

Resolution 2003-9

Resolution by the City of Lexington Concerning Plans for Interstate 81

Whereas, the I-81 corridor is increasingly the route of choice for trucks traveling between the northeast and the south and southwest because of congestion on I-95 and expanding shipments generated by the North American Free Trade Act (NAFTA); and

Whereas, multi-national corporations, Halliburton and Fluor Corporations have submitted proposals to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to expand the number of lanes and other appurtenances on I-81; and

Whereas, the Norfolk-Southern Corporation estimates that seventy percent (70%) of truck traffic on I-81 passes through Virginia to destinations south or north; and

Whereas, the minimal rail freight proposals included in the STAR Solutions and Fluor Public Private Partnership Act proposals do not adequately address rail freight potential in the whole I-81 corridor; and

Whereas, these same proposals provide no option for passenger rail, although upgrading the corridor's main rail line secures the passenger rail option; and

Whereas, the Commonwealth of Virginia is now planning the future of the I-81 corridor, and its decision will have significant impacts for the future of western Virginia; and

Whereas, the Commonwealth of Virginia's decision on this corridor will determine whether I-81 and connecting interstates will become a multi-state "East Coast Truck Bypass"; and

Whereas, the increased use of railroads to move freight will improve safety by reducing dangerous vehicular congestion on I-81, improve energy conservation by reducing the amount of diesel fuel consumed for freight transportation, and improve the health of people and other forms of life in western Virginia by dampening the rate of increase in diesel engine-generated toxic emissions along I-81; and

Whereas, the creation of additional freight rail capacity paralleling I-81, in Virginia and Tennessee, may spur the creation of new freight rail capacity nationwide, resulting in more shipping options at lower cost for the nation's business;

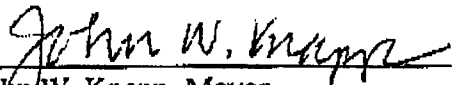
Now, Therefore, Be It Resolved that the Lexington City Council requests the Virginia Department of Transportation, when evaluating alternatives solutions under the National Environmental Review Act, to consider innovative concepts, such as the "truck-ferry" and "Steel Interstate", that have the potential to divert time-sensitive freight from trucks on I-81 to rail; and

Be It Further Resolved that the Lexington City Council requests the Commonwealth of


Virginia through the Virginia Department of Transportation, and other appropriate agencies, to work with their counterparts in Maryland, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and West Virginia along with various railroad companies to explore a viable I-81 rail alternative.

Adopted this 4th day of September, 2003.

Resolved: September 4, 2003



John W. Knapp, Mayor



Deborah Desjardins, Clerk

Resolution 2003-10

**A Resolution of the Council of the City of
Lexington, Virginia Commenting on the Public-
Private Partnership Proposals to Widen I-81**

Whereas, Virginia Department of Transportation is seeking comment on proposals for improvements to I-81 submitted by STAR Solutions and the Fluor Corporation; and

Whereas, the implementation of either Star Solutions' or Fluor's proposal to widen I-81 will increase the volume of truck traffic along the I-81 corridor in Virginia; and

Whereas, there is a correlation between the increase of truck traffic and of accidents and deaths along I-81; and

Whereas, additional truck traffic will only increase the air, noise and visual pollution along the interstate corridor; and

Whereas, it is estimated that long-distance rail transport causes three to four times less pollution than highway traffic; and

Whereas, the rail option can be constructed more cheaply and sooner than highway widening; and

Whereas, the upgrading of rail infrastructure removes most necessary construction from the interstate, saving lives and preventing the frustration and loss of productivity resulting from highway construction; and

Whereas, it is projected that both the Star Solutions and Fluor proposals will be outdated before the end of the mandated 20 year design life.

Now, Be It Therefore Resolved that the Council of the City of Lexington, Virginia supports a rail solution in order to divert time sensitive freight from using I-81 and to minimize the requirement for widening this interstate; and

Be It Further Resolved that the Council does not support either the Star Solutions or Fluor proposals in their present form for the widening of I-81.

Adopted this 16th day of October, 2003.

Resolved: 10/16/03

John W. Knapp
John W. Knapp, Mayor

Deborah Desjardins
Deborah Desjardins, Clerk