



Item #5

District of Columbia  
Bowie  
College Park  
Frederick County  
Gaithersburg  
Greenbelt  
Montgomery County  
Prince George's County  
Rockville  
Takoma Park  
Alexandria  
Arlington County  
Fairfax  
Fairfax County  
Falls Church  
Loudoun County  
Manassas  
Manassas Park  
Prince William County

**MEMORANDUM****June 16, 2004**

**TO:** Transportation Planning Board

**FROM:** Ronald F. Kirby *RFK*  
Director, Department of  
Transportation Planning

**RE:** Letters Sent/Received Since the May 19 TPB Meeting

The attached letters were sent/received since the May 19 TPB meeting. The letters will be reviewed under Agenda #5 of the June 16 TPB agenda.

Attachments





*Local governments working together for a better metropolitan region*

District of Columbia  
Bowie  
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Frederick County  
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Falls Church  
Loudoun County  
Manassas  
Manassas Park  
Prince William County

June 4, 2004

Honorable John Warner  
United States Senate  
225 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Warner:


As you prepare for conference committee deliberations on the TEA-21 reauthorization bill, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) respectfully requests that you include the Senate legislative language of SAFETEA (Section 1103) in the final bill, which would increase the takedown for metropolitan planning from 1 percent to 1.5 percent and increase the base from which it is taken to include the minimum guarantee program.

According to the 2000 Census, 80 percent of the nation's population now resides in metropolitan areas such as the National Capital Region. Trends suggest that the metropolitan share of the population will continue to increase. Planning funds for these metropolitan areas have not kept pace.

We believe an increase from 1 to 1.5 percent in the takedown for metropolitan planning will ensure that the MPO community -- such as COG's National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), and including the 46 new MPOs -- has the resources needed to maintain the current system while taking on a number of new responsibilities. Increasing the planning funds to 1.5 percent as proposed by the Senate will result in a more efficient transportation system. Without this increase, it will be difficult for existing and new MPOs to meet the new requirements of reauthorization.

I urge you to ensure that Section 1103 of SAFETEA is maintained in the conference bill.

Thank you again for your hard work on this legislation. COG looks forward to working with you to ensure the TEA-21 reauthorization bill is enacted by Congress and signed into law this year.

Sincerely,  
  
Phil Mendelson  
Chair, Board of Directors

*Senator - this was your  
amendment in committee  
that we're fighting for!*



*Local governments working together for a better metropolitan region*

June 4, 2004

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*Manassas*

*Manassas Park*

*Prince William County*

Honorable Paul S. Sarbanes  
United States Senate  
309 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Sarbanes:

As you prepare for conference committee deliberations on the TEA-21 reauthorization bill, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) respectfully requests that you include the Senate legislative language of SAFETEA (Section 1103) in the final bill, which would increase the takedown for metropolitan planning from 1 percent to 1.5 percent and increase the base from which it is taken to include the minimum guarantee program.

According to the 2000 Census, 80 percent of the nation's population now resides in metropolitan areas such as the National Capital Region. Trends suggest that the metropolitan share of the population will continue to increase. Planning funds for these metropolitan areas have not kept pace.

We believe an increase from 1 to 1.5 percent in the takedown for metropolitan planning will ensure that the MPO community -- such as COG's National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), and including the 46 new MPOs -- has the resources needed to maintain the current system while taking on a number of new responsibilities. Increasing the planning funds to 1.5 percent as proposed by the Senate will result in a more efficient transportation system. Without this increase, it will be difficult for existing and new MPOs to meet the new requirements of reauthorization.

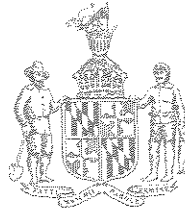
I urge you to ensure that Section 1103 of SAFETEA is maintained in the conference bill.

Thank you again for your hard work on this legislation. COG looks forward to working with you to ensure the TEA-21 reauthorization bill is enacted by Congress and signed into law this year.

Sincerely,

Phil Mendelson  
Chair, Board of Directors

SENATOR JOHN A. GIANNETTI, JR.  
STATE SENATOR  
21st Legislative District  
Prince George's and Anne Arundel Counties



Annapolis Office  
122 James Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991  
410-841-3141 • 301-858-3141  
Fax 410-841-3850 • 301-858-3850  
E-Mail John\_Giannetti@senate.state.md.us

Committee to Revise Article 27

Commissioner  
Maryland Commission on Criminal Sentencing

Washington Metropolitan  
Transportation Planning Board

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401-1991

June 2, 2004

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
777 North Capital Street, N.E., Suite 300  
Washington, D.C. 20002-4239

Dear Members of the Transportation Planning Board:

I want to thank you for the information that you provided me regarding the ICC and emergency preparedness within the area. The information was very useful and brings to light some important issues. I appreciate everything that was shared, and the concerns that were addressed. In addition, I really enjoy seeing my name in print and appreciate being on the cover story of the newsletter.

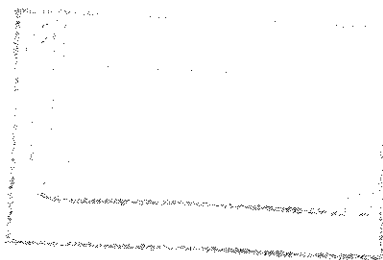
The future of the ICC is going to be a hot issue next session. Thank you for keeping me up-to-date and well educated on transportation issues. This directly affects my constituents in District 21 and I'm sure they appreciate all the work that this organization does for our community.

If there is ever anything I can do for you all in the future, please don't hesitate to contact my office. I look forward to working with this group again.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'JAG', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

John A. Giannetti, Jr.  
Senator, District 21  
Prince George's and Anne Arundel Counties





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Prince William County

May 26, 2004

Supervisor Sean Connuaghton  
Chairman, Board of Supervisors  
Prince William County  
One County Complex Ct  
Prince William, VA 22192

Dear Supervisor Connuaghton:

On behalf of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, I want to thank you for your support of the Commuter Connections InfoExpress Kiosk program and your participation in the unveiling ceremony at the Manassas Mall early this month.

The new kiosk will serve Prince William County citizens by giving them easier access to alternative commute information and services to help ease frustrations with the daily commute to and from work. Information such as ridesharing matchlists, schedules for local and regional transit lines, park & ride and telework center locations, real time traffic and weather details, plus maps and guides.

To circumvent the glitch with the mapping software, we have upgraded to an application that provides the same functionality as the old maps and guides but with accurate datasets.

We greatly appreciate your involvement and thank you again for being a part of the ribbon cutting event.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Ramfos  
Chief, Alternative  
Commute Programs

cc: Karen Rae, VDRPT  
R. Kirby



June 16, 2004

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*Prince William County*

Ms. Cynthia D. Simpson  
Deputy Director, Office of Planning and Preliminary Engineering  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
State Highway Administration  
707 N. Calvert St.  
Baltimore, MD 21202

Dear Ms. Simpson:

Thank you for your letter of May 26, 2004 in which you expressed interest in obtaining TPB's Version 2.1D model set (draft #18, presented to the Travel Forecasting Subcommittee at its May 21, 2004 meeting) and in having TPB staff install it on computers in SHA's offices.

In a subsequent phone conversation, Michael Clifford of my staff indicated to Joseph Finkle of your staff that, since this version will not be the final one to be used in the air quality conformity assessment of the 2004 Constrained Long Range Plan and FY2005-10 Transportation Improvement Program, it would be better to wait for the final model set (expected to be presented to the Travel Forecasting Subcommittee at its July 23, 2004 meeting). Mr. Finkle agreed this would be the most efficient approach in the long term.

Pending your concurrence, we will wait until the July 23, 2004 model set is available, and we will be happy to provide and install it at SHA's offices at that time.

If you have any questions please call me or Michael Clifford of my staff. We look forward to continuing work with you and your project planning staff on the use of these new methods.

Sincerely,

Ronald F. Kirby  
Director, Department of  
Transportation Planning

cc: Joseph Finkle, SHA  
Michael Clifford, COG/TPB



Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., *Governor*  
Michael S. Steele, *Lt. Governor*

Robert L. Flanagan, *Secretary*  
Neil J. Pedersen, *Administrator*

Maryland Department of Transportation

May 26, 2004

Ronald Kirby, Director  
Department of Transportation Planning  
Metropolitan Washington  
Council of Governments  
Transportation Planning Department  
777 N. Capital Street  
Suite 300  
Washington D.C. 20002-4239

Dear Mr. Kirby:

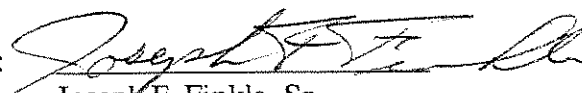
Based on the May 21, 2004 Travel Forecasting Subcommittee, Ms. Mona R. Sutton of my staff informed me that this would be the correct time for jurisdictions interested in obtaining the Version 2.1D model set. On behalf of Maryland State Highway Administration (MSHA), Travel Forecasting Section, I am writing this letter to obtain the Version 2.1D/TP+ model set along with all of its associated data files.

In the past, staff members from Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) have come to our office and set up the model set for us. We would greatly appreciate MWCOG staff member's assistance once again in setting us up with this new model set, and providing any additional training needed.

If you have any questions, please feel free to call the writer or Ms. Mona Sutton at 410-545-5643.

Very truly yours,

Cynthia D. Simpson  
Deputy Director  
Office of Planning and  
Preliminary Engineering

By:   
Joseph F. Finkle, Sr.  
Assistant Division Chief  
Travel Forecasting Section

CDS:MRS:pj

cc: Mr. Mike Clifford Mr. Ron Spalding  
Ms. Fatimah Hasan Ms. Mona Sutton  
N:\oppe\ppd\traffic\mona\letters\version2.1D.doc

410-545-5580 or 1-800-548-5026

My telephone number/toll-free number is \_\_\_\_\_

Maryland Relay Service for Impaired Hearing or Speech 1.800.735.2258 Statewide Toll Free

Street Address: 707 North Calvert Street • Baltimore, Maryland 21202 • Phone 410.545.0300 • www.marylandroads.com





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Manassas Park

Prince William County

June 16, 2004

Mr. Thomas Harrington

Program Manager

Office of Business Planning and Project Development

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

600 Fifth Street, N. W.

Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Harrington:

This letter transmits the following information in response to your letter request of May 21, 2004:

1. Draft highway and transit networks, input, control, support and TP+ script files and software to run the demographic sub-models and accomplish trip generation, trip distribution, mode choice and trip assignment using the COG/TPB Travel Forecasting Model Version 2.1D (**DRAFT # 18**), for three time periods for the simulation years of 1994, 2000 and 2030. The data are contained on a CD-R labeled "CGV21D\_18X".

**Please note that generic file names are used in these model runs, so it is recommended that data for each simulation year be kept in separate directories.**

2. A copy of the following document:
  - a. A memorandum to the files by Ron Milone, dated June 15, 2004, titled "*Transmittal of Version 2.1D (DRAFT # 18) Model*".
  - b. A memorandum to the Travel Forecasting Subcommittee by Robert E. Griffiths, dated May 21, 2004, titled "*Travel Model Employment Data Adjustment Factors*".

These data are being delivered to Mr. Jeffrey Bruggeman of the AECOM Transportation Consulting Group, as discussed in your telephone conversation with Mr. G. Toni Giardini of my staff.

Questions concerning these data should be directed to members of my staff as follows: For

Mr. Thomas Harrington

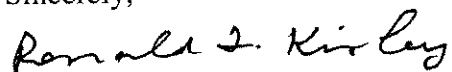
June 16, 2004

Page 2

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questions concerning Version 2.1 D (DRAFT # 18), please contact Mr. Ron Milone at (202) 962-3283. For questions concerning the employment data adjustment factors, please contact Mr. Robert E. Griffiths at (202) 962-3280.

Sincerely,



Ronald F. Kirby  
Director, Department of  
Transportation Planning

cc: Richard Stevens, WMATA  
Jeffrey Bruggeman, AECOM  
James Hogan, COG/DTP  
Ron Milone, COG/DTP  
Robert Griffiths, COG/DTP



May 21, 2004

Mr. Ronald Kirby  
Director, Department of Transportation Planning  
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
777 North Capitol Street, NE, Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mr. Kirby:

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority is requesting a copy of the latest COG/TPB Travel Forecasting Model (Version 2.1D\_#18, 05/04) for our use in regional planning studies.

Any fees or staff time needed to support this request should be taken from WMATA's technical assistance account with MWCOG. Please contact me at 202-962-2294 if you have any questions.

Thank you for your help with this request.

Regards,

Thomas Harrington  
Program Manager  
Office of Business Planning and Project Development

Cc: Richard Stevens

**Washington  
Metropolitan Area  
Transit Authority**

600 Fifth Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
202/962-1234

By Metrorail:  
Judiciary Square—Red Line  
Gallery Place-Chinatown—  
Red, Green and  
Yellow Lines  
By Metrobus:  
Routes D1, D3, D6, P6,  
70, 71, 80, X2





June 15, 2004

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Arlington County  
Fairfax  
Fairfax County  
Falls Church  
Loudoun County  
Manassas  
Manassas Park  
Prince William County

Mr. Norman Marshall, President  
Smart Mobility, Inc.  
16 Beaver Meadow Road, #3  
Norwich VT 05055

Dear Mr. Marshall:

This letter transmits the following information in response to the letter request of May 24, 2004, from Ms. Amy L. Horner of Sidley Austin Brown & Wood, LLP:

1. Draft highway and transit networks, input, control, support and TP+ script files and software to run the demographic sub-models and accomplish trip generation, trip distribution, mode choice and trip assignment using the COG/TPB Travel Forecasting Model Version 2.1D (**DRAFT # 18**), for three time periods for the simulation years of 1994, 2000 and 2030. The data are contained on a CD-R labeled "CGV21D\_18X".


**Please note that generic file names are used in these model runs, so it is recommended that data for each simulation year be kept in separate directories.**

2. Copies of the following documents:
  - a. A memorandum to the files by Ron Milone, dated June 15, 2004, titled "*Transmittal of Version 2.1D (DRAFT # 18) Model*".
  - b. "*Status of the TPB Version 2.1D Regional Travel Model*" by Ron Milone, dated 5/21/2004 and delivered to the Travel Forecasting Subcommittee.
  - c. A memorandum to the Travel Forecasting Subcommittee by Robert E. Griffiths, dated May 21, 2004, titled "*Travel Model Employment Data Adjustment Factors*".

Questions concerning these data should be directed to members of my staff as follows: For questions concerning Version 2.1 D (**DRAFT # 18**), please contact Mr. Ron Milone at (202) 962-3283. For questions concerning the employment data adjustment factors, please contact Mr. Robert E. Griffiths at (202) 962-3280.

Mr. Norman Marshall  
June 15, 2004  
Page 2  
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Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Ronald F. Kirby". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R".

Ronald F. Kirby  
Director, Department of  
Transportation Planning

cc: Mr. Ron Milone, COG/DTP  
Mr. Robert E. Griffiths, COG/DTP

SMRTMOB5.ltr

# SIDLEY AUSTIN BROWN & WOOD LLP

BEIJING  
BRUSSELS  
CHICAGO  
DALLAS  
GENEVA  
HONG KONG  
LONDON

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WASHINGTON, D.C. 20005  
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NEW YORK  
SAN FRANCISCO  
SHANGHAI  
SINGAPORE  
TOKYO  
WASHINGTON, D.C.

WRITER'S DIRECT NUMBER  
(202) 736-8529

WRITER'S E-MAIL ADDRESS  
ahorner@sidley.com

May 24, 2004

## VIA REGULAR MAIL

Mr. Ron Kirby  
Director of Transportation Planning  
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
777 North Capitol Street, NE, Ste. 300  
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Mr. Kirby:

We are writing on behalf of our clients, the Audubon Naturalist Society and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, with regard to the updated model Version 2.1D #18. By this letter we are requesting that you provide to our consultant some basic information connected with the public release of travel model Version 2.1D #18 so that we may fully participate in the public process associated with this analysis. The following is the information requested:

- 1) A complete set of documentation, with full model set-ups, data inputs, and validation results for 1994, 2000, and for 2030;
- 2) All networks, inputs, controls, support and script files, and software to run the sub-models and accomplish the four-step model along with a calibration report and users guide specific to the new version of this model;
- 3) Any information you may have comparing the 2.1D #16 and 2.1D #18 models; including, but not limited to, documents supporting the technical adjustment to the Base Year and Forecast Employment for Certain Jurisdictions in the TPB Modeled Area and documents identifying the specific K factors which have been eliminated and/or dampened in the 2.1D #18 model;
- 4) All specifications you may presently have for transit improvements and toll lane networks for the Regional Mobility and Access Study, including the related computerized highway and transit network input files and any other related model

Mr. Ron Kirby  
May 24, 2004  
Page 2

set-ups and data inputs used in conjunction with those analyses, and your assessment of when additional information on these proposals will become available, if it is not currently available;

- 5) We are formally repeating our request for your assurance that you will provide us with notification of any further modifications to the 2.1D #18 model in the upcoming months while the ICC project is pending.

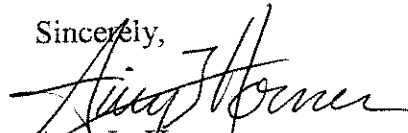
Additionally, we request the information provided the Transportation Planning Board (TPB) by the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) on the Inter County Connector (ICC) project in preparation for 2004-2009 Air Quality Conformity Analysis. Specifically, this information includes "...alignments, number of lanes, a managed facility concept employing tolls and specification on bus service." Further, we request any information on interchange configuration and transit for the ICC project that TPB expected MDOT to provide shortly after the April 21, 2004 TPB meeting. (See Minutes of the Transportation Planning Board, April 21, 2004 at page 13).

If you have any questions about these requests, we encourage you to call us so that your response to these requests can be prepared as soon as possible. Please send your response to our clients' consultant, whose name and address is listed below:

Norman Marshall  
Smart Mobility, Inc.  
16 Beaver Meadow Road, #3  
Norwich, VT 05055

Thank you for your prompt response to this request.

Sincerely,



Amy L. Horner

ALH: alh

cc: Norman Marshall







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June 16, 2004

Mr. Eric Graye, AICP, Planning Supervisor

Transportation Planning

Montgomery County Department of Park and Planning

The Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission

8787 Georgia Avenue

Silver Spring, MD 20910-3760 .

Dear Mr. Graye:

This letter transmits the following information in response to your letter request of June 10, 2004:

1. Draft highway and transit networks, input, control, support and TP+ script files and software to run the demographic sub-models and accomplish trip generation, trip distribution, mode choice and trip assignment using the COG/TPB Travel Forecasting Model Version 2.1D (**DRAFT # 18**), for three time periods for the simulation years of 1994, 2000 and 2030. The data are contained on a CD-R labeled "CGV21D\_18X".

**Please note that generic file names are used in these model runs, so it is recommended that data for each simulation year be kept in separate directories.**

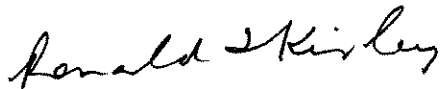
2. Copies of the following documents:
  - a. A memorandum to the files by Ron Milone, dated June 15, 2004, titled "*Transmittal of Version 2.1D (DRAFT # 18) Model*".
  - b. A memorandum to the Travel Forecasting Subcommittee by Robert E. Griffiths, dated May 7, 2004, titled "*Travel Model Employment Data Adjustment Factors*".

Questions concerning these data should be directed to members of my staff as follows: For questions concerning Version 2.1 D (DRAFT#18), please contact Mr. Ron Milone at (202) 962-3283. For questions concerning the employment data adjustment factors, please contact Mr. Robert E. Griffiths at (202) 962-3280.

Mr. Eric Graye  
June 16, 2004  
Page 2  
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Please note that Round 6.4 of the COG Cooperative Forecasting Process is still under review at this time.

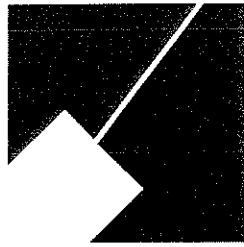
Sincerely,



Ronald F. Kirby  
Director, Department of  
Transportation Planning

cc: Jeff Zyontz, MNCPPC/Montgomery County  
Yuanjun Li, MNCPPC/Montgomery County  
Yetta McDaniel, MNCPPC/Montgomery County  
Rich Roisman, MNCPPC Montgomery County  
Ron Vaughn, MNCPPC/Montgomery County  
Mike Clifford, COG/DTP  
Ron Milone, COG/DTP  
Robert Griffiths, COG/DTP

M-NCPPC



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF PARK AND PLANNING**

THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL  
PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

8787 Georgia Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3760  
301-495-4500, [www.mncppc.org](http://www.mncppc.org)

June 10, 2004

Mr. Ronald F. Kirby, Director  
Department of Transportation Planning  
**Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments**  
777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300  
Washington, D.C. 20002-4239

**Re: Request for MWCOG Version 2.1D\_#18 Model and Related Data Sets**


Dear Mr. Kirby:

In support of our Department's ongoing effort to transition to and validate the latest available version of the MWCOG travel demand model in support of Montgomery County-focused planning applications, this letter requests a copy of the items referenced above. It is my understanding that this model version includes those revisions reported by COG staff at the May 21<sup>st</sup> Travel Forecasting Subcommittee meeting -- including Round 6.4 Cooperative Forecast demographics. This request includes:

- **1994, 2000 and 2030 highway and transit networks; as well as input, control, and supporting TP+ script files and**
- **Round 6.4 Cooperative Forecast land use by MWCOG traffic analysis zones for the metropolitan Washington region.**

Please use funds available in our Department's Maryland-DOT service account to support the cost of providing these items. Your kind attention to this matter would be greatly appreciated. Should you have any questions concerning this request, please contact me at 301.495.4632 (phone) or [eric.graye@mncppc-mc.org](mailto:eric.graye@mncppc-mc.org) (e-mail).

Regards,

  
Eric Graye, AICP  
Planning Supervisor  
Transportation Planning

cc: Jeff Zyontz  
Yuanjun Li  
Yetta McDaniel  
Rich Roisman  
Ron Vaughn





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Prince William County

June 16, 2004

Mr. William W. Thomas, III  
Staff/Technical Manager, Transportation Planning

Michael Baker, Jr., Inc.  
801 Cromwell Park Drive, Suite 110  
Glen Burnie, MD 21061

Dear Mr. Thomas:

This letter transmits the following data in response to your letter request of April 19, 2004 and discussions with Mr. G. Toni Giardini of my staff:

1. Draft highway and transit networks, input, control, support and TP+ script files and software to run the demographic sub-models and accomplish trip generation, trip distribution, mode choice and trip assignment using the COG/TPB Travel Forecasting Model Version 2.1D (**DRAFT # 18**), for three time periods for the simulation years of 1994, 2000 and 2030. The data are contained on a CD-R labeled "CGV21D\_18X".

**Please note that generic file names are used in these model runs, so it is recommended that data for each simulation year be kept in separate directories.**

2. Copies of the following documents:
  - a. A memorandum to the files by Ron Milone, dated June 15, 2004, titled "*Transmittal of Version 2.1D (18)(DRAFT#18) Model*".
  - b. A memorandum to the Travel Forecasting Subcommittee by Robert E. Griffiths, dated May 21, 2004, titled "*Travel Model Employment Data Adjustment Factors*".

Questions concerning these data should be directed to members of my staff as follows: For questions concerning Version 2.1 D (DRAFT # 18), please contact Mr. Ron Milone at (202) 962-3283. For questions concerning the employment data adjustment factors, please contact Mr. Robert E. Griffiths at (202) 962-3280.

The years 2015 and 2025 were not simulated in Version 2.1D ( DRAFT #18). The only

Mr. William W. Thomas

June 16, 2004

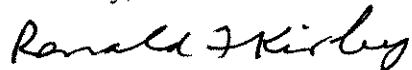
Page 2

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presently available simulations for these two years are those simulated as part of the Air Quality Conformity regional modeling process using the COG/TPB Travel Forecasting Model Version 2.1/TP+, Release C, as adopted in December, 2003. These two years will again be simulated in the 2004 Air Quality Conformity regional modeling process currently underway.

Note that refinement of the Version2.1D Regional Travel Model continues as described in the May 21, 2004, meeting of the Travel Forecasting Subcommittee.

Sincerely,



Ronald F. Kirby  
Director, Department of  
Transportation Planning

cc: Mike Clifford, COG/DTP  
Ron Milone, COG/DTP

MBAKER1.ltr



**Michael Baker Jr., Inc.**

*A Unit of Michael Baker Corporation*

801 Cromwell Park Drive, Suite 110  
Glen Burnie, Maryland 21061

(410) 424-2210  
FAX (410) 424-2300

April 19, 2004

Mr. Ron Kirby  
Director, Transportation Planning  
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
777 North Capitol Street, NE, Suite 300  
Washington, D.C. 20002-4239

Subject: Data Request

Dear Mr. Kirby:

Michael Baker, Jr., Inc. is proceeding, under direction of the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to evaluate several transportation planning alternatives. The project team has decided to base its demand estimates on the draft version of the "2.1D" model set produced by your organization. We request a copy of all needed script files, associated data, and documentation to execute the Year 2015 and 2025 model sets.

Thank you in advance for your time and attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

MICHAEL BAKER JR., INC.

William W. Thomas, III  
Staff/Technical Manager, Transportation Planning







District of Columbia  
Bowie  
College Park  
Frederick County  
Gaithersburg  
Greenbelt  
Montgomery County  
Prince George's County  
Rockville  
Takoma Park  
Alexandria  
Arlington County  
Fairfax  
Fairfax County  
Falls Church  
Loudoun County  
Manassas  
Manassas Park  
Prince William County

June 15, 2004

Mr. Allen Muchnick  
1030 S. Barton St #274  
Arlington VA 22204

Dear Mr. Muchnick:

In response to your inquiry, I am enclosing information regarding high occupancy vehicle (HOV) restrictions on I-66 inside the Beltway.

The Fiscal Year 1999 U.S. Department of Transportation Appropriations included the following language in reference to I-66 inside the Beltway:

*SEC. 361. Hereafter, the Commonwealth of Virginia shall have the exclusive authority to determine the high-occupancy vehicle restrictions applicable to Interstate Highway 66 in Virginia.*

In a memorandum of December 22, 1998, which is attached, the Federal Highway Administration provided a legal interpretation that this legislative provision took precedence over the Coleman Decision of 1977, which approved construction of I-66 inside the Beltway, and "other laws, regulations or agreements that would restrict the Commonwealth of Virginia's sole authority." The FHWA further found that the provision would apply to the current and future fiscal years.

The Fiscal Year 2000 U.S. Department of Transportation Appropriations further clarified this provision:

*SEC. 357. (a) Notwithstanding the January 4, 1977, decision of the Secretary of Transportation that approved construction of Interstate Highway 66 between the Capital Beltway and Rosslyn, Virginia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, in accordance with existing Federal and State law, shall hereafter have authority for operation, maintenance, and construction of Interstate Route 66 between Rosslyn and the Capital Beltway, except as noted in paragraph (b).*

*(b) The conditions in the Secretary's January 4, 1997 decision, that exclude heavy duty trucks and permit use by vehicles bound to or from Washington Dulles International Airport in the peak direction during peak hours, shall remain in effect.*

Mr. Muchnick  
June 15, 2004  
Page 2

On April 17, 1996, the TPB approved Resolution 35-96 (copy attached), which approved HOV-2 for I-66 inside the Beltway with several conditions, including the stipulation that HOV-3 would be reestablished if specified thresholds were exceeded. These conditions were negated by the federal appropriations language referenced above.

COG/TPB staff produced Regional HOV Facilities Monitoring Reports for 1997, 1998, 1999. Since that time, COG/TPB staff has collected annual data on HOV facilities in Virginia, and transmitted these data to the Virginia Department of Transportation for review and analysis.

I hope you find this information helpful. Please do not hesitate to contact me or my staff if you have any additional questions.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ronald F. Kirby".

Ronald F. Kirby  
Director, Department of  
Transportation Planning



U.S. Department  
of Transportation

Federal Highway  
Administration

Virginia Division

February 1, 1999

The Dale Building, Suite 205  
1504 Santa Rosa Road  
Richmond, Virginia 23229

Provision in FY 99 USDOT  
Appropriations Act on  
I-66 HOV in Virginia

Mr. Ronald F. Kirby  
Department of Transportation Planning  
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
777 North Capitol Street, N.E. Suite 300  
Washington, D.C. 20002-4239

Dear Mr. Kirby:

My purpose for this letter is to provide some clarification of Section 361 in the Fiscal Year 1999 USDOT Appropriation Act, which involves the high occupancy vehicle (HOV) restrictions on Interstate 66 in Virginia. Because of the Transportation Planning Board's past interest and involvement in the I-66 HOV lanes, we felt it was important to provide this information.

Basically, Section 361 states, 'Hereafter, the Commonwealth of Virginia shall have the exclusive authority to determine the HOV restrictions applicable to I-66 in Virginia.' This may seem like a simple statement, but because of the 1977 Coleman Decision and the history of HOV restrictions on I-66 in Northern Virginia, we sought a legal interpretation within the FHWA, as well as, the answers to a number of questions. Attached for your reference is a copy of the response we received.

Please note that Virginia now has the authority, without FHWA's involvement, to determine in the current fiscal year and in future fiscal years, all operational restrictions relative to the HOV lanes on all portions of I-66. In particular, the restrictions and conditions referenced in an October 28, 1996, letter and attachment to VDOT Commissioner David Gehr, are no longer applicable. FHWA's concurrence in changes to the HOV restrictions is no longer needed.

If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Thomas Jennings at (804) 281-5107.

Sincerely yours,

Roberto Fonseca-Martinez  
Division Administrator

Thomas A. Jennings  
Transportation Management Engineer

Attachment





# Memorandum

U.S. Department  
of Transportation  
  
Federal Highway  
Administration

Subject: Virginia I-66 HOV Restrictions  
Date: December 22, 1998

From: James W. Scouten, Assistant Chief Counsel, Office  
of the Chief Counsel at Baltimore, MD  
Reply To: HCC-ERC  
Att of:

To: Mr. Roberto Fonseca-Martinez, Division  
Administrator, Virginia Division Office, Richmond,  
Virginia

In your memorandum of December 16, 1998, you have requested a legal interpretation of the provisions of Section 361 of the FY-99 USDOT Appropriations Act. You note that: this provision seems like a simple statement, but it becomes somewhat complicated when one considers the history of high occupancy vehicle (HOV) restrictions on I-66, including the 1977 Coleman Decision and the more recent approval for HOV-2 on I-66 inside the Capital Beltway.

You are correct that this provision is simple and straightforward. It is clear from the language that congress intended that the "exclusive", i.e., the absolute, complete and sole authority to determine all operational restrictions relative to HOV lanes on all portions of route I-66 within Virginia, should rest in the hands of the Commonwealth. It is clear from this language that congress negated any of the provisions of the 1977 Coleman Decision, and the provisions of any other laws, regulations or agreements that would restrict the Commonwealth of Virginia's sole authority.

The answers to your other specific questions are as follows:

**Question 1:** The major question is does this provision take precedence over the Coleman Decision and other USDOT determinations on the HOV restrictions on I-66? Thus, can Virginia make changes to the HOV operations without USDOT/FHWA approval or action, as required in the past? Can they make changes to the restrictions without following the coordination/approval process outlined in the Coleman Decision, which involves the USDOT, The Transportation Planning Board (TPB), and the metropolitan transit authority?

**Answer 1:** Yes to all of the above.

**Question 2:** Can Virginia determine the HOV occupancy level (HOV-2, HOV-3, or HOV-4) without any approval or action on

USDOT/FHWA's part?

**Answer 2:** Yes.

**Question 3:** Can Virginia establish the hours of HOV operation, whether it is peak hour or longer?

**Answer 3:** Yes.

**Question 4:** Can Virginia determine the type of vehicles allowed during the HOV period without our involvement? For instance, could Virginia decide that they want to now exclude single vehicle occupants bound to or from Dulles?

**Answer 4:** Yes to all of the above.

**Question 5:** Could Virginia decide to only have 1 lane HOV and regular traffic on the other lane, instead of having only HOV traffic in both lanes during the peak period?

**Answer 5:** Yes.

**Question 6:** Could Virginia make HOV in both directions during the peak periods?

**Answer 6:** Yes.

**Question 7:** In addition to the above, there is a current agreement between Virginia and USDOT concerning the conditions under which the facility could operate as HOV-2. Are these conditions no longer valid as far as USDOT's involvement? For instance, are the conditions outlined in the October 24, 1996, memorandum from the FHWA Administrator to Regional Administrator Dave Gendell no longer valid? Would this include the threshold level for changing from HOV-2 to HOV-3?

**Answer 7:** Yes to all of the above.

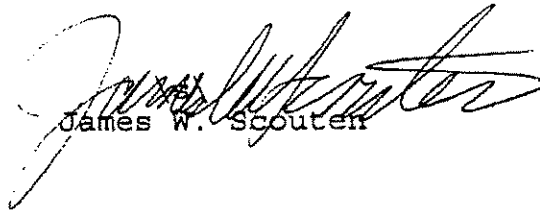
**Question 8:** The conditions referred to in #7 also involve agreements between Virginia and the metropolitan transit authority and TPB. Are we no longer involved in those agreements, and is it left up to Virginia rather or not they want to fulfill their agreements with others?

**Answer 8:** Yes, with the proviso that Virginia must still comply with Federal-aid planning and air quality maintenance requirements.

**Question 9:** As a final issue, we recognize that air quality was a concern with the changes from HOV-3 to HOV-2. We assume that no action with respect to conformity would be necessary by Virginia or the region prior to changing the HOV restrictions. Is that correct?

**Answer:** The Commonwealth must still comply with federal air quality conformity legislation and regulations. It may be that changes to the HOV restrictions, for which the Commonwealth now possesses exclusive authority, would have to be off-set by changes in the regional plan.

We hope that the above answers your request. Please feel free to contact my office with any further questions.



James W. Scouter







U.S. Department  
of Transportation

Virginia Division

The Dale Building, Suite 203  
1504 Santa Rosa Road  
Richmond, Virginia 23229

Federal Highway  
Administration

May 13, 1999

Provision in FY 99 USDOT  
Appropriations Act on  
I-66 HOV in Virginia

Mr. Ronald F. Kirby  
Department of Transportation Planning  
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
777 North Capitol Street, N.E. Suite 300  
Washington, D.C. 20002-4239

Dear Mr. Kirby:

This letter is to provide a follow-up and clarification to our February 1 letter and legal interpretation concerning Section 361 in the Fiscal Year 1999 USDOT Appropriation Act, which involves the high occupancy vehicle (HOV) restrictions on I-66 in Virginia. In the legal interpretation, we had indicated that Virginia now has the authority to determine all operational restrictions relative to the HOV lanes on all portions of I-66.

In a recent letter to the FHWA Chief Counsel in Washington, D.C., the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority asked for a clarification. Basically, they questioned whether Section 361 intended to allow Virginia the ability to exclude Dulles Airport traffic during the HOV period. We have reviewed this concern and concluded that the airport traffic should remain covered by the Coleman Decision. Thus, we do not consider Section 361 to apply to the use of I-66 by traffic bound to and from Dulles Airport, and Virginia does not have the authority to exclude it. Attached for your reference are copies of the relevant correspondence.

This qualifies our previous view on this subject, and we hope clarifies our view of Section 361. Because of the Transportation Planning Board's past interest and involvement in the I-66 HOV lanes, we wanted to provide you this information. If you have any questions, please contact Mr. Thomas Jennings at (804) 775-3357.

Sincerely yours,

Roberto Fonseca-Martinez  
Division Administrator

Thomas A. Jennings  
Transportation Management Engineer

Attachments



## ITEM 6

April 17, 1996

Approval of Amendments to the Constrained Long Range Plan and FY96-01 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to continue HOV-2 conditions on I-66 inside of the Capital Beltway

### **Staff**

**Recommendation:** Adopt resolution R35-96 to amend the CLRP and FY96-01 TIP to continue HOV-2 conditions on I-66 inside the Capital Beltway.

**Issues:** None

**Background:** At its February 21 meeting, the TPB provided public notice of its intention to amend the CLRP and FY96-01 TIP at its April 17, 1996 meeting to continue HOV-2 conditions on I-66 inside the Capital Beltway. The Board will be briefed on the comments received to date from the public and through the interagency consultation procedures.



**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS  
NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING BOARD  
777 North Capitol Street, N.E.  
Washington, D.C. 20002-4201**

**RESOLUTION ON CONTINUED HOV-2 OPERATIONS ON I-66  
INSIDE THE CAPITAL BELTWAY**

**WHEREAS**, the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) has been designated by the Governors of Maryland and Virginia and the Mayor of the District of Columbia as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Washington Metropolitan Area; and

**WHEREAS**, U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Coleman's decision on Interstate Highway 66, Fairfax and Arlington Counties, dated January 5, 1977, approved as one of the conditions of a Federal grant in aid contract (Attachment A, page 9):

"3. Restrict the use of the highway lanes in the peak direction, during the peak hours, to buses, carpools of four or more persons, emergency vehicles, and vehicles bound to or from Dulles Airport. These restrictions can be removed by VDH&T or the Commonwealth of Virginia,, only with the concurrence of the U.S. Secretary of Transportation, the authorized transportation planning body for the metropolitan Washington area, and WMATA. In addition, the restrictions can be removed by the U.S. Secretary of Transportation after consultation with these same parties. In either case, all environmental requirements would have to be met before the restrictions could be removed;"

**WHEREAS**, Public Law 103-331 provided for a one-year demonstration of high-occupancy vehicle restrictions of two or more persons per vehicle (HOV-2) on I-66 inside the Capital Beltway, and this demonstration was initiated on March 1, 1995; and

**WHEREAS**, the TPB Technical Committee has been briefed by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) on the Final Report: "I-66 HOV-2 Demonstration Project," dated February 14, 1996, key sections of which are included as Attachment B, and based on that briefing the Technical Committee has recommended the continuation of HOV-2 on I-66 inside the Beltway if the following items are addressed:

- measures are committed that will mitigate the estimated increases in mobile source emissions as needed to meet air quality conformity requirements;

- the compensation of WMATA for rail revenue losses is adequately addressed;
- the enhanced enforcement of HOV-2 will be continued;
- an annual evaluation of HOV-2 will be made;
- the volume threshold at which I-66 inside the Beltway will be returned to HOV-3 will be established at 1950 vehicles per hour per lane during the AM or PM restricted periods. This threshold must be exceeded for two consecutive weeks; and
- the traffic volumes on the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge will be represented and analyzed in the Demonstration Report and included in the annual evaluations.

**WHEREAS**, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) has made commitments which address the items identified by the TPB Technical Committee, including the implementation of a bus fare reduction program in Northern Virginia, together with continuation of the enhanced police enforcement program on I-66 within the Capital Beltway, which will offset any emissions increases or reductions in Metrorail revenues which may result from the continuation of the HOV-2 provisions (Attachment C);

**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) amends the Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) and the FY96-01 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to continue HOV-2 conditions on I-66 inside the Capital Beltway, in accordance with the following provisions:

- (1) the stipulations included in the Recommendations section of the Demonstration Report prepared by the Virginia Department of Transportation (Attachment B);
- (2) the implementation of the bus fare reduction program referenced in Attachments C & D to this resolution, and the continuation of this bus fare reduction program until such time as I-66 reverts to HOV-3;
- (3) A ceiling of 1950 vehicles per lane per hour as measured at the agreed upon cut-lines, with such measurements to take place quarterly according to generally accepted standards. Any reinstatement of the HOV-3 rules would take place no more than two months from the date of the last measurements demonstrating that volumes on the facility are exceeding the ceiling;
- (4) An annual review and report to the TPB of the performance of the HOV facility, including the hours of operation of HOV-2 conditions;
- (5) A commitment by the Governor and/or designee that the Commonwealth of Virginia will pursue no policy changes to I-66 heretofore subject to the Coleman agreement process, except pursuant to that process;

- (6) Continued enforcement of HOV rules by Virginia State Police at the level maintained during the demonstration.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) recommends that WMATA and the Virginia Department of Transportation address Fairfax County's concerns and comments as follows:

1. The provision of any additional parking facilities in Fairfax County as part of making the I-66 HOV-2 program permanent or its continuation on a long-term basis shall be governed by all applicable County ordinances and regulations and shall be subject to approval by the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.
2. The implementation of strategies needed to continue the I-66 HOV-2 program shall not reduce or otherwise affect federal or state transportation funds available or allocated for transportation purposes to the localities in the Northern Virginia Construction District.
3. The implementation and pricing of additional parking facilities in Fairfax County shall be done pursuant to an agreement with the County that ensures that the financial integrity of County bonds that were sold to provide the existing parking structures at the Vienna and Huntington Metrorail station is not adversely affected.
4. The Commonwealth of Virginia shall provide \$808,000 in annual funding to implement the bus fare buydown program on selected Metrobus, Fairfax Connector, and City of Fairfax CUE Bus routes that serve existing Metrorail stations and continue such funding until such time as I-66 reverts to HOV-3.

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB) recommends that the HOV-2 provisions be continued on I-66 until all the actions required under Secretary Coleman's decision of January 5, 1977 are completed.





From: Allen J. Muchnick [<mailto:muchnick@capaccess.org>]

Sent: Sunday, June 13, 2004 1:26 AM  
To: Ron Kirby  
Subject: Fwd: TPB Resolution R35-96 on I-66 HOV-2

Dear Mr. Kirby and Mr. Farley,

In my May 19<sup>th</sup> statement to the TPB (pasted below), and in an email sent 5-18-04, I asked about the status of the April 17, 1996 TPB agreement that made HOV-2 permanent on I-66 for peak-direction traffic and that has evidently been disregarded for at least several years.

The 4-17-96 agreement had four stipulations: 1) a bus fare buydown program through which the Commonwealth would provide "\$808,000 in annual funding...until such time as I-66 reverts to HOV-3."; 2) enhanced enforcement of HOV rules by the state police "at the level maintained during the [HOV-2] demonstration project."; 3) an annual VDOT report to the TPB on HOV-2 performance and Roosevelt Bridge traffic volume, based on traffic measurements conducted every quarter; and 4) the prompt re-establishment of HOV-3 for I-66 inside the Beltway if specific speed or volume thresholds for the HOV lanes are exceeded for two consecutive weeks (Tuesday-Thursday) during the AM or PM peak periods.

To date, I have not received any written reply to my inquiry (which is also summarized in the minutes of the 5-19-04 TPB meeting). On June 10<sup>th</sup>, however, Mr. Kirby gave me a verbal explanation and promised that I will receive a written reply from TPB staff.

According to Mr. Kirby, a legislative rider that Rep. Frank Wolf inserted into a federal transportation appropriation in Sept. 1999 totally invalidated the 1-5-77 Decision of USDOT Secretary Coleman on I-66 inside the Beltway. The Arlington Coalition for Sensible Transportation and Arlington County, however, maintain that the Coleman Decision has not been abrogated. Moreover, I fail to see how Rep. Wolf's appropriations rider would invalidate any of the four stipulations of the 4-17-96 TPB agreement. As I recall, the intent of Rep. Wolf's rider was to "allow" the Commonwealth to "unilaterally" alter I-66 if approved by the CTB and otherwise conformed to federal laws and regulations, which include NEPA requirements and MPO approval. Moreover, how can this rider eliminate the Commonwealth's obligation to adequately enforce HOV requirements and to ensure that HOV lanes are not regularly and needlessly congested?

Since information on I-66 traffic and HOV performance are highly relevant to the I-66 mobility study that the TPB approved on 5-19-04, I ask that the raw data, summaries, analyses, and reports of I-66 traffic inside the Beltway be made available to the public.

Sincerely,

Allen Muchnick  
1030 S. Barton St #274  
Arlington VA 22204  
[muchnick@capaccess.org](mailto:muchnick@capaccess.org)  
703-271-0895

---

May 19, 2004 TPB Meeting

Remarks of Allen Muchnick, Virginia Bicycling Federation

Good afternoon. I'm Allen Muchnick, president of the Virginia Bicycling Federation, speaking on Agenda Item #8.

I-66 inside the Beltway is a key regional multi-modal travel corridor, although the freeway only opened in 1982, just 22 years ago. A feasibility study for effectively managing mobility in this corridor is long overdue. In fact, three years ago, in 2001, the TPB approved the scope of a \$5

million VDOT study of future alternatives for this corridor, yet for the next year and a half, VDOT failed to initiate that study.

MPOs and state highway agencies are legally required to develop and implement congestion management plans, yet I-66 has often been allowed to become unnecessarily congested through generally lax enforcement of HOV restrictions. For example, VDOT found a 68% HOV violation rate on eastbound I-66 at Sycamore St in 1995 and a 38% HOV violation rate just inside the Beltway in 2003.

Because I-66 is never congested when HOV is in effect, adding travel lanes is totally unnecessary. Moreover, narrowing the I-66 shoulders to squeeze in a third travel lane would only worsen congestion by impeding HOV enforcement, decreasing motorist safety, delaying the response to incidents, diverting trips from transit, and inducing more sprawl.

Eight years ago, the TPB adopted Resolution R35-96, to amend the CLRP and TIP to continue HOV-2 conditions on I-66 inside the Beltway after a one-year trial, with the following four agreements stipulated:

- 1) The Commonwealth of Virginia agreed to mitigate the estimated increase in mobile-source emissions and to compensate WMATA for rail revenue losses with "\$808,000 in annual funding to implement the bus fare buydown program on selected Metrobus, Fairfax Connector, and City of Fairfax CUE Bus routes that serve existing Metrorail stations and continue such funding until such time as I-66 reverts to HOV-3."
- 2) The Virginia State Police agreed to continue enhanced enforcement of HOV rules "at the level maintained during the [HOV-2] demonstration project."
- 3) VDOT agreed to evaluate and report to the TPB annually on the performance of HOV-2 and traffic volumes on the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge and to count I-66 HOV traffic quarterly.
- 4) VDOT agreed to re-establish HOV-3 on I-66 inside the Beltway within two months if specific speed or volume thresholds for the HOV lanes are exceeded for two consecutive weeks (Tuesday-Thursdays) during the AM or PM peak periods; i.e., average corridor speeds below 40 MPH or traffic volumes above 3,900/hr in the peak direction. VDOT had predicted that "the volume threshold will be met in two to four years."

What happened to these agreements? Were any invalidated by legislative or judicial action? If not, when and why did the bus fare buydown program end, the state police stop "enhanced enforcement" of HOV requirements, VDOT discontinue quarterly traffic counts and annual reports on HOV-2 performance, and/or VDOT abandon the speed and traffic-volume thresholds for restoring HOV-3 on I-66?

I request a summary of the quarterly traffic counts and speed data for the I-66 HOV lanes since 1996 to determine whether the traffic-volume or speed thresholds were in fact ever exceeded.

Thank you for your consideration.



May 20, 2004

Mr. Ronald Kirby  
Director of Transportation Planning  
Transportation Planning Board  
777 North Capitol Street, NE – Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20001

Dear Mr. Kirby: *Ron*

As promised in my letter to you at the end of February, we are transmitting the Proceedings for the January 9th Planning Session for the Regional Mobility Initiative. The Proceedings document includes a summary of the opening remarks and the two panel discussions on Transportation System Management and Transportation Demand Management that featured planning directors and transportation leaders from around the region. Remarks from the keynote address made by Thomas Downs, Executive Director and CEO of the ENO Transportation Foundation, are summarized as well.

The afternoon segment of the January 9th program covered the scope of work for the Regional Mobility Initiative and was intended to elicit feedback from participants. The Proceedings document reviews the goals and objectives, performance measures, Toolbox of Strategies, and priority corridors and activity centers that were discussed. Comments made by session participants, including those submitted in writing, have been compiled.

The Planning Session was an important first step to fostering collaborative partnerships between regional transportation providers to maximize efforts to provide quality service and information to the riding public. WMATA is advancing the Initiative by developing a draft project management plan and schedule. Important next steps include the following:

- On June 17th, we will convene a Technical Advisory Committee to begin developing a three-year Action Plan to continuously implement management strategies.
- On July 1st, we will brief the WMATA Board on the Regional Mobility Initiative in preparation for the first Senior Policy Steering Committee meeting.

**Washington  
Metropolitan Area  
Transit Authority**

600 Fifth Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20001  
202/962-1234

By Metrorail:  
Judiciary Square—Red Line  
Gallery Place-Chinatown—  
Red, Green and  
Yellow Lines  
By Metrobus:  
Routes D1, D3, D6, P6,  
70, 71, 80, X2

Page Two

- Subsequently, on July 9th, we want to convene a Senior Policy Steering Committee meeting to discuss the action plan. In particular, this group will focus on regional integration strategies, such as bus traffic signal priority, real time passenger information, multi-purpose smart cards, transit benefits and bus shelter maintenance strategies. We hope to choose a champion from the Steering Committee for each of the selected regional strategies and fold the selected strategies into the action plan.
- By August, we hope to have an Action Plan outlining strategies ready to be implemented in FY'05 - FY'07. This plan will identify deployable management strategies in select high priority corridors and on a region-wide basis.

Please feel free to contact Thomas Harrington, if you have questions about the Regional Mobility Initiative. He can be reached at (202) 962-2294 or via e-mail at [tkharrington@wmata.com](mailto:tkharrington@wmata.com).

Sincerely,



Edward L. Thomas  
Assistant General Manager  
Department of Planning and Strategic Programs



## Coalition for Smarter Growth

*Better Communities...Less Traffic*

May 19, 2004

Chairman Chris Zimmerman  
 Chair, Transportation Planning Board  
 Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
 777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300  
 Washington, DC 20002-4290

COUNTY BOARD OFFICE  
 RECEIVED  
 2004 MAY 24 A 11:18

Re: VDOT "techway" study

Dear Chairman Zimmerman Members of the TPB,

We are writing to you regarding the just released study of traffic crossing the American Legion Bridge. A new bridge is simply not justified by the data tabulated in this recent report, contrary to the impression created by the first paragraphs of the Washington Post story of May 11<sup>th</sup>, which relied in part on the representations made in the report.

Our initial review of the VDOT report indicates that the "U-shaped commutes" between middle and upper Montgomery County and the Dulles Corridor and Loudoun represent a very small percentage of Virginia and Maryland commuters. The report shows that just 342 Virginia vehicles traveled from the Dulles, Route 15, Route 28/7100, and I-66 corridors to Gaithersburg. No more than 1637 Maryland vehicles traveled from the entire I-270 corridor including Frederick to the I-66 and Dulles corridors and beyond (see attached "Review of VDOT Commissioned Study"). Please consider the attached review of the data as presented in the report tables.

The data hardly justifies what must be a \$1 billion+ project, with associated damage to historical sites, the environment, and communities. Neither is it justified in the face of Metro's \$1.5 billion in urgent funding needs for maintenance and ridership growth, and the TPB's resolution singling out Metro as a regional priority.

Thank you for your work in addressing regional transportation and land use issues.

Sincerely,

Stewart Schwartz  
 Executive Director

210213  
 CZ

1777 Church Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036  
 (202) 588-5570 fax: (202) 667-4491  
[www.smartergrowth.net](http://www.smartergrowth.net)



## Coalition for Smarter Growth

*Better Communities...Less Traffic*

### REVIEW OF VDOT TECHWAY STUDY MORNING COMMUTER TRAFFIC CROSSING AMERICAN LEGION BRIDGE - STUDY DATA SHOWS NO NEED FOR NEW BRIDGE -

#### At most 2000 Commuters Make U-Shaped Commute - No Justification for \$1 Billion+ Bridge

Proponents of a new Potomac River bridge crossing, the so-called "techway," have long claimed that "U-shaped commuters" are clogging the American Legion Bridge and that this justifies a new bridge to get them directly from homes to jobs in Montgomery and Fairfax/Loudoun.

Yet the new study shows that at most 2000 commuters out of 24,679 Maryland and Virginia cars counted are making what could be called a U-shaped commute:

- Just 342 vehicles travel from Virginia's Dulles Corridor, Route 7, Route 28/7100, Route 15, and I-66 to Gaithersburg (Table 3-3).
- Just 1637 Maryland vehicles from the I-270 Corridor (Montgomery from the Beltway out & Frederick) travel to the Dulles Corridor, Route 7 and I-66 (not including Tyson's Corner which is directly adjacent to the Beltway) (Table 3-6). The actual number is likely smaller if residents living in North Bethesda with nearby access to the Beltway are subtracted out.

So, the spin given to the Washington Post (May 11, 2004, B-1) by the report authors and VDOT, that "thousands of drivers make a horseshoe commute between the western suburbs of both states," is simply not true.

#### "Westbound" Commuters Are Not the Same as "U-Shaped Commuters" AND Study Authors and VDOT Inflated "Westbound" Numbers in the Writeup

While the study consultants reported a very accurate job of counting and matching commuters to zip codes of origin, the Executive Summary, Analysis, Findings and Maps were used to inflate the number of "westbound" commuters and to create a misleading impression of demand for a new bridge.<sup>1</sup> Citing the study, the Washington Post reported that, "Nearly two-thirds of Maryland commuters head west to jobs once they enter Virginia." Yet, most of those are coming from homes near the Beltway and inside the Beltway. They are not "U-Shaped Commuters." All percentages of vehicles originating to the west of the Beltway or having destinations west of the Beltway cited in the findings on pages 4-2 and 4-3 were inflated by the following:

- The report increases the numbers of "west" bound commuters by treating near-Beltway job center destinations like Tyson's Corner and Rock Spring/N. Bethesda as "western." These are adjacent to the Beltway and far from a potential new bridge crossing. Commuters going to

<sup>1</sup> Hint of bias toward inflating westbound numbers is found on p 2-3: "Budget considerations caused exclusion of several desirable data collection sites; decisions were guided by focus of analysis on likely destinations beyond the Beltway"

- these destinations would not benefit from a new crossing because they would be forced to join equally congested traffic headed inbound to these centers.<sup>2</sup>
- The report includes commuters originating in near-Beltway neighborhoods and locations inside the Beltway in the westbound percentages, but these are not, nor will they be, "U-shaped commuters." For example, included in the "western" destination totals by the study authors are residents of DC, Bethesda, College Park, Mclean, Arlington, Falls Church, and Alexandria and the report implies that someone driving from these neighborhoods out to a job in Reston would be a "U-shaped commuter," which they are not.
  - The report inflates the percentage of drivers assigned to "western" origins and destinations by moving the boundary between eastern and western farther to the east to Georgia Avenue. This increases the perceived percentage of vehicles going "west" up I-270 and decreases the percentage going east and inside the Beltway. It similarly increases the number of Marylanders originating "west" and outside the Beltway up I-270 and decreasing the number originating east of I-270 and inside the Beltway (see findings on pages 4-2 and 4-3). For example, someone driving from Kensington would be considered a "western" origin and by implication a "U-shaped commuter."
  - By deleting cameras on the mainline of 495 just south of I-66 (a camera location which would have been similar to the location on Maryland's mainline just past I-270 spur) and cameras at Virginia Route 50 e/w and Route 7 west (into Tyson's) the report reduces the total number of Maryland commuters counted and the number counted as "eastbound" to near Beltway and inside Beltway destinations. Both act to inflate the percentage of westbound commuters. For example, a Marylander going to the Fairview Park office park at Route 50 would not be counted in the eastern totals.
  - The Maps of zip codes shaded on both sides of the river creates the impression of demand to cross that does not exist according to the traffic counts. The report authors include an "Overall" finding on page 4-4 citing figure 3-7 to say that there is a "concentration of commuters around I-495 and along the western radial routes." That means little, because at most 2000 of these are the "U-shaped commuters."

**Conclusion:** The Washington Post reported, "But VDOT planners also acknowledged that the information could bolster arguments for building a bridge across the Potomac west of the Beltway..." To the contrary, the actual numbers in the study show that the majority of the commuters with origins outside the Beltway who cross the American Legion Bridge are going to near-Beltway job centers and to centers inside the Beltway, not to destinations across the river and far west of the Beltway. With at most 2000 commuters making the so-called "U-shaped commute," a \$1 billion+ new bridge and outer beltway segment cannot be justified.

Figure 2-1, the Site Location Map shows that the Beltway provides a straight line between major job centers at Tyson's Corner and North Bethesda. Given the large majority of vehicles traveling to these near-Beltway destinations and to destinations inside the Beltway, the report documents the need for more options along this straight line commute. These options range from carpooling, and potential conversion of lanes to HOT lanes to manage demand, to Purple Line circumferential transit. At the same time, other traffic data will likely show that commuters would also be helped by measures to address inward AND outward radial traffic -- using a mix of carpool, rail and bus transit, and links between development and transit. The report does not establish the need for a new bridge.

<sup>2</sup> Deletion of cameras for budgetary reasons meant that no cameras were provided to measure the exact number exiting at Democracy Blvd, Montrose Road, Falls Road, and Route 28.