

Coming soon* to the I-81 Corridor...



A New Jersey Turnpike-style industrialized **tollway** built primarily for freight trucking



...Unless you speak up **NOW**

* Construction on the section of Interstate-81 running between **Lexington and Staunton** could begin as early as **this summer**

* VDOT is still deciding on toll rates. The rates above are an average of VDOT's current \$26-\$45.50 estimate for cars and \$65-\$113.75 for trucks.

PUBLIC HEARINGS: **APRIL 11-19**

Dates & Locations

Tues, April 11: Roanoke, Va.
Roanoke Wyndham Hotel
2801 Hershberger Road

Tues, April 11: Wytheville, Va.
Wytheville
Community College
1000 East Main St.

Wed, April 12: Bristol, Va.
Bristol Holiday Inn & Conference Center
3005 Linden Drive - Exit 7, I-81

Mon, April 17: Natural Bridge, Va.
Natural Bridge Hotel &
Conference Center
15 Appledore Lane

Tues, April 18: Winchester, Va.
Winchester Travel Lodge
160 Front Royal Pike

Wed, April 19: Bridgewater, Va.
Turner Ashby High School*
(see additional info below)
800 North Main St.

All public hearings will take place from 5 - 8 p.m.

At each location, there will be 2 meetings taking place simultaneously: **The first meeting** will be in the form of a traditional public hearing, where people can either leave a written comment, make comments privately (to a court reporter), or register and make oral comments publicly for up to 3 minutes (**speaker registration begins at 4 p.m.**). **The second meeting** will be an open house, where citizens may come and view exhibit boards and speak with VDOT representatives. The public is welcome to attend either or both meetings and can make comments in various forms to VDOT at both meetings. **Exhibit boards showing the specifics of VDOT's plans will also be available for public viewing from 1 - 3:30 p.m. at each location.** For maps & directions see VDOT's website www.I-81.org

* Exhibit boards for the April 19 meeting at Turner Ashby High School will be available for public viewing from 1 - 3 p.m. at VDOT's Harrisonburg Residency Office, located at 3536 North Valley Pike (from I-81, take Exit 251 and go left off the ramp onto Rt. 11. The residency is 200 yards on the left).

WRITTEN COMMENTS **Due by APRIL 29**

Write to: Christopher Collins, Project Study Manager
Va. Dept. of Transportation
1401 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Or Email: Christopher Collins, Project Study Manager at:
cg.collins@VirginiaDOT.org

For more information and sample letters:
Visit RAIL Solution's website at:
www.railsolution.org



Citizens for the protection of quality of life in the Shenandoah Valley and Southwestern Virginia — advocating intermodal freight transportation on higher-speed trains near I-81.

David Foster, Executive Director
342 High Street
Salem, VA 24153

Visit our new website at: www.railsolution.org

Ready to Say Goodbye to the Rustic Beauty of the Shenandoah Valley & Southwestern Virginia?

We've reached a critical point in I-81 planning

The Virginia Dept. of Transportation (VDOT) is about to hold hearings for public comment on its plans with the STAR Solutions construction consortium to rebuild I-81 — all 325 miles — as a massive industrialized tollway, similar to the New Jersey Turnpike. It will alter forever: our quality of life, our local economies, our air and water quality, our tourism industry and some of our historic battlefields. These changes to the Shenandoah Valley & Southwestern Virginia — will be permanent!

Dramatic growth in thru-state truck traffic is what's driving this proposal. By the time the proposed tollway is finished, I-81 will have *already* reached its future capacity for truck traffic and even more lanes will have to be added — making it a perpetual construction project.

VDOT refused to look at the potential for multi-state rail improvements. VDOT examined **Virginia-only (325 mile) rail improvements** to divert truck traffic from I-81 and reduce pressure for highway expansion. VDOT's rail analysis is inaccurate and unfairly discounts the traffic diversion impact of improved rail service. **VDOT knows a 500 mile line is necessary** for successful intermodal transfer to rail, yet they refused to examine the Knoxville, TN-to-Harrisburg, PA rail corridor as RAIL Solution requested.

'Highway thinking' dominates VDOT. Staff have spent entire careers building roads and are less comfortable with rail improvements that would be cheaper, safer and cleaner. **The highway construction lobby reinforces this thinking.** STAR Solutions, a construction consortium, led by Halliburton Corp. subsidiary KBR, proposed a truckway for I-81 in 2002. In the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS), VDOT embraces STAR's plan for highway widening, but dropped STAR's separated truck lanes.

Grim Realities of VDOT's plan:



Less safety for drivers. VDOT's proposal offers no separation between cars and the extra millions of trucks that would need to travel I-81 every year in order to pay down the \$10 billion bonded debt.

Tolls tax local business. While other north/south interstates remain free, tolls would unfairly impact local businesses, shipping costs, growth, jobs, and economic activity in the Shenandoah and Southwestern Virginia. VDOT estimates a cost of \$10 billion to be financed by tolls on cars and trucks — for decades.

Expect at least a decade of construction delays and accidents. The local tourism industry will be depressed as travelers avoid an ugly mess and travel delays.

Trucks divert to side-roads to avoid tolls.

Many trucks are expected to divert to local roads in order to avoid tolls. This will mean congestion, driving hazards and extreme wear on roads that were not built to handle such traffic.

Battlefields, farms, homes paved over.

Businesses and families will be dislocated, many more degraded by noise pollution.

Air pollution. Our mountain and valley landscape naturally traps air — like a big bowl. A huge increase in truck traffic would mean an equally huge increase in air pollution—and incidence of asthma, emphysema, and other respiratory ailments, especially in children and the elderly. **VDOT completely ignores these risks in its Draft EIS impact analysis.**

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement has NOT been unbiased.

VDOT chose a former STAR Solutions partner (Vanasse Hangen & Brustlin) to execute this federally-required study of the potential economic, social and environmental effects of the I-81 rebuild. The public hearings are a part of this study.

www.railsolution.org

RAIL Solution is a grassroots citizens' group in the I-81 Corridor.

Rail's 21st Century Role is to add time-sensitive freight and passenger capacity in transportation corridors where highway expansion is prohibitively expensive and/or environmentally detrimental.

Higher-speed trains traveling in two directions on parallel tracks near I-81 could divert up to 60% of thru-state trucks off I-81 — IF it were a part of a multi-state balanced transportation plan, from Knoxville, TN-to-Harrisburg, PA.

Learn more about VDOT's I-81 plans and the rail option at our **NEW** website: www.railsolution.org

47 Counties, Cities, Towns & Planning Organizations voted resolutions supporting rail

See the resolutions at: www.railsolution.org

Abingdon	Staunton	Northern
Blacksburg	Stephens City	Shenandoah
Botetourt Co.	Vinton	Valley Regional
Bristol	Warren Co.	Commission
Buena Vista	Washington Co.	Roanoke
Clarke Co.	Winchester	Valley-Alleghany
Clifton Forge	Wythe Co.	Regional
Covington	Wytheville	Commission
Craig Co.	Blacksburg/	Scott Co. Economic
Edinburg	Christiansburg/	Development
Floyd Co.	Montgomery Area	Authority
Frederick Co.	Metropolitan Plan-	Winch.-Fred.
Glade Spring	ning Organization	Metropolitan
Harrisonburg	Mount Rogers	Planning Org.
Lexington	Planning District	Bristol, TN
Marion	Commission	Jonesborough, TN
Montgomery Co.		Kingsport, TN
Page Co.		Knoxville, TN
Pulaski		
Radford		
Roanoke		
Roanoke Co.		
Rockbridge Co.		
Rockingham Co.		
Salem		
Saltville		
Scott Co.		
Shenandoah Co.		
Smyth Co.		

We need a more sensible solution for I-81

Virginians don't have to repeat the ruinous policies of the West Coast and Northeastern U.S. at great cost to our economy and environment. **Keeping the rail option alive is the key to safer, cleaner, balanced transportation planning.**

A more sensible solution would target specific highway chokepoints and safety problems. VDOT analysis shows improvements in a few areas could make I-81 much safer. **We could begin now — not wait for a decade of construction.** The improvements could be paid for like other VA highway projects, not with tolls, but using competitive bids to save taxpayers' money — unlike **STAR Solutions' 'no-bid' contract.**

Upgrading the rail line paralleling I-81 from Knoxville, TN, to Harrisburg, PA, would transfer much of the thru-state truck freight off I-81 and onto rail — eliminating the need for drastic highway changes and ensuring adequate capacity and improved safety for many more years.

Rail upgrades can be funded with the \$35 billion federal *Railroad Rehabilitation & Improvement Fund* loan program. The 2006 Va. Gen. Assembly ordered a multi-state rail feasibility plan for the I-81 Corridor. **VDOT should not rush to a decision without the results of this study.**

With a core network of high-capacity rail lines instead of vast new highways as our primary means of moving freight, we can pioneer for our state & nation a balanced transportation system that guarantees less environmental, public health, aesthetic and economic damage.

Rail for freight shipping:

- **Would be 1/3 cheaper** than VDOT's plan
 - **Produces 1/5 the pollution** of trucks
 - **Uses 1/3 of the energy** to move freight
 - **Uses little land** for major capacity increases
 - **Minimizes risk of fuel cost increases** for businesses
 - **Passenger service** possible at higher speed
- Learn more about a rail option at www.railsolution.org

What you can do

We are near the end of the I-81 decision-making period. Rebuilding could begin as soon as this summer between Lexington & Staunton.

VOICE YOUR OPINION NOW

► To Governor Tim Kaine

Website: www.governor.virginia.gov

Mail: Office of the Governor
Patrick Henry Building, 3rd Floor
1111 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Phone: (804) 786-2211

Fax: (804) 371-6351

► **To VDOT** Come to the public hearings and deliver your comments privately or publicly.

Or write to Christopher Collins, VDOT's I-81 Project Study Manager at:

Email: cg.collins@VirginiaDOT.org

Mail: See address on reverse side.

PUBLIC COMMENTS DUE BY APRIL 29

For sample letters and more information visit the RAIL Solution website at: www.railsolution.org
Also see VDOT's I-81 web page at www.I-81.org