

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 17, 2016

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: CARRIE SANDERS, ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR, TRANSPORTATION & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #7 – I-395 HOT LANES UPDATE

ISSUE: Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT)-led proposal to convert I-395 High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lanes to High Occupancy Toll (HOT) Lanes

RECOMMENDATION: That the Transportation Commission receive an update from VDOT on its project proposal.

BACKGROUND: On November 20, 2015, the Virginia Secretary of Transportation sent a letter to the City and other jurisdictions noting the State's planned action to improve travel along the I-395 Corridor. The letter noted the State's intent to initiate an Environmental Assessment to study the conversion/expansion of the existing HOV lanes to dynamically-priced express lanes spanning into Washington D.C. In addition, the state will initiate a transportation demand management study to identify transit, carpool, vanpool and other demand management strategies to improve travel along the corridor. The proposal would include the following:

- Convert existing HOV lanes from Turkeycock Lane north to the Eads Street Interchange to dynamically tolled Express Lanes;
- Provide three through lanes and improve transit service;
- Include guaranteed funding for new / enhanced transit service and carpooling incentives;
- Will not include the construction of a new ramp at the Shirlington Interchange;
- Will maintain HOV-only access at the new Seminary Road ramp;
- Will include a significant public outreach process.

The City of Alexandria has raised a number of questions related to the project, which were included in a letter that was sent to the Secretary of Transportation in early December 2015. The City will work closely with VDOT as well as Arlington and Fairfax Counties in the coming months to further explore this proposal and how it differs from previous ones. Any implications from potential cut-through traffic to Alexandria, especially at Seminary Road, or near Shirlington must be further analyzed.

DISCUSSION: The state intends to provide coordination with affected jurisdictions. VDOT is actively reaching out to City civic and community associations. Most recently, a project outreach event conducted by TransUrban, the concessionaire for the I-395/95 HOT lanes project. The event was held as part of the Seminary Hill Civic Association meeting on January 14, 2016. TransUrban provided a high level overview of the HOT lane conversion proposal and answered questions from meeting attendees. VDOT staff was in attendance and answered questions related to VDOT's role in the proposal.

As a part of this project, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) will be conducting a corridor-wide multimodal TDM/transit study. The multimodal TDM/transit is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2016.

The City will actively participate in the environmental assessment to ensure the City's concerns are addressed, and will be asking VDOT to attend a future Transportation Commission meeting to further discuss the project components and issues.

Attachment 1 – City's Response Letter to VDOT