



Item #5

District of Columbia

Bowie

College Park

Frederick County

Gaithersburg

Greenbelt

Montgomery County

Prince George's County

Rockville

Takoma Park

Alexandria

Arlington County

Fairfax

Fairfax County

Falls Church

Loudoun County

Manassas

Manassas Park

Prince William County

MEMORANDUM

October 19, 2005

TO: Transportation Planning Board

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

RE: Letters Sent/Received Since the September 21st TPB Meeting

The attached letters were sent/received since the September 21st TPB meeting. The letters will be reviewed under Agenda #5 of the October 19th TPB agenda

Attachments



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

September 20, 2005

John Swanson, Editor
The Region
Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Phil Mendelson, Chair
Transportation Planning Board
777 N. Capitol Street, NE, Suite 300
Washington, DC 20002-4239

Gentlemen:

While I enjoyed reading the most recent (Fall) edition of *The Region* (Vol. 44, 2005), part of the article describing the study of "What If" scenarios by the Transportation Planning Board requires correction. A feature box on page 17 states: "The TPB's Citizens Advisory Committee was the first voice in 2000 to call for a regional "what if" scenario study."

While that may have been the case in 2000, our three organizations joined together in 1993 to call for the same, publishing that year the first-ever *citizens* plan for transportation in the region (indeed, in any region across the country): *A New Approach: Integrating Transportation and Development in the National Capital Region* (enclosed). For two years following that publication, we publicly and persistently urged the TPB to develop and test our scenario and any other alternate scenarios for transportation efficiency and effectiveness, as well as air quality improvement, that fully integrated land use and transportation policy changes. In 1995, the TPB undertook a modest study of a "WRN-like" scenario, and in 1996, we published our own computer modeling of such a scenario (*A Network of Livable Communities*) (enclosed), again challenging the TPB to more fully reflect in its testing the reasonable attributes of change we recommended.

While it's great that in 2000 the CAC also called for this work, and even better that the TPB is finally responding, we think it important to note that our organizations began the quest for intensive study of a new and different approach to transportation and land use some 12 years ago. Who knows how regional transportation systems might today be performing if our suggestions and the information we had developed had then been taken more seriously – and acted upon. Perhaps the TPB and regional and local leaders are now ready to respond with action that will help the metropolitan Washington region realize a more efficient and hopeful future.

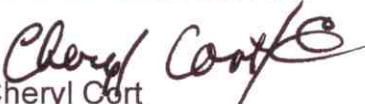
Sincerely,



Lee R. Epstein
Director Lands Program
Chesapeake Bay Foundation



Michael Replogle
Transportation Director
Environmental Defense



Cheryl Cort
Executive Director
Washington Regional Network for
Livable Communities

Enclosures

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

777 North Capitol Street, N.E., Suite 300, Washington, D.C. 20002-4290 (202) 962-3315 Fax: (202) 962-3202

October 19, 2005

Jennifer L. Dorn
Administrator, Federal Transit Administration
400 7th Street SW
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Administrator Dorn:

On behalf of the National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board (TPB), the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) for the Washington region, I urge you to recognize variably-priced lanes that provide for unimpeded transit service as "fixed guideway miles" in the transit funding formula administered by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), so that federal transit funding is not decreased in a situation where existing high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) facilities are converted to variably-priced lanes.

The Washington region continues to face significant transportation funding shortages and severe congestion. Value pricing can provide an alternative source of funding, and value-pricing approaches such as High Occupancy/Toll (HOT) lanes can be an effective long-term congestion management tool. For these reasons, TPB member jurisdictions are seriously considering applying value pricing to both new and existing roadways. The region's current long-range transportation plan includes four new HOT lanes along a 15-mile stretch of the Capital Beltway in Virginia. Virginia is also exploring the possibility of converting existing HOV lanes along the I-95/395 corridor into HOT lanes. Maryland is considering express toll lanes along I-495, I-95 and I-270, among other facilities, as part of a statewide integrated system.

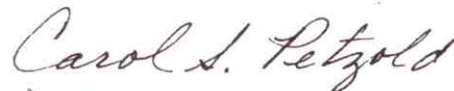
While the FTA currently counts High-Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) facilities as "fixed guideway miles" in its funding formula, it is unclear whether variably-priced lanes would be counted as fixed guideway miles. If variably-priced lanes are not included in the federal formula, transit funding in the Washington region would be significantly reduced.

Therefore, we urge you to adopt an explicit policy stating that FTA will count variably-priced lanes which provide for unimpeded transit service as fixed guideway miles in the transit funding formula. Thank you for considering the TPB's views on this matter.

Sincerely,



Phil Mendelson
Chair,
National Capital Region
Transportation Planning Board (TPB)



Carol Petzold
Chair,
TPB Value Pricing Task Force

cc: Regional Congressional Delegation
Mr. Tyler Duvall, Mr. Thomas McNamara and Mr. Jeff Shane, U.S. DOT, Office of the Secretary
Mr. Patrick DeCorla-Souza, U.S. DOT, Federal Highway Administration