



FY 2017 Recommended Budget Budget Question

Board Question #: 33

BUDGET QUESTION: What is the status of the J-ramp given the recent FHWA opinion? Are we still in a position to spend \$6 million on it in FY 2017? If not, the debt service on that project alone would be a half penny off the tax rate.

RESPONSE: FHWA advises that the J-ramp alone does not solve the problem and, instead, is expected to create additional problems at other intersections. The other components of the Exit 126 improvements (i.e. super ramp, improvements at either end of Southpoint Parkway, Rt. 1 and Rt. 17) would need to be completed, as well. Prior to giving permission for the J-ramp to be completed, FHWA wants a commitment from the County and State that these other improvements will be completed. A discussion of this project at a recent Transportation Committee meeting made it clear that more work needs to be done by VDOT and the County to determine how we can advance this project. However, it seems clear that FHWA will not permit the J-ramp to move ahead on its own.

Four Board members were in attendance at the February 11 Transportation Committee meeting at which the J-ramp project was discussed. Given the uncertainty surrounding this project, it was agreed that it is highly unlikely that local funding will be necessary in FY 2017. The group agreed that the project should be shifted out at least one year. Shifting the \$6.0 million from FY 2017 to FY 2018 reduces FY 2017 Transportation Fund debt service by \$525,000. It does not reduce the General Fund debt service and since no funding is being transferred from the General Fund to support Transportation in FY 2017, does not factor into the tax rate discussion.

Staff will review this change to the J-ramp project as well as changes to other CIP projects with the Board at a future budget work session.