



Memorandum

TO: The Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council

VIA: James E. Baker, City Manager 

FROM: Jaleh M. Shea, AICP, Planning Director 

DATE: December 4, 2017

SUBJECT: Follow-Up on City Council Inquiry Regarding Impact of Proposed Interstate 87 on Dominion Boulevard Corridor Development

This memorandum is provided in response to a recent inquiry by City Council regarding potential impacts to development patterns along the Dominion Boulevard corridor resulting from the proposed upgrade of Route 17 to interstate status (i.e. Interstate I-87). In particular, Council was interested in where the interstate interchanges might be located and how this could affect planned development under the adopted Dominion Boulevard Corridor Study & Economic Development Strategic Plan.

The Dominion Boulevard Corridor Study was adopted by City Council on November 15, 2016, following a nearly three-year planning process, including significant stakeholder input. While the construction of the Dominion Boulevard Bridge Replacement & Roadway Improvement Project was the primary catalyst for the Study, efforts by many stakeholders in North Carolina and Virginia to upgrade Route 17 to interstate status also factored into the Study's strategic economic development recommendations. The Study contains a number of direct references to the proposed interstate.

The Study's master land use plan, proposed street network, stormwater management, and other planning frameworks contemplated possible interstate interchanges along Dominion Boulevard, based on existing and planned traffic intersections allowed under the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) Access Management Plan for Route 17. The Study planning team tried to cluster more non-residential land uses around possible interchange locations in the two urban core development areas. The proposed street network also makes accommodations for traffic circulation in the vicinity of possible interstate interchanges, in order to maintain internal connections within the study area and to surrounding neighborhoods.

It was mentioned during City Council's October 10, 2017 Work Session recap of the September Council Retreat that public meetings/hearings should be held to facilitate identification of interchange locations and appropriate land uses around them. It was mentioned that revisions to the Dominion Boulevard Corridor Study might also be needed to better promote commercial uses. In this regard, at the City's request, the Hampton Roads District Office of VDOT has agreed to take the lead in initiating a feasibility study to identify the general limits and future interchanges along the Dominion Boulevard/Route 17 corridor. The Hampton Roads Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) is also being requested to participate in the study.

City staff will maintain contact with VDOT and HRTPO to facilitate initiation of the Route 17 interstate interchange feasibility study and will be prepared to help coordinate the study's implementation, including organizing and promoting citizen input opportunities. Staff will keep City Council apprised of key upcoming steps in this process once formulated. The feasibility study should provide valuable guidance as to the need to amend the 2035 Comprehensive Plan to revise the Dominion Boulevard Corridor Study.

Please let me know if you have any questions or desire further background information.

JMS:mhw

Attachment

cc: Robert Geis, Deputy City Manager
Eric Martin, Public Works Director
Jay Tate, Development and Permits Director
Steven Wright, Economic Development Director
Karen Shaffer, AICP, Assistant Planning Director
Earl Sorey, Assistant Public Works Director
Nicole Benson, Administrative Assistant III
Kathryn Berning, Office Coordinator