



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **PLANS TO EXTEND I-395 EXPRESS LANES LAUNCHED**

***Virginia Secretary of Transportation and project leaders kick off project to provide congestion relief and transit improvements; Network of express lanes expected to help unlock gridlock in Northern Virginia***

**FAIRFAX** - Virginia Secretary of Transportation Aubrey Layne today launched the McAuliffe Administration's plans to extend the northern section of the I-395 Express Lanes, providing expansion of a managed lanes network that provides faster and more reliable travel, and new choices to Northern Virginia - one of the most congested regions in the country. The 395 Express Lanes extension, which involves expanding and converting two high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes to three express lanes from north of Edsall Road to Eads Street near the Pentagon, will help ease bottlenecks that occur where the existing 395 Express Lanes end. Improvements to the commuter-heavy Eads Street interchange and transit improvements on the entire I-395/I-95 Corridor are other key benefits of the project. This eight-mile extension is the latest addition to a growing network of express lanes aimed at unlocking gridlock in Northern Virginia.

"By 2021, we will have created an 84-mile network of express lanes that moves more people with fewer vehicles, using all modes of transportation, throughout Northern Virginia," commented Virginia Secretary of Transportation Aubrey Layne. "This seamless network provides unprecedented travel choices to travelers to reach their destinations faster, and helps open up our congested roads for commerce - top priorities for Governor McAuliffe and the Commonwealth," continued Layne.

In November 2015, VDOT and its 95 Express Lanes partner, Transurban, entered into a framework agreement and began working together to finalize the scope of improvements, finance plan and arrangements to expand the express lanes northbound on I-395. As part of the agreement, Transurban will provide long-term transit investments through an annual payment to fund transit improvements on the entire I-95/I-395 Corridor. Virginia's Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is engaging in a transit and transportation demand management (TDM) study to identify priority transit projects that should be supported by these funds. The I-395 extension project is expected to be built largely within VDOT's right of way, and also will involve building new noise walls to protect neighboring communities. VDOT currently is leading an environmental assessment to study all potential effects the improvements would have on the natural environment, and will engage the public for input at public hearings in fall 2016.

The expanded express lanes network also includes extending the I-95 Express Lanes southbound, past Garrisonville Road in Stafford County, in order to reduce rush-hour bottlenecks where the current express lanes end at Garrisonville Road. Combined with the northbound extension, this 2.5-mile southbound extension provides drivers the opportunity for a reliable trip from Stafford County to nearly the Washington, D.C. line.

Construction on the I-395 Northern Extension is expected to begin in spring 2017 with completion in summer 2019. Construction on the I-95 Southern Terminus extension is expected to get underway as early as this summer, with the new southbound ramp opening in winter 2017/2018, and a new northbound ramp opening in summer 2018.

Transforming the I-66 Corridor is another critical solution to Northern Virginia's traffic challenges. Over the past year, VDOT and DRPT have been working on plans to bring express lanes and multimodal solutions to I-66 Outside the Beltway, and provide a package of improvements to I-66 Inside the Beltway, including dynamic tolling during rush hours in the peak directions and funding multimodal improvements that will directly benefit travelers on the I-66 Corridor. As part of the overall improvements inside the Beltway, the decision was made to move forward with widening I-66 eastbound from the Dulles Connector Road to Ballston. Multimodal solutions are a top priority of the Commonwealth on both I-66 improvement projects as well, and will be critical to transforming the corridor.

For more information, go to [VirginiaDOT.org](http://VirginiaDOT.org) and [Transform66.org](http://Transform66.org).

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