

NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY**MEMORANDUM**

FOR: Chair Phyllis J. Randall and Members
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority

FROM: Monica Backmon, Chief Executive Officer

DATE: September 1, 2022

SUBJECT: Approval of Letter of Endorsement for Virginia Department of Transportation FY2022 Bridge Investment Grant Program Application

- 1. Purpose:** To seek the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) approval of the letter of endorsement for Virginia Department of Transportation's FY2022 Bridge Investment Grant Program Application for I-395 Ramp Replacement.
- 2. Suggested Motion:** *I move Authority Approval of the Letter of Endorsement for Virginia Department of Transportation's FY2022 Bridge Investment Grant Program Application for I-395 Ramp Replacement.*
- 3. Background:** The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is committed to the safety of its citizens and those who travel through the Commonwealth. As part of this commitment, VDOT seeks funding that will support the safety of bridges in Northern Virginia. The U.S. Department of Transportation's Bridge Investment Program (BIP) offers three funding opportunities that include Planning, Bridge Projects, and Large Bridge Projects. As safety is a shared objective of VDOT and NVTA, VDOT requests that its application for the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bridge Projects grant under the 2022 Bridge Investment Program (BIP) be endorsed by the Authority.
- 4. Bridge Projects Grant Criteria:** Bridge Projects grants are awarded on a competitive basis and are reserved for projects with eligible costs less than \$100 million. The projects must identify the "replacement, rehabilitation, preservation, and protection projects that: (1) improve the safety, efficiency, and reliability of movement of people and freight over bridges; and (2) improve the conditions of bridges in the United States by reducing (a) the number of bridges, and total person miles traveled over bridges, that are in poor condition or that are in fair condition and at risk for falling into poor condition within the next three years, or (b) the number of bridges, and total person miles traveled over bridges, that do not meet current geometric design standards or cannot meet the load and traffic requirements typical of the regional transportation network." ¹

¹ U.S. Department of Transportation, Bridge Investment Program-Planning, Bridge Projects, and Large Bridge Projects, <https://www.grants.gov/view-opportunity.html?dpp=1&oppld=341050>, August 29, 2022.

5. **VDOT's I-395 Ramp Replacement:** The I-395 Ramp is in Arlington County and carries southbound traffic from I-395 to Route 1. The I-395 Ramp Replacement project ("Project") is a critical step towards transforming the Route 1 corridor from an elevated freeway to an at-grade urban boulevard linking Crystal City's east and west neighborhoods. The Project will create a space for drivers to adjust from the fast-paced I-395 highway to the slower, multimodal Route 1 urban boulevard. The Project will remove a bridge that is nearing the end of its service life and replace it with a more resilient at-grade intersection that better meets the transportation needs of all users in the area.

The I-395 Ramp Replacement project satisfies all the merit criteria outlined in the federal grant opportunity, especially the priorities of providing a state of good repair, safety, and quality of life. VDOT is committed to working with the Commonwealth Transportation Board to secure matching funds from the State of Good Repair program totaling approximately \$19 million.

Attachment:

- A. Virginia Department of Transportation's Request for Endorsement Letter
- B. Draft Endorsement Letter for VDOT's BIP Grant Program Application



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Stephen C. Brich, P.E.
Commissioner

1401 East Broad Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

(804) 786-2701
Fax: (804) 786-29

September 1, 2022

Monica Backmon
Chief Executive Officer
Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
3040 Williams Drive
Fairfax, VA 22031

RE: Request for NVT Authority Endorsement of Virginia Department of Transportation's Application for the Bridge Projects Grant Under the 2022 Bridge Investment Program (BIP) for the I-395 Ramp Replacement Project

Dear Ms. Backmon:

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) is requesting the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority's endorsement for VDOT's application to the U.S. Department of Transportation for the Bridge Projects grant under the 2022 Bridge Investment Program (BIP). This grant request will allow Virginia to replace the fracture-critical, structurally deficient bridge from southbound I-395 to southbound Route 1 with an at-grade intersection.

The I-395 Ramp (Federal Bridge ID. 110, VA Bridge ID. 000-1042) is in Arlington County (VA) and carries southbound traffic from I-395 to Route 1. The I-395 Ramp Replacement Project is a critical step towards transforming the Route 1 corridor from an elevated freeway to an at-grade urban boulevard linking Crystal City's east and west neighborhoods. The bridge was built in 1976 and refurbished in 1999. Based on 2019 data, the bridge carries 23,000 vehicles per day. The I-395 Ramp Replacement project will create a space for drivers to adjust from the fast-paced I-395 highway to the slower, multimodal Route 1 urban boulevard.

The existing bridge is nearing the end of its service life and significant investments are required to replace the structure. Emergency maintenance and repairs are ongoing due to the fracture-critical design of the bridge. This project will remove a bridge that is nearing the end of its service life and replace it with a more resilient at-grade intersection that better meets the transportation needs of all users in this area.

A grant award from the U.S. Department of Transportation will have tremendous project impact in the following areas:

- **State of good repair:** The I-395 Ramp Replacement project will replace a fracture-critical, structurally deficient bridge, which will help to avoid ever-increasing long-term maintenance and rehabilitation costs.
- **Safety:** Along with improving structural conditions, the I-395 Ramp Replacement project will address safety through crash reduction from slowing southbound traffic coming off I-395 or Route 110. By

converting the I-395 ramp from a grade-separated highway to an at-grade intersection, speeds along the ramp will be reduced. The reduction in speed will enhance safety by reducing the number, rate, and consequences of fatal and serious injury crashes among transportation users.

- **Mobility and economic competitiveness:** Continued access to the I-395 ramp will offer residents reliable access to employment centers in National Landing as well as aid the transformation of Route 1 into an urban boulevard. Integrating Route 1 into the urban fabric of Crystal City and Pentagon City through multimodal design improves connectivity in this growing urban center.
- **Climate change, resiliency, and the environment:** The I-395 Ramp Replacement supports the Crystal City Sector Plan and the Livability 22202 Action Plan by extending the footprint of the Route 1 corridor multimodal urban boulevard further north.
- **Quality of life:** Redesigning the I-395 ramp into an at-grade intersection removes a physical barrier to walking and biking and strengthens National Landing community connectivity. The reallocation of roadway space will create a place where the community will want to connect. This project is a step towards reinventing the Route 1 corridor.
- **Innovation:** This project incorporates innovation in delivery. It provides innovative solutions through its use of a progressive design-build strategy, which facilitates involvement of the design-build team during the earliest stages of project development, ensuring they are part of the project team developing design solutions.

The I-395 Ramp Replacement Project satisfies all the merit criteria outlined in the federal grant opportunity, especially the priorities of providing a state of good repair, safety, and quality of life. It is important to VDOT that this project prioritizes citizen safety, supports economic growth, and improves mobility.

This BIP grant application has been developed to make a strategic request within the maximum allowed federal funding limit with the state funding the remaining cost. VDOT developed a cost estimate for the construction of the I-395 ramp replacement to confirm that construction is feasible within the requirements of this grant opportunity. VDOT has committed to work with the Commonwealth Transportation Board to secure matching funds from the State of Good Repair (SGR) program totaling approximately \$19 million.

I can assure NVTA and the U.S. Department of Transportation that its investment in the I-395 Ramp Replacement project will have a significant, measurable impact on the economic health, well-being, and safety of citizens. VDOT is completely committed to this project and will readily apply expertise and previous work in the area to efficiently implement this important initiative detailed in the grant application.

I ask that you give this proposal every appropriate consideration. Should you or your staff have any questions, please contact Amir Shahpar, Northern Virginia Director of Transportation Planning at 703-259-1731 or amir.shahpar@VDOT.Virginia.gov.

Sincerely,



John D. Lynch, P.E.
Northern Virginia District Engineer

cc: William Cuttler, Northern Virginia Deputy District Engineer
Maria Sinner, Northern Virginia Assistant District Administrator Planning & Investment Management



Northern Virginia Transportation Authority
The Authority for Transportation in Northern Virginia

September 8, 2022

The Honorable Pete Buttigieg
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

Re: NVTA Endorsement of Virginia Department of Transportation's FY2022 Bridge Investment Grant Program Application for I-395 Ramp Replacement

Secretary Buttigieg,

On behalf of the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA), I am pleased to express our full support of the Virginia Department of Transportation's (VDOT) application to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bridge Projects grant under the 2022 Bridge Investment Program (BIP). This grant request will allow Virginia to replace the fracture-critical, structurally deficient bridge from southbound I-395 to southbound Route 1 with an at-grade intersection.

The I-395 Ramp (Federal Bridge ID. 110, VA Bridge ID. 000-1042) is in Arlington County (VA) and carries southbound traffic from I-395 to Route 1. The I-395 Ramp Replacement project is a critical step towards transforming the Route 1 corridor from an elevated freeway to an at-grade urban boulevard linking Crystal City's east and west neighborhoods. The bridge was built in 1976 and refurbished in 1999. Based on 2019 data, the bridge carries 23,000 vehicles per day. The I-395 Ramp Replacement project will create a space for drivers to adjust from the fast-paced I-395 highway to the slower, multimodal Route 1 urban boulevard.

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A grant award from the U.S. Department of Transportation will have tremendous project impact in the following areas:

- **State of good repair:** The I-395 Ramp Replacement project will replace a fracture-critical, structurally deficient bridge, which will help to avoid ever-increasing long-term maintenance and rehabilitation costs.
- **Safety:** Along with improving structural conditions, the I-395 Ramp Replacement project will address safety through crash reduction from slowing southbound traffic coming off I-395 or Route 110. By converting the I-395 ramp from a grade-separated highway to an at-grade intersection, speeds along the ramp will be reduced. The reduction in speed will enhance safety

by reducing the number, rate, and consequences of fatal and serious injury crashes among transportation users.

- **Mobility and economic competitiveness:** Continued access to the I-395 ramp will offer residents reliable access to employment centers in National Landing as well as aid the transformation of Route 1 into an urban boulevard. Integrating Route 1 into the urban fabric of Crystal City and Pentagon City through multimodal design improves connectivity in this growing urban center.
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- **Innovation:** This project incorporates innovation in delivery. It provides innovative solutions through its use of a progressive design-build strategy, which facilitates involvement of the design-build team during the earliest stages of project development, ensuring they are part of the project team developing design solutions.

This project satisfies all the merit criteria outlined in the federal grant opportunity, especially the priorities of providing a state of good repair, safety, and quality of life. It is important to VDOT that this project prioritizes citizen safety, supports economic growth, and improves mobility.

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The U.S. Department of Transportation's investment in the I-395 Ramp Replacement project will have a significant, measurable impact on the economic health, well-being, and safety of citizens. VDOT is completely committed to this project and will readily apply expertise and previous work in the area to efficiently implement this important initiative detailed in the grant application.

Thank you for your consideration of the Virginia Department of Transportation's application as well as your time and attention.

Best Regards,

Phyllis J. Randall
Chair

Cc: The Honorable W. Sheppard Miller III, Virginia Secretary of Transportation
The Honorable Stephen C. Brich, Commissioner of VDOT
Amir Shahpar, P.E., NOVA Director of Transportation Planning
Monica Backmon, NVTa Chief Executive Officer