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February 12, 2004

Mr. Richard Parsons
President
Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce
51 Monroe Street, Suite 1609
Rockville, MD 20850

Dear Mr. Parsons:

In your letter of January 30, 2004 to the Chairman of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), the Honorable Christopher Zimmerman, you note that "traffic forecast modeling for the ICC Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) will be conducted using a modified version of the TPB's Version 2 model." You indicate that you would appreciate being notified of the availability of information on the model and its use for the ICC study, and to receive this information as soon as it is released to the public.

At the January 23, 2004 meeting of the TPB Travel Forecasting Subcommittee, I reported that work on improvements to the Version 2.1C model is ongoing, with a staff goal of releasing the model improvements and results at the time that such results are presented for public review at the ICC public meetings, currently scheduled for late spring or early summer of 2004.

More recently, however, on February 11, 2004 the Maryland Department of Transportation submitted to the TPB two build corridors for the ICC, each with managed lanes and express bus service, to be included in the conformity analysis for the 2004 amendments to the Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) and the FY2005-2010 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). In order to include this project in the conformity analysis, TPB staff will be implementing improvements to the Version 2.1C model which address key features and impacts of the project. Accordingly, TPB staff plans to release for review and comment an initial Version 2.1D model which incorporates all of the improvements made to date to the adopted Version 2.1C model, as well as some additional improvements resulting from the first phase report of the TRB Review Committee. This release will occur at the March 19, 2004 meeting of the TPB Travel Forecasting Subcommittee. On that date a complete set of documentation will be available to all interested parties, along with full model set-ups, data inputs, and validation results.

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I wish to assure you that the TPB staff is implementing all of the viable improvements identified for the Version 2.1C model as quickly as practicable, and will be making the results of this work available for review and comment by all interested parties in the TPB process in a timely and convenient manner. TPB staff looks forward to receiving your comments and those of other interested parties on the new Version 2.1D model, beginning with its release on March 19, 2004, and continuing as work proceeds on the refinement and use of the model over the coming months.

Sincerely,



Ronald F. Kirby
Director, Department of
Transportation Planning