



**Alternatives for Improving Roadway Services  
in  
Fairfax County**

Board Transportation Subcommittee  
November 30, 2010



## CONTRIBUTORS

- Transportation Advisory Commission
- Virginia Department of Transportation
- Fairfax County staff



## BACKGROUND

- Most roads in County maintained by VDOT
  - Cities and towns maintain their roads
  - Arlington and Henrico counties maintain their secondary roads
- Transportation revenues declining statewide
- State perspective and priorities may not match County perspective and priorities
- Increased urbanization of Fairfax County
- County has increasingly expanded transportation role since 1980s



## STUDY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Examine ways to improve the delivery of roadway services
  - Consider different levels of responsibility the County may assume
- Estimate VDOT's expenditures on maintenance and operations in Fairfax County
  - Compare with other arrangements in other Virginia jurisdictions
- **Consider the “roadway” as multi-modal**
  - **The entire right-of-way has the potential to carry pedestrian, bikes, transit, and cars**



## STUDY DATA AND LIMITATIONS

- VDOT provided the County with expenditure and allocation data
  - FY 2007 – FY 2009: budget allocations and actual expenditures
  - FY 2010 – FY 2011: budget allocations
- Cost data provides only an approximation
  - Sometimes difficult to isolate costs that are only attributable to Fairfax County
  - Maintenance categories change year by year
- Performance measures not examined
- Additional analysis would be needed before taking any actions
  - Manpower Needs
  - Equipment Resources
  - Facility Resources
  - Start Up Costs



## POTENTIAL BENEFITS OF AN INCREASED COUNTY ROLE

- Overall funding
- Enhanced influence in transportation decision-making
- Improved responsiveness and accountability
- Increased flexibility in establishing priorities and standards
  - Maintenance standards and priorities
  - Roadway standards
  - Improvement priorities

***Would an increased County role improve any of these?***



## ALTERNATIVES CONSIDERED

- Enhance select maintenance activities
  - Increase and improve communication and coordination with VDOT
  - Provide additional local funding to VDOT
  - Assume responsibility for select activities
- Assume responsibility over secondary system under provisions for *Devolution*
  - Maintenance only
  - Construction only
  - Maintenance and construction
  - Full responsibility (maintenance, operations, construction)
- Assume responsibility in select geographic areas under provisions for *Urban Transportation Service Districts*
- Assume responsibility for entire primary and secondary system



## CONSIDERATIONS

- Public expectations
- Condition of assets
- Start up and recurring costs
- Levels of service
- Form of government
- VDOT reimbursement and other revenue sources
- Experiences of other jurisdictions who maintain roads
  - Majority supplement VDOT payments with local funds

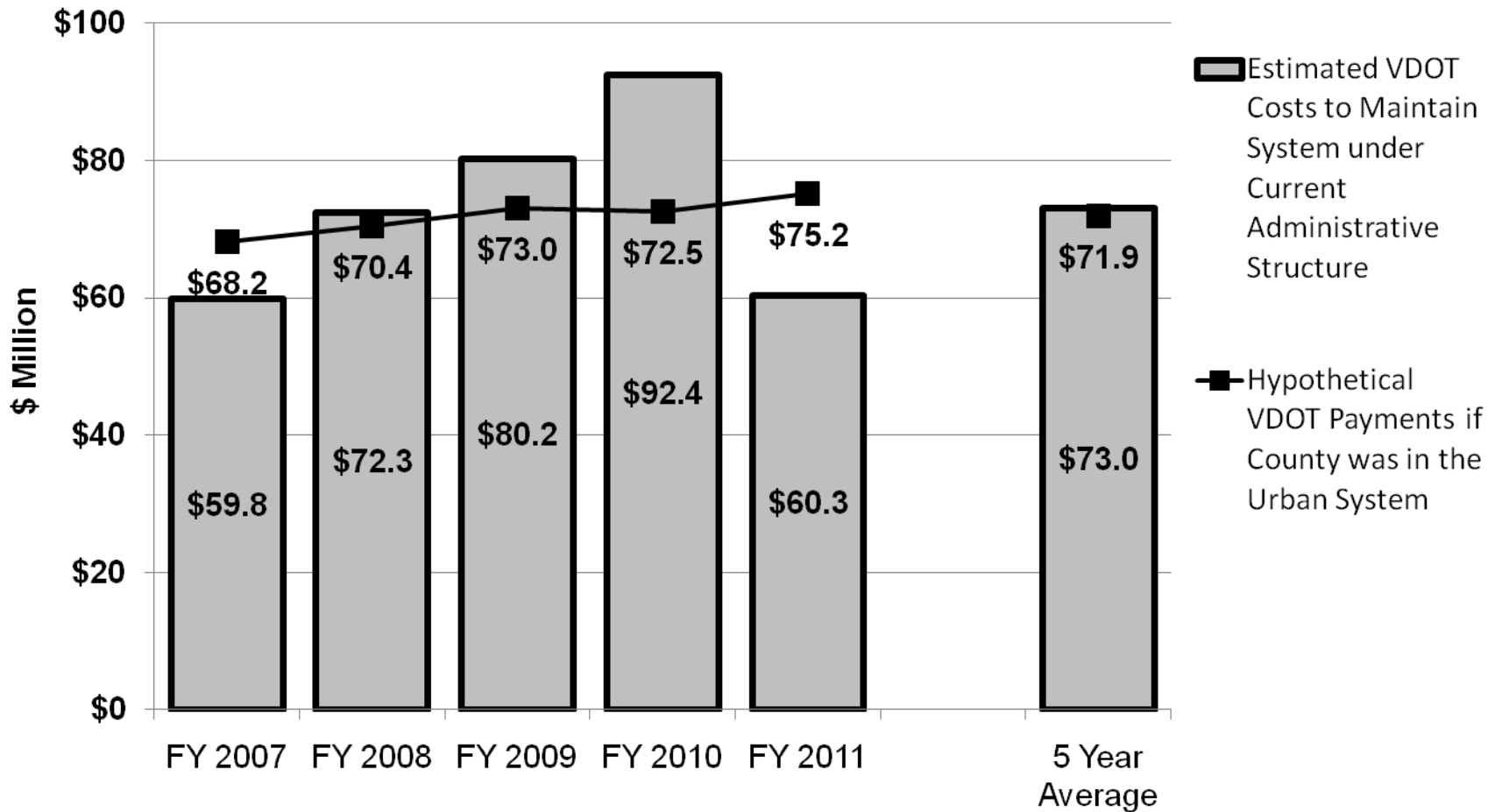


## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- Costs vary by:
  - Alternative
  - Maintenance and operation functions assumed
  - Level of service provided
- Revenues vary by alternative
  - Some state payment prescribed by law
  - Other payments to be set by agreement
- Study reviews possible local funding sources
- VDOT expenditures in Fairfax County approximately equal to VDOT payment rate for cities and towns



## VDOT COSTS IN FAIRFAX COUNTY VS. URBAN PAYMENTS





## HOW DOES THE COUNTY WANT TO IMPROVE ROADWAY SERVICES?

Areas for improvement	Possible actions that would address improvement		
	More funding (federal, state, and/or local)	Improve coordination with VDOT	Assume responsibilities from VDOT
Improve levels of service <i>More frequent mowing, more frequent repaving</i>	●	○	◐
More responsiveness to local requests <i>Modifying signal timings, changing speed limits</i>	○	◐	◑
Flexibility in establishing standards <i>Ability to set more urban design standards for certain areas of the County</i>	○	◐	●
More control in setting priorities <i>Ability to reallocate resources to changing needs of County</i>	○	○	●

○ Minimally effective      ◐ More effective      ● Most effective



## CONCLUSIONS

- Significantly improving levels of service (more mowing cycles, more frequent repaving) requires more funding
  - Assuming responsibility may or may not improve levels of service
- No clear financial benefit for assuming more responsibilities
- Assuming responsibility provides benefits in:
  - Transportation decision-making
  - Local responsiveness and accountability
  - Flexibility in establishing priorities and standards



## CONSIDERATIONS

- If the County decides to increase its responsibilities over roads, it should consider the following:
  - Take an incremental approach
  - Work with VDOT to identify additional administrative, planning, or engineering functions that the County could assume
  - Work with VDOT to enhance select maintenance activities Countywide
  - Begin studying assuming full maintenance and operations responsibilities in select areas of the County under provisions for *Urban Transportation Service Districts*