

# Compilation of Comments Received on the Project Submissions for Inclusion in the Air Quality Conformity Analysis of the Constrained Element of Visualize 2045 and the FY 2019-2024 TIP

## Draft project submissions for the Visualize 2045 Constrained Element

### Submitted by: A Business

*Rybeck, Rick* Washington, District of Columbia 20009

*Just Economics LLC*

Subject: Visualize 20145 - Public Comment

See attached document - page 11

### Submitted by: A Governmental Body

*Surovell, Scott* Mt. Vernon, Virginia 22121

*Virginia General Assembly Members*

Subject:

See attached document - page 14

*Hucker, Tom* Rockville, Maryland 20850

*Montgomery County Council*

Subject: Letter on Visualize 2045

See attached - page 15.

### Submitted by: A Non-profit Organization

*Grymes, Charlie* Prince William County, Virginia 0

*Prince William Conservation Alliance*

Subject: comments on project submissions to be included in the Air Quality Conformity Analysis for the constrained element of Visualize 2045

See attached. - page 17

*Schwartz, Stewart* Washington, District of Columbia 20002

*Coalition for Smarter Growth and partners*

Subject: Comments on draft CLRP

See attached sign-on letter by 8 organizations - page 19, additional supporting comments on page 41

*Polkey, Martha* Leesburg, Virginia 20176

*The Catoctin Coalition*

Subject: US 15 Widening from Battlefield Parkway to VA 661

The Catoctin Coalition strongly opposes the proposed project. 1. It circumvents an underway Loudoun County public process by local stakeholders for improvements to this road. The stakeholders group has not reached consensus. Requested analyses by stakeholders (of induced traffic, environmental and safety impacts) have not been conducted. 2. It does not in fact meet criteria to achieve Goal 4: Maximize operational effectiveness and safety, or Goal 5: Protect and enhance the environment, as stated. 3. It is being forwarded before the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors has voted to approve the Comprehensive Plan Amendment to change the designation of the road from a 2-lane local access rural arterial to a 4-lane median-divided controlled access rural arterial. 4. It circumvents an underway County process revising the comprehensive and transportation plans. I have attached a document that addresses, point by point, concerns with this transportation project. - page 40

### Submitted by: An Individual

Draft project submissions for the Visualize 2045 Constrained Element

*Pace, David*

*Woodbridge, Virginia 22192-1011*

Subject: US 301 WIDENING PROJECT

The Project "US 301 WIDENING From the Governor Harry Nice Bridge to US 50/I-595" is a good start, but it is insufficient to siphon East Coast through traffic from I-95/The Beltway. Through traffic will still be dissuaded from bypassing the Beltway route because US 301 will still be slowed by stoplights and community reduced speed limits. What is needed is to make US 301 a limited access highway with no stoplights and with full highway speed limits throughout. Compared to the proposed widening, adding limited access interchanges would be relatively cheap and would be far more effective than merely widening.

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*Slater, Tina*

*Silver Spring, Maryland 20910*

Subject: Comments/Concerns with draft Visualize 2045 Plan.

Attached please find my 2-page comment letter about the draft Visualize 2045 Plan. - page 23

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*Brenman, Marc*

*Kensington, Maryland 20895*

Subject: Comments on Visualize 2045 CLRP

See attached - page 25

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*Gustafson, Peter*

*Leesburg, Virginia 20176*

Subject: Route 15 Widening

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*Budiansky, Stephen*

*Leesburg, Virginia 20176*

Subject: comment on project submission for Visualize 2045: Rt 15

See attached - page 29

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*Logue, Patricia*

*Leesburg, Virginia 20176*

Subject: Route 15 Widening

Please see comments submitted to my (Selma Estates) Homeowners Association Stakeholder Committee Representative. The entire length of Route 15 between north of Leesburg to the Potomac River at the Point of Rocks Bridge needs to be considered in this project. This Project as described does not address the major congestion problem of daily traffic coming from Maryland and Pennsylvania by way of the Point of Rocks and Brunswick MD river crossings. It addresses northbound traffic leaving Leesburg only. Congestion relief and safety priorities for the entire length of Route 15 in Virginia north of Leesburg are listed in the attached document.

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*Milne, William*

*Lake Ridge, Virginia 22192*

Subject: I-95 Southbound Auxiliary Lane from VA 123 to VA 294

See attached document - page 30

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*Snow, Lucinda*

*Germantown, Maryland 20874*

Subject: Comments on Proposals in the Visualize 2045 Constrained Element

Here are my comments: \* Regarding the proposed I-270 Toll Lanes from I-495 to I-70/US 40. All these new toll lanes are a fad congestion relief. I-270 should not be widened in Montgomery County and south. Adding a lane in each direction north of Montgomery County may be in order. The real "Traffic Relief Plan" for this region comes from the Brunswick Line MARC Expansion Plan, which should be implemented before any widening is done on I-270. \* Regarding the proposed I-495 Toll Lanes from American Legion Bridge to Woodrow Wilson Bridge. Before anything is done on this plan the Purple Line should be completed and its impact assessed first. If the impacts from the Purple Line on congestion are positive, then extension of the Purple Line should be considered before any I-495 widening is

Draft project submissions for the Visualize 2045 Constrained Element

considered. \* I can't comment on the other road proposals in MD, as I am not familiar with them. I do support the list of transit projects, that is where our major efforts need to go.

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*Boles, Margaret A.*

*Prince George's County, Maryland 0*

Subject: Comment on multiple topics

Document attached - page 31

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*Berger, Trent*

*Clifton, Virginia 20124*

Subject:

I strongly support the following project: 1) Adding HOT lanes on I-495 in MD from the American Legion to Woodrow Wilson bridges. 2) Extending the HOT lanes in VA to the American Legion bridge. 3) Adding the auxiliary lane on I-95 in Woodbridge. 4) Adding HOT lanes on I-270. Unfortunately, a few projects that are much needed I do not see here. These include: 1) Adding a 4th lane on I-95 throughout ALL of Prince William County 2) Adding HOT lanes on I-95 between the Capital Beltway and exit 43 in Maryland.

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*Brune, David R.*

*Woodbridge, Virginia 22192*

Subject: I-95 Southbound Auxiliary Lane from VA 123 to VA 294

Absolutely essential improvement project BUT it should not stop at VA 294 – this improvement needs to continue to VA 234 which will make a much more meaningful impact. If at all possible – this needs to happen sooner than 2025. Ideally, the extension to VA294 would be completed by 2020 with further extension to VA 234 by 2022.

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*Finnegan, Eileen*

*Silver Spring, Maryland 20903*

Subject: Comments on Visualize 2045 Constrained Element: Missing New Project

See attached - page 32

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*Blankinship, Brian*

*Woodbridge, Virginia 0*

Subject: I-95 Southbound Auxiliary Lane Comment (in favor)

See attached - page 33

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*McCoy, Kristina*

*Woodbridge, Virginia 22192*

Subject: I-95 Southbound Auxiliary Lane Comment (in favor)

The Visualize 2045 plan includes a potential I-95 Southbound Auxiliary Lane. Since this region is the most congested traffic area in the US, the project should be moved up earlier than the 2028 expected completion date. There is rarely a time day or night that this area is not congested. This is a safety hazard as the area loses a lane and effectively loses two lanes as traffic from Lorton/Rte-1/Ft. Belvoir merge from what becomes the Rte-123 merge lane. The effective loss of two lanes slows commuters and through traffic to a halt creating a dangerous mix of widely differing approach speeds. The constant traffic jam also increases pollution of both the air and the water below the bridge (Occoquan, a Chesapeake Bay tributary). Additionally it impacts the dynamic activity centers in the commercial realm, the DC commuter bedroom communities, and museums (Quantico Marine Corps Museum and pending American Military History). Thank you for this opportunity to comment. Regards

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*Chisholm, Kevin*

*Arlington, Virginia 0*

Subject: Visualize 2045 Comment

Funding (near term and long term) heavily favors (1) automobile usage and (2) suburban projects or projects for citizens outside the beltway. Very little funding is projected to be used to encourage or support non-automotive transportation.

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*Scheufler, Mark*

*Manassas, Virginia 20111*

Subject: Draft project submissions for the Visualize 2045 Constrained Element - "I-95 Southbound Widening from VA 123 to VA 294"

Draft project submissions for the Visualize 2045 Constrained Element

*Ausema, John*

*Greenbelt, Maryland 20770*

Subject: new projects

I have comments regarding several of the projects on the long range plan: 1 - For widening MD 201, this project should include a separated bike/ped path that also continues along the existing multi-lane section of road between Cherrywood Ln and Crescent Rd. Improvements to the Sunnyside Rd bridge over Indian Creek and the Power Mill road bridge over the RR tracks should be considered as part of the project, with enhanced bike/ped facilities 2 - Any widening of route 301 should include provision for a future transit way (rail or BRT) of some kind. 3 - I strongly support the BRT routes in Montgomery County and the bike lanes in DC 4 - For the proposed toll lanes in MD, the priority should be for re-building the American Legion Bridge and creating toll lanes from there to the 270 split and north along 270.

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## Other Regional Transportation Issue

### Submitted by: A Non-profit Organization

*Cameron, Diane*

*Kensington, Maryland 20895*

*Conservation Montgomery*

Subject: Thank you for voting NO on Outer Beltway Bridge.

As a member of the Board of Conservation Montgomery, and as a member & former staffer of Audubon Naturalist Society, I'm writing to thank the Board for voting NO on the proposed Outer Beltway Bridge. And, thank you for voting YES on improved funding for transit and bus service in our region.

### Submitted by: An Individual

*Rushing, Kathryn*

*Silver Spring, Maryland 20904*

Subject: Proposed Outer Beltway

Please, no outer Beltway! Protect our region's drinking supply and water quality and do the right thing! Long-term solutions to traffic issues should never compromise public safety and the safety of our natural resources. Thank you.

*Lindholm, Martin*

*Bethesda, Maryland 20814*

Subject: Do not build an outer beltway bridge

We are lucky to live in a region that is seeing rapid growth, but we all know this presents its own set of challenges. It has been shown that roads lead to increased sprawl and more car trips. The outer beltway is just such an initiative, more likely to exacerbate our transportation issues in the long term than to solve them. It also poses serious environmental issues, not just in the loss of green space and habitats, but also a substantial risk to the water that 5 million area residents drink. It is time for our region to focus on a more sustainable model of growth, with higher density areas accessible by public transportation. Our public transportation desperately needs a more ambitious vision and a commitment that stretches across jurisdictions and past the next fiscal year. If you aim to support our growth while reducing congestion, please focus on opportunities like tying together Montgomery County with Tyson's Corner using public transportation, not another beltway.

*Bush, Elizabeth*

*Bethesda, Maryland 20816*

Subject: outer beltway, new bridge

I am NOT in favor of a new outer beltway/Potomac River crossing. There is too much chance of harming the entire region's water supply, which comes from the Potomac River, downstream of the proposed River crossing.

*Todd, Cindy*

*SILVER SPRING, Maryland 20904*

Subject: NO new bridge over the Potomac

No new bridge over the Potomac. This is STILL a bad idea and jeopardizes our water supply.

*Chevy Chase, Frank*

*Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815*

*ANS - Jones Mill Road*

Subject: Potomac River bridge

Thanks for not pursuing another bridge across the Potomac. Our water supply will be in much better shape if this bridge is not built.

*Cochran, Clayton*

*Kensington, Maryland 20895*

Subject: Proposed New Bridge for the Potomac River

I am writing as former Conservation Chair of the Potomac Chapter of the Appalachian Mountain Club, a current volunteer Trail Ranger for Montgomery County, and a volunteer with the Audubon Naturalist Society, and a nearly 50-year resident of Montgomery County. The LAST thing that Montgomery County needs is to again bridge the Potomac River. Catering to the business interests of Virginians (who have turned over their countryside to massive road systems

and dreadful sprawl), and to a few parochial Mont. Co. business interests will do great damage to the general public. We depend on good water from the Potomac. The massive traffic that will inundate our county via a new bridge will forever change the character of our area. Please do not allow this monstrosity to proceed and think of people, not special interests. Thank you, Clayton E. Cochran

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*Greene, Mitch*

*Silver Spring, Maryland 20901*

Subject: Thank you.

Thank you for not advancing the Northern Potomac bridge crossing. While I firmly believe that more ways across the Potomac are necessary to improve traffic flow in the area, building a whole new bridge--in a sensitive area!--is not the answer. Perhaps I live in a fantasy world but I love stacked highways and bridges. They're complicated, but they use the (mostly!) unused vertical space. Thank you again for keeping our drinking water safe.

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*Goldberg, Robert*

*Germantown, Maryland 20876-4422*

Subject: Outer Beltway - northern Potomac bridge crossing

See attached - page 39

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*Whitfield, Paula*

*Silver Spring, Maryland 20910*

Subject: strongly against outer beltway bridge.

I am strongly, vehemently opposed to the propose beltway bridge. Not only would it put our drinking water supply in danger it would continue to fragment and destroy habitat even more than it already has been in this area.. enough is enough.. NO to this bridge! Thank you, Paula

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*Liotta, Marilyn*

*Silver Spring, Maryland 20902*

Subject: Potomac bridges

No more bridges across the Potomac..think about pollution please. And fix the metro and it's parking facilities so it's appealing enough to transport more people.

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*Ambler, Anne*

*Silver Spring, Maryland 20902*

Subject: Thanks for prioritizing drinking water: no new highway bridge

Thank you for not including another highway crossing of the Potomac in the long range transportation plan. The focus should be on providing comprehensive mass transit as a large part of improving quality of life while preserving our forests and farms. Another bridge and the highway that would connect it would have seriously degraded our water supply, through both the construction itself and the development and traffic it would bring. Sincerely, Anne Ambler Silver Spring

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*Bartolomeo, Kathleen*

*Greenbelt, Maryland 20770*

Subject: Potomac Bridge

Thank you for protecting our water by not voting for the new Potomac Bridge. Sincerely, Kathy Bartolomeo

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*Goldberg, Robert*

*Germantown, Maryland 20876-4422*

Subject: Thank you for not recommending the additional bridge crossing of the Potomac River

Thank you for not recommending the additional bridge crossing of the Potomac River. Your decision will help to protect our drinking water, farms, and Agricultural Reserve.

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*Bailey, Joyce*

*Barnesville, Maryland 20838*

Subject: outer Beltway Bridge across the Potomac

Dear Planning Board Members, I am writing to encourage you to NOT PURSUE plans to build a second bridge across the Potomac River. This is not a viable solution to our areas transportation needs. It has been shown repeatedly that Other Regional Transportation Issue

building additional roads and bridges simply stimulates more far flung development and road congestion. We need to protect our drinking water and the source of that water is the Potomac River. Our River is already challenged by upstream pollution and at times, low flow rates due to longer periods of drought in our area brought on by Climate Change. We need to keep traffic away from the river so that any spills and accidents occurring on our roadways do not spill over into the Potomac River. We all know that despite our best efforts, accidents and spills do happen all too frequently. We need to protect our drinking water by protecting our River. We are counting on you to abandon any plans to build another bridge across the Potomac. Thank you.

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*Witherel, Jeff and Linda*

*unknown, District of Columbia 0*

Subject:

Is there any consideration in the plan for Metro down/up I 95 ILO HOV lanes?. I feel that by relying on Metro to/from Fredericksburg vice HOV we will be taking vehicles off of this congested avenue.

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*Suvarna, Shreenivas*

*CLARKSBURG, Maryland 20871*

Subject: Possible Idea to help reduce traffic congestion

Hello, I had an idea that might be a way to get people out of their cars and use public transportation more. A lot of people work in one state and live in another, but many of those do not deal with DC. The current transportation issue with the area is that it takes longer to commute using public transportation vs drive by a lot of time. In my case, I live in MD but work in N. VA and it would take over 2.5 hours to commute from the metro plus time getting to the Metro, where as if I drive, I can make the drive in 45 min on normal traffic. I would suggest that a second crossing be created, but let us be better about it and create something to get people out of their cars. Seeing this, I would suggest a Mall across the Potomac that would connect VA and MD together. There would be parking lots and buses from the location, but the only way to cross would be to walk. In addition the mall could have restaurants and stores to spur the economy. Regards, Seenu Suvarna

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*Lane, June B. and Edward S.*

*Loudoun County, Virginia 0*

Subject: Today's Vote on a New Potomac Bridge

Before the meeting today, I want to weigh in on the idea of a new Potomac Bridge. After having been active in local transportation issues for many years, my husband and I want to register our opposition to any further consideration of a bridge anywhere in Loudoun County. We have seen no actual scientific studies (as opposed to that commissioned by the group that wants the bridge based on either best practices in traffic management or the will of the people. Once people understand the issues involved, they realize that a new bridge anywhere in Loudoun (or perhaps anywhere other than supporting the upgrading of the American Legion Bridge) will cause more problems than it solves. The financial cost would be ghastly. If the bridge is supported by tolls, it would cost so much that people would avoid it. If it is supported by taxes, that expenditure will drain money from other, more effective projects. **DROP THE BRIDGE FROM THE PLANNING DOCUMENTS!!!**

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*Agarwal, Nitin*

*Gaithersburg, Maryland 20878*

Subject: Please oppose the proposed bridge on Potomac

The proposed northern Potomac bridge would create a new and unnecessary risk to this already fragile drinking water supply. Four of the region's drinking water intakes are downstream from the most frequently proposed northern bridge crossing, and an accident which leads to a major spill of gasoline or other toxic chemicals would directly threaten drinking water for the majority of the region's residents. If the intakes need to be shut down, we will have only 48 hours of drinking water supply without the Potomac. Accidents are common, and a study of data from 1991-2000 found that the likelihood of a spill in the event of a crash was 50% higher for hazardous materials than non-hazardous.

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*Sterling, Diana*

*Sterling, Virginia 20165*

Subject: Proposed northern Potomac bridge crossing

Hello, I'm writing to ask that you vote no to a new Potomac bridge in Loudoun county. It will generate new traffic, by as much as 85% according to one VDOT study. Loudoun will become a mainline for big rigs carrying freight. Route 28, Route 7 & the Dulles Toll Road will turn into a parking lot (again). A second crossing will divert taxpayer dollars from critically needed projects such as Metro and improvements to east/west corridors that could ease our already congested roadways. The bridge will bring more pollution, noise and lowered home values. It will destroy a large chunk of the

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Potomac River watershed, wetlands and our dwindling green spaces. A bridge in this location also threatens our drinking water supply. Please do not include such a crossing in the plan. sincerely, ~D Diana Bendit

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*BENJAMIN, KATHERINE*

*GARRETT PARK, Maryland 20896*

Subject: Potomac bridge crossing for outer beltway

No to the bridge. Protect our drinking water!

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*Schubert, Richard*

*Bethesda, Maryland 20817*

Subject: Outer beltway

Ladies and Gentlemen: Just because there is an undeveloped piece of land does not mean it needs to be destroyed. I strongly encourage you to REJECT any proposition that would lead to furtherance of an Outer Beltway. There are already more than enough roads traversing Montgomery County; enough trees have been cut; enough watersheds polluted; enough rocks blasted; enough concrete and asphalt poured. Try to take a longer view: someday your children and grandchildren will need to deal with the results of the destruction such a road would bring-- please don't do it. Thank you. Richard Schubert Bethesda MD

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*Henderson-O'Keefe, Parrie*

*Washington, District of Columbia 20010*

Subject: Additional Northern Potomac Bridge Crossing

DO NOT ADD AN ADDITIONAL BRIDGE ACROSS THE POTOMAC. We can not continue to pave every piece of precious land in service to the almighty automobile! Find alternatives that DISCOURAGE car use, not encourage it. When you start putting automobiles ahead of safe water and green spaces you've made a deal with the devil. You don't raise our region, you lower it. Our quality of life goes down, our safety goes down, and we destroy our environment. This is insane.

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*Padgett, Philip & Mary*

*Kensington, Maryland 20895*

Subject: No Outer Beltway Bridge

Dear Chairman, No, do not approve the building of an outer beltway bridge. This is a bad idea that only would exacerbate the bad decisions of the past. When we fly into Dulles Airport, we often approach first over Maryland. Looking down, we see a verdant land of balanced, smart growth. As soon as the plane crosses the Potomac into Virginia, we are over a World War I battlefield of rapacious development. When oh when did "Virginia Mother of Presidents" become "Virginia Panderer to Developers?" Enough is enough. Our region must find and take a better alternative path to the future. If a shock to the system is needed to start that, then saying no to an outer beltway bridge is the right action at the right time - now! Sincerely, Philip and Mary Padgett, Kensington, MD

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*Wayne, Barbara*

*Sterling, Virginia 20165*

Subject: Additional Northern Potomac River Crossing

In addition to promoting sprawl, increasing congestion and competing with the new metro stations in eastern Loudoun, the Northern Potomac Crossing project will present a clear threat to the region's drinking water supply. The Potomac River in this area is a sole source aquifer depended on by about five million of your neighbors. A bridge in the area will provide an opportunity for disaster which could result in leaving those millions without any drinkable water for an undetermined period of time. Without the river, we have 24-48 hours of drinking water. One spill amounting to one tanker truck could contaminate intakes for Fairfax, Montgomery, Prince Georges and Loudoun Counties, Rockville and the District. All this for a "developer's dream." Please ensure this project does NOT make it onto your plans in any form. It should never see the light of day.

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*Ambler, Anne*

*Silver Spring, Maryland 20902*

Subject: NO to another Potomac River crossing

I am a resident of Montgomery County who values what this area offers. That includes relatively clean air and water and a nationally recognized agricultural reserve that contributes greatly to preserving that clean air and water. Another bridge and highway do not compensate for their degradation. A major highway bridge increases the likelihood of a chemical spill that could contaminate our drinking water. Accidents are common, and a study of data from 1991-2000 found that

Other Regional Transportation Issue

the likelihood of a spill in the event of a crash was 50% higher for hazardous materials than non-hazardous. One tanker truck of hazardous material can contaminate an entire drinking water system. Remember Charleston? The amount equivalent to one tanker left 300,000 Charleston WV residents without water for over 10 days in 2014. Is this the future for the DC Metro area? Clearly Third World. Please focus on transit and stop planning more highways as a First World country that values its future should do.

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*Browne, Janice*

*Silver Spring, Maryland 20910*

Subject: Say NO to another Potomac bridge

The proposal to build another Potomac crossing is extremely ill-advised. As this area's primary source of drinking water, the risk of contamination -- both from construction and operation -- is simply too high. The many reasons NOT to do this are the same as the previous times this proposal was defeated. Please refer to the testimony of the Audubon Naturalist Society. <http://conservationblog.anshome.org/blog/action-alert-outer-beltway-bridge-still-threatens-our-drinking-water-supply-regional-vote-weds-12-20-17/> Thank you.

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*Brown, Doug*

*unknown, District of Columbia 0*

Subject:

Once again a new Potomac bridge crossing is being evaluated, and once again the studies show as they always do what a bad idea this is in so many different ways from air and water quality to increased traffic congestion and volume. Please remove this study from your list of projects for the future and focus on the ones that show they have the merit to be implemented, mass transit, land use and fixing existing roadways and bridges that are in poor shape and outdated.

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*Miller, Kristie*

*Washington, District of Columbia 20008*

Subject: Outer Beltway Bridge

Please do not even consider building this bridge. It could seriously imperil the DC area drinking water supply in the event of a toxic spill. As we have learned to our cost, such accidents are all but inevitable. Do not gamble with our community's health and safety!

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*Gravitz, Michael*

*Chevy Chase, Maryland 20815*

Subject: Opposing the outer bridge crossing of the Potomac

Dear Commission members, In an era of increasingly worse summer heat, bad air pollution that comes mostly from transportation sources, a need to protect Potomac River water intakes and Montgomery County's Ag Reserve, it seems silly to have to urge your committee to oppose this idea for another Potomac River crossing and highway. The State of Maryland is already losing money on the Intercounty Connector, we don't need an outer Beltway, and this proposed plan for another Potomac River crossing looks lined up to compound these mistakes. As a taxpayer in Montgomery County and Maryland, a breather of air, and supporter of the Ag Reserve, I wish to register my strong opposition to this idea. There are many, many alternatives to this idea --all of them a better use of resources and greener solutions. Mike Gravitz

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*Farb, Anna*

*Columbia, Maryland 21044*

Subject: Outer Beltway Bridge

The proposed northern Potomac bridge would create a new and unnecessary risk to this already fragile drinking water supply. Four of the region's drinking water intakes are downstream from the most frequently proposed northern bridge crossing, and an accident which leads to a major spill of gasoline or other toxic chemicals would directly threaten drinking water for the majority of the region's residents.

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*Keenan, Linda*

*Silver Spring, Maryland 20901*

Subject: Proposed North Potomac Bridge

I am writing to urge you to oppose any new bridges across the Potomac River. We should not be planning to accommodate more auto traffic and increase runoff, we should be planning projects that encourage other modes of transportation that do not increase impervious surfaces. I will urge all of my elected officials to oppose new bridges and Beltway widening. Thank you.

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*Pearce, Alison*

*Garrett Park, Maryland 20896*

Subject: Outer Beltway Bridge

I am opposed a new outer beltway bridge. A major highway bridge increases the likelihood of a chemical spill that could contaminate our drinking water. In 1997, 1 out of 10 trucks in the US was transporting hazardous material. About half of those carried flammable liquids, such as gasoline, diesel fuel, and fuel oil. Accidents are common, and a study of data from 1991-2000 found that the likelihood of a spill in the event of a crash was 50% higher for hazardous materials than non-hazardous. One tanker truck of hazardous material can contaminate an entire drinking water system. Water intakes for Fairfax County, the City of Rockville, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, and the District of Columbia are all downstream from the most likely crossing.

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## Comment on Visualize 2045

January 12, 2018

To the Transportation Planning Board & Staff:

The Washington Metropolitan Region (Region) suffers from very bad traffic congestion. Yet congestion arises from land use patterns as much as it arises from particular transportation facilities. This was recently demonstrated by modeling the "Balanced Land Use" scenario as part of the Long Range Plan Task Force. **Visualize 2045 largely fails to include regionally significant measures that can help achieve the balanced land use scenario.**

During the 1900s, many people believed that congestion was caused by land use density. It was assumed that spreading out homes and businesses through suburbanization would reduce density and congestion. Although there is generally more congestion in high-density places than in low-density places, it turns out that low- to medium-density, single-use development patterns (often referred to as "sprawl") create the most traffic congestion. In high-density places with diverse land uses, walking, biking, transit and other forms of shared transportation are often an option. In places characterized by sprawl, almost every activity outside the home requires a private vehicle trip.

Cars take up lots of space when parked – and even more space when moving (1 car-length between it and the next vehicle for every 10mph of speed). Additionally, while we tolerate homelessness for people, we do not tolerate "homelessness" for cars. Zoning and other development regulations often require that cars have dedicated parking spaces at home, at work and at shopping and entertainment venues. Thus, there are more than 2 dedicated parking spaces for each vehicle. Space dedicated to parking (much of it vacant much of the time) creates additional distance between trip origins and trip destinations. The space requirements associated with auto parking and travel combined with the necessity for using a car for almost every activity ensure that sprawl will generate worse traffic congestion than higher-density areas that permit walking, cycling, transit and other forms of shared transportation.

Many of the highway projects in the draft updated constrained long-range plan (Visualize 2045), seek to **accommodate sprawl by adding new lanes**. History shows that this approach encourages more sprawl development that will soon overwhelm the improved facilities. More balanced land use (placing houses, jobs and shops closer together in a mixed-use environment) performs better in terms of reducing congestion, energy consumption and pollution. **But key actions required to move toward more balanced land use are omitted from Visualize 2045.**

With the exception of a few tolled HOV lanes, most of the Region's roads and highways are free

to use regardless of the distance travelled and regardless of the level of congestion. This encourages many households and businesses to locate at the periphery of the Region, where land prices are lower. Unfortunately, lower land prices are offset by increasing traffic congestion, energy consumption and pollution. But these negative effects become apparent to households and businesses only indirectly. If these effects were more apparent directly, in terms of transportation and land use costs, many households and businesses would make different and more beneficial land use choices.

The jurisdictions that comprise the Region can help achieve the “balanced land use scenario” by adopting an integrated set of policies including the following:

- Parking (curbside and off-street) should be priced according to demand.
- All roadway travel should be priced according to distance and congestion. Additional surcharges can be added for heavy and/or heavily polluting vehicles. NOTE: Metrorail already charges users according to distance and congestion. **Distance- and congestion-based roadway prices encourage households and businesses to locate closer to daily activities and to the people that they regularly engage.**
- Development Impact Fees should be assessed only in those areas where infrastructure is lacking or where infrastructure would need to be expanded to accommodate new development. **This discourages sprawl development;**
- Property taxes should be transformed into public service access fees. This is accomplished by reducing the property tax rate applied to privately-created building values and increasing the tax rate applied to publicly-created land values.
  - The lower rate on building values makes buildings cheaper to construct, improve and maintain;
  - The higher rate on land values moderates land prices. It also creates an economic incentive to develop high-value land (typically infill sites near existing infrastructure). **Increased infill development reduces the demand for sprawl development.**
- Zoning regulations should be changed to:
  - Replace parking minimums with parking maximums in activity centers; and
  - Permit greater density and mixed-use development in tightly-defined activity centers.

To some people, the “balanced land use” scenario seems like an unattainable ideal. **Balanced land use is attainable.** Sprawl is not natural or inevitable. Sprawl has been (and is being) subsidized by incentives embedded in existing tax, regulatory and roadway pricing policies. Every jurisdiction within the Region can benefit from a comprehensive set of policy reforms that will reduce sprawl. Just Economics is prepared to assist the Region’s jurisdictions (individually or collectively) to implement these and other measures that can simultaneously:

- Enhance opportunities and incentives for walking, cycling, transit and other forms of shared transportation, thereby **reducing SOV trips and congestion;**
- Reduce rents for both housing and business space, enhancing housing affordability and job creation;
- Enhance infill development and thereby reduce demand for expensive infrastructure extensions (**reduced public expenditures**);



- Enhance land value return and recycling to make infrastructure financially self-sustaining to a greater degree than today (**enhanced public revenues**);
- Enhanced equity because roadway and transit users pay for public goods and services in proportion to the benefits that they receive or the costs that they impose upon others;
- Enhanced equity because landowners will pay in proportion to the public benefits that they receive.

The transportation departments of the District, Maryland and Virginia, the transportation staff at the Transportation Planning Board, and the Transportation Planning Board members themselves have played an important role in making the Washington Metropolitan Region one of the most prosperous and desirable metropolitan regions in the country. At one level, congestion is a symptom of success. Congestion arises from people going to work, to school, to shop and to visit friends and entertain themselves. Cities where the factories and stores have closed generally don't suffer from traffic congestion. But, while some congestion is unavoidable, it is like friction. And too much friction can cause the Region's economic machine to under-perform or even decline.

The Washington Metropolitan Region is at a pivotal moment. Climate change and urban sprawl did not happen in an instant. Neither can they be remedied in an instant. But a failure to take meaningful action now will have inevitable and unavoidable consequences in the future. TPB has a track record of stepping beyond its transportation silo and working with MWCOG's and the member jurisdictions' planning, environmental, housing and economic development departments to create a regional vision and to address some of the Region's most pressing challenges. Therefore TPB, MWCOG and the Region's jurisdictions can do this again. They can design and implement a "balanced land use" program as outlined above. The elements of this program have been used successfully in communities in the United States and around the world. If we are successful, our children and grandchildren will praise us for our courage and foresight. If we fail this challenge, they will curse us for timidity and ignorance. Let us act and be praiseworthy.

Thank you for considering my remarks. Please let me know if you have any questions or if I can provide any assistance regarding the design and implementation of a "balanced land use" approach to transportation solutions, affordable housing and sustainable, equitable prosperity.

Sincerely,



Rick Rybeck, Director



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA  
**GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF VIRGINIA**  
RICHMOND

January 13, 2018

Chairman Charles Allen  
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board  
777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20002-4239

RE: MCOG Draft Project List for Air Conformity Inputs

Dear Chairman Allen:

We are writing to submit public comment regarding the Metropolitan Council of Governments' Draft Project List of Air Conformity. The list includes the U.S. 1 Bus Rapid Transit System (Project 808) with a completion date of 2030.

I am not familiar with that completion date. The elected officials representing the U.S. 1 Corridor have endorsed completing the project as soon as possible and are endeavoring to complete it by 2022 or 2024 at the latest.

Additionally, consistent with the U.S. 1 Multimodal Alternative Analysis, we have also pledged to achieve a two-stop extension of the Yellow Line in the next 15 years. If the list is intended to cover project through 2045, then the Yellow Line Extension should likewise be included with a completion date no later than 2032.

We are elected officials who represent U.S. 1 and we have repeatedly stated that we want to construct this project much sooner than 2030. We have been committed to completing this project ever since we endorsed the Route One Multimodal Alternatives Study in October of 2014. Please change the expected completion date for Project 808 to 2022 and add the Yellow Line Extension.

Sincerely Yours,

Handwritten signature of Senator Scott A. Surovell.

Senator Scott A. Surovell  
36<sup>th</sup> District

Handwritten signature of Delegate Paul E. Krizek.

Delegate Paul E. Krizek  
44<sup>th</sup> District

CC: Chairman Sharon S. Bulova  
Supervisor Daniel G. Storck  
Supervisor Jeffrey C. McKay  
Mr. Thomas P. Biesadny



**MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL**  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

**TOM HUCKER**  
COUNCILMEMBER  
DISTRICT 5

January 13, 2018

Chairman Charles Allen  
National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board  
777 North Capitol Street NE, Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20002-4239

Dear Chairman Allen,

I urge you to reconsider the list of projects for inclusion in Visualize 2045 and to include bus rapid transit (BRT) on New Hampshire Avenue between the Colesville Park and Ride Lot (north of Randolph Road) south to Eastern Avenue (at the border with the District of Columbia). Ideally, with the support of the District's Mayor and Council, this route would continue south to the Fort Totten Metro station, connecting eastern Montgomery and northern Prince George's commuters with the Purple Line at the Takoma/Langley Station, and to the Red Line and Green Line at Fort Totten.

For the following reasons, New Hampshire Avenue BRT should be added to the Visualize 2045 plan:

- We know there is already very high demand for bus service in this corridor. The implementation of Metro K9 limited stop bus service (between FDA and Fort Totten) in 2013 resulted in a 25% increase in ridership, followed by a 61% increase in 2014. As of June, 2017 K9 ridership has leveled off but is still steadily strong; there was a 5% increase in 2017 with over 320,000 riders on this route in the Metro FY17 fiscal year.<sup>1</sup>
- There is very high existing residential density on New Hampshire Avenue that could support BRT. And significant new development is underway in Hillandale, all of which will rely heavily on transit.

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<sup>1</sup> Metrobus Monthly Ridership - June 2017:  
[https://www.wmata.com/initiatives/plans/upload/201706-JCC-June-2017-Preliminary-Ridership-Rpt\\_-07092017.pdf](https://www.wmata.com/initiatives/plans/upload/201706-JCC-June-2017-Preliminary-Ridership-Rpt_-07092017.pdf)

- It will connect Fort Totten and the Takoma-Langley Transit Center directly with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), campus, already the largest employer on the eastern side of Montgomery County, and one that is rapidly growing. According to the FDA Master Plan update, nearly 9,000 additional employees will be added at the FDA's White Oak campus on New Hampshire Avenue.
- The Montgomery County Council has identified BRT on New Hampshire Avenue as a priority transit project. In 2013, the Council approved a long term transit priorities plan, the Countywide Transit Corridors Functional Master Plan, which listed BRT on New Hampshire Avenue as a priority BRT project for study and eventual construction. Since then, we've invested further in BRT on New Hampshire Avenue; by allocating \$2 million in 2015 for a New Hampshire Avenue BRT study.
- The Takoma-Langley Crossroads is the highest trafficked transit hub outside of the reach of a Metro station and must continue to be a focus of mass transit enhancements.
- The cross-jurisdictional nature of the project would also make it eligible for funding from other local Maryland governments, the state of Maryland, the District of Columbia, and the federal government.

Thank you for including other important Montgomery County BRT corridors, like Randolph Road, Viers Mill Road, 355 and the Bethesda Transitway, in Visualize 2045. However, New Hampshire Avenue BRT should not be left behind. It has long been a stated priority for BRT expansion in Montgomery County BRT and should be reflected as such in Visualize 2045.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tom Hucker", with a stylized, cursive script.

Tom Hucker

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**From:** Charlie Grymes <cgrymes@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 13, 2018 5:50 PM  
**To:** TPBcomment  
**Cc:** Kim Hosen  
**Subject:** comments on project submissions to be included in the Air Quality Conformity Analysis for the constrained element of Visualize 2045

The Prince William Conservation Alliance supports improving mobility in our region. That includes upgrading our highway network, in addition to expanding the network of bike/pedestrian paths.

We need to expand the number of live-work-play communities, places where people can get “from here to there” without using a car.

The Prince William Conservation Alliance supports converting VRE from a rush hour commuter rail system into a two-way transit system. That will incentivize transit-oriented development, which will improve mobility and minimize costs to taxpayers over the long run.

We support the proposed Virginia Railway Express (VRE) Service Improvements on the Fredericksburg and Manassas lines (ConID 504 in the inputs for the Air Quality Conformity Analysis at [https://www.mwcog.org/assets/1/28/12202017 - Item 9 - Visualize 2045 Conformity Input Table.pdf](https://www.mwcog.org/assets/1/28/12202017_-_Item_9_-_Visualize_2045_Conformity_Input_Table.pdf)).

Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) on Route 1 (ConID 808) will also support mobility in a corridor where new housing and jobs should be concentrated.

The region also needs to increase the capacity for moving people in cars and buses.

Building interchanges on VA 234 Bypass (ConID 678 for Balls Ford Road, ConID 727 for Sudley Manor Drive, and ConID 739 for University Boulevard) are appropriate investments. They will help spur the growth planned at Innovation, and will smooth traffic flow between Route 28 and I-66.

The improved traffic flow resulting from those interchanges should eliminate the need to build a new Route 28 bypass around Manassas. The ongoing study (ConID 656) is considering Option 2B, but that would damage Bull Run Regional Park and affect historic sites associated with the First Battle of Manassas in 1861..

In contrast, proposals for building a Bi-County Parkway in Prince William-Loudoun counties (ConID 286) are a waste of money. That road would not improve safety, reduce traffic congestion, or facilitate transit-oriented development. It would simply encourage more sprawl.

ConID 853 appears to be mis-labeled. If that project involves new ramps located 1.5 miles west of Route 15, then the “University Boulevard Ramps” are on the other side of Haymarket from University Boulevard. Those ramps are an inappropriate inducement for extending suburban sprawl into the Rural Area of Prince William County.

Those ramps were never included in the public hearing for I-66 Outside the Beltway. When they were revealed along with a new parking lot and bridge over I-66 \*after\* the public involvement process, Prince William officials made their opposition clear - see <http://www.pwconserve.org/landuse/i66/main.html> for more details.

ConID 853 should be dropped. If ConID 785 (Heathcote Boulevard Extension) is associated with those ramps, then it too should be deleted.

The proposed I-66 flyover ramps .65 miles east of VA Bus 234 were also proposed after completion of the public involvement process. Their impact on Manassas Battlefield National Park is not appropriate. Those ramps (with no ConID number) should be deleted.

- Charlie Grymes  
Chair, Prince William Conservation Alliance  
[www.pwconserve.org](http://www.pwconserve.org)



Time does not permit us to comment on every project or to sign on all of our partners, so please accept the following comments as not being all inclusive:

- 1) We would like to see the dates of all transit projects moved up to as early an implementation year as possible.
- 2) We are strongly supportive of all bicycle infrastructure projects.
- 3) We are strongly supportive of all bus rapid transit projects that meet at least Gold Standard BRT for the maximum extent of their routes (i.e. minimal time in mixed-traffic, and maximum incorporation of features such as level-boarding, all-door boarding, off-board fare collection, real time information, dedicated lanes, and traffic signal priority.
- 4) We support Metrorail and bus investments.
- 5) We support deletion of the VRE extension to Haymarket in favor of more rail cars and more frequent service, station platform expansions throughout the system, and a station closer to Godwin Drive to be closer to the Innovation center.
- 6) We support the MARC investment plan and want the dates for implementation of MARC projects moved up.
- 7) We recommend that the Long Bridge, American Legion Bridge, and Rosslyn Metro tunnel be your top big-project investment focus, after the Metro capital rehabilitation. We do support extension of the Virginia HOT lanes across the American Legion Bridge to the I-270 spur to address the most significant need, provided that significant investment is made in express bus service including connecting Red Line and Silver Line job centers.
- 8) We strongly oppose the 76-mile Maryland Express Toll Lanes proposal for the Beltway and I-270 and we oppose conversion of the Baltimore-Washington Parkway to an expanded tolled interstate style highway. Unlike the Virginia HOT lanes, the Maryland proposal doesn't guarantee that HOV users will travel free, and doesn't use the revenues to fund express bus service or build park and ride lots for carpoolers and transit users. The tight right-of-way on a long stretch of 495 means massive tree loss. The 495 proposal ignores the fact that a big cause of outer loop traffic in the morning and inner loop traffic in the evening is the east-west jobs imbalance. Addressing that imbalance with Maryland incentive investments in TOD in eastern Montgomery and Prince George's, combined with a Purple Line extension to Virginia would be a more effective long-term solution. I-270 expansion to Frederick will fuel more sprawling development in the absence of better land use policies. A combination of land use, HOV and bus extension on I-270, MARC investment, and Route 355 BRT would be a more effective approach.
- 9) We continue to oppose inclusion of the Manassas Battlefield Bypass and BiCounty Parkway (Route 234 Extended North) in the CLRP. Both have been the source of broad opposition and have been shown not to address area congestion. Rather, they open up rural land to development, harm the historic battlefield, put the Bull Run watershed and Occoquan drinking water supply at risk, and add to traffic. Many of our organizations have offered a range of more



effective alternatives including roundabout near the battlefield, and the investment in I-66 and Route 28, along with VRE, meets most of the needs in the area.

- 10) Proposed expansion of Route 301 from Route 50 to the Henry Nice Bridge. We are concerned that effective alternatives to this expansion from 4 to 6 lanes throughout the corridor have not been studied, including land use, targeted interchange investments, and local parallel road networks that reduce demand in the key bottleneck areas of 301.
- 11) Another project may seem small but is symbolic of the problems we see with local and state transportation planning. This is the Loudoun/VDOT proposal to widen a 3.6 segment of Route 15 north of Leesburg -- a prelude to widening it all the way to the Potomac. However, the agencies never fairly studied a roundabout solution like the one proven successful at Route 50/Route 15 in Loudoun. Roundabouts with a two-lane Route 15 will move traffic better, make the road safer, and save money. Widening from two to four lanes while keeping traffic lights will mean continued traffic delays, and only lead to future proposals for costly interchanges. If this end-to-end expansion were to be built, VDOT will have spent hundreds of millions of dollars, fueled more sprawling development, and compromised another rural landscape. We recommend rejection of this project in the CLRP to allow for a thorough study of a roundabout and traffic calming alternative.

Thank you for consideration of our comments.

Sincerely,



Stewart Schwartz  
Executive Director  
Coalition for Smarter Growth

Caroline Taylor  
Executive Director  
Montgomery Countryside Alliance

John Sutherland  
President  
Arlington Coalition for Sensible Transportation

Christopher G. Miller  
President  
Piedmont Environmental Council

John Campagna  
Executive Director  
1000 Friends of Maryland

Lauren Greenberger  
President  
Sugarloaf Citizens Association

Trip Pollard  
Senior Attorney, Director Land and Community Program  
Southern Environmental Law Center

Charlie Grymes  
Chair  
Prince William Conservation Alliance



Don & Tina Slater  
402 Mansfield Road  
Silver Spring MD 20910-5515

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January 13, 2018

Chair Charles Allen  
Transportation Planning Board  
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments  
777 N. Capitol Street, Suite 300  
Washington, DC 20002

Re: Draft Visualize 2045 Long Range Plan

Dear Chair Allen and members of the Transportation Planning Board:

As a past member of the TPB's Citizens Advisory Committee, and a current member of Purple Line NOW!, Action Committee for Transit, and Montgomery County Sierra Club, I pay attention to transportation issues and especially want to see our region develop more transit, better land use, and fewer highways. I have listed below some items that I see as supporting/incorporating core findings of the TPB's Long Range Plan Task Force, while other items (also mentioned below) do not. Visualize 2045 should emphasize Balanced Land Use, Transportation Demand Management, Bus Rapid Transit, and Metro Core Capacity. The TPB should push the jurisdictional transportation planners to address climate change, the east-west economic divide, and access for all in their submissions.

In that regard, the number of highway and arterial road expansion projects across suburban Maryland (and Virginia) in this draft Visualize 2045 plan cause concern. Certainly a number are necessary but over the long term, if we don't change the pattern and design of development and achieve the TPB goals of focusing more growth in activity centers in a pedestrian and bicycle friendly, and transit-accessible environment, then we will not achieve a sustainable and effective transportation system. Smart growth advocates have long argued that the Long Range Plan should be focused on investing in TOD packages of local streets, bike/pedestrian and transit, along with rail and BRT connections between centers.

Here are some comments I hope you will consider:

- 1) Transit project dates should be moved up to as early an implementation year as possible.
- 2) Strongly support all bicycle infrastructure projects.
- 3) Support all bus rapid transit projects that meet at least Gold Standard BRT for the maximum extent of their routes (i.e. minimal time in mixed-traffic, and maximum incorporation of features such as level-boarding, all-door boarding, off-board fare collection, real time information, dedicated lanes, and traffic signal priority.
- 4) It is imperative that our region support Metrorail and bus investments.

5) The MARC investment plan is good; dates for implementation of MARC projects should be moved up. This, plus implementation of BRT on Rt. 355 in Montgomery County could go a long ways towards relieving current traffic congestion on I-270.

6) The Long Bridge, American Legion Bridge, and Rosslyn Metro tunnel should be the next top big-investment projects. Extending Virginia HOT lanes across the American Legion Bridge to the I270 spur will address the most significant need, provided that significant investment is made in express bus service including connecting Red Line and Silver Line job centers.

7) Please do not support the 76-mile Maryland Express Toll Lanes proposal for the 495/Beltway, I-270 and the conversion of Baltimore-Washington Parkway to an expanded tolled interstate style highway. Unlike the Virginia HOT lanes, the Maryland proposal doesn't guarantee that HOV users will travel free, and doesn't use the revenues to fund express bus service or build park and ride lots for carpoolers and transit users. The 495 proposal has an extremely tight ROW, would involve taking of many homes, massive tree loss and simply ignores the fact that a big cause of outer loop traffic in the a.m. and inner loop traffic in the p.m. is due to the east-west jobs imbalance. To address this, Maryland should incentivize investments in TOD in eastern Montgomery and Prince George's. This, combined with mobility relief provided by the upcoming Purple Line (which could be extended to Virginia), would be a more effective long-term solution. Note also that I-270 expansion to Frederick will fuel more sprawling development in the absence of better land use policies. A combination of land use, HOV and bus extension on I-270, MARC investment, and Route 355 BRT would be a more effective approach.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Sincerely,  
Tina Slater

From: Marc Brenman <[mbrenman001@comcast.net](mailto:mbrenman001@comcast.net)>

Sent: Thursday, January 11, 2018 10:47 PM

To: TPBcomment

Subject: Comments on Visualize 2045 CLRP

1. Tolling and pricing have economically regressive effects on low income people. If these solutions are pursued, means must be found to reduce the adverse effects on low income people.
2. Right now, all the North-South truck traffic on the East is forced onto the Beltway. An Outer Beltway is the obvious solution.
3. The current MetroRail system is hub and spokes. The ends of the spokes need to be connected.
4. Bus Rapid Transit is an obvious and low cost solution to many public transit commuter problems.
5. All timed traffic signals should be replaced with on demand signals. A huge amount of time and energy is wasted waiting for cross traffic that isn't there.
6. All "no right turn on red" rules should be ended.
7. Telecommuting and other virtual transportation initiatives should be encouraged.
8. Planning should include transportation on demand services such as Uber and Lyft.
9. Planning should include the imminent arrival of autonomous vehicles.
10. Metro needs a dedicated funding source.
11. There should be a direct light rail link to BWI, unlike the current convoluted system.

Marc Brenman

4917 Flanders Av.

Kensington, MD 20895

[mbrenman001@comcast.net](mailto:mbrenman001@comcast.net)

240-676-2436

Author of The Right to Transportation and Planning as if People Matter: Governing for Social Equity

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**From:** Peter Gustafson <peterggustafson@me.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 13, 2018 11:28 PM  
**To:** TPBcomment  
**Cc:** bos@loudoun.gov; Phyllis.Randall@loudoun.gov; Ralph.Buona@loudoun.gov; Suzanne.Volpe@loudoun.gov; Tony.Buffington@loudoun.gov; Ron.Meyer@loudoun.gov; Geary Higgins; Matt.Letourneau@loudoun.gov; Kristen Umstattd; Koran.Saines@loudoun.gov; Eugene.Scheel@loudoun.gov; Stacy Carey  
**Subject:** Route 15 Widening

Transportation Planning Board (TPB) member—

Thank you for serving our region on the all-important TPB. I realize that the important decisions facing you are not easy and often controversial. Many competing interests need to be considered before arriving at the best long-term solutions.

I am writing to you in response to **VDOT's/Loudoun County's** project submission to the Washington Council of Governments' (COG) TPB's *Visualize 2045: A Long-Range Transportation Plan for the Nation Capital Region*. The specific project name is: **Route 15 Widening**.

**Who am I?** My name is Peter G. Gustafson. My wife Mary and I live along US Route 15 near Lucketts in an old log home (circa 1800) overlooking the Potomac River Valley. We've lived and farmed here for 36 years. My formal education is in environmental science and biology. We're partners in a small graphic design business and give generously of our time to local community organizations. I've been a member of the Lucketts Ruritan Club since 1986. Presently, I'm serving at the pleasure of the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors as a citizen stakeholder representative on US Route 15 improvements for the Ruritan club. After two recent fatalities, I have also recently worked alongside several others to encourage VDOT to facilitate specific safety improvements to the road (Citizens for a Safer Route 15). The first phase of this work is now complete.

**The Problem:** As I'm sure you're aware, right now US Route 15 is a hot issue in Loudoun and amongst its many users: local residents, commuters, tourists, travelers and commercial traffic from adjoining jurisdictions and beyond. Emotions are running high within our local community—we're becoming increasingly polarized over congestion, safety and access. In spite of discussions going back 20 years or more, it has, of late, become a political 'pressure point' as daily backups—both morning and night—waste countless man-hours, disrupt people's schedules, use costly and finite fuel resources, lower air quality, decrease land values, and threaten people's safety. Local officials have responded by instructing staff and the VDOT to make progress. Now, you are, as a TPB member, also being asked to play a role—entrusted with helping to determine the future of our US Route 15—or James Monroe Highway as its sometimes called—in VDOT's project application: **Route 15 Widening**.

**The Context:** This is not just any ribbon of asphalt. As a transportation corridor, it predates history. Beginning as a game trail, then followed by native peoples tracking that game, it was to become a critical North-South route in colonial America and our new nation—far enough west for the rivers to be forded, and east of the mountains. This "Old Carolina Road", a.k.a. "Rogues Road" saw "Mad" Antony Wayne travel south to join Lafayette and later Robert E. Lee's Army of Northern Virginia headed north to invade Maryland. These events, among many others and the beautiful and historic homes situated along the route, have contributed to it being recognized Federally as part of the Journey Though Hallowed Ground ([www.hallowedground.org](http://www.hallowedground.org)), part of the Mosby Heritage Area ([www.mosbyheritagearea.org](http://www.mosbyheritagearea.org)), exclusively as the Catoctin Rural Historic District ([https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/registers/Counties/Loudoun/053-0012\\_Catoctin\\_Rural\\_Historic\\_District\\_1988\\_FINAL\\_Nomination.pdf](https://www.dhr.virginia.gov/registers/Counties/Loudoun/053-0012_Catoctin_Rural_Historic_District_1988_FINAL_Nomination.pdf)) and a Virginia Scenic Byway

<http://www.virginiadot.org/programs/prog-byways-sites.asp>). In addition, the area through which this road passes is unique geologically. To quote from a recent report prepared by the State\*:

(It is a) "...unique region of the Mid-Atlantic Piedmont that is underlain by the Leesburg Limestone Conglomerate of the Balls Bluff Formation. This unique rock has been locally called 'calico marble' or 'Potomac marble' but is actually a limestone conglomerate composed of limestone and other rock fragments from previously existing rock formations cemented together by calcium carbonate. The rocks were formed about 210 million years ago. The local names are derived from the rock's use as decorative stone for the columns in the U.S. Capitol Statuary Hall and for agricultural lime. This is a unique geological formation for the Piedmont. Car-sized to room-sized outcrops and boulders of the conglomerate are well exposed along and east of US Rt. 15..."

It is unique, sensitive and irreplaceable.

The unprecedented growth of the last several decades have led to the present situation of rush hour congestion and unsafe conditions. Adding to the problem are the limited alternatives with US Route 15 being sandwiched between the Potomac River on the East and Catoclin Mountain to the West. The stretch from Leesburg to the Maryland State Line also terminates at the only river crossing in the 42 miles north of the Cabin John Bridge on Interstate 495!

**An Attempt at a Solution:** The Loudoun County Board of Supervisors (BODS) has put forth a concerted effort to solving the problems of congestion and safety once and for all—all the while retaining local access and the road's significant scenic, cultural, historic assets through "context sensitive" improvements. A scheduled process was put in-place engaging a paid consult (Kimley-Horn), county staff, local elected officials, VDOT, and a Stakeholders Committee of local community representatives. Stakeholders were tasked at representing their respective communities and arriving at a consensus on solutions and phased implementation of improvements (<https://www.loudoun.gov/index.aspx?nid=3997>). Unfortunately, jumping ahead of this process, has been an amendment (CPAM) to the Countywide Transportation Plan (CTP) to 4-lane a significant portion of the road to Route 661 or Montresor Road ([www.loudoun.gov/documentcenter/view/130389](http://www.loudoun.gov/documentcenter/view/130389)). The CPAM was approved by the planning commission with little debate and remains unapproved by the County Board of Supervisors.

In the rush for a "fix", there has been insufficient and or inaccurate information, unsubstantiated solutions, and competing interests. The process involving citizen input, county staff, elected officials and VDOT working together needs to run its course. To summarize:

- A Loudoun County BOS-appointed citizens Stakeholder Committee is currently evaluating transportation improvements for this section of the roadway. The "Committee" was not informed of VDOT's application for advancement of this project—nor was it placed on the agenda at any stakeholder's meeting.
- This project has leapfrogged Loudoun County's comprehensive county land use and transportation planning processes currently being updated.
- VDOT has submitted this project prior to Loudoun County BOS' approval and vote scheduled for February 14, 2018.
- The citizens' Stakeholder Committee disproportionately represents several newer and larger suburban communities with Home Owner's Associations (HOAs) to the detriment of the larger proportion of rural residents. In addition, the Stakeholder Committee has yet to reach consensus on solutions
- Requested studies on alternates to 4-lanes of less expensive, intrusive, and safer congestion-reducing intersection treatments such as roundabouts have not been performed. Cost-benefit analyses of those solutions need to include not only construction cost but accident reduction, emissions and noise reduction, and improved fuel efficiency data.
- Widening a 3.6-mile portion of a scenic byway, which will *still* funnel traffic volumes onto an existing 2-lane highway. Five miles further north is the 2-lane Potomac River bridge into Maryland.
- The \$33 million project cost for 4-laning a 3.6-mile of highway that according to current induced-traffic estimates will be equally congested in 5 years without truly comprehensive transportation planning incorporating additional solutions and alternatives—a huge waste of scarce transportation dollars.

- Cost estimates are likely underestimated, given the karst geology of the project area, (with sinkholes that have opened up on Route 15 twice within the past decade) and at least one cave entrance within feet of the current two-lane highway just north of Whites Ferry Road.
- A large portion of the road is within floodplain.
- VDOT's "Route 15 Widening" is a flawed response to congestion and safety in response to political pressure. This application is premature given it's timing in the ongoing planning process. Exploration of alternatives, a comprehensive resource inventory and analysis and environmental safeguards have not been performed and remain insufficient and incomplete, contrary of the visionary planning necessary.
- The recent endorsement of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board's five initiatives found to have the most potential to improve the region's transportation system has not been considered.

At present, VDOT's application to 4-lane Route 15 from Battlefield Parkway to Montresor Road should be rejected. It would be premature to approve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

*\*Survey Report: Stumptown Vernal Woods Property. Loudoun County, Virginia; Gary P. Fleming and Karen D. Patterson, Vegetation Ecologists, Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation, Division of Natural Heritage, January 11, 2018*

**Peter G Gustafson**

42230 Black Walnut Lane, Leesburg, VA 20176

(h) 703 777-6368

(c) 571-239-7030

[petergustafson@me.com](mailto:petergustafson@me.com)



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**From:** STEPHEN BUDIANSKY <sbudiansky@me.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 13, 2018 8:23 PM  
**To:** TPBcomment  
**Subject:** comment on project submission for Visualize 2045: Rt 15

Dear Sirs:

As a resident of Loudoun County who relies upon Rt 15, I am writing to express my strong opposition to the Project Submission for widening 3.6 miles of Rt 15 north of Leesburg.

This is an ill-conceived and extraordinarily wasteful proposal that ignores the needs of residents, threatens the safety and access of local residents to Rt 15, imperils the scenic amenities that our rural businesses depend upon to attract vitally needed tourism revenue, and worst of all short-circuits existing processes to examine and recommend sensible solutions the problems of Rt 15.

It is premature to rush forward with a piecemeal project when an existing Stakeholders Committee appointed by Loudoun County has not even had a chance to study and weigh in on proposed solutions.

The assertions in this Project Submission that widening from 2 to 4 lanes a tiny segment of Rt 15 will improve Homeland Security, International Travel and Commerce, Economic Vitality, and Accessibility are frankly laughable — and reflect no study whatsoever.

I ask you to reject this slapped together proposal and allow serious studies to go ahead without premature action that make a mockery of any sensible process.

Stephen Budiansky  
Chapel Lane  
Leesburg, VA

A **forth lane** extending Southbound from the Occoquan Bridge/Route 123 Interchange to the Prince William Parkway will; (1) reduce traffic congestion on the Occoquan bridge where commuters transit southbound on I-95 from 4-lanes to 5-lanes (including the overpass from HWY-1) back to 3-lanes over a 1000' stretch of road as they approach and cross the Occoquan bridge, (2) better handle the southbound Route 123 traffic coming from Fairfax county onto I-95, and (3) improve the quality of life for residents in Lake Ridge and the Town of Occoquan.

I moved to Lake Ridge in 2003 (lived in Springfield during the "mixing bowl" project) and over the years watched VDOT begin work to widen I-95 over the Occoquan River and widen HWY 123 on the Occoquan bridge as valves for easing the I-95 traffic coming from Fairfax County. While VDOT might have eased traffic congestion in Fairfax County, their planning efforts appear to have merely pushed more of the congestion towards Prince William County's (one of the fastest growing counties in VA).

In addition, while the I-95 express lane project created more highway capacity, it did nothing to reduce congestion at two major gateways into Prince William County (PWC Parkway and HWY-123). Moreover, the agreement with TransUnion also revealed a lack of judgement and long-range planning by signing a contract that did not allow for I-95 expansion without additional costs to the taxpayer; *"... if there is the talk of widening I-95, Transurban gets the first crack at adding new lanes to Interstate 95, which it would operate as toll lanes. If the company opts not to add new lanes, VDOT may add additional lanes as a department project...such Additional Lanes will constitute a compensation event, according to a copy of the agreement McCord shared with Potomac Local."* <http://potomaclocal.com/2017/01/13/virginia-wont-consider-widening-i-95-blames-express-lanes/>

VDOT's own Environmental Assessment of the I-95 express lanes project concluded that, *"while the project would improve the overall situation, several currently failing road segments would remain at failing levels."* The Occoquan Bridge/HWY-123 sector on/near I-95 is one such example. It further concluded that *"after completion, the merge areas at the northern and southern ends of the HOT lanes would still operate at failing levels."* So, *"while this billion-dollar project was primarily aimed at moving commuters through the corridor...it did not address the need to connect emerging urban nodes in the two counties...or to the surrounding region."*

VDOT's mandate should be to address the Occoquan Bridge/HWY-123 interchange congestion by adding an additional lane leveraging better engineering designs. Please don't wait until 2028 to address the issue.

**Proposed bike lanes:**

This is a wonderful use of taxpayer funds, offering better safety for riders and more transit options for people going to and from work in the city. Plus, this will relieve motor vehicular traffic and pollution in the city. All noble goals! Thank you for this proposal.

**Toll lanes:**

While toll lanes sound like a good option, they seem to only benefit the private partner who will be taking the tolls. The roads will remain overcrowded until we can dedicate our transportation funds to enhance the public transit options such as: more multi-passenger commercial vans like some hotels have that could be used to transport workers to their jobs; more buses; more and better funding of the Metro system so that it could be cleaner, safer, and more appealing to more of the public. I use the Metro any time I go into the city and it is a much better option than driving into the city at any time of day for me, an over 70 woman.

**Widening 201:**

The widening of 201 is a complete waste of public transportation money and would increase the pollution in an area that never should have been developed anyway. It would only encourage the foolish future development of other lands that are far outside the reach of public transit by a county that should have known better than to develop this land for commercial and residential use. There were many other options for development or redevelopment available at the time, but the Prince George's County Counsel, Planning Board, and the County Executive were too shortsighted to realize or explore them. The citizens held meetings to Envision Prince George's County and proposed more development near public transportation, but our recommendations fell on deaf ears. This is a perfect example of poor planning and it should not be rewarded with a wider road to increase the pollution in that area of the county when public transit could be an excellent option and would create more jobs and increase private entrepreneurship as well.

**Georgia Ave.-16<sup>th</sup> St.:**

Are you kidding me, 7 or 8 lanes of traffic going through an already developed area? No, no, no, a thousand times NO, where are the planners that want to make a toll lane here to alleviate traffic; or the people who could devise a public transit option for this area? We do not need a major highway in the middle of residential dwellings just because too many people are not being trained to use public transit as an option, or no one is far sighted enough to develop a mini bus system to serve that area properly...

**Randolph Rd. BRT:**

Yes, this is a very good idea and it will work well for that area and address all of the goals that you have sighted. This is a good use of Transit Funds and Planning.

**MetroRail Capacity:**

Yes, yes, yes, we must increase the capacity and comfort on the Metrorail especially during the rush hour times. Anything that we can do to make Metro more inviting is a good plan and will help us be a better Metropolitan area, more viable, more modern, more open to better development.

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**From:** Eileen Finnegan <finnegan20903@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 13, 2018 8:05 PM  
**To:** TPBcomment  
**Cc:** Council President Hans Riemer; Tom Hucker; Councilmember Elrich; Glenn Orlin; Debbie Leigh; Andrew Austin  
**Subject:** Comments on Visualize 2045 Constrained Element: Missing New Project

Dear Transportation Planning Board Chair Allen, all TPB Board Members & TPB staff,

There is a serious omission in the Montgomery County transit submission for new projects to be included in the Visualize 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan for the National Capital Region. The omission is the New Hampshire Avenue Bus Rapid Transit project (NH BRT), part of the larger Montgomery County BRT system.

Although submitted as a "study" by MC DOT, this particular transit facility is integral to the regional transportation network, and should have full "for construction" status in this major TBP update, just as the 4 other BRTs submitted. **Please amend the draft plan to add this critical new project.**

High-density development is being approved in the New Hampshire corridor based on this BRT line being in place in the near future. Here are a few added reasons to gain your support for adding this important transit facility to the Visualize 2045 Plan:

- The NH BRT, part of the County's Transitway Master Plan, is a keystone element to the White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan, connects the Montgomery-Prince George's bi-county area to the Purple line at Takoma-Langley Crossroads, and will service the growing FDA campus on New Hampshire Ave in White Oak.
- The NH BRT line has been identified by County Council as the next BRT to move forward after the three lines currently underway, i.e. US29, MD 355 and Viers Mill Road.
- The NH BRT is an acknowledged priority of the County Executive and the Montgomery County Council as detailed in the Joint Priorities letter to the Maryland Department of Transportation on June 29, 2017. The letter is attached; see item 4 under the BRT section on page 3/4.
- The NH BRT is critical to achieving the Non-Auto-Driver-Mode-Share (NADMS) goals of the 2014 White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan. This WOSG plan, approved without achieving transportation balance, is based on greatly increasing the person throughput on New Hampshire Ave with BRT transit.
- GSA is moving forward with the Food and Drug Administration Master Plan update for this growing federal agency in White Oak. An additional 9,000 employees are anticipated on the FDA headquarters campus on New Hampshire Avenue in the coming years. For more information on this pending update see: <https://www.gsa.gov/portal/content/166346>
- The NH BRT will provide high-quality transit for underserved communities along the Montgomery and Prince George's county line.
- The New Hampshire corridor is currently problematic. Given the additional density being approved with more anticipated, advancing this transit service in the TPB's CLRP process is critical.

I urge the Transportation Planning Board to request the Montgomery County Department of Transportation to amend the submission and add this necessary project to the 2045 vision for the region.

Thank you for your consideration.

Eileen Finnegan  
10404 Sweetbriar Parkway  
Silver Spring, MD 20903  
301-439-2263

The Visualize 2045 plan includes a potential I-95 Southbound Auxiliary Lane to be built in 2028. It certainly should be funded for construction by 2028. Considering this is the most congested traffic area in the United States, it should be moved up earlier.

There is almost no time day or night that this area is not congested. This is a safety hazard as the area loses a lane and effectively loses two lanes as traffic from Lorton/Rte-1/Ft. Belvoir merge from what becomes the Rte-123 merge lane which ends at Rte-123. The effective loss of two lanes slows commuters and through traffic to a halt creating a dangerous mix of widely differing approach speeds.

The constant traffic jam also increases pollution of both the air and the water below the bridge (Occoquan River, a Chesapeake Bay tributary). Additionally it impacts the dynamic activity centers in the commercial realm, the Washington DC commuter bedroom community, and museums such as the Quantico Marine Corps Museum and the soon to be open Museum of American Military History.

Again I suggest since this area is rated the most congested traffic area in the United States, the I-95 Southbound Auxiliary Lane should be moved up earlier to as soon as possible.

Brian Blankinship  
Woodbridge, VA

Please consider modifying the scope of the "I-95 Southbound Widening from VA 123 to VA 294" project. The current scope as written will do little to resolve this safety/congestion bottleneck.

Please consider modifying the scope to: "I-95 Southbound Widening from US 1 to VA 294 with VA 123/I-95 interchange configuration changes"

General Recommendations:

- Convert I-95 Southbound lane to an exit lane ramp to VA 123N
- Shift VA 123 Exit Ramp from I-95S around/west of the I-95S Entrance Ramp from US 1 (Removes Merge point )
- Remove Ramp from VA 123N to I-95S
- Add Dual Left Turn Lanes to provide access from VA123N to I-95S
- Add I-95S Auxiliary Lane from US 1 to VA 294

More detailed recommendations for this project are linked/attached.

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=zQQBCxHd6New.kPg56RYdjMTU>

[http://novarapidtransit.org/I95\\_VA123\\_US1\\_Interchange\\_Improvement\\_12152016.pdf](http://novarapidtransit.org/I95_VA123_US1_Interchange_Improvement_12152016.pdf)

While this project will not reduce traffic volume congestion during peak periods in the long run, it will improve safety, reduce accidents, provide better access to Prince William County, and reduce congestion during off-peak hours (Reason it is the worse bottleneck in DC metro area)

This project needs to be completed ASAP. With the completion of the fourth I-395 Southbound lane from Duke Street to Edsel Road, the I-95 FedEx Express Lanes and the I95S Rappahannock River Crossing projects this may become the biggest bottleneck in the United States.

Also, please consider adding the "I-95 Northbound Widening from VA 294 to VA 123" as well. This is also a top ten congestion point in the DC Region.

Thank you for considering these comments,

Mark Scheufler

Manassas, VA 20111

[novarapidtransit.org](http://novarapidtransit.org)

## TOP 10 BOTTLENECKS

Rank (Last Quarter Rank)	Location	Average duration	Average max length (miles)	Total duration	Impact factor
1 (1)*	I-95 S @ VA-123/EXIT 160	8 h 09 m	2.88	31 d 05 h 50 m	136,097
2 (2)	BALTIMORE-WASHINGTON PKWY N @ POWDER MILL RD	7 h 17 m	2.75	27 d 23 h 07 m	94,142
3 (14)	DC-295 S @ EAST CAPITOL ST	10 h 46 m	1.3	41 d 06 h 49 m	78,882
4 (3)	I-495 CCW @ MD-97/GEORGIA AVE/EXIT 31	4 h 11 m	2.73	16 d 02 h 08 m	74,102
5 (8)	I-66 E @ SYCAMORE ST/EXIT 69	7 h 14 m	1.86	27 d 18 h 15 m	72,505
6 (5)	I-495 CW @ CLARA BARTON PKWY/EXIT 41	4 h 40 m	3.2	17 d 22 h 31 m	72,256
7 (4)	I-495 CW @ I-270 SPUR	2 h 25 m	4.18	9 d 06 h 20 m	71,830
8 (9)	I-95 N @ VA-123/EXIT 160	4 h 21 m	3.12	16 d 16 h 40 m	70,787
9 (6)	I-495 CW @ MD-214/CENTRAL AVE/EXIT 15	3 h 06 m	3.04	11 d 22 h 31 m	62,133
10 (10)	I-66 W @ VADEN DR/EXIT 62	4 h 55 m	1.42	18 d 20 h 34 m	59,729

\* See "Bottlenecks" section in the "Background" chapter for ranking variability from quarter to quarter.

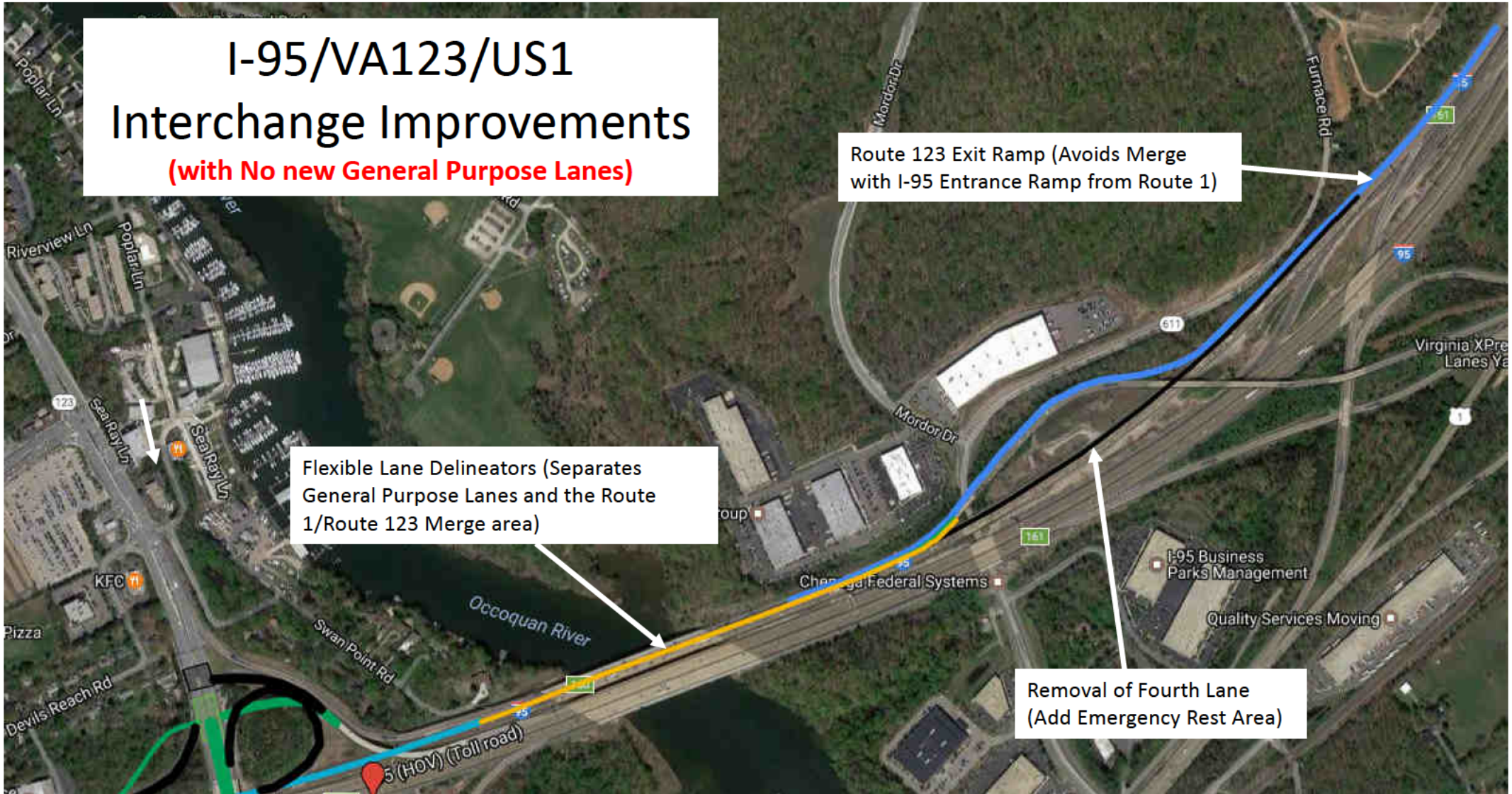


# I-95/VA123/US1 Interchange Improvements (with No new General Purpose Lanes)

Route 123 Exit Ramp (Avoids Merge with I-95 Entrance Ramp from Route 1)

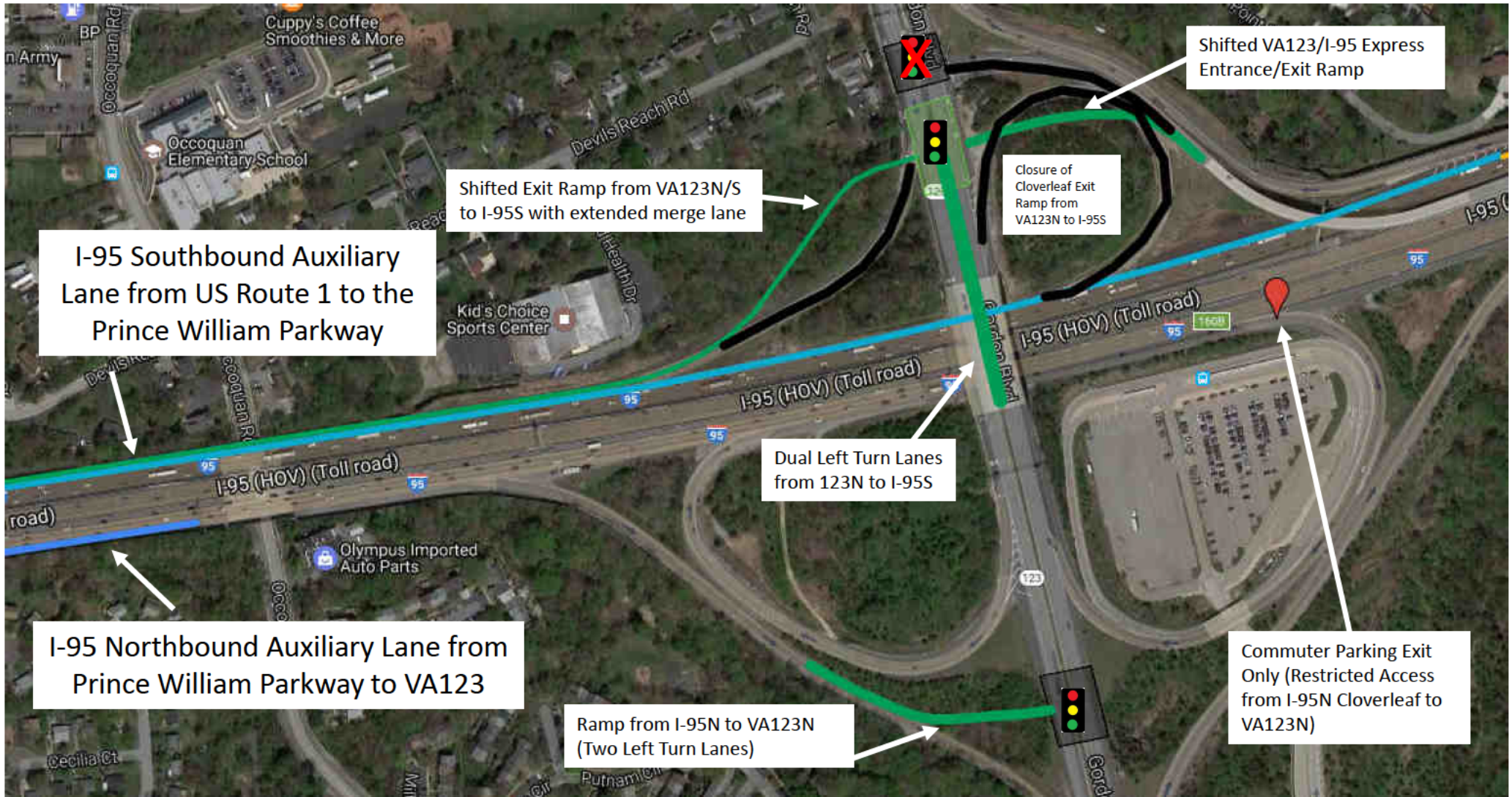
Flexible Lane Delineators (Separates General Purpose Lanes and the Route 1/Route 123 Merge area)

Removal of Fourth Lane (Add Emergency Rest Area)





# I-95/VA123/US1 Interchange Improvements (with No new General Purpose Lanes)



# COMPREHENSIVE AGREEMENT RELATING TO THE I-95 HOV/HOT LANES PROJECT DATED AS OF JULY 31, 2012

- “Additional Lanes will constitute a Compensation Event.”
- **Additional Lanes** means **any additional GP Lanes along the I-95 Corridor** within the Project Right of Way to the extent the plans for such improvements have not been included in (i) the CLRP and the SYIP as of November 30, 2011 or (ii) the Technical Requirements; provided however, that the addition of a fourth general purpose traffic lane travelling southbound on I-395 between Seminary Road and Edsall Road will not be an Additional Lane.
- **Interpretation:** Auxiliary Lanes between Entrances and Exits can be added without a Compensation Event

December 18, 2017

Dear Sir/Madam:

I wish to state my opposition to the northern Potomac bridge crossing that is being proposed as part of the proposed "Outer Beltway". My reasons follow:

A major highway bridge increases the likelihood of a chemical spill that could contaminate our drinking water. In 1997, 1 out of 10 trucks in the U.S. was transporting hazardous material. About half of those carried flammable liquids, such as gasoline, diesel fuel, and fuel oil. Accidents are common, and a study of data from 1991 to 2000 found that the likelihood of a spill in the event of a crash was 50% higher for hazardous materials than non-hazardous.

- One tanker truck of hazardous material can contaminate an entire drinking water system. A chemical spill in the amount equivalent to one tanker left 300,000 Charleston WV residents without water for over 10 days in 2014.
- We could have less than a day to react before a spill contaminates municipal water intakes serving nearly 5 million area residents. Water intakes for Fairfax County, the City of Rockville, Montgomery and Prince George's Counties, and the District of Columbia are all downstream from the most likely crossing.
- A spill requiring cleanup lasting longer than 48 hours could result in most of the Washington Metro Area being without water. We currently have only 24 to 48 hours of water supply without the Potomac.
- Climate change could make backup water supplies less reliable during spill events. Droughts are predicted to be more frequent and longer, resulting in backup supplies being used more extensively and potentially running out.
- The construction of the necessary connecting roads to the proposed bridge could do irreparable harm to the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve and lead to extensive development in the Reserve.

Sincerely,

Robert N. Goldberg  
21404 Davis Mill Road  
Germantown, Maryland 20876-4422  
Telephone: 301-540-2915  
E-mail: r.n.goldberg@att.net

# PROJECT SUBMISSION FORM

## Basic Project Information

CEID 3608

1. Submitting Agency: VDOT
2. Secondary Agency: Loudoun County
3. Agency Project ID:
4. Project Type:  Interstate  Primary  Secondary  Urban  Bridge  Bike/Ped  Transit  CMAQ  
 ITS  Enhancement  Other  Federal Lands Highways Program  
 Human Service Transportation Coordination  TERMS
5. Category:  System Expansion  System Maintenance  Operational Program  Study  Other
6. Project Name: **Route 15 Widening**
7. Facility:

Prefix	Route	Name	Modifier
US	15	James Madison Highway	
		Battlefield Parkway	
VA	661	Montresor Road	
8. From ( at):
9. To:
10. Description: **Reconstruction with added capacity. This two lane road will be widened to four lanes.**
11. Projected Completion Year: **2025**
12. Project Manager: **James Zeller**
13. Project Manager E-Mail: **James.Zeller@VDOT.virginia.gov**
14. Project Information URL: **www.loudoun.gov/Route15**
15. Total Miles: **3.6 miles**
16. Schematic (file upload):
17. State/Local Project Standing (file upload):
18. Jurisdictions: **Loudoun County**
19. 2018 Baseline Cost (in Thousands): **\$33 million** cost estimate as of 10/17/2017
20. Amended Cost (in Thousands): cost estimate as of MM/DD/YYYY
21. Funding Sources:  Federal  State  Local  Private  Bonds  Other

## Regional Policy Framework

Questions 22-27 address the goals identified in the Regional Transportation Priorities Plan. Question 28 should be used to provide additional context of how this project supports these goals or other regional needs identified in the Call for Projects.

### 22. Provide a Comprehensive Range of Transportation Options

Please identify all travel mode options that this project provides, enhances, supports, or promotes.

- Single Driver  Carpool/HOV  
 Metrorail  Commuter Rail  Streetcar/Light Rail  
 BRT  Express/Commuter bus  Metrobus  Local Bus  
 Bicycling  Walking  Other

Does this project improve accessibility for historically transportation-disadvantaged individuals (i.e., persons with disabilities, low-incomes, and/or limited English proficiency?)

**RESPONSE: VDOT accepted the bike trail proposal in order to advance this road widening project.**



**23. Promote Regional Activity Centers**

- Does this project begin or end in an Activity Center?
- Does this project connect two or more Activity Centers?
- Does this project promote non-auto travel within one or more Activity Centers?

**24. Ensure System Maintenance, Preservation, and Safety**

- Does this project contribute to enhanced system maintenance, preservation, or safety?

**RESPONSE: The project will degrade preservation and safety.**

**Preservation: Route 15 is a National Scenic Byway in a National Heritage Area (Journey Through Hallowed Ground Region). The project will degrade the historic and scenic attributes of an otherwise-pristine two-lane rural highway in the Catoctin Rural Historic District that has remained the same for many decades. Substantial land from historic properties (Rockland, on the National Register of Historic Places) and one contributing structure to the Catoctin Rural Historic District (the Old Limestone School, now a private home), will be taken as part of the highway expansion.**

**Safety will be reduced. The project, which changes the designation from a rural 2-lane local access arterial to a 4-lane divided controlled access rural arterial, will reduce safe access for all private drives, roads and entrances along the section of highway. Impacted are working farms which to retain viable need to move farm machinery across and up and down the section of roadway (which will, subsequent to the lane additions, need to negotiate two extra lanes of traffic), visitors to wineries, breweries, regional parks, and equestrian facilities on Limestone School Road—which have no other close access to the highway.**

**Most traffic from the eastern side of Route 15 makes left-hand turns onto Route 15 toward Leesburg. A controlled access designation eliminates property owners and visitors' ability to make left-hand turns. Property values and business profitability are adversely affected. Affected property owners were not notified of the impending change in designation. It was not a topic of an ongoing, Loudoun County Route 15 Stakeholders Committee group deliberating about improvements to this roadway, nor was its description provided to them.**

**Where "controlled access" points are located, drivers will have an additional lane of traffic to negotiate to make a left-hand turn off of Route 15 onto a side road/drive/entrance, and two additional lanes of traffic to negotiate to make a left-hand turn onto the highway;**

**The proposed widening does not include analysis of whether intersection controls such as roundabouts would eliminate the need for expensive widening (because of the increased capacity and multimodal safety that RAB provide).**

**25. Maximize Operational Effectiveness and Safety**

- Project is primarily designed to reduce travel time on highways and/or transit without building new capacity (e.g., ITS, bus priority treatments, etc.)?
- Does this project enhance safety for motorists, transit users, pedestrians, and/or bicyclists?

**RESPONSE: A focus of citizen efforts for decades, with repeated requests to VDOT by citizens, local, and state officials, has been to increase safety along this National Scenic Byway in the Journey Through Hallowed Ground Region. The project ignores these goals. It will not reduce travel time and does not enhance safety for motorists, pedestrians, and/or bicyclists. It will reduce access for property owners, park visitors, and customers along roads, drives, and business entrances, who will have left-hand turning access reduced or eliminated.**

**26. Protect and Enhance the Natural Environment**

- Is this project expected to contribute to reductions in emissions of criteria pollutants?
- Is this project expected to contribute to reductions in emissions of greenhouse gases?

**RESPONSE: It will induce traffic (no studies requested by citizens have been performed) and increase cut-through traffic to adjacent rural areas on narrow two-lane and unpaved roads, including through historic villages already overwhelmed with such traffic documented in local studies. It includes no intersection treatments (such as roundabouts) which would increase safety, access, and congestion reduction—and no study has been done to evaluate whether similar congestion reduction (without inducing traffic) could be achieved for millions less by installing roundabouts (particularly at Montresor Road) instead of a four-lane median-divided controlled access highway. The project is being forwarded without any comprehensive transportation plan for the area and county (a process currently underway). No studies of environmental impacts (emissions, noise, vibrations, reduced fuel efficiency)—requested by stakeholders committee members since September—have been performed by the consultant or Loudoun County or VDOT.**

## 27. Support Interregional and International Travel and Commerce

Please identify all freight carrier modes that this project enhances, supports, or promotes.

Long-Haul Truck    Local Delivery    Rail    Air

Please identify all passenger carrier modes that this project enhances, supports, or promotes.

Air    Amtrak intercity passenger rail    Intercity bus

**RESPONSE: It will facilitate regional delivery at a direct cost to local delivery for rural businesses including parks, wineries, breweries, pick-your-own farms, and equestrian facilities.**

## 28. Additional Policy Framework Response

Please provide additional written information that describes how this project further supports or advances these and other regional goals or needs.

The project will improve regional north-south mobility between Virginia and Maryland.

**RESPONSE: The project ends 8 miles south of the Potomac River and the Maryland State Line. Maryland has no short or long-term plans to increase capacity south to the river, particularly at the location of the current 2-lane bridge. There has been no planning or coordination with either Frederick County or the state of Maryland on improvements to the arterial.**

## Federal Planning Factors

29. Please identify any and all planning factors that are addressed by this project:

a.  Support the **economic vitality** of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.

**RESPONSE: The project will degrade the economic vitality of the rural economy of the area, by reducing safe access to wineries, breweries, equestrian facilities, and other local businesses whose customers require safe and expedited access onto and off of Route 15.**

b.  Increase the **safety** of the transportation system for all motorized and non-motorized users.

i. Is this project being proposed specifically to address a safety issue?  Yes;  No

ii. If yes, briefly describe (in quantifiable terms, where possible) the nature of the safety problem:

**RESPONSE: It will decrease the safety of the transportation system for all motorized and non-motorized users. Safe access will be reduced because of the “4-lane, divided, controlled access” redesignation.**

c.  Increase the ability of the transportation system to support **homeland security** and to safeguard the personal security of all motorized and non-motorized users.

**RESPONSE: Four-laning for 3.6 miles further north on a 2-lane highway, and to rural road that becomes a two-lane unpaved road in a rural area does nothing to “increase Homeland Security.”**

d.  Increase **accessibility and mobility** of people.

**RESPONSE: Four-laning up to a rural road that becomes a two-lane unpaved road in a rural area does little to “increase accessibility and mobility of people.”**

e.  Increase accessibility and mobility of **freight**.

**RESPONSE: The route is plagued by freight hauled in overweight and unsafe trucks that are avoiding inspection stations on other routes. Enforcement is sporadic and ineffective.**

f.  Protect and enhance the **environment**, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.

**RESPONSE: The project, by any measure, degrades, instead of protecting and enhancing, “the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.” It is being advanced prior to the underway process of revising the county’s transportation and land use plan, with no comprehensive analysis of its impact. The project lies in a fragile geologic area, a karst region characterized by sinkholes, voids, and cave entrances, one within feet of the current roadway in the project area. Sinkholes have closed portions of the highway in the past decade. Large sections of the project area are adjacent to streams and are within the floodplain area. Massive mitigation efforts will be required with little return for the investment.**

g.  Enhance the **integration and connectivity** of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.

**RESPONSE: The project will degrade the local transportation system across and between modes, for people and freight. It will reduce safety and access for local residents and businesses.**

h.  Promote efficient system **management and operation**.

**RESPONSE: Given the actual impacts of 29a through g, it does NOT promote efficient system management and operation.**

i.  Emphasize the **preservation** of the existing transportation system.

**RESPONSE: It will substantially degrade the preservation of the existing transportation system because of reduced access and induced demand.**

j.  Improve **resiliency** and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation.

**RESPONSE: Induced traffic will push congestion further north onto the 2-lane road, reducing reliability of the system at huge cost. Large sections of the project area are adjacent to streams and are within the floodplain area. Massive mitigation efforts will be required with little return for the investment.**

k.  Enhance travel and **tourism**.

**RESPONSE: The project will destroy the setting of a National Register of Historic Places property, Rockland, a working farm that has been in the same family for centuries, with acreage on both sides of the road. A mature arbor and trees that protect the site from the roadway will be bulldozed. Another contributing property to the Catoclin Rural Historic District further north in the project zone, the Old Limestone School (now a private residence), 80 feet from the current two-lane rural highway, will either be taken or have a 4-lane highway just feet from its front door. It will reduce safe access for visitors to two regional parks, and numerous wineries, a brewery, pick-your-own farms, and equestrian facilities that are part of the area’s growing rural economy and rely upon the rural and scenic setting to attract tourists to their venues.**

## Environmental Mitigation

30. Have any potential mitigation activities been identified for this project?  Yes;  No

a. If yes, what types of mitigation activities have been identified?

Air Quality;  Floodplains;  Socioeconomics;  Geology, Soils and Groundwater;  Vibrations;

Energy;  Noise;  Surface Water;  Hazardous and Contaminated Materials;  Wetlands

**RESPONSE: Surveys of impacted properties have not yet been conducted; their costs may be substantial. The project lies in a fragile geologic area, a karst region characterized by sinkholes, voids, and cave entrances, one within feet of the current roadway in the project area. Sinkholes have closed portions of the highway in the past**

**decade. Large sections of the project area are adjacent to streams and are within the floodplain area. Massive mitigation efforts will be required with little return for the investment.**

## Congestion Management Information

### 31. Congested Conditions

- Do traffic congestion conditions necessitate the proposed project or program?  Yes;  No
- If so, is the congestion recurring or non-recurring?  Recurring;  Non-recurring
- If the congestion is on another facility, please identify it:

**RESPONSE: The project does not designate intersection solutions and so does not evaluate to what degree congestion reduction could be achieved at substantial cost savings by simply redesigning intersections (for example, replacing the Route 15 bypass/Business Route 15 merge area with a roundabout, replacing the Whites Ferry signal with a roundabout and realigning Limestone School Road with Montesor Road with a roundabout.) Loudoun County requested as early as 2004 that VDOT study the latter alternative. It has not.**

### 32. Capacity

- Is this a capacity-increasing project on a limited access highway or other principal arterial?  Yes;  No
- If the answer to Question 32.a was "yes", are any of the following exemption criteria true about the project? (Choose one, or indicate that none of the exemption criteria apply):
  - None of the exemption criteria apply to this project – a Congestion Management Documentation Form is required
  - The project will not use federal funds in any phase of development or construction (100% state, local, and/or private funding)
  - The number of lane-miles added to the highway system by the project totals less than one lane-mile
  - The project is an intersection reconstruction or other traffic engineering improvement, including replacement of an at-grade intersection with an interchange
  - The project, such as a transit, bicycle or pedestrian facility, will not allow private single-occupant motor vehicles
  - The project consists of preliminary studies or engineering only, and is not funded for construction
  - The construction costs for the project are less than \$10 million.
- If the project is not exempt and requires a Congestion Management Documentation Form, click here to open a blank Congestion Management Documentation Form.

**RESPONSE: This project increases capacity on a segment of a principal arterial. Requested studies on the induced traffic that the increased capacity will invite or the subsequent adverse effects on side roads or points further north have been conducted. Multiple studies note that capacity additions reach previous congestion levels within 5 years. Is \$33 million on a project that will fail in 5 years worth the cost?**

## Record Management

- Completed Year:
- Project is being withdrawn from the CLRP:  Yes
- Withdrawn Date: MM/DD/YYYY
- Record Creator: Cina Dabestani
- Created On: 10/30/2017
- Last Updated by: Regina Moore
- Last Updated On: 12/12/2017
- Comments:



The following text was received via email from the 110 individuals signed below:

Hello Transportation Planning Board,

I write to register my concerns about the draft Constrained Long-Range Transportation Plan (CLRP). This is a massive list of projects, which lists an overwhelming number of road widening and interchange projects in Maryland and Virginia. Since new and wider roads fill up so quickly, it will add to traffic, and not make conditions better. More traffic and massive roads like those found in LA will harm our quality of life, and chase people and companies away.

You studied new approaches to the problem and found that balanced land use, demand management, bus rapid transit, and Metro core capacity solutions worked better than road expansion for our transportation network and our environment. Yet, these solutions are not the basis of this latest draft CLRP. Why?

I recommend that you immediately do a major amendment to this long-range plan, one that puts balanced land use (transit-oriented development, more housing closer to jobs, etc), demand management, and transit first. Doing so is essential to preserving the character of our communities and our quality of life, and for reducing air pollution and the greenhouse gas emissions that fuel climate change.

Thank you,

Naomi Engle

[Redacted]

Kevin Shanahan

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Susan Levine

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Christopher Richter

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Jim Webster

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