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[00:00:06] Good morning, everyone. I'm Jimmy Bierman, chair of our transportation committee. Welcome to the Board of Supervisors Transportation Committee meeting of September 22nd, 2026. We'll start the meeting as we always do with a question of whether or not anybody has changes to the summary of the June 16th meeting minutes. And as we always do, absolutely nobody has changes, so we're going to get right to it. We've got a full meeting today. We've got first an update from the VDOT Northern Virginia District Mega Projects team, and then an update on our active transportation

[00:00:44] projects audit. And with that, I'm just going to jump right into it and turn it over to Bill Cutler to introduce his team. Thank you. Thank you very much, Supervisor Beerman. I'm Bill Cutler. I'm the district engineer, the leader of VDOT here in Northern Virginia District.

[00:01:00] Thanks for having us today. I'm with Krishna Paturi, who is our Northern Virginia District Megaprojects Director, and is going to walk through a slide presentation on two large projects on the interstate that we are conceptualizing right now.

[00:01:15] I'll turn it over to you, Krishna. Thank you. All right. Good morning, everyone. I'm Krishna Paturi. I'm the Megaprojects Director at VDOT. I started with VDOT about three months back. I'm happy to hear to give you an update on two studies we are working on currently.

[00:01:32] As you all know, with the opening of Project NEXT, the 495 Northern Extension, we now have 97 miles of express lanes. And express lanes continue to be a key solution in managing congestion and unreliability in our region.

[00:01:53] So we are, I'll go over both the studies we are currently working on, the 95 bidirectional project and the south side express lanes project. All right, the first one, the 95 bi-directional, as you know, currently the 95 express lanes are reversible and operate only in the peak travel direction, and they start at Springfield Interchange and go all the way to exit 133, which is Route 17 in Stafford County.

[00:02:26] VDOT and Transurban, we continue to explore feasibility of adding bi-directional traffic for approximately 45 miles. This starts from Springfield Interchange all the way to Spotsylvania Parkway and Fredericksburg area, and the proposed concept will build three express lanes in each direction in the northern section, which is from Springfield Interchange to Prince William Parkway, and then it will transition from the three express lanes in each direction to express lanes in each direction from Prince William Parkway all the way to Spotsylvania Parkway in South

[00:03:04] in Spotsylvania County, sorry. The next slide you see here is a stick diagram where we are looking at. This is focused on Fairfax County. What you see there in the purple color is the express lanes. What you see in gray is all the general purpose lanes and the access through general purpose lanes. The two purple lines indicate the three express lanes that will be in Fairfax County from Occoquan all the way to Franconia Springfield Parkway.

[00:03:43] And that will connect back to the reversible system. And then we have a northbound express lanes running for the last two miles north of Franconia Springfield Parkway to Springfield Interchange. Where we are currently, we just entered into a development framework agreement with Transurban to develop this project.

[00:04:09] That was signed at the end of June, and we started working on this project. VDOT is heading up the environmental and traffic studies, and then Transurban is working closely with VDOT to develop the concept. We expect to have public information meetings in 2027 with a public hearing schedule.

[00:04:32] Our goal is to have public hearing in 2028. Once the project is decided to be feasible and we get the necessary approvals from Federal Highway, we expect the project to move into commercial close and financial close in the year 2029.

[00:04:50] Following that, TU will submit a binding proposal to VDOT in 2029, and the construction would begin approximately in the year 2030. We continue our coordination with the agencies and the county staff to develop design details on this.

[00:05:08] And this is my last slide on the bidirectional. We just started working on this project. We are laying out the concepts. We see most of the project footprint is within the existing right-of-way. There are some areas where we will have to take some right-of-way takes for different purposes, some of the management ponds or things like that.

[00:05:31] But we are in a very early stages of the project where all the conceptual geometric details are being ironed out. With that, I'll pause here for a second before we move on to the next study we are working on, which is the 495 south side.

[00:05:50] I think it's good since we've got two studies to offer up the opportunity for questions right now on the first, which is the bidirectional express lane study. Sorry, Mr. Chairman, yes. Not really a question. I just want to thank you for the presentation. This is the first time we've seen a tentative timeline. This was probably the biggest mistake ever made in Virginia's interstate system. And I, for one, am proud to be saying that at the time I was saying this is a huge mistake to do this section of 95 the way it is. And if you look at it out there every single day, you can see evidence of exactly why it was a big mistake.

[00:06:29] So I really appreciate all the work that VDOT, Secretary of Transportation, and others are doing to advance this and give us some real dates. I think one of the points that you mentioned, which can't be mentioned enough, was another thing that, you know, I know I said and others said, and I'm not an engineer, which is it seems like this can fit largely in the existing right-of-way.

[00:06:50] And now to get a confirmation that largely this can fit in the existing right-of-way changes the dynamics of this project significantly. and hopefully through the course of the public meetings and discussion on this will also help advance it as quickly as possible because obviously there are some environmental impacts anytime you do road work but in this particular case you know a lot of the right-of-way is already out there it's underutilized and people are sitting in traffic looking at traffic in the other direction free-flowing and wondering why they don't have an option and it's very frustrating

[00:07:26] So I am very grateful and thankful that you have a timeline here. I would also add that, you know, largely this segment of 95 benefits people outside of Fairfax County for the large part. But it harms everyone in Fairfax County that this traffic is sitting dead stopped, at least in one direction most of the time.

[00:07:46] And so while a lot of this is not physically within Fairfax County, it does have an impact on our residents and the environment in Fairfax County. And my hope is that these dates stick pretty well and that you find this project to be tremendously popular with the public.

[00:08:06] I believe it will be. And I just wanted to express not only my support for this project, but my gratefulness to you all for advancing it and providing us some dates and some hope that we can finally fix this section of interstate and put it on an equitable level with every other piece of interstate in Northern Virginia.

[00:08:28] Thank you. Supervisor Alcorn and then Supervisor Stork. Yeah, just very quickly. This is – I totally concur with everything that the chairman just said. And my only question is, this has been through at least the study part, is part, has been approved by the TPB, correct?

[00:08:48] And it's in there. Is there anything pending right now for this? Yeah, so I can talk to that. So we studied 11-mile section of the project in previous years. That portion of the project is currently in the TPB.

[00:09:05] But now that we have expanded the project all the way to Spotsylvania Park. So the additional part. The additional part needs to be added to. Okay, thank you. Because I knew part of it was in. I just didn't understand that much. Thank you. Thank you. TPB means Transportation Planning Board. Sorry, just clarification for those watching at home, all six of you.

[00:09:26] Supervisor Stork. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I'm obviously pleased to see Lorton Road access in there. think it's huge, a major mistake when it's really done. And what I don't know, and I'm smiling as I say that, is anybody who goes down that way during rush hour knows how horrible really all

the traffic is. And it's really more of a function of 123. But the amount of people that jump off 95 at that point in time and how they clog the rest of the roads around there, I mean, that is one of the

[00:10:03] major and most sensitive issues that I have as a supervisor because it literally brings to a stop and a crawl 123, Lorton Road, I mean all the furnace road, really all the back roads that potentially route one, etc. So I don't know how that gets addressed and I realize I'm saying something that probably everybody would shake their head and go yeah that's a problem but I think it has to be part of how do we engineer this to minimize people jumping off and clogging up local roads because they're either unwilling to to be on 95 or the express lanes so i i just

[00:10:40] want to weigh in on that and and urge that be part of the engineering look of that and i would also ask that there be uh engagement deep engagement with the south county federation and the south county community because those folks live it every day and and and you all have i know have heard generally about the traffic lights on Lorton Road and the timing of those. And I don't know that you could ever get them 100% right, but because of the Amtrak and the different other I-95 and all the other kind of turns and changes there that it's, we're also looking for something

[00:11:20] there. And then a final piece of that, which I think could make a difference in that whole intersection, and that's ultimately what you're looking at is how do you kind of fix the Lorton Road intersection is to pay for and support the pain for a continuous right turn from Lorton Road onto Silverbrook Road. Jerry Connolly, Congressman Connolly got a study, got money for a study to kind of look at that. And I think some of it may be done, but I think the cost of the study, et cetera, et cetera, has gone up. So I don't know that that was ever complete, but that

[00:11:55] would also, I think, do a lot to improve traffic flow. And then my maybe final point is something that is very important to me. I know very important to a number of my constituents, the Potomac Heritage National Trail. Are you familiar with the Potomac Heritage National Trail?

[00:12:14] Okay. My colleagues, I don't know how many of them are, but it's a trail that runs literally from Maryland all through northern Virginia, mostly down to Alexandria. And over time, We're trying to make it a little bit more enjoyable to hike, not along railroads, et cetera. And so we're looking at a piece, particularly from the VRE station that goes over to Laurel Hill and Liberty, the former Lorton maximum security prison, et cetera, looking for how we can support that and having the trails go underneath not only CSX tracks, the new VPRA tracks that are being built, as well as the I-95 tracks.

[00:12:53] So ultimately the trail connections there and then ultimately across the Occoquan River are a big deal. So I'm looking for ways, and I know you're going to hear it maybe even more loudly from others in the community about how do we build that into what's getting built.

[00:13:11] Much like what was done in I-66, looking for ways for pedestrians and bicyclists to literally cross the Occoquan River, To really do that now is almost impossible. I mean, theoretically, you'd use Route 1, but it's not safe, and there's really no trail or access point there.

[00:13:27] So those are core, critical elements that I think have to be part of the planning. And I would say for mine and the community support, we'll have to be part of it because they're so central and so important to the future of traffic access and trail and pedestrian access.

[00:13:48] And we all know that we're going to see more and more and more and more and more electric bikes and scooters as a major mode of transportation. And to not have people be able to cross the

Occoquan without some easy use of that would also be as short-sighted as having this be a one-way directional railway versus the bi-directional that we're planning now.

[00:14:16] So thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Stork. any other questions on this topic seeing and hearing none i stole that from chairman mckay we'll go to the next one which is the south side express lane study thank you all right our next study we are actively working on is the the 495 south side express lanes project um as you all know we kicked off this project back in 2022 there has been several public meetings for this project The project itself is 11-mile extension of express lanes from Springfield Interchange

[00:14:56] all the way into Maryland, Maryland 210. There have been more than 10 concepts that were studied, and then we whittled it down to two concepts, which is taking one express lane in each direction or two express lanes in each direction.

[00:15:12] And finally, we presented two express lane concepts back in 2025. So the corridor faces significant regional mobility challenges, there's a lot of recurring traffic congestion, unreliable travel times, and limited travel choices including no HOV or no reliable transit service, and also limited bicycle and pedestrian access for the community.

[00:15:40] So this has been coordinated with multiple agencies, Fairfax County, City of Alexandria, Prince George's County and others so just to take you back to our previous proposal a little bit the previous proposal took advance took that space which was available on Woodrow Wilson Bridge and that was that was used to accommodate the two express lanes on Woodrow Wilson Bridge based on some

[00:16:14] extensive feedback we received from the region that that place was the the ask from the region was to preserve that space for a future metro and because of that in fall 2025 the project was not added to the regional long-range transportation plan effectively pausing that study so we kind of lost about 12 to 15 months we we we went back to the drawing board and with the new administration

[00:16:46] Starting early 2026, we started looking at other ways how we can address the feedback we received from the public and all the localities. What you see on this slide here is the new concept, so we broke it down into three.

[00:17:08] The one on the top is the existing configuration on Woodrover's and Bridge. What you see in the middle is the new concept, and then at the bottom is how the new concept would address a future metro.

[00:17:24] So the way we did that is we took the local lanes, which are three local lanes on the outside, and converted them into four general purpose lanes. And then we used the through lanes in the middle, which are two through lanes, into express lanes.

[00:17:41] So by doing that, we still leave that space in the middle, which is 18 feet on both sides, for a future metro. And this has been a major change from what the concept we had before.

[00:17:57] Most of the geometry remains the same on the Virginia side. It's how this lane configuration changes in Maryland is something we are working on. But at the crux of it, this is the one key element of the design that is being revised.

[00:18:16] And I want to point out that for this to happen, it requires some sacrifices. To accommodate those four lanes on the outside, we need to reduce the shoulders and use that space.

[00:18:32] Otherwise, there is no way to leave that space in the median for metro and still be able to accommodate six lanes. So the coordination is underway with Maryland, SHA. We have been having constant meetings with SHA to kind of take this concept further down.

[00:18:55] And because there will be other changes at interchange 295 and 210. So we are working through those concepts right now. but this is the major change with the new concept. Where we are, we plan to present the revised concept to public and stakeholders later this year, and we are targeting early 2027 for inclusion of the project into the TPB.

[00:19:21] And one of the key points I want to make here is it's so important for the project to be included in the TPB because that will give us the opportunity to extend the studies we are already doing. We currently gathered more traffic information to understand the impact of this project on side streets.

[00:19:42] That is really important for us to make sure that whatever detrimental effect the project is inducing on side streets are clearly addressed. So we went back, gathered more traffic information, and we are actively working on new traffic analysis. But the important thing is to get that regional consensus and include the project in TPB so that we can continue our studies and gather more information.

[00:20:07] As you all know, the project is very unique. We are working towards finding a solution which is workable for both Virginia and Maryland. It is complicated because the needs on both sides of the river are different.

[00:20:23] So we continue our discussions with the stakeholders. We are having meaningful conversations with several locality partners and we hope to continue that engagement throughout this year and early part of next year.

[00:20:39] And I did just want to add one more thing. Thank you so much. Last week at the Commonwealth Transportation Board, or CTB, Deputy Secretary Carter Hutchison presented this project. It's on the web, our VDOT CTB website.

[00:20:55] You can take a look at that. Included in his presentation was Virginia committing an annual transit funding amount of at least \$15 million per year. That is a floor, and the intent is for that to grow.

[00:21:15] And part of how that could grow is through the agreements with should we go the private concessionaire route. there is opportunity for growth there. But at least a floor has been placed in terms of the Commonwealth's commitment to transit funding. That was a very important addition that the Secretary and the administration made in being responsive to our region, including Maryland and Prince George's County, who have expressed interest in that. So if I could summarize some of the three

[00:21:54] main changes in our concept that was not supported by the region previously includes the preservation of the space for the metro rail, as was illustrated in Krishna's slide, the transit payment floor, the transit floor, I should say, of \$15 million a year, the intention that that would be even bigger than that, but at least it's a starting point, and then also the commitment to be looking at the side street traffic. And that would be a written commitment that the Commonwealth would

[00:22:29] make as well. And that would be to the benefit of our local governments in Virginia, as well as our local governments in Maryland. Thank you. Thank you. With that, I will turn it over to questions starting with Chairman McKay. Yeah. So first, before I ask my question, I think your response to the concerns that came up at CTB over a sustained period of time are outstanding. I mean, honestly there's a

limit to what you can do here with the existing bridge and frankly I think this is better than a lot of us thought in terms of getting commitments and certainly address the

[00:23:07] issues that I have heard most significantly. I will comment on the side street piece just briefly because Supervisor Stork in the last presentation was presenting exactly what my concern has been from day one that these lanes are not extended, which is they are a major reason the side streets have problems. Because when the interstate isn't working right, where does the traffic go? It diverts and it finds ways around. That doesn't mean that there aren't impacts of the project, but I've just always been consistent on this point that it seems like concerns over the side

[00:23:45] streets are being driven by the project when in fact a lot of the existing conditions on the side streets are being driven by the lack of infrastructure in this section of the beltway that exists everywhere else in Virginia. And the fact that there's no transit benefit to the people who live in this corridor still to me is a leading equity issue why this is important.

[00:24:07] So I'm a strong supporter of this. I appreciate what you've done to make it more palatable to the region. And I'm hopeful that CTB will see that progress as well. The technical question that I have, and I know this was explained to me, but I'm not sure many people in the public understand it. The way the segments are on page eight, especially where the divider walls are, there's structural reasons for that. And so I know I asked the question of could the dedicated metro portion of the right of way, could that be used currently as a bus only lane,

[00:24:45] which would be great, but for the fact that there's some technical reasons why that can't happen, and then also why you can't adjust to be able to provide for emergency shoulder space on the bridge right now.

[00:25:01] So can you explain the technical reasons why those things would be difficult? Yeah, so thank you very much for the question. And the space in the middle, which is a wide shoulder, geometrically, we can put a lane there.

[00:25:20] The challenge comes in at both the interchanges, how we take those buses across the express lanes or across the GP lanes back to wherever we're connecting back to. So that would be the challenge, I would say, from a feasibility standpoint.

[00:25:39] And then I will touch upon the incident management, when we put four lanes on the outside with narrowed shoulders, there is a concern about what happens during the incident, we thought about that internally too, and one of the things we have successfully implemented is having the project pay for a tow truck sitting on both sides of the bridge, which will be available instantaneously for any incident that can be cleared.

[00:26:06] That happens on 66 currently, and we expect to include that as a term in the term sheet for the project. Yeah, I think that's important because one incident that clogs that up can offset the entire benefits of the infrastructure advancement that you're pushing for.

[00:26:22] And, you know, and I appreciate the bus comment. I will say that if this was built today and was existing, there would be a lot of frustration for people that might potentially be sitting in traffic looking at a space for another lane that is just sitting there that they can't use.

[00:26:41] But I also think in order to move the project and advance the project moving forward, preserving that for future Metro Rail is a necessity. And so it will be frustrating, but it is, in my mind, a necessity to be able to preserve that. I would just say on the bus piece, understanding the technical issues with that, I do think it's something we continue to look at as this project advances, because it's one thing to see space there that nobody can use.

[00:27:09] It's another to see that space being used by transit that could be converted into rail in the future. And I know that there's a lot of reasons why that is a very difficult thing to accomplish. But I hope we don't stop looking at it, at least in creative ways, potentially to do that, because there is going to be a perception issue here down the road.

[00:27:30] We don't know where the traffic volumes are going to be by the time this gets built. We don't know what the embrace of transit is going to be. There's a lot of unknowns at this point. But what we all know sitting here today is anytime there's a piece of infrastructure that can't be accessed by people while they're sitting in traffic, there's a political pressure point.

[00:27:49] And so I just want us to just keep looking at that dedicated use for metro and keeping that in here for the reasons that we need to be able to secure CTB support, but also continue to think about some bus options there.

[00:28:06] Sure. Thank you very much for the comment. I just wanted to point out, and also the express lanes, transit travels for free. That is probably one of the reasons why we did not look at exclusive bus rapid transit lanes. But we can definitely take that back and see what we can do about it.

[00:28:25] Yeah, I mean, to me, that's an important reason to do the express lanes, period, is to be able to get the buses and them to be able to use them. Here you have this very unique situation, though, that doesn't exist anywhere else where you might be able to have your cake and eat it, too, and that's why I just want to make sure we don't foreclose on that opportunity before it's researched heavily.

[00:28:45] Sure. Thank you. I saw Supervisor – I'm going to go in the order of hands I saw. So Supervisor Palchik, Supervisor Alcorn, Supervisor Lusk, Supervisor Stork, and Supervisor Herity. And if you can remember the order for me, I would appreciate that. That was great.

[00:29:01] Supervisor Palchik, please. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you so much, Mr. Peturi and Mr. Cutler. I think my comments were mainly in line with the chairman as looking at, number one, appreciate that we've been able to preserve the future rail. And the question of both, I'm not an engineer, but the question of both shoulders and programming in the interim phase, I think, whether it's, you know, additional support while we're at it from whoever will be planning, owning this project, if it can't be done structurally,

[00:29:35] to do programmatically, because we do know whenever there's a stoppage, and my husband drives this every day, so he knows how difficult it can be when there is a stoppage, that we're able to go quickly and address that. So I do think that's critical to be included in here, especially, you know, as we know the workforce that's going to be living on both sides of the river going to existing places, including the future sphere on the Maryland side, is I think the connectivity is a number one thing we've heard from our regional economic development partners and

[00:30:13] leaders, and so anything that improves that connectivity, right, I think we'll have a return on investment as well as the transportation. Because to me, that's a big part of this, is the ROI to our regional

economic work in addition to the transportation piece, right, is when we get stuck, the region gets stuck.

[00:30:33] So I appreciate the flexibility and would say let's continue to study ways in the interim to be able to address, you know, issues that arise and have our engineers and planners really take a deep look at that and include that in our contracts.

[00:30:49] And secondly, you know, I appreciate because although we have that bus on the northbound lanes without the express lanes, it gets stuck in traffic. So very much appreciate that here, anything we can do. Number one, there are express lanes, but number two, if there are other ways to be flexible to understand, I've seen quite a few motorcycles going across here, right, going to work and back.

[00:31:14] And so I appreciate this. I do think we have to bring it to modern times, and I feel like this is a step forward in that direction. Thank you. And then finally, I was going to ask if we have data on side street traffic where we have built express lanes, because this is something I want to get as much through traffic on, you know, the highways and off our streets as possible.

[00:31:35] It seems intuitively to do that. And so I just want to make sure we're looking at data when we're making those decisions. Yeah, yeah. Thank you very much for those comments. And from a connectivity standpoint, we are actively engaging with SHA and their needs on the Prince George's County side.

[00:31:54] So that is being, we are looking at multiple access points. We are looking at ways to make that flow better between Route 1 and 295. That's ongoing. And just in terms of the side street traffic, for this corridor, we have collected new traffic data.

[00:32:10] So we have more current traffic data that we will be using in our analysis expanse outside. Just looking at 495, we go at least two intersections outside to look at what impact 495 will have on the side streets.

[00:32:25] So that is ongoing. We have done this on all our express lanes projects. That is something we look closely and to the point that was made earlier. I think the important part is if the bedway flows better, there will be less impact on the side streets.

[00:32:44] Our effort is going to be so much focused on making the 495 corridor, give more travel choices, to be working actively with other transit routes that we can add because once the infrastructure is in place, there will be more opportunities to run more buses, move more people, right?

[00:33:03] The only way we can resolve the congestion is by moving more people and not with the space available. These are highly congested urban corridors. So we are looking at all those, and we are using express lanes as a tool to kind of solve the situation.

[00:33:22] I appreciate it. And to do that, my only question would be is if you've been able to go back and look at your original projections for the existing lanes and how accurate were we, you know, looking at the side street traffic. I haven't seen that. I don't know if you have that and can share it with us, just so we are looking at facts and not reactions, right, to potential problems.

[00:33:38] Yeah, we can share that. Thank you. Appreciate it. Thank you, Supervisor Palachuk. Supervisor Alcorn. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. So just to build on the comments, I very much appreciate this new approach that's being put forward. I think it is going to be received more favorably by a number of the stakeholders in the region. This is definitely helpful.

[00:34:03] I did want to note one thing that Chairman McKay was talking about in terms of use of that right-of-way. With our newly adopted regional bus guidelines, we now have definitions.

[00:34:20] We have actually different terms that we use. We used to just say BRT, and BRT was BRT, and it's like lots of different terms. Now we have different categories of BRT. BRT, bus priority, bus priority. So I would encourage you as you look at this project to think a little bit how those types of BRT might fit in here, not just for Fairfax County and Alexandria, but frankly for PG County too.

[00:34:51] And there could be potentially some future project that comes out of this. And then just to build on, there has been a lot of history here. I want to really underscore how, to me anyway, in my conversations that I've had with folks on this side of the river and on the other side of the river, how common some of the concerns and issues are across Fairfax County, City of Alexandria, and PG County.

[00:35:22] And I know we, as a board, about a year ago, sent a letter to VDOT about a number of different intersections and roads that were needing to be looked at. What's the impact?

[00:35:39] Not just the impact for this project, but if the project happens, but also what if the project doesn't happen to build on what Chairman McKay was saying. I think looking at sort of the common issues that we face along with Alexandria, along with PG County, is a good way to look at this because, you know, frankly, we need them on board.

[00:36:04] You know, we need to get our partners across the river to step up and work with us on this. So this is a great movement in that direction. And again, I just want to underscore that some of the concerns I've heard from them are very similar to the concerns that we have here as well.

[00:36:24] And working together, I'm confident we can work through these and solve this. So thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Alcorn. Again, for the folks watching at home, Supervisor Alcorn is all about the acronyms today. BRT is Bus Rapid Transit. And I do know that our friends across the river prefer when you call it Prince George's County.

[00:36:43] With that, I will turn it over to Supervisor Lusk. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'll sort of dovetail on some of the points that Supervisor Alcorn made, and I'll just make the point first that I really appreciate the new concept.

[00:36:59] Just love the addition of the metro lanes. I think that makes a lot of sense. The thing that I'm still struggling with is I remember when we were kind of rolling this out to our partners across the Potomac River and their vehement opposition to this project was a surprise to me. So I'm going to be honest, I thought there were some benefits even with the previous iteration and recognize that that wasn't, at least from their public points and

[00:37:33] positions at the time, that wasn't necessarily the case. So I guess the question I have here is, in terms of our conversations with Maryland, and I guess we've had some, I'm assuming, what has been their position with regard to the new concept? I'm assuming that you're feeling that we're getting to a better place, but just trying to understand what has been your assessment of where they are in light of this new concept. Thank you for that comment and question. I think

[00:38:13] From their perspective, the space in the median for Metro, that's a big ask, and this concept addresses that. The second thing I would say is a transit commitment, and that is something, like Bill said, Virginia is ready to commit to a floor, a transit payment, and that would be applied within the corridor.

[00:38:43] And that is something I think is in the positive direction. So that addresses some of their concerns. And we still have to, do we have a yes today from them? No. But we are working towards and having those meaningful conversations.

[00:39:01] Okay. So I guess the expectation is that we will get to a yes, which I'm hoping that that is the case. But I'm also recognizing that there were some significant challenges from before. So just wanted to maybe get a sense of how you see this, but it sounds like from your perspective here, we're making positive steps and we're moving in the right direction.

[00:39:25] That is correct because of the new concept is the first time we are presenting it to them and they have to kind of, we're giving them that opportunity to review the new concept and see what that means and how that addresses their previous concerns.

[00:39:41] Yeah, so there's yet to have that back-and-forth dialogue with them. But it's good. It feel like where we are today We feel like we are moving in a positive direction. Okay. Well, I'll acknowledge and say I appreciate the work that you're doing and we certainly are very supportive of it We certainly want to get to a place where we can get Maryland and our colleagues across the stomach River to a yes So thank you. Thank you Supervisor Lusk, Supervisor Stork, and then Supervisor Herity. Thank you, mr.

[00:40:10] chairman and uh thank you all very i'm going to go into the chairman's comments particularly about the quote-unquote unused lane i know that that's been a sensitive issue and i i am a thousand percent in support of making sure we have a lane for metro whenever we get to that point but i i am probably equally a thousand percent against not using that lane in some way um until such time i mean i want to guarantee if you will so that nobody can ever say we won't yeah put metro because we already have this other thing there.

[00:40:43] But I also, I know I am going to get verbally abused, and who knows where it goes after that, if people see an unused lane on that bridge. I mean, there already is now, but if these changes are made and there's that space on the bridge, I just, I'm telling you, it's not going to be worth all the abuse that we will all take.

[00:41:08] I know, I mean, I'm sure VDOT will get more than their fair share of it. So I am not supportive of just leaving that open or unused. So I know there has to be some guarantee. I've had this conversation with the state representatives about this, and some of them aren't as, I guess, supportive as I am of making sure that that lane gets used because their fear, and it's not unreasonable, their fear is that whenever the day comes that we want to run MetroCross there, that somehow or other it might not happen.

[00:41:39] So I think there's ways to do that contractually in other ways, and so I do want to find a way to use that if at all possible. Already, the lanes are so backed up as you go into Maryland in the evening, and obviously on the Maryland side as you come into Virginia in the morning.

[00:41:59] I mean, I don't see how we change that unless we somehow or other out of lane. I had a lane. I know that the HOTs will potentially move a lot more traffic faster because the speeds are, if you will, regulated, but I know that for most of us, people like myself and people that I would say from the Mount Vernon district, and I'm sure a few Franconia folks as well, all that means is that it's going to get backed up even further to Van Dorn, to Springfield, and now because the regular lanes of traffic will have, people will have fewer lanes.

[00:42:35] options for it. So I'm really concerned, skeptical about that. You know, maybe if you can figure out a way to use that other lane, maybe that does ultimately improve the throughput, if you will, of vehicles. But I'm very cautious and concerned. So it gets to my third point, which is the HATS study, the Huntington Area Transit Study, which I'm sure you guys are familiar with. It's been on the books now for at least, I think, five or six years and was studied five or six years before that.

[00:43:05] um there's a number of items in there that would help to improve local traffic movement it's not going to ultimately fix what is a huge problem right now and I see it frankly only getting worse which is the backup on Fort Hunt Road and it backs up to Bellevue and really way beyond that we have a we just had a meeting I think you all were there a couple nights ago um at Bell haven we're talking about cut through traffic i know that we have a problem with with ways and other google and others that do mapping that it maps them through this community which to me makes

[00:43:42] no sense anybody who's driven through the community knows that it's an old community so at best you have maybe a lane enough for two cars to pass if one's parked there you only have one lane so So I think we have to address that issue. But getting to the core of what I think the Southside Express Lanes could do, they have to provide funding to fix some of those local problems.

[00:44:07] I can't support it without it. I know the community has already spoken against it. I think we can maybe move some of those folks if they feel like they can help solve some of the other local problems on Huntington, Fort Hunt, et cetera. So that's kind of the third point.

[00:44:22] And then the fourth point is we have an opportunity to create, and it isn't going to take much, but we have an opportunity to create a trail in that area that would run, that would cross from the bridge. You know, it crosses, there's actually already an access point down to Route 1, and we don't have any access.

[00:44:45] So when you get down from the GW Parkway and the bridge and you get down to Route 1, it basically is there. Now, you can go up to the traffic light, but there really is no trail. There's no access along the creek, Great Hunting Creek and so forth.

[00:45:03] So we need some ability, which ultimately is about funding. There is a mechanism. There is a way. There is a lot of it's already in the comprehensive plan. There's lots of pieces are all there. A few of the connections are not, and they're going to require funding to take that connection all the way from literally the bridge, you know, down to Route 1.

[00:45:24] You go on to Route 1. There's a great – we already mapped it out. It can all be done. The heights are there. There's everything else you need. Take that over to Telegraph. And then at Telegraph, there's a couple of other trail systems that you can run from there, which Supervisor Luss can go into. So it's one of those things that can link.

[00:45:41] And, again, we continue to work on, you know, scooters and electric bikes and bicyclists. I mean, we are going to continue to see more and more of those, and this is a great way of ensuring that we have that additional capacity that can make a difference for the folks that are traveling the highways.

[00:46:00] Thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Stork. Lots of good ideas in there that I'm sure he'll commit to writing as well. Supervisor Herity. Oh, Eddie. Yeah, I've got a bunch of questions, but let me start with some of the harder ones.

[00:46:16] What's the soonest date that we're projected to have met Metrorail in this corridor? There is no projected date for Metrorail on this corridor, although there's a strong regional interest in it.

[00:46:35] Is there a soonest date in our wildest expectations that we would have rail in this corridor? That's an unfair question. You don't need to ask that. And I understand. I know. And I understand, Marilyn. And I don't know the answer to this, but what is the life of a roadway typically?

[00:46:55] Is it 30 years, 40 years before you have to kind of like redo it or a bridge? Well, bridges can be 50, 75, 100 years. Roadways, if you're just talking about the pavement, it can be 20 years or 10 or 5 depending on the type of facility.

[00:47:13] So we're designing all this 30-year stuff around something that's – anyway. My real problem with this, though, is I look at this and help me understand this. And I think this is just, is this just the bridge or is this the whole corridor that's going to look like this?

[00:47:33] That is just the bridge. And in general, before the bridge and after the bridge, there will be four general purpose lanes and two express lanes. So my problem looking at this is in your old version that we can't get Maryland to agree to, and I get that's real tough, it's four lanes plus four of the local, two through, and then we have two new ones.

[00:47:59] So we've got additional capacity. That was in the old immediate improvement. In the current situation, we have three. No, I'm talking about the old immediate improvement one, the one on slide seven that's not on the table. It was three local, two through, and two express. So we had seven lanes, five plus.

[00:48:19] Okay. On our current one, it looks like we've got four local lanes and two express lanes instead of the current four local lanes and two through lanes that we currently have today.

[00:48:39] Currently, we have three local lanes and two GP lanes, two through lanes. Oh, there's only three currently? Yeah, correct. Okay, so you are getting one additional capacity. That is correct. Okay, yeah.

[00:49:00] When I was looking at it, I saw four instead of three on the existing. But what I was trying to do is figure out where the existing capacity is coming from and why you would, if you're taking one of the rules in hot lanes, at least if you want to keep the public happy, is you don't take away free lanes and charge people for them. And it appears as though that's exactly what we're doing here, is we're taking away the through lanes and charging people to be on them. Now, you can incentivize the, you know, the HOV

[00:49:40] use, which the most efficient lanes going used to ever in the entire country were I-95 into the Pentagon. Those carried more people. But I'd have a hard time taking free lanes that are now the through lanes and converting them to charge lanes or toll lanes. Do we expect we're going to get enough HOV in that? Yeah, I can answer. We have discussed this quite a bit internally too.

[00:50:16] So the way we look at it is the 495 beltway has four general purpose lanes currently. And as you approach Woodrow Wilson Bridge towards Route 1, you have, they separate into two through lanes and two local lanes.

[00:50:36] And then what happens is between interchanges, there is what we call as the auxiliary lane. They come in and go depending on where you are. Some of the auxiliary lanes will merge, some of them kind of continue to that next interchange. It's a lot of fun.

[00:50:52] Yeah, based on federal highway guidelines, and you're right, we cannot take away the general purpose lanes and convert them into express lanes. But in this case, we are retaining all those general

purpose lanes. We are just repurposing the space available to make those operations better, I would say.

[00:51:12] Because in a way, the way you look at it, if you have four lanes, then open up into five lanes, then go back into four lanes. The reason why you do that is for operations. And with adding the express lanes and with the extra capacity, we are able to do things while still maintaining those four general purpose lanes.

[00:51:31] So you're adding one lane of capacity and convert. So over the bridge now, we have five lanes, two through three local. Currently, yes. Yep. And this configuration would go to four lanes with two paid lanes.

[00:51:49] Correct. And from our experience in the past and what we see on 9566, the express lanes carry more people. We can get more people. Because of the HOV. That relieves that congestion on the general purpose lanes, which will be the advantage of the general purpose lanes, because you're taking those cars and the general purpose, putting them on express.

[00:52:13] And then we are also giving opportunities for buses, which will move more people. So there will be some – we are encouraging people to change their travel patterns a little bit, and that relieves that congestion. And that certainly happened in the 95 quarter, and it was the most efficient set of pavement anywhere in the country because so many people did the HOV.

[00:52:38] And I know we can't get anywhere with Maryland, but I would agree with the chairman and others' comments on making use of that as a bus and looking at that as a potential busway, even if it doesn't exit right off at Route 1. But I think it's worth a look, and I would use it, obviously, but Maryland's not going to let us use it.

[00:53:03] That's unfortunate. Hopefully the rest of the corridor, and you don't have that up here, but I'd love to see what the rest of the corridor looks like. Hopefully we're being a little more realistic with the rest of the corridor. Thank you. And I'll leave it at that.

[00:53:20] Excuse me. Thank you, Supervisor Herity. I think the recap point is that if we put in express lanes but there aren't meaningful benefits to general purpose lanes, then it won't work. It will be something that people don't like, don't want, and they will feel like it's the wrong plan, so we need to demonstrate, we being VDOT, needs to demonstrate that there is a general purpose benefit in order to earn the support for this project.

[00:53:49] Thank you very much for being here today and for the presentation from VDOT. We appreciate it. With that, we will move into our next topic, which is the active transportation projects audit update. And as we're rearranging the chairs for a moment, I will just take a moment to say this, to preview part of this discussion.

[00:54:12] This is the Standard Procedural Guide for Active Transportation Projects. I printed it out. It's really a remarkable document. I think that Greg and Martha, you've worked tremendously hard on this. I wanted to thank you for your work on it, trying to standardize some of our processes and try to deliver projects faster and under budget or on budget, what you name it.

[00:54:38] But with that, I'll turn it over to our director, Greg Stevenson, to talk about the active transportation projects. Thanks. Appreciate it. And I'll try and give a little bit of an abridged version here. I know we've got a little bit of time that we've got to get through. Good morning, members of the board.

[00:54:53] My name is Greg Steverson. I'm the director of the Fairfax County Department of Transportation. With me here is Martha Coelho, who is our Deputy Director. And as stated, we're back to talk a little bit more about where we are with sort of our report outs from the Active Transportation Project audit.

[00:55:12] This slide, I'm sure you've seen before, and we'll continue to show it. This is sort of our North Star in terms of the audit and our recommendations and the timelines that we're going to complete these various tasks in. In green, you'll see both the interim and the final standard project guide.

[00:55:32] We completed the interim version back in June and the final version at the end of August. We'll talk a little bit about what's gone into that and what's in that document in the next couple slides. In the orange is sort of our next steps and what's next on our list of things to be completed.

[00:55:50] tracking metrics, and providing an updated monthly status report on our various projects. All that is due sort of at the end of this month and the end of next month. We'll talk about that as well in the upcoming slides, along with, quite frankly, some of the things that are in blue that have a little further out timeline, but I wanted to give a little bit of an update on those things as well.

[00:56:14] So really quickly, I want to talk about standard project guide. Obviously, the goal behind this recommendation from the board auditors was to provide resources for staff to help them understand the nuances behind the work that we do and the processes that go into implementing active transportation projects.

[00:56:33] As Supervisor Beerman said, we spent a lot of time and effort on this guide, and I do think it shows. To highlight a few of the key pieces of the guide, we have checklists in the guide to help staff organize tasks and project parts and closeouts so they know what needs to be done before they move on to their next steps.

[00:56:55] The checklists feed off of the step-by-step notifications and instructions for our project phases and all the tasks within the phases. We've got really good information in there about workflows, about the various internal handoffs that are needed as a part of the process, as well as their timelines.

[00:57:13] We've got good information in there about key project decision points, which is super important. And we've also got a lot of information about roles and responsibilities, not just for the project managers, but also for leadership, meaning myself and Martha, for internal agencies that we interact with, whether it's DPW or others, and external agencies as well.

[00:57:36] So we understand what the responsibilities are and what people need to do as a part of these processes. Additionally, and again, these are not exhaustive lists. These are just some points that I wanted to highlight. We've got information regarding public engagement, strategies, and that includes one of the things that we talked about in previous meetings, which is an optional public meeting during the early stage pre-scoping process that can help us maybe shore some things up before we get into design.

[00:58:08] We've got information in there about timelines and decision points regarding condemnation, including strategies for notifying both leadership and the board so that we can better make decisions about whether we should move towards condemnation versus using the standard acquisition process. We've got information discussing ways to provide earlier notification to property owners when we'll be in the field doing survey work. That can cut down on the time that it takes to sort of get through some of the survey phases of the project. And finally, I'll say we're going to

[00:58:45] be doing updates to the guide and include all of our lessons learned and process enhancements as we learn our lessons. We've committed to doing it once a year, but we will do it more as needed and more frequently if substantial changes to the process happen that we need to update the guideline with more frequently. The biggest piece of the guide, though, I think, at least that will likely be of interest to you all, is our escalation and flagging guide, or matrix, if you want to call it that. It's basically a summarized document, and you all have that at your desk. It was also in the presentation materials, but it's a summarized document that outlines when we need

[00:59:24] to flag things or escalate things to you all at the board level. It includes the conditions when we need to flag things or escalate things, whether we're just notifying you or whether there's action needed, including sort of what action is needed and when we need to take that action. Our deputy county executive told me offline that she actually has this document posted in her office, and I actually think that's probably something that I'm going to ask staff to do as well. I think this is that important of a guide and that important of information that it should be at our fingertips at a moment's notice, quite frankly. The next thing I want to talk through

[01:00:04] is our baseline and tracking document. The audit talked about tracking tasks and timelines, which is really important because it helps establish our baselines and helps us measure our performance throughout the project process. In March, we're looking at a long-term project management software called Capital Project Management Information System. We'll call it CPMIS, and we'll make sure we do the acronym thing. And that will help us manage projects and tasks.

[01:00:34] But as I said, that's not going to launch until the spring of next year. In the interim, we really want to do our due diligence with tracking projects and tasks and getting our metrics. And so we're using Smartsheet right now to develop our tracking system.

[01:00:52] You'll see sort of a printout of what we'll see internally. I'll talk a little bit about what we can provide to you all in a moment. But when we get to the point where we're rolling out CPMIS, we as a department are going to make some decisions about whether we use CPMIS to do our metrics and tracking or whether we stick with Smartsheet.

[01:01:10] I think the team is starting to like Smartsheet, so Smartsheet might be the way that we go. But our goal is to do what is best for us tracking and what's best for you all to get the information and what works to provide us the right information so that everyone can understand how we're doing with projects.

[01:01:29] So best case scenario, both of the tools will work together, and we can use both, and it'll work out in that way. But in the spring, we're going to be making some decisions about whether we keep using SmartScale or whether we shift to CPMIS to do some of our tracking. But what we're doing here is we've got about 85 tasks.

[01:01:48] I know it's a lot, but our goal is to really understand our process and really understand what we're doing and where things either are going right or going wrong. But we're going to be tracking about 85 tasks from start to finish of a project. We've got dates regarding when we expect things to happen versus when they actually happen.

[01:02:05] so we can compare our on-time performance. We're also working on developing through Smartsheets some automated reminders for upcoming tasks or overdue tasks. Although, to be perfectly

honest, as we talked about with the guide, my expectation is project managers will be looking at that sheet every day or, worst case scenario, weekly.

[01:02:25] So they shouldn't need project reminders, but we're working on ways to update or to remind people in automated fashion about the upcoming tasks or things that they have going on or coming up that are due. In addition to sort of our internal tracking document, we do understand the need for us to provide this information in a much more digestible format, not only to you all at the board and board aid level, but also to the community at large.

[01:02:58] In the past, I know you remember our TDD monthly report would do that. Now what we're talking about is taking our smart sheet information and summarizing them into a worksheet that can show project progress in a more straightforward and easy-to-process structure.

[01:03:15] It's kind of hard to see, but at the top there's project information, which will include some project cost information, project description information. And then in the tracking sheet, it will show you sort of our large-scale phases and where we are in the process and how we're doing as far as our metrics.

[01:03:34] It's going to be updated monthly, and it's going to also show in one column for each of the tasks, are we ahead of schedule, are we on schedule, or are we behind schedule. Also, when we complete something, whether we completed it on time, whether we completed it ahead of schedule, or whether it was behind schedule.

[01:03:52] I think what we're still working on is sort of the best strategy for providing you this information. I think we've got the data, but what we're trying to do is figure out what works best for you all, and that'll be one of the questions near the end. PDF, potentially sorted by district, or we're also working on if it's possible to give people read access so they can see the spreadsheet whenever they want to.

[01:04:17] But we're working on ways to better provide that information to you all so you have it at your fingertips. But I will say we're well on our way to finishing this. I know our due date is this month. We're basically inputting data into the sheets now. We've got all the sheets set up. The key is just getting all the data into the sheets and making sure that everything has been checked in QA, QC.

[01:04:40] So I want to quickly provide some updates on a couple or a few of the other recommendations from the audit. We already talked about CPMIS. We're still on track to complete that by March 15th of next year. Our next major steps were migrating data and doing user testing in the early part of next year, but I wanted to make sure that I've said that we're still on track for our due dates there.

[01:05:07] One of the other recommendations that was talked about was providing more innovative project delivery and maybe looking at some alternate project delivery methods. Basically, it was recommended that we talk to our peers and our folks in the industry to find out, are there things we're missing or things that we're doing wrong or things that we can do better. And in that vein, I've got a good working relationship with the folks over in Prince William County. We're setting up a workshop, hopefully in October, where our project managers and their project managers are going to sit down, discuss lessons learned, issues we run

[01:05:42] into, ways to better interact with VDOT, and other strategies that can help accelerate project timelines and reduce costs. As I said, we're looking at October at the moment, and if this makes sense and this works out and provides some fruit, I think we're going to look to do the same thing with Loudon and

with Arlington. I've got good relationships there as well. And then if it works there, we'll even look at outside of Northern Virginia if it makes sense to do so.

[01:06:11] In terms of the public-facing access to project information, I think this is something we're going to be working on well into the new year. I think we're going to have good data, and we're going to have good worksheets and information to provide. The trick, though, is the public-facing part and the accessibility piece. It can be very challenging, especially when you're dealing with the website, getting things to an accessible format without, quite frankly, having to do a lot of back-end updates. You can have some great information that provides you with data in spreadsheets and in this great format that helps you understand things, but then you try and put

[01:06:48] it on the website, and all you get is errors on accessibility. And so what we're looking to make sure that we don't have happen is we create a great database for ourselves and for you all, but then it takes a week for people to have to go in and make edits and do things in order to get it on the website. So we're working through how do we best tackle that? How do we work through the easiest way to get the information in a format that makes sense and can be viewed by you all, but also doesn't create headaches and issues when we're trying to get it accessible and on the website. And then lastly, a few more updates. A couple of the recommendations talked about

[01:07:27] tracking the differences between cost estimates at pre-scoping and comparing them to estimates as we get deeper into the design phase. And the goal there is really revising our cost estimating practices, especially at the early stage. And I know staff has been working on this and I've been working on this as well. We're evaluating a lot of things, including things like how changes in project scope from pre-scoping to design affect the cost estimates. We're looking at are there differences in what we did in pre-scoping and design in terms of looking at unit costs or

[01:08:02] looking at consultant costs. We're looking at have changes in regulations between when we started something at pre-scoping and when we got into heavy design, did that make a big change in our cost estimates? Really, any factors that we see that might allow us to better understand where we started versus where we go and why some of those numbers look different from pre-scoping into design. We're looking at workforce capacity and staffing strategies. I'm looking at vacancies all the time. I always look at our organizational structure, understanding how hiring has gone,

[01:08:40] whether we've been able to get people on board, whether we struggled for, whether it's salary reasons or some other reason. We're looking at understanding what our standard workload is for staff to get an understanding of what is an overworked staff versus what is a normal workload for staff. Really all in an effort to optimize our capacity. And we're using that information to help us understand in the future, are there tasks that make sense maybe that could be done in-house versus bringing in consultants? And so I will say all this work is happening. We're still

[01:09:15] on track and on schedule for each of the tasks that's come out of the audit. And with that, I will look to you all for feedback, just generally your thoughts on the proposed tracking report, how you feel about the summary document for flagging and escalation.

[01:09:34] And I will ask, have any of you read all 200 pages of the project guide? Because if you have, then I was going to say, well, there were two people that I, one person I knew did and one person I thought might. But if you have, I'll give a special prize.

[01:09:53] I don't know what that is yet. But with that, I will turn it over to questions. Thank you, Greg. lot of great stuff in that presentation I will turn it over to the question so first mr. chairman yeah so I appreciate the presentation I especially appreciate the end part because you know these tools are only as good as the ease in which they can be used and the comfort level in which the staff has using them and so you know I to me if it takes more time to use something like this then it's going to fail. And so I think, you know, the changing of the culture and understanding why these

[01:10:32] things are important can't be emphasized enough to get the full buy-in of the staff who's going to be using these tools and why over time these make their jobs easier if used properly. And I do think there's a cultural thing there that I think will need to be continued to be worked on as this moves forward. The one thing that jumped out at me, on page six, we talk about tracking of approximately 85 tasks. Seems like a lot. Maybe that's been honed down significantly from what it could be, but that's not 85 tasks on every project, because some of the ones that we have

[01:11:12] are smaller, and I think a frustration level some of us have is the smaller projects seem to get caught up in the same delays that even larger projects get caught caught up in and so have we streamlined that to the full extent possible just to make sure that you know we're not creating extra entries and extra steps for especially some of our smaller projects that that might get in the way yeah so the concept is to have the task that would exist for uh the largest of the large project in situations where that task doesn't exist or won't happen there just won't be something filled in for

[01:11:47] that but I also think over time and my goal is when people are doing their project management and as they're working through their steps again my hope is they have this open on a daily basis and when things are complete it's really just adding in a number that says this is the date it's complete and the math does itself and gives you an understanding of were you ahead were you behind and also if you're in it every day you'll also see that like I've got three tasks coming up this week, I need to get them done. But in the situation over time, if we start to see that things are not helpful or not useful or not providing us information, we'll take it out.

[01:12:23] Flip of that is if we find something that within a task, we always see it's creating a delay of some sort and we can't figure out why, we might have to look at maybe subtasks of that task. And so it's going to be adaptive. We have people that have access to Smartsheet and can edit these documents if we need to. But the goal is to make sure that what we're tracking is worthwhile.

[01:12:46] Okay. And I definitely like the escalation part. I mean, we talked about that here. It's one of the biggest frustrations we have is we want to be helpful. And knowing when to escalate, that'll be helpful. Just a comment on the regional collaboration piece. I like that, especially since Prince William County has a lot of the same challenges we have. I think when you get into Arlington and Alexandria and those places that own their own roads, different ballgames. So I would just, you know, be mindful of that. And probably the hardest question I want to ask you, but I want to ask it anyway, which is what could potentially go wrong here? Or what do you think

[01:13:20] the biggest challenge is in implementing this? And how do we overcome that? Good question. I think at the onset, it's going to be staff sort of understanding the new rules of engagement.

[01:13:36] I think that's going to be probably the initial hardest part, because when you're doing something a very specific way and you've been doing it for a while, take some time to sort of figure out, oh, we're doing this now. This escalation document, I guarantee you there are going to be times someone's

going to have to check us on that in the early going because you don't just automatically go, oh, that's right. I got to flag this thing or, oh, I have to do this thing.

[01:14:00] So I think that's the biggest sort of challenge definitely at the onset. And I think the way that we're going to have to overcome it is I have to rely and lean on my division and section chiefs to hammer home sort of this is what we're looking for, this is what we need, and to be on top of these processes as we work through them.

[01:14:20] That's their sort of MO, and that's what they're responsible for doing. The project managers need to learn it, but the leadership needs to, and that includes me, needs to make sure that we're on top of people and say, hey, how are we doing with this or how are we doing with that, whether it means checking in on some of the metrics and tracking or whether it's just checking in with staff on a weekly basis.

[01:14:44] That's what I think is the strategy there. Yeah, I think that's a good answer. And, I mean, I think ultimately that's going to be the keys to success here. And that's kind of why I started with talking about, you know, the cultural shift within the staff because we've made it, you know, as clear as we can about the speed.

[01:15:00] We know there are challenges that exist outside of your department, both with private sector consultants, with VDOT coordination, utilities, all the other things that come up. But I think if this tool is going to work and work as well as it should, and I think it will, it's going to be getting that complete buy-in with the staff and making sure that you're aware going in where the potential problems could be most profound and getting ahead of those real-time before they compound.

[01:15:28] And that's why I asked you that question. So I appreciate that answer. Thank you. I have Supervisor Palczyk, then Supervisor Herity. Thank you very much. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate this. I think you've got a lot of the details in there that we're looking at. My big question is more, and because we like to maybe sometimes point fingers at Vida, but I really like the way their public-facing website works on their projects and actually heard about it first from constituents and people in the region.

[01:15:58] I assume that takes a lot of back end, but are we really looking for the public-facing piece to be easy to search, easy to navigate, doesn't maybe need all the details, right? but is able to maybe a collaboration with our outreach teams to really make it much more easy, I guess, for our community to be able to track these projects.

[01:16:21] Yeah, that's a great point. And our marketing communications team is a part of sort of our project, active transportation project audit team. And there's been a lot of discussion, even in the midst of sort of the tracking document and the technical aspects of that.

[01:16:38] There's been a lot of conversation about, okay, but if you're doing this and it's not accessible, how are we going to make it accessible? And so that's why I sort of talked about that and sort of the challenges with that, because we've already started to try and figure out how that's going to work. And I think at the end of the day, our goal is to absolutely make this something that's public-facing and that can be easily sort of understood and seen, including the tracking of sort of where these projects are in the process and whether we're ahead of schedule or behind schedule or things like that.

[01:17:08] I mean, I would recommend we go a step further and really be doing this in parallel. Yeah. And what the deputy county executive was saying, there are some projects we already have online. I think

where the goal is to go is we've got project dates for completion, but giving people a better understanding of where they are in the process and what the next step is, I think is what we've been talking about a lot more frequently recently.

[01:17:33] Yeah, and I would say just the way ours looks right now, I think, could have an easy facelift to make it a little bit more accessible and switchable. Everybody's pointing out great stuff. We did put a sort of a life cycle. We have on the website, we have a life cycle document that sort of tells you through process, this is what pre-scoping is, this is what pre-design is.

[01:17:56] So it's really about providing more information and more transparency. So we're definitely moving towards that, and we'll look for you guys' feedback as we start to do it as well because you'll look at it and go, well, I like that. Yeah, I appreciate that. I think the transparency piece is going to be key moving forward, not just with us, but with the public as well.

[01:18:14] Absolutely. Thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Palachuk. Supervisor Herity. Yeah, I think I'm going to start with a big thank you, but I'm going to also start with thanking our audit team and Supervisor Behrman for driving this thing home. It's a little surprising how little we had in place.

[01:18:33] But I would go to the chairman's comments that he made earlier that if you overcomplicate it, it gets really hard to get people to buy into it to do that. I was a turnaround CFO for government contractors.

[01:18:50] Programs is what it's all about. I would encourage you, what I didn't hear in here, and hopefully it's there, is the people part of it. We used to do regular program reviews where we'd get the division together. And it depends on how big the project was is how often.

[01:19:07] But we got all the program managers there, and they got the very simple red, yellow, green is the schedule, cost, deliverables, customer satisfaction, all that kind of stuff. But that's where our program managers learned the philosophy, the culture, and got trained in what to do and what not to do.

[01:19:30] So I'd encourage you to not forget the people piece. And if you don't have that built into it, because you learn from other people's mistakes and issues too. So it kind of can be hard to do. We used to have a rule that if you brought a problem to program review, it became our problem.

[01:19:49] If you kept it to yourself, it was your problem. And those kinds of things, program reviews are good. So I think we're on the right track here. The real problem, and this is probably more to the county executive because audit has said that they don't really have, we've got a full audit program, so we can't look at where we're missing program reviews in other departments because we all just went through office, some of us went through office security upgrades.

[01:20:22] And I could, I don't, the silos, the time delays, the you name it were not, it was just not good. So I would ask the county executive to kind of take some of the lessons we've learned here and see what we can do to improve program management and our other groups.

[01:20:46] Because my example with it, I see Chris Harrington sitting there. I went to see him at I-66 and he's been trying to get a camera. to make sure the loads are covered on the way out and it's like big dollars which it shouldn't be for a camera and a long long it's not a flock camera and a long period of time it's so i think we got some work to do elsewhere thank you for the work you're doing don't forget the people piece because i think it's it's important to for culture and customer satisfaction that sort of thing thank

[01:21:20] thank you. Thank you. Supervisor Sizemore Heiser and then Supervisor Stork. Thank you. And I appreciate it. I'll pick up where my colleague left off. I had on my list change management and program management as well on my list. And I think I love this. I really appreciate all the hard work. I think having these processes in place, anytime we're implementing complex, right? It seems like a sidewalk shouldn't be complex, but obviously a lot of the work and the compliance and the checks and working with our state partners makes it very, very complex.

[01:21:57] And so I think this is really helpful to streamline that. So I have a couple avenues of questions. One is on sort of that change management piece, the people piece that my colleague was talking about, right? This is, you know, it sounds like a very thorough guide. I haven't read all 200 pages of it yet, but it sounds like a very, very thorough guide.

[01:22:14] Do we have quick user guides? Do we have somebody, like a question piece, things that people, as you're trying to bite into this, right? Like how do you eat an elephant one bite at a time are able to digest it? Jennifer Miller, Deputy County Executive, so I'll address a couple things here.

[01:22:30] I think, no, to exactly your point, we actually found when we started this process an 81-page old project management guide that people didn't know existed because it collected dust on a shelf, and that's the last thing we want out of here. So one of the things I appreciate, and when I read through this initially, I started saying this tone doesn't really match, this section of this tone doesn't really match, and then I realized the awesome part is that they brought in each of the folks who work in that section, so none of these is like 200 pages that apply to all.

[01:22:55] you know it's like here's the 10 pages of how this section does its work here's the 10 pages and it was written by the people in those sections working with brook on what works what do we need to learn what do we need to you know have to identify these issues so to your point no no one has to re-eat this whole elephant other than maybe the three of us right who who went through it and no one should control f is your friend so the the reason why we we wanted to produce this document was exactly that like this is all the board and the transportation office need to see and if they have some questions about it there's a reference to where it is here in the guide but also to your program management point just to address this quickly we do identify you know that that's a bigger issue in the county and

[01:23:35] that's one of the things we've actually worked with DIT we're about to roll out a pilot we hope we're close with DEI using it first on a pro countywide project management type system that does the flagging and tracking and suspenses because a lot of different departments have their own but we're We're getting pretty close.

[01:23:52] We actually have been working with a vendor, and DEI is the first up. You got my next question was, are we looking at some tools around project management? So you answered that question on that piece of it. And I think the knowledge management piece as well, as you said, it's great that the people who are doing the work now helped you create this.

[01:24:10] But I know that there's been turnover in our transportation staff, and I anticipate that may continue, that may not. But to ensure all of this good work is contained somewhere in a knowledge management component, whether it's through SOPs or however it is, so if there is turnover, it doesn't then, you know, five years down the road get put on a dusty shelf.

[01:24:27] So I just want to put that out there. The escalation and flagging guide, who's responsible for the oversight of if it's happening, when things are getting flagged and escalated? You know, how does that sort of process work? So the main people are the section and division chiefs, but also Martha and myself are in that mix as well.

[01:24:50] We're at the higher level of trying to make sure the interaction, we have the interaction with you all, especially if we're not doing the things that we're supposed to do, but at the level of staff and checking the staff, it's at the division and section chief level. Great.

[01:25:06] And then my last was a little bit, because I always bring this piece of it up, but I love that there's monthly project reports are those internal is there are those board level are those are there's something that's i see it as a self-service access to project information but how many of those reports are on that how do we make sure the community knows the great work you're doing here and how to access this information sure yeah the the dashboard excuse me the concept of the monthly report right now is to make sure that you all have the information about our metrics and tracking the goal is to convert or find a way to convert that into something that can be online

[01:25:43] because the goal is to have that same level of transparency with the community but as I talked about a little bit earlier the struggle is that accessibility piece because there's a lot of flagging especially with tables tables are just brutal and that's what we've sort of found in our I don't know if you all have found that but we found that in our sort of expectations and And my desire to try and get a one-to-one of this onto the website, the amount of sort of flags that you get for readability, it's just, it's heavy.

[01:26:18] And so now we've got to try and figure out, is there an easier way to take exactly this and put it on the website, or do we have to do something on the back end, or what is the strategy? But the goal is to have the community be able to see the same information that you all will be able to see through our worksheets.

[01:26:35] Two pieces on that. There are probably software and vendors out there that help with that because this, that accessibility is something that governments and agencies are struggling with writ large across the country, right? So there may be pieces to look at that can help so we don't have to reinvent the wheel. Not that you're doing that, but that might help. And then when you send these reports, it might be helpful if you haven't already planned this to have a one page summary or something that can be easily shared out with our community, you know, based on this is what's happening in Braddock or in Mount Vernon or wherever it may be. So just two pieces that might be helpful.

[01:27:05] while you're building the dashboard's website piece of it. So thank you again. Thank you for this great work. I'm really excited about it. Thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Sizemore Heiser. Before moving on to Supervisor Stork, I just wanted to quickly flag when Deputy County Executive Miller was talking about the standard procedural guide and how you don't need to read every page, she also provided us with a cover memorandum, which goes point by point by the sections that go with our request and give you, as she said, a good control F to find what you want to find.

[01:27:40] Go ahead, Supervisor Store. And I was just going to kind of tag on to that. I think this is a great collaboration, not only with the audit process that I think helped to bring a lot of this to all of our attention better and maybe identify what we already knew, frankly, because we've been living it.

[01:27:55] But the collaboration and the work, I think, of the teams really brought to life a system that I do have high hopes for. And I realize we're not going to really know for probably a year because it's having a system and then having people use it and then having it work the way you think it is and having it done in a way that it doesn't take a lot more work.

[01:28:15] I mean, those are the key elements. So I'm all in, very supportive, very appreciative. And I look forward, because I know the audit team is going to be coming back and looking at this as well, which will give us a good way of, a good tool and a good way of ensuring that we're kind of making progress. But I absolutely credit you all for bringing this together and moving it forward.

[01:28:35] And, of course, Supervisor Baron, for your work and initiative and focus on this. The only thing I think I'm missing, and I think we need to maybe it would help me and maybe help the board in general, is when we had real challenges in public safety, particularly with police officers and firefighters and recruitment and so forth, We understood that we were 15% or 20% below our legislative or expected levels.

[01:29:06] I don't know what those are. And I realize 5% or so is maybe not surprising in terms of staff versus vacancies. And I think if there's a bigger measure there, I think it would help us also understand and maybe educate us, if you will.

[01:29:24] I know the county executive probably is very tuned to all that, but sometimes it helps us to understand that in a broader way, not to get into the specifics, but if we're over 10%, obviously vacancies, and we know we've got a big problem, where is it under 10% and where is it? Supervisor Stork, that's a great question.

[01:29:43] I have asked some board members to come talk to me in my office so I could show them the dashboards that we have. Supervisor Smith has been in there. she understands where, as a personnel chair, where we're having issues with employment.

[01:29:59] We probably have about 15 departments throughout our organization that are above 10%. The most departments are running between 6% and 9%, predominantly because we have so many individuals that are in drop and or eligible to retire.

[01:30:18] Again, when you have 13,000 people and we're trying to monitor what goes on and when it goes on. I mean, you know, we do have to have certain things that allow us to understand what's happening. When the police were in that situation, it was never fire because Chief Butler, I believe, is at 2% or 3% right now. Police are about 5% to 6%. But it was about drop. And I'm going to tell you all today, 2027, 28, and 29, I have probably over 1,200 people that

[01:30:53] could be either in drop or retirement eligible. So we're working on that right now. And Greg took the hit first. Sorry. But what's coming down the pike, and that is countywide, it's just not public safety. But anytime you want to come upstairs and look at some numbers with me, I would take your guidance and counsel as we move forward. Thank you. Good point. And I appreciate you elaborate on that. Thank you. Thank you. Well, I will wrap up our meeting quickly to say that

[01:31:28] I really appreciate the work that's been done on this guide. I appreciate the approach that's been taken. I appreciate that Deputy County Executive Miller mentioned actually consulting with the people who have to do this work every day and getting their input on the guide. If you want to come work for a Department of Transportation that is committed to delivering projects faster, that is looking into

creative solutions, that will go out and meet with other counties about creative solutions, and that is saying, we want to be able to move this along and get things done.

[01:32:03] Come work for the Fairfax County Department of Transportation. And with that, this meeting is adjourned. Thank you.



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