



City of Alexandria, Virginia

301 King Street, Suite 2300

Alexandria, Virginia 22314



Allison Silberberg
Mayor

Office: 703.746.4500
Mobile: 571.319.9948
allison.silberberg@alexandriava.gov

October 16, 2018

The Honorable Shannon Valentine
Secretary of Transportation, Commonwealth of Virginia
Patrick Henry Building, 4th Floor
1111 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Secretary Valentine,

I want to thank you for meeting with me, City Manager Mark Jinks, and Deputy City Manager Emily Baker on October 1. I appreciate your service to the Commonwealth and acknowledge the challenging transportation issues that you are addressing within the framework of inadequate financial resources. To summarize the issues discussed:

- You raised the issue of the possibility of using the current I-395 HOV-only ramp at the Seminary interchange for HOT-lanes traffic. As I stated at our meeting, a number of City residential neighborhoods currently experience severe cut-through traffic related to their geographic position between the center of the Alexandria I-395 corridor and the south of Alexandria I-95 Beltway corridor. This is in fact one of our most challenging issues. The City's position has long been and continues to be one of strongly opposing the use of the Seminary HOV ramp for HOT-lane purposes because of the concern about the impact of cut-through traffic. As the City Manager stated in our meeting, it is important that traffic analyses are conducted so that the discussion between the Alexandria community and VDOT/Transurban can be based on data and measured impact to our residential neighborhoods. We already have in place a central city traffic committee which would be the appropriate community forum to discuss this issue. VDOT did reach out to the City earlier this week and indicated that Transurban had now asked for this HOT lanes enhancement, and City staff reiterated to VDOT our concerns, as well as the need for analyses and data. We also have been informed that Transurban plans to begin traffic data collection this month. And as I mentioned, community input is needed and warranted as soon as possible.
- In regard to the fire suppression system issues on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge (WWB), it appears that VDOT and MDOT are beginning to make progress on the long overdue list of fixes and improvements to the current dry pipe system. We will continue to monitor the progress to ensure that these life safety improvements are made in a timely manner. We appreciate your initiative in getting this stalled project moving. While these

"Home Town of George Washington"

The Honorable Shannon Valentine

October 16, 2018

Page 2

enhancements to the dry pipe system will upgrade the current level of protection to the WWB, only a wet pipe solution (which was value engineered out of the original WWB construction project budget) will truly give the WWB the protection that an investment of that magnitude deserves. Therefore, as we discussed, fixing the pipe with a wet pipe solution is paramount, given the need to ensure public safety and the WWB's structural integrity after an incident.

- The Cameron Run dredging under the I-95 Beltway bridges is a concern for the City as the siltation under the Beltway bridges and in stream vegetation to the south beyond the bridges reduces the flow capacity of Cameron Run and increases the risk of flooding on the Alexandria side of the Beltway. As we saw in 2006, Cameron Run (despite an aggressive and periodic dredging by the City) can overrun its dredged channel and indeed significantly flooded the adjacent office park with damage to the buildings and their contents, which can occur because of an inadequate under-bridge flow capacity.

Thank you for your service and for all you do. It was a pleasure to meet you. Please feel free to let me know your thoughts, concerns, and ideas about any of these issues. We look forward to continuing to work with you, your staff, VDOT and DRPT in the years ahead.

Always my best,



Mayor Allison Silberberg
Alexandria, Virginia

cc: The Honorable Members of the Alexandria City Council
Mark B. Jinks, City Manager
Emily Baker, P.E., Deputy City Manager
Yon Lambert, Director, Transportation & Environmental Services
Robert Dubé, Fire Chief