

About This Report

The Commonwealth of Virginia's Statewide Multimodal Freight Study is the product of more than three years of study and tool development. The Study finds that Virginia's overall statewide transportation planning process is and has been effective to assess appropriate transportation improvement needs and recommendations for the Commonwealth to mitigate the growth of congestion. However, what the Commonwealth's existing statewide transportation planning process has not had is the ability to connect the growth trends of trade and business to transportation demand that reflects a more comprehensive consideration than simply projecting future demand from historical traffic counts. It has also lacked the ability to assign impact or value to the freight transportation industry regarding growing congestion, or planned transportation improvements.

Moreover, significant and specific freight-transportation-generating business decisions have been and will be made that will drive the rapid growth of transportation demand – decisions made both inside of the Commonwealth, and outside. For example, China's joining of the World Trade Organization on November 11, 2001 is one; the plans and projects to expand the Port of Virginia to accommodate new business is another. The Commonwealth needs a transportation planning process that considers these actions and others, and provides specific recommendations to transportation decision-makers at all levels.

Hence, the findings and recommendations contained in this Summary Report stand as a starting point for Virginia's Transportation Long Range Plan to address these issues: to prescribe an effective freight transportation policy; to make more accurate statements to decision-makers and the freight community as to what the Statewide Transportation Plan does for freight mobility; and provide tools to Virginia's transportation planners to evaluate recommendations and make decisions based on collaborative transportation goals that impact, not only freight transportation providers, but every consumer that pays for their service.

This report consists of three parts:

- Part I: *About This Report* provides a brief description of the Study's overall purpose and structure.
- Part II: *Statewide Freight Study* identifies, from all modes, the projects that are most important to freight movement, including both programmed near-term projects and potential long-term projects. Potential policies, actions, and initiatives that supplement capital projects also are included.

- Part III: *Multimodal Freight Corridor and Subregion Profiles* provides concise descriptions of the geography, economic structure, commodity flows, transportation facilities, and potential capital projects associated with each of the 11 multimodal freight corridors and 4 subregions in Virginia. While an integral part of the overall Study, these profiles also can be read as stand-alone documents.