



NEWS RELEASE

Transform66.org

RELEASE: IMMEDIATE
CONTACT: Michelle Holland - VDOT
(703) 259-3378 (office)
(703) 586-0487 (cell)
Michelle.Holland@VDOT.Virginia.gov

January 17, 2017
NR17-66IB-1

15-Minute Overnight Closures of I-66 Inside the Beltway for Initial Toll Gantry Installation

ARLINGTON - The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) will hoist into place the first of eight gantries for the I-66 inside the Beltway Rush Hour Toll Lanes project. The lift will be carried out between midnight and 4 a.m. on January 18, weather conditions permitting.

To ensure public safety, Virginia State Police troopers will close all lanes in both directions between Exits 71 (Gleve Road/Fairfax Dr.) and 72 (Lee Hwy./Spout Run Pkwy.) for an estimated two 15-minute periods between midnight and 4 a.m. Additional total closures may be implemented if needed, but no closures will be in place after 4 a.m. Starting at 9 p.m. tonight, the right lanes of the highway will be closed to mobilize the crane that will lift the gantry; the right lanes will reopen by 5 a.m.

The remaining seven gantries, in various locations on I-66 inside the Beltway and on the Dulles Connector Road approaching I-66, will be lifted into place starting in the first half of February and approximately every subsequent week thereafter to completion. Installation of these gantries will require closures in only one direction of the highway. The gantries support electronic tolling equipment that reads the E-ZPass and E-ZPass Flex transponders, which will be required in all vehicles traveling on the Rush Hour Toll Lanes.

Testing of the Rush Hour Toll Lanes system, which will start before construction is completed, will involve rigorous checks to ensure all tolling functions operate properly prior to the lanes opening to traffic this year. When they open, HOV and toll hours will be in place on weekdays in the eastbound direction from 5:30-9:30 a.m. and westbound from 3:00-7:00 p.m., a lengthening of current HOV hours that is designed to reduce congestion. Carpoolers with two or more people will continue using the lanes for free, just as they do today, though three or more people will be required to ride for free by 2022, when the outside the Beltway express lanes are slated to open. Solo drivers will be able to use the lanes during rush-hour in exchange for paying a variable toll.

As with other Northern Virginia express lanes, Rush Hour Toll Lane rates will vary based on traffic volumes to provide reliable, free-flowing trips for all travelers. The lanes will remain free to all traffic in the off-peak direction and during off-peak hours and weekends.

Last year, VDOT awarded the tolling construction contract to Fort Myer Construction, which also includes installing approximately 125 electronic and static signs. A separate contractor, TransCore, is responsible for developing and operating the tolling system on behalf of VDOT.

More information is available at Transform66.org.

(END)