Supervisor Letourneau and Supervisor Buffington Update on Northstar Boulevard

Dulles District Supervisor Matt Letourneau and Blue Ridge District Supervisor Tony Buffington have prepared a fact sheet for Loudoun residents on the current status of the Northstar Boulevard project.

What is Loudoun County planning to build?

The approved FY2017 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) contains $48.5 million to build the missing link of Northstar Boulevard from Route 50 to Shreveport Drive (where it currently ends in Brambleton) in FY2017-FY2019 ($11.4 million was already appropriated in FY2016 to begin design), and $30.5 million to build the missing link between Route 50 and Tall Cedars Parkway in Stone Ridge in FY2018-FY2019 ($5.4 million was already appropriated in FY2016 to begin design). This road is intended to provide another connection between Dulles South and Dulles North to alleviate congestion in the Belmont Ridge Road/Evergreen Mills Road/Stone Springs Boulevard corridor.

What sources of funding exist for road projects?

There are several ways to fund transportation projects:

Local Tax Funding: Funded through cash fund balance.

General Obligation Bonds: GO Bonds are sold by a locality to finance a project.

Proffers: Cash or construction offered by a developer as part of a request to build more density.

State Revenue Share Funding: Funding requested from VDOT to match locality funds for projects.

HB 2 Project Award Funding: Funding provided by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) for projects that are run through a congestion relief formula. The CTB is appointed by the Governor and decides on funding for projects annually.

Northern Virginia Transportation Authority 70% funds: NVTA receives 70% of fees collected by localities as part of the 2013 Transportation Bill. NVTA also scores projects through a different congestion relief formula and awards funding. NVTA is made up of local elected officials.

Local 30% funds: The other 30% of funds collected from fee increases in the 2013 Transportation Bill stay with the locality to be used at its discretion.

What is currently proposed for Northstar Boulevard?

The FY2017 CIP proposes to apply for NVTA 70% funding in the total amount of $32 million for the segment of Northstar Boulevard from Shreveport to Route 50 in FY2018 and FY2019 when we believe we will be ready to have construction funding in place. The balance of funds needed is proposed to come from a combination of revenue sharing, NVTA 30% funds, and local tax funding. The County had not programmed HB2 project funds from the CTB into the funding plan for this project.

What has the Commonwealth Transportation Board Proposed for Northstar Boulevard?

Recently, Loudoun County became aware that Northstar Boulevard between Route 50 and Shreveport had scored high enough in the HB 2 funding process that it might be eligible to receive state funds from the CTB for construction, instead of relying on NVTA funding. Receiving state funds would free up NVTA funding for other projects. However, the Commonwealth Transportation Board has instead proposed to shift funding from Northstar to fund the widening of a segment of Route 7 in Fairfax

County. While that particular segment scored lower than Northstar in the formula, it would be combined with another segment that is already funded in order to save money and allow for a more streamlined construction process on Route 7.

Does that mean that Northstar won't receive state funds?

It means that Northstar won't receive state funding this year. However, since the project still needs to be designed, it is not yet ready for construction funding until FY2018. Northstar would be eligible to compete for funds in next year's HB 2 process.

What position has the Board of Supervisors taken on the CTB's proposal?

The Board of Supervisors voted 9-0 to continue its request for state funding for Northstar Boulevard this year, which would mean not shifting funding to the Route 7 project. While Supervisors Letourneau and Buffington understand the thought behind combining Route 7 funding, they are concerned that sufficient funds may not be available from the state during next year's process. The CTB member that proposed shifting funding has committed to supporting the Northstar project next year if it is eligible for funding.

What happens if Northstar doesn't receive state funds?

The Board of Supervisors will request NVTA funding as planned for Northstar Boulevard. Supervisor Letourneau has spoken with Prince William County Supervisor Marty Nohe, Chairman of NVTA, about Loudoun's potential need for funding and received a commitment to be as helpful as possible.

Will Northstar be delayed by the CTB's actions?

We don't know yet. It will depend on what happens next year. To help make up for Loudoun's lack of project award this year, the Commonwealth is offering $10 million in state revenue sharing to help fund design of Northstar between Route 50 and Shreveport, which would allow the project to continue without any delays-provided Loudoun receives funding next year.

Is there any way to comment on the CTB's decision?

The CTB will hold a public hearing on May 2, 6:00 - 8:00 pm at the VDOT Headquarters, 4975 Alliance Drive in Fairfax. The Board of Supervisors will be presenting our position at that hearing. Citizens may attend and speak or if you cannot attend in person you may view the meeting materials online at http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/syip/sixyear_improvement_program_meetings.asp and submit comments by email to Six-YearProgram@VDOT.Virginia.gov.

What other projects will help relieve congestion in this area?

Loudoun County Parkway is being extended to Route 606 as part of the 606 widening project. Crews are currently working through difficult utility line relocation issues, so the timing of this connection is uncertain-but it could be done by the end of 2017. The Board of Supervisors also plans to fund $40.2 million in FY2019-2022 for design and construction of Arcola Boulevard, extending north from the Gum Spring Road and 50 intersection to 606/Loudoun County Parkway. And the Board has proposed $12.3 million in improvements to the Belmont Ridge Road/Evergreen Mills Road and the Stone Springs Boulevard (former Gum Spring)/Evergreen Mills Road intersections in FY2021-FY2022.

Supervisors Letourneau and Buffington will continue to fight to make sure that Loudoun receives its fair share of funding. Improving access between Dulles South and Dulles North is one of their top transportation priorities.

Supervisor Matt Letourneau, 1 Harrison Street, S.E., 5th Floor,
P.O. Box 7000, Leesburg, VA 20177-7000

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Sent by matt.letourneau@loudoun.gov in collaboration with

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