

Mooresville, N.C. – May 13, 2015: Mayor Miles Atkins of Mooresville issues the following personal statement regarding the pending I-77 HOT/Express Lanes Project:

“I’ve recently received numerous requests from Mooresville residents to comment on the uncertainties surrounding the I-77 HOT/Express Lanes project. I believe the economic vitality of our community is tied to the City of Charlotte and having a faster track to the Charlotte Douglas International Airport will definitely increase our potential for recruiting new corporations and jobs to Mooresville. However, there have been general concerns about the financial viability of this proposed toll project, particularly in light of the recent cancellation by Virginia DOT of a similar Cintra project. I also have concerns about the additions to the agreement that prohibits the region from being able to build general purpose lanes without a financial penalty. Expediency in accomplishing the end goal of more lanes on I-77 is imperative, no doubt. However, with the recently discovered contract amendments and too many unanswered questions; I simply cannot justify moving forward with the current project as is.”

“I believe we are all entitled to clarity regarding the amendments to the Comprehensive Agreement between the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) and I-77 Mobility Partners. I have always had strong convictions about governmental transparency and want to make sure the information I bring back to my citizens is candid and accurate. I am finding that some of the information I have shared with my constituents about this project is now inaccurate. I feel it’s time to make my personal position known; especially to those who have entrusted me to do my due diligence in ensuring the voices of our community are being heard.”

“At this point, my recommendation would be to respectfully call for a deferral of the planned financial closing. Between the recent updates from the state on budgets and a clause in the agreement that may prevent us from proactively addressing future congestion issues, it is not unreasonable to re-assess the path we are on. We need time to examine what the best course of action is for our residents and our region.”

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