



# Dulles Corridor Advisory Committee



## Information Report on Public Comments on the Dulles Toll Road (DTR) Toll Rate Increase

September 22, 2022

## Purpose of the Discussion

To provide information on input received from the public on the proposed amendment to the Metropolitan Washington Airports Regulations (Regulations) to increase the toll rates for use of the Dulles Toll Road, effective January 1, 2023.

Public comment was also received on the following topics:

- *Environmental Sustainability Initiatives.* Converting to all electronic toll collection on the DTR will reduce harmful emissions from vehicles idling at toll plazas. Are there other potential environmental initiatives related to the operation of or maintenance of the DTR that should be explored?
- *DTR Customer Incentives.* Would offering toll credits or other financial incentives be an effective way to encourage DTR customers to carpool or travel during off-peak hours?

## Background

The Airports Authority has the exclusive right to establish, charge and collect tolls and other fees for the use of the Dulles Toll Road.

Prior to adjusting toll rates, the Airports Authority must follow its process for promulgating regulations, including convening one or more public hearings in the Dulles Corridor to provide members of the public and others an opportunity to become informed about, and express their views on, any proposed toll rate changes.

## Background, continued

The Airports Authority also consults with the Dulles Corridor Advisory Committee (DCAC) with respect to any proposed toll rate adjustments, but DCAC consent or approval of toll rate adjustments is not required.

A projected toll rate schedule was initially made public in 2009 when the first DTR revenue bonds were issued and has not changed since 2014. The next projected toll rate increase is scheduled for 2023.

## Background, continued

### Current Disclosure Regarding Future Toll Rates

“Beginning in 2023, and occurring every five years thereafter, there is an assumed increase of \$0.75 at the mainline toll plaza and \$0.50 at all ramp toll plazas, except for a \$0.75 increase at all toll plazas in 2033.”

*Excerpt from the official statement for the DTR Second Senior Lien Revenue Refunding Bonds, Series 2022*

Year	Mainline Toll Rate	Ramp Toll Rate	Trip Cost	Trip Cost Change
2022	\$3.25	\$1.50	<b>\$4.75</b>	
2023-2027	\$4.00	\$2.00	<b>\$6.00</b>	\$1.25
2028-2032	\$4.75	\$2.50	<b>\$7.25</b>	\$1.25
2033-2037	\$5.50	\$3.25	<b>\$8.75</b>	\$1.50
2038-2042	\$6.25	\$3.75	<b>\$10.00</b>	\$1.25
2043-2047	\$7.00	\$4.25	<b>\$11.25</b>	\$1.25
2048-2058	\$7.75	\$4.75	<b>\$12.50</b>	\$1.25

Order-of-magnitude estimates based on numerous assumptions, including no future debt issuance or debt restructurings.

The assumed toll rate increases in 2038, 2043 and 2048 may not be necessary based on current debt service requirements.

## Background, continued

The proposed amendment to Section 10.1 of the Regulations:

### § 10.1. (Effective January 1, 2023) Tolls for Use of the Dulles Toll Road

- (1) The tolls applicable to the Dulles Toll Road (also known as the Omer L. Hirst-Adelard L. Brault Expressway) shall be as follows:

<u>Vehicle Class</u>	<u>Main Line Plaza</u>		<u>Ramps</u>	
	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>	<u>From</u>	<u>To</u>
2-Axle	\$3.25	<b>\$4.00</b>	\$1.50	<b>\$2.00</b>
3-Axle	\$6.50	<b>\$8.00</b>	\$3.00	<b>\$4.00</b>
4-Axle	\$7.75	<b>\$9.25</b>	\$3.50	<b>\$4.50</b>
5-Axle	\$9.00	<b>\$10.50</b>	\$4.00	<b>\$5.00</b>
6 or more axles	\$10.25	<b>\$11.75</b>	\$4.50	<b>\$5.50</b>

## Notice of Public Hearings and Public Comment Period

The notice was published on June 29, 2022. The public was invited to submit written comments between July 11 and August 10 at public hearings, on the Airports Authority's website, and via e-mail, voice mail and regular mail.

Information about the public hearings and the public comment period was provided in print and digital banner advertisements in local newspapers in English and Spanish. Reminders were posted regularly to social media and sent to the Airports Authority's stakeholder e-mail distribution lists.

## Public Hearings

Public hearings were held on July 12, 2022 (virtual) and July 18, 2022 (in-person at the Washington Dulles Airport Marriot).

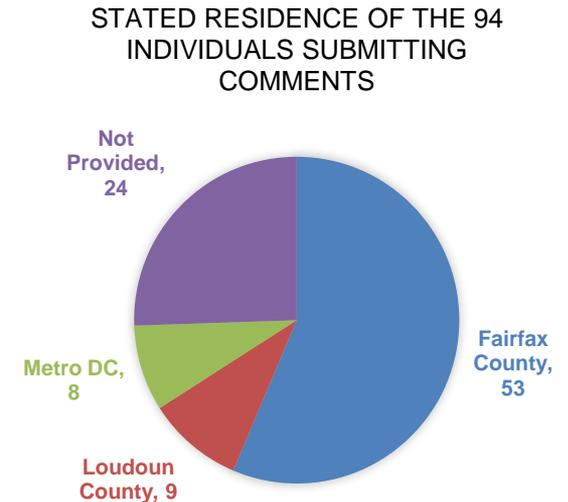
Information presented to the public included an overview of the DTR toll rate setting process and information on DTR operations, capital improvements in the Dulles Corridor funded with toll revenue, and the financing and construction of the Dulles Corridor Metrorail Project.

Copies of the presentation materials, a recording of the virtual public hearing, responses to questions submitted during the virtual public hearing, and a Frequently Asked Questions document are posted online at: <http://www.dullestollroad.com/toll-setting-process>

## Information Report on Public Comments

During the public comment period, 94 individuals and one organization submitted a total of 105\* comments.

	Number Received
Comments submitted using online comment form	62
Comments submitted via e-mail	34
Comments submitted via Q&A at virtual public hearing	7
Written comments submitted at in-person public hearing	1
Comments submitted via voice mail	1
Comments submitted via regular mail	0



*All comments included in the Report on Public Comments. The 105 total comments conveyed 206 views. Of these, 97 were on the proposed toll increase, 64 were on the two topics, and 45 were on the proposed regulation to authorize an administrative fee for pay-by-plate payments.*

## Information Report on Public Comments, continued

The **comments on the proposed toll rate increase** can be grouped in the following general categories:

General Theme/Subject of the Comment	Number Received
<p><b>The unfairness of the toll rate increase</b></p> <p><i>These commenters generally oppose the use of DTR toll revenue to pay for a significant portion of the Metrorail construction costs. Some advocate for shifting more of the burden to entities that will directly benefit from the Silver Line. Some commenters feel it is “unfair” for toll road users to pay for cost over-runs and delays. Others argue it is unfair to increase toll rates when Route 7 is under construction.</i></p>	21
<p><b>Negative impact of the toll rate increase on individuals</b></p> <p><i>These commenters state that the DTR will be unaffordable given inflation and high gas prices. Some are concerned that the toll rate increase will widen the gap between “haves” and “have nots” and will force people to use local roads to avoid the DTR.</i></p>	54

*All comments included in the Report on Public Comments. Some individuals made multiple comments and some comments address more than one topic. Summary data is provided for illustrative purposes.*

## Information Report on Public Comments, continued

General Theme/Subject of the Comment	Number Received
<p><b>Consider alternative sources of funding</b></p> <p><i>Pursue other sources of funding pursued for Metrorail construction, such as charging users of the Dulles Airport Access Highway.</i></p>	5
<p><b>Qualified support for the toll rate increase</b></p> <p><i>The commenters acknowledge that the toll rate increase may be appropriate but would prefer a lower amount or have the increased rates combined with an incentive program for frequent users.</i></p>	2
<p><b>General opposition to the toll rate increase</b></p> <p><i>Commenters express opposition to the toll rate increase but do not provide any reasons for their opposition.</i></p>	14
<p><b>Other concerns</b> - <i>The comment was a question about how toll revenue is used and did not express a specific view on the toll rate increase.</i></p>	1

All comments included in the Report on Public Comments. Some individuals made multiple comments and some comments address more than one topic. Summary data is provided for illustrative purposes.

## Information Report on Public Comments, continued

The **comments on the environmental sustainability initiatives** can be grouped in the following general categories:

General Theme/Subject of the Comment	Number Received
Increase connectivity by either adding express bus service between Tysons and Dulles International Airport or a bike trail along the DTR	3
Reduce toll rates for electric and clean-fuel vehicles	2
Vehicle emissions are not substantial on the DTR but will increase on local roads	3
Install small wind-turbines along the DTR to generate electricity	1
Toll booths should be eliminated and replaced with gantries to allow traffic to flow freely	4
The toll rates should be eliminated or reduced	5
Concerns unrelated to environmental sustainability	3

*All comments included in the Report on Public Comments. Some individuals made multiple comments and some comments address more than one topic. Summary data is provided for illustrative purposes.*

## Information Report on Public Comments, continued

The **comments on the DTR customer incentives to encourage carpools and off-peak travel** can be grouped in the following general categories:

General Theme/Subject of the Comment	Number Received
General support for the concept	8
Do not support the concept / Customer incentives will not work	12
Lower toll rates during off peak hours and/or for local trips	10
Eliminate or reduce the toll rates	3
Improve bus service; help create carpool and van pool hubs	3
Free travel for HOV	7

*All comments included in the Report on Public Comments. Some individuals made multiple comments and some comments address more than one topic. Summary data is provided for illustrative purposes.*

## Next Steps in the Airports Authority Regulatory Process

<b>October 2022</b>	<b>10/19/22</b> Airports Authority Board Committee Meetings <i>Staff report on DCAC consultation; consideration of resolution to set toll rates</i>
<b>November 2022</b>	<b>11/16/22</b> Airports Authority Board of Directors Meeting <i>Anticipated Board action on DTR toll rate resolution</i>
<b>January 2023</b>	<b>01/01/23</b> Proposed Implementation of Toll Increase



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