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Capital Beltway HOT Lanes Education Campaign Kicks Off Today
Faster, More Predictable Travel Coming to the Capital Beltway in Virginia

Alexandria, Va. – A new educational campaign to prepare Virginia Beltway travelers for the landmark change coming to travel on I-495 kicked off today. The HOT Lanes, now formally known as the 495 Express Lanes, will provide extensive new options for a faster, more predictable trip on the Capital Beltway in Virginia and help drivers control how and when they get to their destination. Today's website launch is a first step in a year-long education campaign focused on educating the community on how to safely take advantage of the new travel options when the lanes open in late 2012.

The 495 Express Lanes are two new high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes in each direction from the Springfield Interchange to just north of the Dulles Toll Road on the Virginia side of the Capital Beltway. The 14-mile Express Lanes will be free for carpoolers with three or more people, buses, motorcycles and emergency vehicles. Other drivers may pay a toll for a faster, more predictable trip. The name of the new traffic solution has changed from HOT Lanes to Express Lanes because the on-road signage will say "EXPRESS" and we want customers to become familiar with what they will see on the road.

The new [495 Express Lanes website](#) focuses on educating the community on what the Express Lanes are and how to use the new travel option. The website includes everything from detailed maps outlining how each interchange will work to information about safety in the lanes. On the website, customers and the community can:

- Understand how the Express Lanes will improve Beltway travel
- Learn how to use the new Express Lanes
- Plan new routes on the Express Lanes
- Get personalized Express Lanes information including customized directions and sign up for email alerts
- Find safety tips before using the Express Lanes

"The 495 Express Lanes will fundamentally change how the region thinks about and uses the Capital Beltway in Virginia," said Tim Steinhilber, Transurban's general manager for the 495 Express Lanes Project. "Between the new exits and on-ramps, the new travel options and the significant increase in capacity, the Beltway will be wholly different than just a few years ago. Drivers and local businesses need to understand the scale of this change, examine the details to prepare to use them and see how the lanes will benefit them. It's also essential that all future



customers know the rules of the road to ensure a safe trip for themselves and those around them.”

The 495 Express Lanes will provide much-needed relief to heavily congested Northern Virginia. According to the Texas Transportation Institute’s 2011 Urban Mobility Report, the Washington, D.C. area has the worst traffic congestion in the United States and yearly commutes that are twice as long as the national average.

“The 495 Express Lanes are the first roadway of their kind in the region,” said Gregory A. Whirley Sr., VDOT Commissioner. “As with anything new, there is a learning curve and we want to make sure drivers and the community are educated and equipped to use the lanes. The more customers understand, the greater the benefits they will see from the lanes – no matter how frequently they intend to use them.”

The 495 Express Lanes are on schedule to be completed in late 2012 and will operate 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The lanes will use dynamic pricing to keep traffic free flowing and provide a more predictable travel option on the Beltway. Dynamic pricing based on real-time traffic conditions manages the demand for the lanes, keeping the Express Lanes moving. Drivers will lock in their rate when they enter the lanes and pay tolls electronically with E-ZPass. There are no toll booths on the Express Lanes.

In addition to providing drivers with an option for a more predictable trip, the 495 Express Lanes will include three new Beltway entry and exit points meaning a safer and more direct route to popular locations in Tysons Corner and Merrifield.

Construction on the 495 Express Lanes is fully underway. The project includes the replacement of more than \$260 million of aging infrastructure including 58 bridges and overpasses.

About 495 Express Lanes

The 495 Express Lanes are new high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes that will operate on the I-495/Capital Beltway to provide drivers faster and more predictable travel options on I-495. The two new HOT lanes in each direction on the Virginia side of the Capital Beltway are from the Springfield Interchange to just north of the Dulles Toll Road (approximately 14 miles). Being delivered through a public-private partnership between the Virginia Department of Transportation and Transurban-Flour, the Express Lanes will give drivers the freedom to control how and when they arrive at their destination. For more information, please visit 495ExpressLanes.com.

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