



NEWS RELEASE

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Commonwealth Announces Agreement for Capital Beltway HOT Lanes

RICHMOND – Virginia Department of Transportation Commissioner David S. Ekern announced today that the Commonwealth has reached an in-principle agreement with its private partners, Transurban DRIVE and Fluor Enterprises, for the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the new Capital Beltway High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes. The agreement will be finalized over the coming months, with final signatures and financing to be completed by the end of the year. Construction will begin in spring 2008, and the lanes will open in 2013.

“I applaud Commissioner Ekern on this major accomplishment,” said Governor Tim Kaine. “The Capital Beltway Project will construct the first-ever dedicated HOV and transit services to the Capital Beltway. The project has been under development since 1994, and it is time for action to bring additional congestion relief to residents, visitors, and businesses in the region.”

Commissioner Ekern, who shared the in-principle agreement with members of the Commonwealth Transportation Board earlier today, noted “By working together, the Commonwealth of Virginia and its private partners, Fluor and Transurban, will deliver traffic congestion relief and new travel choices on the Beltway.

“This agreement is another major step toward helping Northern Virginia commuters and keeping the area’s economy vital. We have all listened to the desires of the citizens through the environmental process, and this agreement addresses congestion and can improve performance of the entire Beltway,” Ekern said.

Key aspects in the agreement require Fluor-Transurban to:

- finance and build a 14-mile stretch of HOT lanes (two lanes in each direction) on the Capital Beltway, based on a fixed-price, fixed-time design-build contract. Construction is expected to last 5 years (see map at http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/HOT_495.asp);
- finance and build three new access points from the Beltway into Tysons Corner, build HOV connections from I-95 to the Beltway (known as Phase VIII of the Springfield Interchange), as well as reconstruction and improvements to many existing bridges, traffic lanes, overpasses, interchanges, and signs;
- finance about \$1.3 billion of the \$1.7 billion project costs;

- manage and fund all operations and maintenance of the HOT lanes including major repairs and rehabilitation;
- collect tolls from non-HOV vehicles. Tolls will vary and be based on the level of congestion in the HOT lanes. During rush hours, the average trip cost is expected to be \$5.00 to \$6.00, and Fluor-Transurban must ensure free flow traffic conditions in the HOT lanes;
- ensure that HOV vehicles, transit and commuter buses travel for free; and
- return the HOT lanes to the Commonwealth in good order at the end of the agreement.

Fairfax Board Chairman Gerry Connolly noted “This agreement brings guaranteed transit and HOV services to the Capital Beltway in Fairfax County. The Beltway is the only major corridor without these services to our citizens. Bringing these services and new access into Tysons Corner serves not only Fairfax County well but also the Washington, D.C. region. I applaud the private partners and the Commonwealth for working together to bring this project to reality.”

The agreement calls for the Commonwealth of Virginia to:

- retain ownership and oversight of the HOT lanes;
- have the right to build any other transportation improvement;
- provide a \$409 million financial grant to the project to support the construction of key elements including the final phase of the Springfield Interchange (Phase VIII), improvements to the I-66 interchange, participation in the regional congestion management plan, and reconstruction of the existing infrastructure; and
- provide police and emergency services to the project.

Transurban’s Senior Vice President North America Michael Kulper said “The Capital Beltway HOT lanes project is a great example of what can be achieved when the government and the private sector work in partnership to deliver much-needed improvements to the transportation network.

“The HOT lanes will provide new travel choices and relief from traffic congestion for the people of Northern Virginia, and both Fluor and Transurban are pleased to be partners with the Commonwealth in delivering such an important project,” Kulper said.

For details about the Capital Beltway HOT Lanes project, go to http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/HOT_495.asp

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