 2007
- Freight Rail Study to be complete mid-2007
- Outstanding issues:
 - Virginia law allows tolling only on trucks on I-81
 - FHWA says toll revenue from I-81 cannot be used to enhance rail capacity



- Travel Center
- News
- Info Center
- Business Center
- Programs
- Projects and Studies
- About VDOT
- Jobs
- Site Map

By region | Transportation program | Major projects and studies | Transportation planning | Engineering and studies

[I81 Home](#) | [About I81](#) | [Corridor Study](#) | [Tolling](#) | [Smart Travel](#) | [News](#) | [Get Involved](#) |



What's New:

- [CTR endorses I-81 improvement strategy](#) - Oct. 11, 2006
- [CTR to hold monthly meeting in Roanoke - video link for public comment period included](#) - Oct. 5, 2006
- [CTR considers improvements to I-81 highway and rail infrastructure](#) - Sept. 21, 2006

Quick Clicks:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I-81 Tier 1 DRIS • I-81 Fact Sheets • Toll Impact Analysis Study • Freight studies 1 2 3 4 • Interstate 81 Update newsletter • Improvement Projects | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I-81 Multi-State Meeting • Frequently Asked Questions • Federal Transportation Bill FAQ • Get Involved • Comment Online • PPTA Proposals |
|--|---|

Page last modified: Tuesday, November 28, 2006

Get the facts at www.I-81.org