

More details released on proposed I-95 fourth lane

BY SCOTT SHENK/THE FREE LANCE-STAR | Posted: Friday, March 25, 2016 12:00 am

It was clear from the displays in the Colonial Forge High School lunchroom just how much major roadwork is coming to Stafford County in the coming years.

The displays were part of a public meeting on Thursday to offer updated details on the construction of a proposed fourth lane on southbound Interstate 95 in North Stafford.

But there was also information on three other major projects: the I-95 express lanes southern merge extension; Courthouse Road widening; and the Courthouse Road interchange reconstruction.

The fourth lane is linked directly to two of the other projects.

It would connect to the planned \$50 million express lanes merge extension, a reversible tolled lane aimed at relieving the problematic traffic jams at the southern terminus near State Route 610.

And construction of the fourth lane is contingent on there being enough money in the interchange project's \$149 million budget.

The Virginia Department of Transportation believes there will be enough money in the interchange budget to pay for the estimated \$17 million fourth lane.

The lane would run next to the median and extend 3,000 feet past the new Courthouse Road interchange, ending near the Ramoth Church Road overpass.

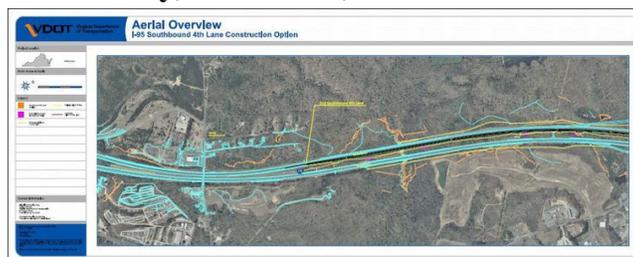
Unlike the merge extension, the fourth lane would be open to all southbound traffic.

If there is money for the fourth lane, work could start around the end of the year.

The hope is that it would be completed in December 2017, said local VDOT spokeswoman Kelly Hannon.

That would allow the opening of the new lane to coincide with the planned opening of the new express lanes merge on the southbound side, according to Hannon. The new northbound side merge is expected to be ready by the summer of 2018.

“We need it,” Del. Mark Dudenhefer, who attended the meeting, said of the fourth lane. “We need to



VDOT's fourth lane design

Click [here](#) to see VDOT's project website, where this and more images and more details on the projects can be found.

keep improving the lanes as we go south.”

North Stafford resident David Clarke, who commutes to his job at a Newington printing plant, likes the idea of the fourth lane.

But he said there’s a lot more needed because the highway infrastructure is way behind growth in Stafford.

“I think everything is about 20 years behind,” he said.