

## **July 2024 Go North Alliance Newsletter**

### **Parsons to Davis: Where are we in the process?**

#### **Background**

On February 6th of this year, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), in coordination with the West Virginia Department of Highways (WVDOH) announced their intention to prepare a new Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the Parsons to Davis section of Corridor H. This was followed by a public meeting at Tucker County High School on February 27 and an opportunity for public comment until March 27.

#### **Next steps in the process**

The February announcement included a project schedule for the subsequent steps:

- Availability of the DEIS: May 2024
- Public Hearing: June 2024
- End of DEIS Comment Period: July 2024
- Issue Combined Final Environmental Impact Statement/Record of Decision (FEIS/ROD): December 2024
- Issue all remaining project permits and authorization decisions: March 2025

As of this writing, we are still awaiting publication of the DEIS. As you can see, FHWA/WVDOH is currently almost two months behind their proposed schedule. In response to a recent request from Bill Peterson for an update, Travis Long, Technical Support Director at WVDOH replied that collecting the data on the northern alignment has taken longer than expected, but “We do now have a draft that is in review in my office and will be going to FHWA next week. After that review process is over ... it will be published to our webpage. I will let you know when that happens.”

This is not a bad thing, as the initial proposed schedule was very ambitious. We hope the delay means that both the WVDOH’s preferred R-ROPA (southern) route and a Northern Route are being given equal, fair, and complete evaluation.

The DEIS will describe the selected route and the reason that route was chosen. The announcement will include the date and location of the required public hearing, and the date the comment period ends.

Publication of the DEIS triggers another opportunity for those who are concerned about the specifics of the route to speak up. Our hope, of course, is that the Northern Route is chosen. Even if it is, there will be opportunity to help refine the route to lessen any environmental and quality of life impacts. And if the R-ROPA is chosen, the public meeting and comment period will be another chance to voice your concerns.

For now, we wait for the announcement. Stay tuned; we’ll let you know as soon as we hear more.