

ITEM 8 - Action

July 20, 2011

VDOT Response to TPB Request for Additional Transit and Park-and Ride Project Information Regarding the Amendment to the 2010 CLRP to Modify the I-95/395 HOV/HOT Lanes Project, and Comment Letters Supporting the Project



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Sean T. Connaughton
Secretary of Transportation

June 28, 2011

The Honorable Muriel Bowser
Chairman, National Capital Region
Transportation Planning Board
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.; Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002-4201

Dear Chairman Bowser:

As a follow up to a request made by members of the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) on June 15, 2011, I am writing to reaffirm the Commonwealth's commitment to funding and delivering transit and transportation demand management (TDM) options along the Interstate 95 corridor. There are several efforts underway to identify, fund and deliver these critical improvements.

First, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is advancing the I-95 HOT/HOV Lanes Project to provide infrastructure for a regional network of managed lanes that will link High Occupancy Vehicles (HOV) and transit services to key destinations in Virginia. While the original scope of the I-95 HOT/HOV Lanes Project has been substantively downsized, the project remains an important step forward in providing quality HOV and transit service in the corridor. It will address major bottlenecks in the current system, provide new access points, enhance incident response and improve enforcement.

Second, VDOT is advancing plans to construct a direct ramp from the existing HOV lanes on I-395 to Seminary Road, which will connect the growing Mark Center site to this expanded regional transit and HOV network. These improvements have been included in the Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) and an environmental study is underway.

Third, the Commonwealth is moving forward with efforts to expand park-and-ride capacity in the corridor. Full or partial funding for previously identified park-and-ride needs has been included in the FY2012-2017 Six-Year Improvement Program. These improvements include the Horner Road lot expansion, leasing of the parking spaces to replace the spaces lost at Potomac Mills Mall, Staffordboro Boulevard park-and-ride lot expansion and Gordon Road park-and-ride lot expansion.

The Honorable Muriel Bowser
June 28, 2011
Page Two

Finally, the Commonwealth has initiated a study to identify even further opportunities to expand transit and TDM in the corridor. Because the scaled-back project no longer includes a concession payment to fund transit beyond the core scope of the project, the previously developed transit and TDM plan is no longer part of the CLRP. Consequently, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is developing a new transit and TDM plan to maximize the capacity of the I-95 HOT/HOV Lanes and to respond to the demand for transportation options within the corridor. The I-95 Transit and TDM Plan will be largely limited to those jurisdictions within the I-95 HOT/HOV Lanes Project area, but will examine improvements such as bus bays at points north of the project's terminus to serve destinations including the Pentagon and the Mark Center.

DRPT has formed a steering committee of stakeholders in the project area to collaboratively advance the study. Recommendations from the study will be submitted to the steering committee and the public for comment this fall. Once recommendations have been established for transit and TDM improvements along the corridor, funding will need to be identified in order to advance the recommendations into the CLRP and toward implementation. This proactive approach will enable DRPT to identify improvements today so as funding becomes available those improvements can be quickly implemented with the full support of the region.

I thank the Board for its interest in providing transportation choices along the I-95 corridor, which is one of Virginia's busiest corridors and supports important economic activities across multiple jurisdictions. The Commonwealth recognizes that only a comprehensive and multimodal solution with the state, regional and local agencies working together will help address the mobility and accessibility needs and remains committed to advancing such a solution.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sean T. Connaughton". The signature is stylized with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Sean T. Connaughton



6434 Brandon Avenue, Suite 208, Springfield VA 22150

June 27, 2011

The Honorable Muriel Bowser, Chair
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board
777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002-4239

Dear Councilwoman Bowser and TPB Board Members,

On behalf of the Greater Springfield Chamber of Commerce **I urge the Transportation Planning Board to support the inclusion of the new I-95 HOV/HOT Lanes project in the 2011 Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) and the proposed amendment to the 2010 CLRP.**

With the soon to arrive increase in traffic associated with BRAC, we need this project more than ever. HOT Lanes on I-95 will provide one more transportation option for our workforce, area residents and long-distance travelers, without taking away any of the means already in place.

Following VDOT's announcement on February 3 we sent a letter to Fairfax County Board of Supervisors Chairwoman Sharon Bulova, reiterating our long-standing support for HOV/HOT Lanes along I-95.

Our Chamber would like to yet see HOT Lanes all the way to Eads Street in Arlington County, but we understand that resolution to our transportation issues will have to be done within current limits.

VDOT's desire to move forward with HOV/HOT Lanes on I-95 will support economic development in Fairfax County, grow jobs and improve the quality of life for our commuters. New ramps and lanes will improve conditions for travelers who currently travel on the I-95 HOV lanes and for those who will use the future Beltway HOV/HOT lanes.

Our Chamber is appreciative that VDOT continues its commitment to keep current SLUG options available to commuters along I-95 by adding access points in Fairfax County and commuter lots to the south. This long-standing commuting option is one that should be protected as an integral part of any transportation improvement plan.

Again, please support the inclusion of the new I-95 HOV/HOT Lanes project in the 2011 CLRP and the proposed amendment to the 2010 CLRP.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Nancy-jo Manney'.

Nancy-jo Manney
Executive Director

Cc: The Honorable Linda Smyth, FC Board of Supervisors
The Honorable Cathy Hudgins, FC Board of Supervisors



GREATER WASHINGTON

Board of Trade

Growing Business, Building Community.

June 23, 2011

The Honorable Muriel Bowser, Chair
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board
777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002-4239

Re: Support for I-95 HOV/HOT Lanes Project

Dear Chair Bowser:

I am writing to reiterate the Greater Washington Board of Trade's strong support for the I-95 HOV/HOT lanes project which, along with other regional projects, is under conformity review for inclusion in the 2011 CLRP.

The I-95 HOV/HOT lanes project will offer major improvements to mobility in the I-95 corridor and will provide critical infrastructure and capacity for future regional transportation needs. The transit and roadway capacity improvements will provide our region much needed travel options of particular importance given the anticipated impacts of BRAC on this part of our region.

By adding a third HOV lane from Edsall Road to the Prince William Parkway, extending two additional HOV lanes to Garrisonville Road in Stafford County, and improving access at major interchanges, new opportunities will emerge for alternative commuting and travel options for commuters and businesses.

This project offers an important step forward for transit. Busses, vanpools, and cars with three or more riders – including sluggers – can use the new HOT lanes at no cost. Other motorists will have a toll option to ride the HOT lanes on occasions when time is of critical importance, otherwise the general purpose lanes can always be used at no charge. The new HOT lanes will be kept congestion-free by variable toll rates with tolls fluctuating in response to real-time traffic volumes.

We thank the TPB for its ongoing support of this important addition to our region's transportation infrastructure.

Sincerely,


James C. Dinegar, CAE
President and CEO

