



# **Analysis for Expansion of the City of Suffolk's Roadway Maintenance Boundary**

**City Council Retreat  
October 1, 2004**



# History

- **In July 1972, Nansemond County became the City of Nansemond (later changed to Suffolk).**
- **Based upon a Circuit Court order in May 1972, the VA Highway Dept. will continue to maintain the new City's roads & streets until such time as the responsibility is transferred from the Dept. to the City.**

# History

- The Commissioner will base the decision on:

**“when in the opinion of the VDOT Commissioner the consolidated area becomes substantially urbanized, the Commissioner may, by agreement with the governing body, transfer the streets in any area deemed urbanized to the city for construction, reconstruction & maintenance.”**

- The Commissioner, by law, makes the final decision as to the area to revert to the City.

# History

- **2001; Council authorized study**
- **Bryant B. Goodloe, P.C., retained to perform the feasibility study**
- **Focus group formed with citizens & City Dept. Heads; this group has met 4 times in the past year**

# Road Classifications

## Urban Roads:

- City roads managed by the locality within the urban system; designated by the census with a population having 5,000 or more – an exception to this rule is Suffolk
- Although Suffolk qualifies as an urban area, most of its roads are treated as country primary & secondary roads
- Should the City take over the roadway maintenance, the roads chosen for transfer will move from the “secondary” or “primary” system to the “urban” system classification

**Rural Roads:** are all other roads other than urban

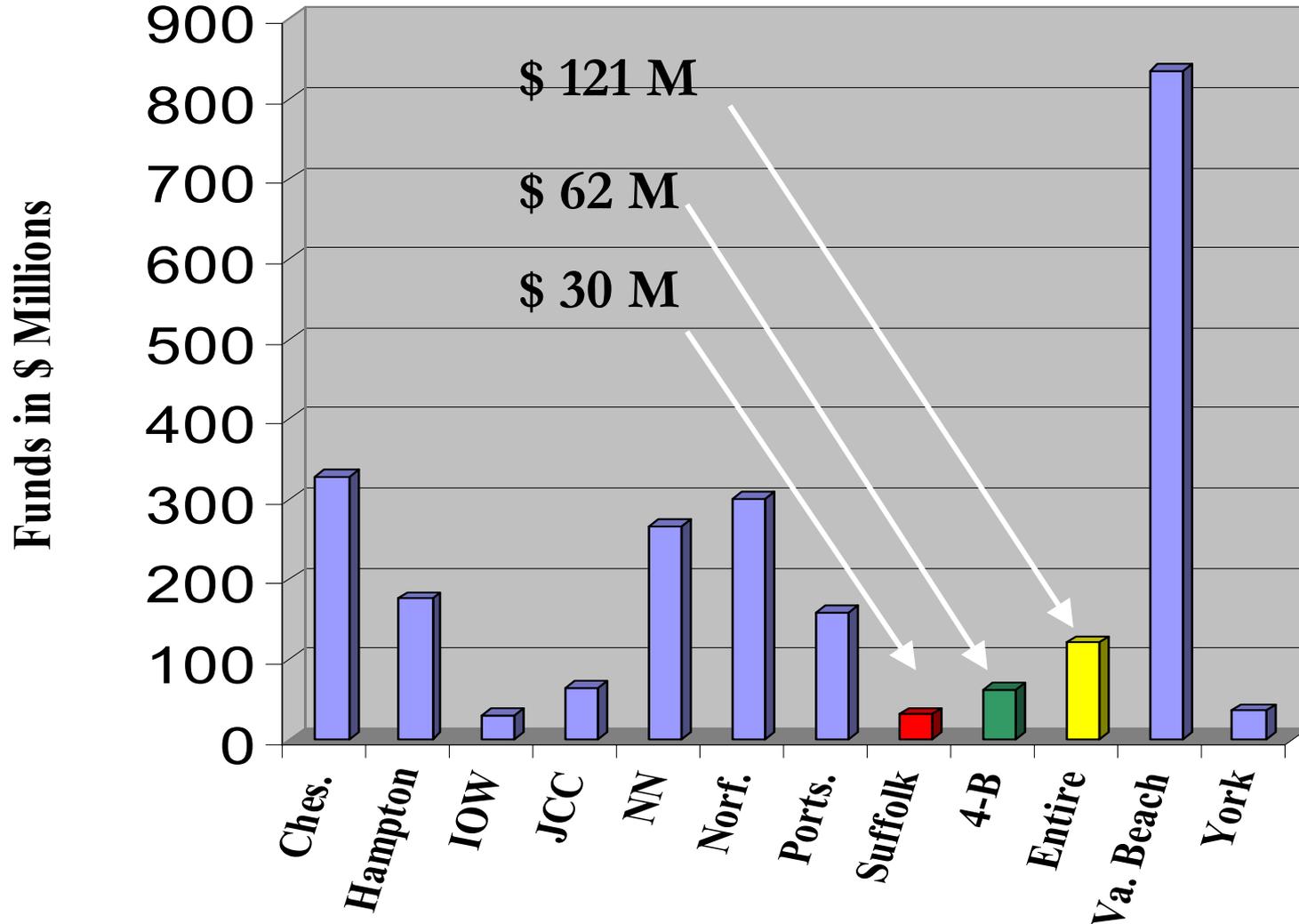
# Street Transfer Analysis

## Report Conclusions:

- **The City can acquire more financial resources through reasons mainly related to maintenance**
- **Accepting maintenance responsibility will enable the City to position itself better & gain additional resources with respect to the prioritization process outlined in the Code of Virginia**

# 2026 Regional Transportation Plan – Projected Construction Funding

Note: area 4B was identified as an option for a partial take over. This option is no longer being recommended.



# Risks vs. Benefits

- City would be responsible for a much greater number of roads & storm sewer systems
- Expectations of the public will be higher, **however, with the substantial increase in funding, the City will be able to provide a much higher level of service**
- Impact to other Departments:
  - Risk Management
  - Human Resources
  - Fleet Management
  - Finance / Purchasing

# Benefits

**City would have the flexibility to adopt policies which are more specific to the City of Suffolk:**

- ✓ **Traffic signals**
- ✓ **Speed limits**
- ✓ **Truck routes (restrictions)**
- ✓ **Storm sewer maintenance**
- ✓ **Traffic calming measures**
- ✓ **Better coordination with: Dept. of Public Utilities (cost sharing), Police & Fire**
- ✓ **Better coordination with Planning Dept. & implementation of neighborhood plans**
- ✓ **Improved disaster response**

# Impact on VDOT Facilities

- After total transfer, there is the possibility of reducing 41 FTE's in VDOT
- By agreement with the City of Suffolk, a transfer of VDOT employees could be accomplished – they have the expertise & the City will have the need
- Enables employees at some AHQ's to be transferred to other VDOT locations

# Street Transfer Analysis

## Report Conclusions:

- Recent initiatives by VDOT seek to assist municipalities to assume more, if not most, of the responsibility for managing their construction projects
- In July, Richmond, Hampton & Virginia Beach assumed the management of their local road construction projects.
- The transfer of roads – either partial or in full – for construction, reconstruction & maintenance from VDOT to the City of Suffolk is within the spirit of this initiative

# Street Transfer Analysis

## Report Conclusions (Cont'd):

- **Transfer of roads – partial or full – would enable the City more control over its transportation network**
- **Current system is fragmented & inefficient**
- **Partial takeover would increase citizen confusion over the new boundaries & whether the City or VDOT is responsible**
- **Full takeover would give the City complete control over any land development issues & streamline process for developers**

# Street Transfer Analysis

## Report Conclusions (Cont'd):

- **The City can acquire significantly more financial resources**
- **Due to the inefficient remainder of roads & streets that would be left, it does not make economic or operational sense for VDOT to support a partial takeover**
- **Most prudent approach for all concerned is that this be a one-time change**

# Other Tangible Benefits

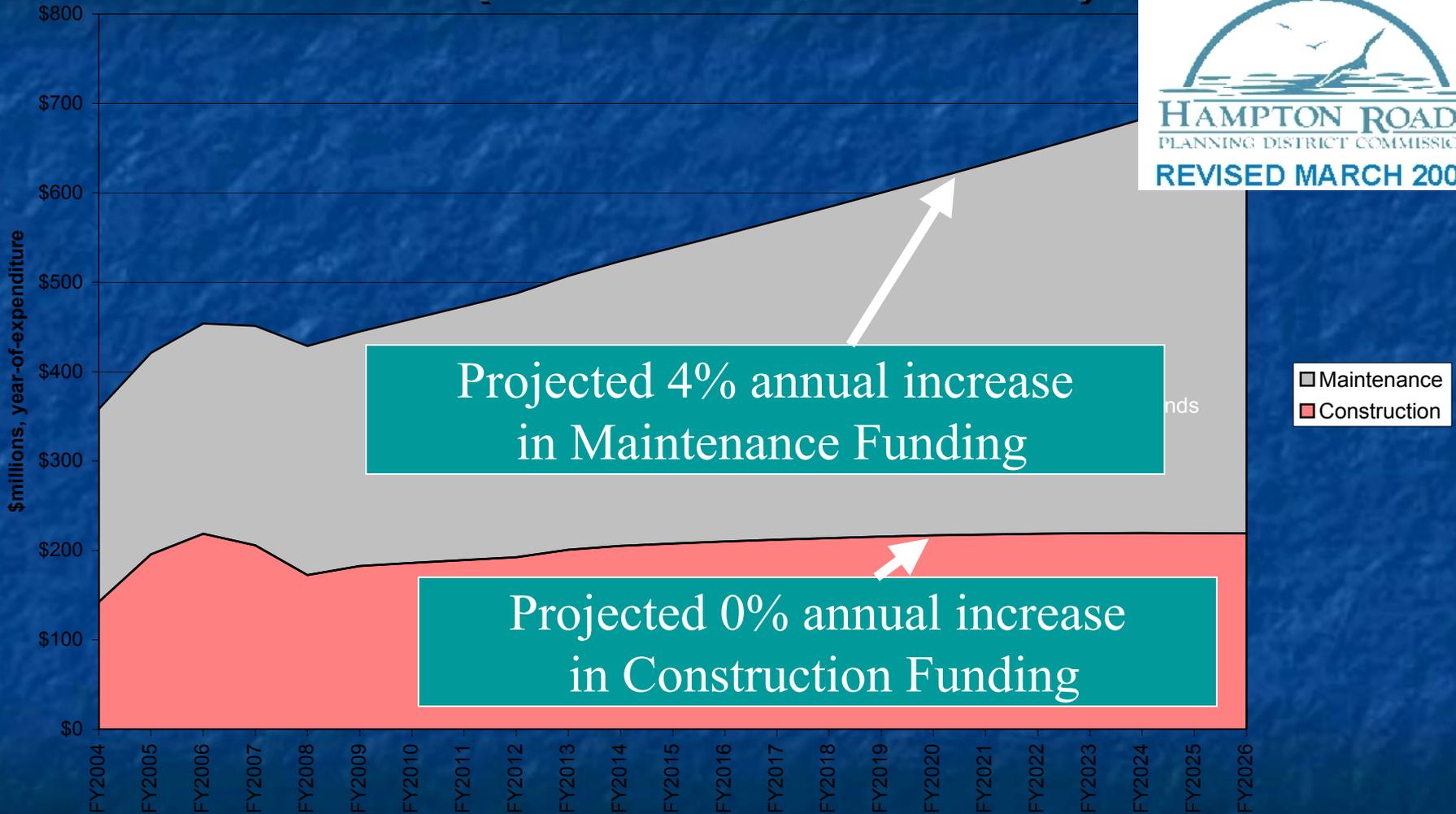
Additional funds available to the City to meet the needs of the Citizens:

- T-21 (transportation enhancement funding)
- CMAQ (congestion mitigation / air quality)
- DMV fines & other sources typically available for Cities which maintain their own roads
- Permit fees

# Roadway Funding Allocations

	<u>Current</u>	<u>Future</u>
<b>Urban Const. Allocation</b>	<b>\$ 507,898</b>	<b>\$ 3,098,508</b>
<b>Secondary Allocation</b>	<b>\$1,771,044</b>	<b>\$ 0</b>
<b>Urban Maintenance</b>	<b>\$ 768,300</b>	<b>\$15,129,006</b>
<b>VDOT Maintenance</b>	<b><u>\$3,352,587</u></b>	<b><u>\$ 0</u></b>
<b>Total \$ spent on Roadways ( FY 2004)</b>	<b>\$6,399,829</b>	<b>\$18,228,513</b>

# Projection of VDOT Funding for Cities in VA. (FY 2004 – FY 2026)



source: VDOT

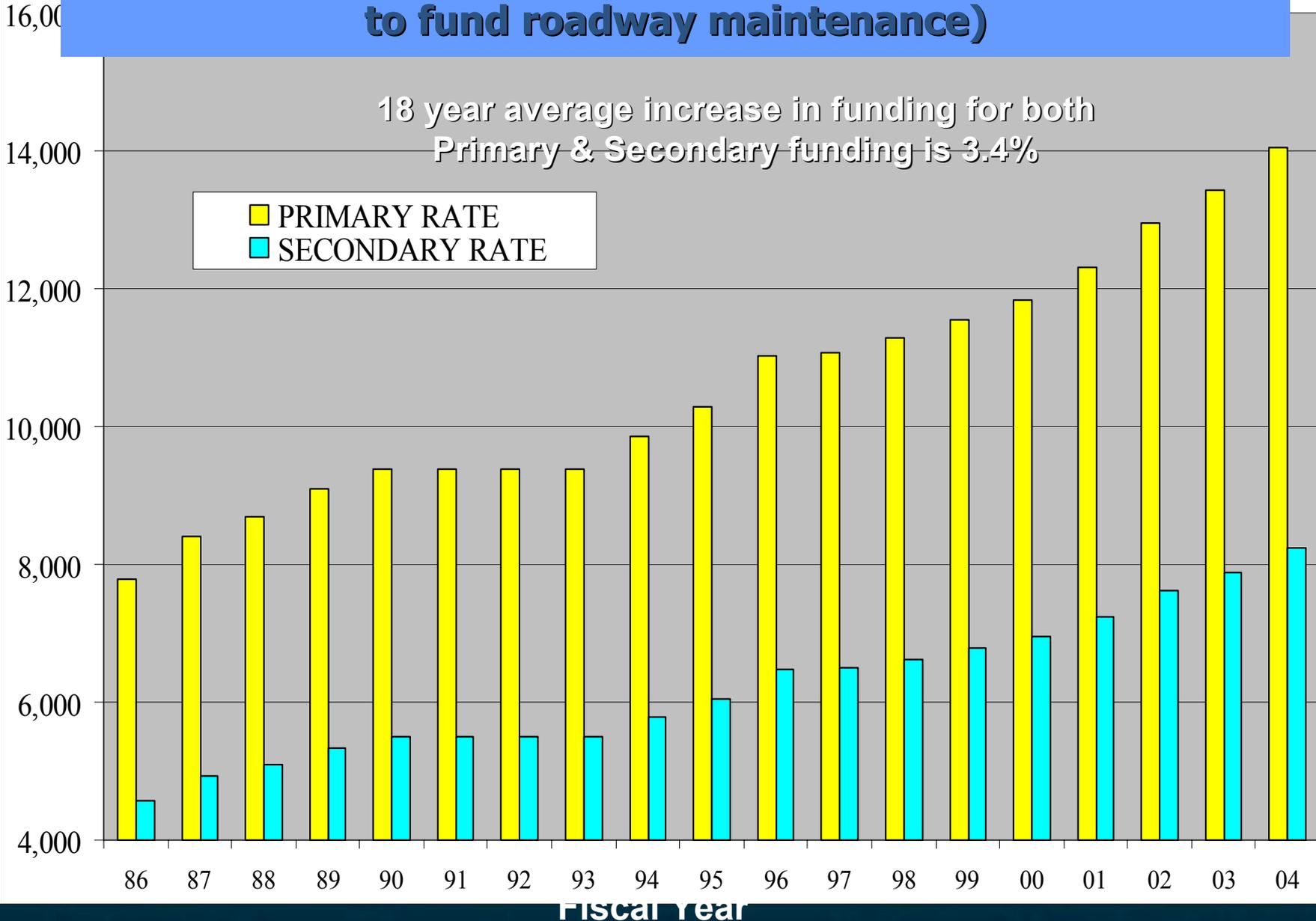
# History of VDOT Funding Cities in VA.

(this slide shows a continued commitment from the State to fund roadway maintenance)

18 year average increase in funding for both  
Primary & Secondary funding is 3.4%

PRIMARY RATE  
SECONDARY RATE

Funding Level (dollars / lane mile)



# Sample of Projected Increase in Level of Service

Roadway and Drainage Items	VDOT	City
	Frequency	Frequency
Ditch Cleaning	as needed	7 years
Ditch clearing (outside of R/W)	Conditional	3 to 5 years
Grass cutting (Primary Routes)	4 times/yr	10 times/yr
Grass cutting (Secondary Roads)	2 times/yr	5 times/yr
Asphalt Overlay (Secondary Roads)	12 to 15 yrs	10 yrs.
Shoulder grading	as needed	7 to 10 years
No Through Truck restrictions	9 months +	10 days
Speed limit studies	2 to 5 months	1 to 2 months
Traffic Signal Modifications	60 to 120 days	12 -18 months

- ✓ Ability to work with and compromise with developers to improve traffic patterns (examples: Lowe's, Northgate)
- ✓ Higher levels of service as specific locations (Ports. Blvd., Elephants Fork, etc.)
- ✓ Improved coordination with City Departments

# **Frequently Asked Questions**

# Frequently Asked Questions

## *1. Why should the City consider expanding its roadway maintenance boundary?*

- To provide a higher level of service for the maintenance of the City's roadway & stormwater drainage systems due to increased funding provided to the City by VDOT
- More control over the City's roadway & drainage system
- Eliminate fees VDOT currently charges various City Departments
- Control of development assistance
- Early implementation of Council requests
- Coordination of signalization on major corridors

# Frequently Asked Questions

**2.** *What will happen if a major disaster strikes the City? How will the City be able to afford fixing roadways which may be damaged by storms or other disasters?*

- Major disasters will result in the state & federal government issuing a state of emergency; when such declaration is issued, the City will be able to recover 95% of expenditures related to repairs
- City currently has a contract for emergency services which covers the entire city and is approved for reimbursement in a declared emergency

# Frequently Asked Questions

3. *How will the City be able to respond to a disaster, such as a major snow storm or hurricane?*
- **At the current time, staff from Public Works department provides assistance to VDOT in clearing roads when disaster strikes**
  - **Staff from P/W was the main source of roadway clearing just prior to & after Hurricane Isabel**

# Frequently Asked Questions

4. *Will the transfer of roadway maintenance be a “cure all” to all of the City’s current & future roadway issues?*
  - It is a start!
  - The roadway maintenance transfer offers the City the opportunity to obtain increased funding to better address transportation related infrastructure needs

# Frequently Asked Questions

5. *How will the transfer affect future development within the City?*
- The transfer will allow the City substantially greater flexibility to negotiate roadway & drainage improvements with developers
  - Our current arrangement makes it almost impossible to coordinate with developers to provide financial contributions to improve roadway & drainage issues

# Frequently Asked Questions

6. *Should the City take over the maintenance responsibilities of all of the City's roadway systems or smaller portion?*
- Complete takeover eliminates the current condition of two levels of service within the City
  - Complete takeover eliminates the dual standard system now in place
  - Complete takeover eliminates the administrative cost for a second phase takeover
  - Complete takeover maximizes the opportunity the City has for maximum reimbursement from VDOT
  - VDOT prefers a total takeover to eliminate the conflicts & effort associated with repeated future expansions

# Frequently Asked Questions

7. *How would the transfer impact the City's consideration of creating a storm water utility program?*

- Provide for a comprehensive roadway & drainage maintenance program
- Provide for a much higher level of service to address long standing problems which continue to develop

# Frequently Asked Questions

8. *Would VDOT employees lose their job if the expansion were to occur?*
- **No - VDOT has indicated that existing employees would be transferred to other area headquarters**
  - **It is also hoped that some VDOT employees would transfer to City employment**

# Frequently Asked Questions

9. *Is VDOT willing to sell the City some of the equipment & office space which are currently used to maintain the roadways in Suffolk?*
- **Yes - VDOT has indicated it is willing to convey both equipment & property to the City at a negotiated terms and conditions**

# Frequently Asked Questions

10. *Will the City be able to manage the task of maintaining the roadways currently maintained by VDOT?*
- Yes - through the use of contracted services & increased staffing levels, the City will be able to assume the maintenance of the roadways; recent examples which demonstrate the City's ability include:
    - In-house construction of **turn lanes to Kennedy Middle School**
    - In-house construction of **Fairgrounds traffic circle**
    - In-house construction of **Prentis Street extended.**
    - Contracted construction of infrastructure related to **Suffolk Industrial Park**
    - Contract management of **Hurricane Isabel Clean-up** efforts
    - Ability & willingness to have staff available when major weather events occur (snow storms, wind, rain, etc.)
    - Core group of competent and professional staff currently exists

# Frequently Asked Questions

*11. Will the City be able to provide a higher level of service than is currently being provided by VDOT?*

- **Yes - with the substantial increase in funding the City will receive from VDOT, the City will be able to:**
  - **Increase the frequency of grass cutting from 4 times a year to 6+**
  - **Increase the frequency of ditch maintenance from 8 to 20+ years to 5 to 10 years**
  - **Provide more frequency of street sweeping**
  - **Provide closed storm sewer maintenance**
  - **Provide more frequent roadway shoulder maintenance**

# Frequently Asked Questions

*12. What are the disadvantages of the City taking over the maintenance responsibilities?*

- **Just like the current arrangement in the STD, the City will be accountable for the roadways & drainage systems**
- **The City will not be able to defer requests for maintenance services to VDOT; however, VDOT will continue to oversee the City's maintenance program and to provide input when requested by the City**

# Frequently Asked Questions

*13. Will all areas receive improved maintenance?*

- **Yes - increased funding will allow for enhanced maintenance throughout the city**

*14. Will the City provide closed drainage throughout the city?*

- **No – however, the staff will be able to develop a priority listing of closure projects & begin closure in accordance with guidelines established by City Council**

# Frequently Asked Questions

*15. Does the transfer have the opportunity to “free up” funding previously allocated towards roadway maintenance in the Nansemond Taxing District?*

**Yes - currently the City funds the following items on an annual basis:**

■	Revenue Sharing Program:	\$ 300,000
■	Street light operating costs:	\$ 700,000
■	Street sign program:	\$ 80,000
■	Enhanced roadside maintenance:	\$ 60,000
■	Traffic signal maintenance:	\$ 10,000
■	Drainage sink hole repairs:	<u>\$ 100,000</u>
■	Total:	\$1,250,000

# Frequently Asked Questions

*16. How will the secondary roadway construction program & the Urban Program be affected by the takeover?*

There are three major projects in the Secondary Roadway Program & Urban Program

- Shoulders Hill Road
- Pughsville Road
- Wilroy Road
- Finney Avenue Flyover

The estimated additional funds needed to complete these projects is \$103 Million

- Current system funded in **44 years**.
- Takeover funded in **23 years**

# Conclusions & Recommendations

- VDOT strongly suggests that either the complete transfer take place or that the discussion be tabled for some agreed upon timeframe, possibly the next 2 years
- VDOT recommends meeting with the City of Suffolk staff to cover any issues which need to be addressed in order to finalize this report
- Mutual goal is to complete a conceptual agreement by December 30<sup>th</sup>. Under this scenario, City Council would need to adopt a resolution in support of the transfer by Dec. of 2004.

# Proven Ability to Perform



**City of Suffolk**  
**Department of Public Works**

# Prentis Street



# Prentis Street



# Myrick Avenue



# Myrick Avenue / drainage structures



# Rosemont (CDBG) / Freeney Avenue



# Kennedy Middle School Turn Lanes



E. Washington Street

# Northern Shores Elementary School Sidewalk Project



# Saratoga Neighborhood Project (VDOT funded)



# Church Street Parking Lot



# Town Point Road



# Town Point Road



# Hurricane Isabel Clean-Up Efforts



# Hurricane Isabel Clean-Up Efforts



# Hurricane Isabel Clean-Up Efforts



# Mineral Springs Road Current Condition (.15 Miles from Rte. 13 Intersection)



# Example Project Cost Comparison

Mineral Springs Road (VDOT managed project)

\$1,539,000                      0.40 miles =    \$3,850,000/mile

Ashley Ave; Battery Ave; Tradd St.; Linden Ave.  
(City managed project)

\$1,150,000                      0.84 miles =    \$1,370,000/mile



**Recommended  
Plan of Action  
and  
Schedule**

# Schedule for January 1, 2006 Implementation

- Resolution from City Council to VDOT: **Nov. 2004**
- Negotiate with VDOT on details of transfer: **Nov. 2004 – Apr. 2005**
- Preparation of operating budget for FY 05/06: **Nov. 2004 – Jul. 2005**
- Develop policies & procedures manual: **Mar. 2005 – Aug. 2005**
- Acquisition of equipment and material: **Jul. 2005 – Dec. 2005**
- Employee recruitment:
  - Transfer of VDOT employees? **Aug. 2005 – Dec. 2005**
  - Recruit employees: **Sep. 2005 – ongoing**
- Advertise & negotiate annual services contracts: **Jul. 2005 – Dec. 2005**