

I got this ridership information from Transurban in mid-September

Express Lanes Usage Total for both 95 and the Beltway

For fiscal year 2019

Average workday bus trips	809 trips/day
Average workday tolled trips	79,000 trips/day
Average workday HOV trips	33,000 trips/day (estimated 100,000 users/day)

When I computed reasonable assumptions about how many commuters would be riding in each type of vehicle, I was amazed that **55% of people using the HOT lanes are riding FREE**

Type of vehicle	# of Vehicles	est. avg. # of people per vehicle	Estimated # of people moved daily	
HOV	33,000	3.03	100,000	<b>46% FREE</b>
buses	809	25.00	20,225	<b>9% FREE</b>
SOV	79,000	1.25	98,750	<b>45%</b>
			218,975	

Transurban also provided this breakdown of the tolls actually paid by people riding in SOVs (single occupancy vehicles) from Jan-June 2019. **Most drivers use HOT Lanes only as an emergency option**

- | Beltway HOT Lanes                         | I-95 HOT Lanes                            |
|---|---|
| • <b>84% spend less than \$20 a month</b> | • <b>70% spend less than \$20 a month</b> |
| • <b>The average toll was \$5.92</b>      | • <b>The average toll was \$9.87</b>      |

**CON** – **The concern I've always had about HOT Lanes is the financing.** They came about because the gas tax hadn't been raised in over 25 years and there were no funds to widen the Beltway or add capacity to I-95.

Background: The 4-lane Beltway project cost \$1.9 billion. The State paid only about \$409 million to replace 50 aging bridges and overpasses and add 3 interchanges and pedestrian/bicycle crossings. Private investors put up \$350 million. The remaining \$1.2 billion came from 40-year bonds. Tolls must repay the bonds and cover all maintenance and operation costs before the private investors earn any return, but the private operator has complete control in setting tolls for 70 years. The financing of the existing 95 HOT Lanes is essentially the same, but the State paid less than 10% of the project cost.

**If the State had been able to finance the lanes, we'd be able to use profits going to the investors to lower tolls or fund other transportation improvements.**

**PRO** – Transit is far more than just Metrorail. **HOT Lanes fill an essential role to reduce congestion and greenhouse gas emissions by getting more people into fewer vehicles.** Carpools and vanpools are the only way to serve commuters living in our sprawling suburban stream valley development. Bus service is effective where collection points, park and ride lots, or urban concentrations can support adequate ridership. However, **if users of these forms of transit can't make up time on the Hot Lanes, a major incentive is gone and we end up with them back in their cars creating more congestion and more pollution.**

**Saying I support all options to get cars off the road, means ALL options.** It includes walkable development and bicycle routes. Metrorail and VRE must deliver reliable service above all. But, they also need adequate parking and local feeder bus service to create an integrated network. Adding rail capacity, requires we buy additional Metro cars and make technological improvements to run more 8-car trains closer together. However, it also requires that the very old unsafe 14<sup>th</sup> street bridge be replaced to remove a major bottleneck throwing eastcoast traffic onto our clogged roads.

**There's No "One and Done" Easy Way to Meet Our Transportation Challenges.**