

# North-South Corridor Study Public Information and Participation Plan

The Public Information and Participation Plan outlined in Task 1.B. of the scope of work presents a framework of outreach activities to support the North-South Corridor Plan Study. This plan outlines specific strategies or activities that will facilitate two-way communication between the North-South Study team and interested stakeholders throughout the course of the study.

## ■ Overview of the North-South Corridor Study

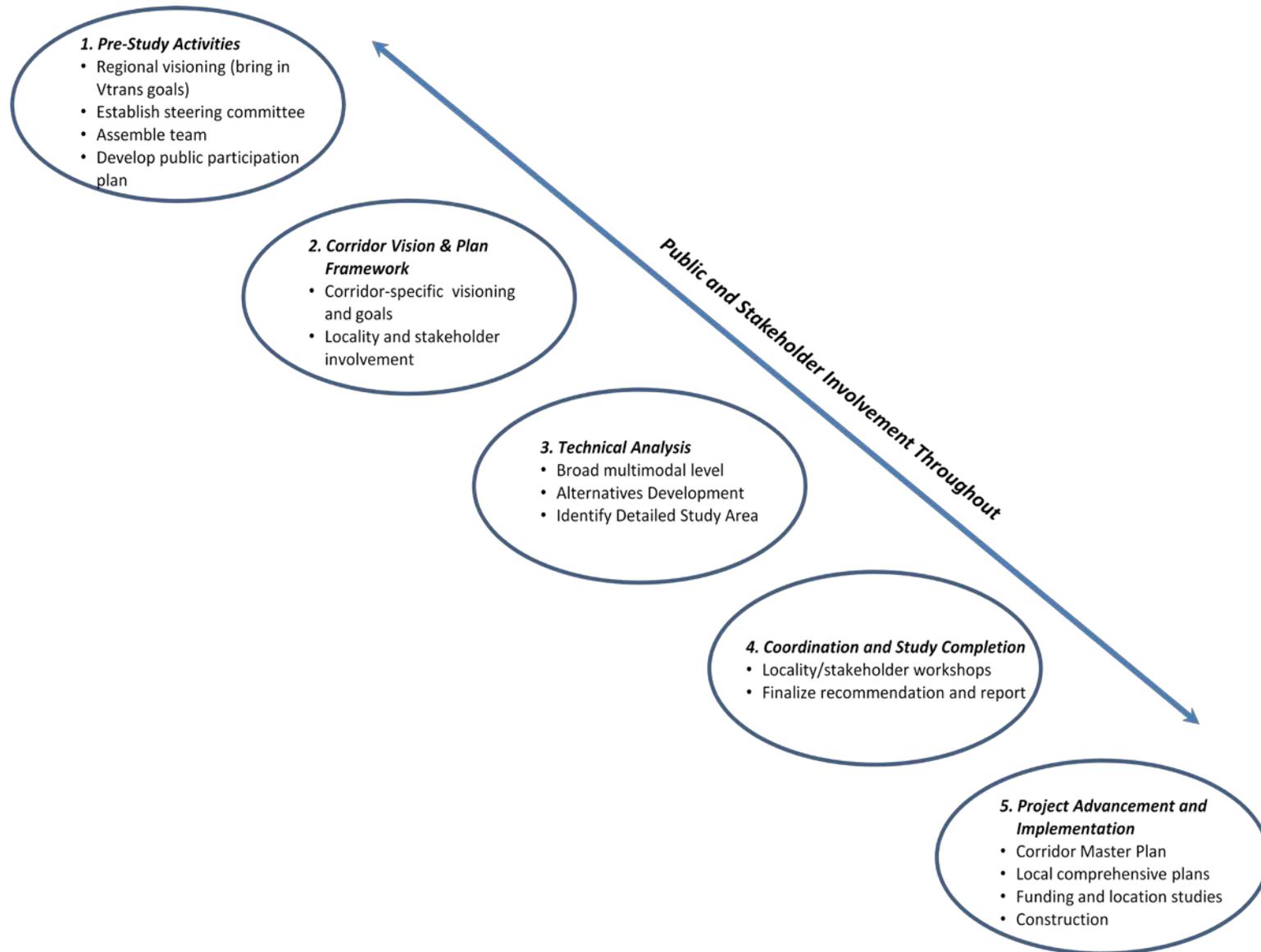
Traffic congestion and an overall lack of north-south modal options in the study area lead to diminished connectivity in this vital economic engine within the Commonwealth. In addition to being an important corridor for freight and passenger vehicles the corridor includes Washington Dulles International Airport, Virginia’s largest by passenger volume serving over 12 million passengers annually. The study builds on work that was conducted previously during the Tri-County Parkway Location Study, the Manassas National Battlefield Bypass Study, and other corridor and regional studies in Northern Virginia. The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) initiated the North-South Corridor Master Plan in April 2012. The study is scheduled to be completed in December 2012.

In May 2010, the VDOT Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) adopted a policy that lays out a process for studying Corridors of Statewide Significance (CoSS). Eleven CoSS were identified and defined in the VTrans 2035 plan; the North-South Corridor was added as the twelfth CoSS on May 18, 2011. From the CTB policy, “a key issue... is how to involve local governments and other stakeholders in a process that has substantial effects on localities, but also larger issues reaching beyond individual jurisdictions.” To that end, a project steering committee and a Project Working Group (PWG) shall be established to ensure public and stakeholder engagement throughout the study.

## ■ Study Process

The goal of the North South Study Public Information and Participation Plan is to inform a broad array of stakeholders, with particular focus on representation from jurisdictions within the corridor, and to obtain their input and suggestions related to the study. Figure 1 represents the CoSS process as defined by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) and illustrates the steps of stakeholder and public involvement throughout the study.

Figure 1. CoSS Study Process Flow Diagram



The CoSS study flow diagram (Figure 1) defines the following four major steps; presented below along with major tasks:

1. *Pre-study Activities:* The vision and goals for the North-South Corridor will be drafted using work from prior studies including VTrans 2035 and a steering committee for the project will be established consisting of stakeholder agency and jurisdictional executive leadership. Members of the PWG, consisting of stakeholder agency and jurisdictional key planning staff will be invited to a study kickoff and introduction meeting.
2. *Corridor vision and planning framework:* The steering committee will meet in a visioning and planning workshop to confirm the vision and goals as well as corridor issues and concerns, along with potential solutions on a corridor and subarea basis. Then, the PWG will assemble to discuss the same information and assist in shaping the information to be made available to the public via factsheet.
3. *Technical analysis:* The study team will quantify issues and needs at the corridor level and subarea level and conduct tests of the solutions. The steering committee and PWG will meet to go over the results of the technical analysis step and develop draft recommendations.
4. *Coordination and study completion:* The steering committee and PWG will again meet to determine final recommendations and to establish steps to ensure implementation of recommendations. In a facilitated workshop, the PWG will review the same information in order to develop consensus solutions and address areas of concern. After additional technical analysis of the recommendations, public meetings will be held to inform and engage the public before moving to final recommendations. As a final step, the steering committee and PWG will each meet one last time to discuss and confirm the final recommendations.

For the North-South Corridor Study, specific meetings and publications of Factsheets are documented in Figure 2. Each activity is aligned with the CoSS study process as defined by the CTB (Figure 1) and includes a timeline that is consistent with the overall project schedule (Figure 3).

**Figure 2. North-South Corridor Public Information and Participation Actions**

	<b>Process Step and Tasks</b>	<b>Meetings/Outreach Actions</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>
1.	<i>Pre-study Activities</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Study introduction</li> <li>▪ Assemble draft vision and goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Memo to the Steering Committee</li> </ul>	July
2.	<i>Corridor Visioning and Planning Framework</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Confirm vision, goals, issues, concerns</li> <li>▪ Present corridor and subarea data (travel and airport data)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Steering Committee Meeting</li> <li>▪ PWG Meeting</li> </ul>	August through September
3.	<i>Technical Analysis</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Present technical results</li> <li>▪ Present draft recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Steering Committee Meeting</li> <li>▪ PWG Meeting</li> <li>▪ Factsheets #1 and #2</li> <li>▪ Public Meeting (2 locations)</li> </ul>	October through December
4.	<i>Coordination and Study Completion</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Present technical results</li> <li>▪ Present final recommendations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Steering Committee Meeting</li> <li>▪ PWG Meeting</li> <li>▪ Factsheet #3</li> </ul>	December 2012 through January 2013

## ■ Public Information and Participation Organization

Strategies to achieve the goal and objectives of the Public Information and Participation Plan will be closely aligned to the technical milestones of the project as defined in the overall project schedule. As detailed in Figure 2, these strategies and actions will be utilized throughout the study to facilitate early dialogue, continuous information flow, and meaningful engagement. The program of strategies is designed to accommodate various stakeholder communication preferences and reflects the diversity of stakeholders in the study area. The activities of the Steering Committee, the PWG, and opportunities for public participation will go hand-in-hand throughout the study process.

The Public Information and Participation program will be put in place immediately upon finalization of the technical Work Plan.

## Steering Committee

A project steering committee with executive-level representation will be formed and include the following members.

- Deputy Secretary of Transportation - Mr. David L. Tyeryar
- Northern Virginia District Administrator – Mr. Garrett Moore
- Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board Member – Mr. F. Gary Garczynski
- Past Virginia Commonwealth Transportation Board Member – Mr. J. Doug Koelemay

## Project Working Group (PWG)

A project working group with voluntary representation from stakeholder agencies, and jurisdictions primarily focused technical advisement study guidance and public engagement, will be formed. The PWG will meet three times in person or via conference call/webinar to review and provide input on draft materials. In addition, representatives have been asked to serve as a liaison with their respective agencies and officials to distribute study information via stakeholder e-mail distribution lists, agency web sites, and regular briefings. The proposed member agencies and jurisdictions are listed below.

- Loudoun County
- Prince William County
- Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority (MWAA)
- Department of Rail and Public Transportation
- Department of Aviation
- Northern Virginia District

Key topics that are anticipated to be addressed at the steering committee and PWG meetings include:

- **Steering Committee Meeting No. 1/PWG Meeting No. 1:**
  - Study introduction;
  - Request for studies, data, and information relating to the corridor;
  - Presentation of existing corridor needs and conditions;
  - Identification and discussion of local and regional mobility goals and objectives, including highlighting where they align and where they differ;
  - Reaching consensus on the goals and objectives of the Study;
  - Review of data collected to date;
  - Identification, discussion and verification of issues and needs.
- **Steering Committee Meeting No. 2/PWG Meeting No. 2:**

- Presentation of identified mobility options and recommendations; modeling results; public input from prior meeting (organized thematically);
  - Facilitated workshop in order to develop and refine consensus solutions and address areas of concern;
  - Discussion of information to be presented at the Public Meetings.
- **Steering Committee Meeting No. 3/PWG Meeting No. 3:**
    - Comprehensive study findings – mobility options; modeling results; public input from prior meeting (organized thematically).

### **Coordinate and Conduct Public Meetings**

One round of public meetings, consisting of two individual meetings, and will take place within a short timeframe of one another in different geographic areas within the study corridor in order to offer constituents within the entire corridor an equal opportunity to participate in and comment on the study. Public meetings create an occasion to give a human face to the technical work and reinforce VDOT’s commitment to including the public by sharing study information as well as seeking input. The public meetings will occur at two sites, one in Prince William and one in Loudoun counties (or inside either the city of Manassas or Manassas Park in place of one of the counties). Potential site locations, such as schools, libraries, or civic facilities, will be considered. Accessibility to the multimodal regional transportation and transit network will be a key consideration when selecting a location.

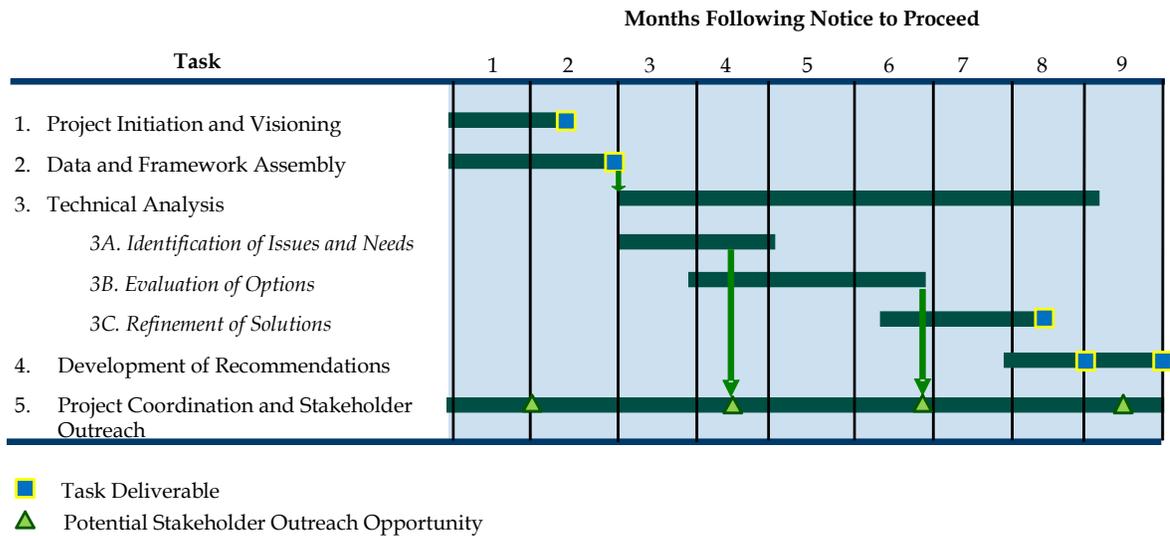
Public meeting dates will be determined based on site availability, and schedule availability of key participants. Meetings will be announced in conformance with the VDOT Policy Manual for Public Participation in Transportation Projects. It is anticipated that announcements will be made through the web page, via e-mail blast, to the PWG, via select local area advertising outlets, and to the media. The VDOT Public Affairs Office will handle media inquiries and announcements.

Key topics that are anticipated to be addressed at the public meetings include:

- Goals and objectives of the study;
- Corridor issues, needs and conditions;
- Mobility options, and;
- Comprehensive study findings – mobility options; modeling results; public input (organized thematically); funding strategies.

Meeting comments will be documented and summarized for consideration during project decision-making. Thematic meeting notes will be taken and public comments received will be transcribed into a report that will also include materials provided at the meeting.

### **Figure 3. Project Schedule**



### Coordination with Other Studies

Numerous other studies and projects have taken place inside the study area and along the North-South corridor. These include projects in the planning/study phase, projects in design phase, and projects in construction. Information exchange with these projects is important. As appropriate, information about these activities will be included in PWG materials. Information about the North-South study will be provided as appropriate to the other study and project teams, either through Lead Agency contacts or through direct contact with those teams.

### Develop and Maintain Study Contact Database

Working with contacts in Northern Virginia, including, but not limited to, members of the PWG, and staff from the VDOT Public Affairs Office, existing e-mail lists will be identified and used to reach an array of stakeholders, including minority and disadvantaged populations. Potential stakeholders identified through web page submissions and public meeting attendance lists will be added to a study-specific e-mail list to receive study information. The e-mail list will be updated and maintained throughout the duration of the project, incorporating new names as they are submitted. This information dissemination approach will be used to distribute project information and news through e-mail blasts. For example, announcements about upcoming public meetings, and other key milestones will be announced via e-mail blast. This effort will be coordinated with VDOT and the PWG, with content provided to them so that they can disseminate information to their proprietary lists.

### Prepare Project Factsheets

Factsheets for public consumption will inform the public about study progress and key findings. Given the expedited schedule for the project, four factsheets, prepared at key

milestones are anticipated. It is anticipated that the factsheets will address overall project goals and methodology, FAQs, project milestones and next steps, study findings, and other topics of interest to stakeholders. PDFs of the factsheets will be distributed to PWG representatives for dissemination to their respective e-mail lists and will be made available on the project web page hosted by VDOT. Paper copies will be available at the public meetings.