

VDOT officials talk about local road projects

BY LINDLEY ESTES/THE FREE LANCE-STAR | Posted: Wednesday, January 27, 2016 4:39 pm

Two Virginia Department of Transportation officials spoke to local businesspeople about upcoming Frederickaburg-area road projects aimed at easing congestion and improving the Interstate 95 commute.

Michelle Shropshire and Allison Richter of VDOT presented updated information on an array of projects to a group of building professionals at the monthly ACES (architects, contractors, engineers and site developers) meeting hosted by Froehling & Robertson Inc.

A \$186 million project to rebuild the interchange at Exit 140 and widen of Courthouse Road in Stafford County will reconfigure the exit into a “diverging diamond” pattern and widen Courthouse Road west of the interchange. The proposed project would also relocate the intersection of Courthouse Road and U.S. 1 to the south, to align with Hospital Boulevard and relocate a commuter lot.

Bids for design and engineering work on that project are due next Tuesday and the contract will be awarded in the fall. Richter said construction should start in 2017 and finish in 2020.

Also active in the bidding stage is work on Mudd Tavern Road in Spotsylvania. VDOT plans to replace the bridge over I-95 to become a 4-lane bridge with possible bike and pedestrian walkways.

That project would also be awarded in the fall and begin in 2017, to be finished in 2019.

VDOT is also planning on an extension of the I-95 express lanes, which end near Garrisonville Road in Stafford, Richter said.

A two-mile extension that would provide additional entry and exit points should be finished in 2018, with contracts to be awarded in May.

She said the proposed Rappahannock River Crossing is also moving forward. Richter said the project would improve I-95 congestion by providing local traffic with an additional route to travel between Route 17 and Route 3, including two new bridges over the Rappahannock River.

Divided into two portions, the southbound project would cost \$125 million and northbound would cost \$152 million.

The southbound portion has been put forward as a transportation funding initiative for the next state budget cycle, she said, and more information will be available after June when the General Assembly is expected to vote on transportation funds.

Smaller area initiatives include new turning lanes at U.S. 1 and Harrison Road and Route 208 and Smith station Road, costing \$26 million and \$3 million respectively.

Oscar Merida of Froehling and Robertson also spoke on regional transportation. Merida is working on an engineering study of the Henry W. Nice Bridge replacement project, which has yet to be funded by Maryland.

He said the replacement would result in a 4-lane bridge with potential walking and bike lanes that “should open commerce of Virginia and Maryland along the 301 corridor.”