



Bi-County Partnership

November 22, 2013

The Honorable Terry McAuliffe
Governor-Elect
Commonwealth of Virginia
1001 E. Broad Street, Suite 305
P.O. Box 426
Richmond, VA 23218-0426

Dear Governor-elect McAuliffe:

As a coalition representing more than 4,000 businesses and other groups that employ more than 150,000 people, we would like to meet with you at your earliest convenience to make the case for the Bi-County Parkway.

The project will provide a major return on investment for Virginia for a number of compelling reasons. The Bi-County Parkway will:

- 1) Foster the creation of new jobs, which you have wisely identified as one of your top-most priorities, and economic development.
- 2) Enhance and protect one of the Commonwealth's most important and vulnerable historic sites – Manassas National Battlefield – by removing Route 234 from the heart of the Battlefield.
- 3) Greatly improve access to Washington Dulles International Airport.
- 4) Most important: Provide much-needed congestion relief for 37,000 daily travelers moving between Prince William and Loudoun Counties each day – a number that will swell to 72,000 by 2040 (up 91%).

Let's illustrate the critical need for the Bi-County Parkway with a specific, real-world example: as you know, today's major employers serve world markets and locate where they have good access to Washington Dulles. The Bi-County Parkway will:

- a) Make northern Prince William County as convenient to Washington Dulles as Tysons Corner is today. The Bi-County Parkway will be a boon to the George Mason University research campus and the county's Innovation Technology Park.
- b) Speed access to Washington Dulles for communities along the Route 29 Corridor, the Shenandoah Valley, and in the Winchester area. With improved airport access, these areas would be primed to attract high tech additive manufacture and other airport related industries.

Robert Clapper
President and CEO
Prince William Chamber of Commerce

Jim Corcoran
President and CEO
Fairfax County Chamber of Commerce

Tony Howard
President
Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce

Don Owens, Chairman
Eileen Curtis, President
Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce

Robert Chase
President
Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance

Anita Grazer
President
Committee for Dulles

Jim Larsen
Executive Director
Dulles Area Transportation Association

Keith Meurlin
President
Foreign Trade Zone - 137

Scott C. Plein
President
Dulles South Alliance

Leo Schefer
President
Washington Airports Task Force

Eric Wells
President
Mercure Business Park Association

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With Loudoun and Prince William Counties forecasting a combined 50% increase in population and a doubling in employment, resulting in a near-doubling of north-south trips between the counties, it is manifestly clear that the existing local road network will be woefully inadequate to meet tomorrow's needs. Built decades ago and improved only slightly as both counties have rapidly grown over the past two decades, these two-lane rural roads (e.g. US 15 and Gum Spring Road) are increasingly overwhelmed today and will only grow more so. To the east of the immediate Bi-County Parkway area, Route 28 – a principal north-south link – typically backs up 10 miles to the north of I-66 each evening and is congested for approximately six hours of the working day. Just the intersection of Route 28 with I-66 is costing the economy an estimated \$400 million a year in lost time. Contrary to the claims of some, the Virginia Department of Transportation's careful study of the Bi-County Parkway is crystal clear: building the Bi-County Parkway will substantially reduce congestion on parallel north-south routes.

Just as important, the Bi-County Parkway will make travel profoundly safer for Prince William and Loudoun County residents. Travelers using limited access roads like the Bi-County Parkway experience only a third as many crashes as those traveling on the undivided, rural roads that presently are the only way to travel north and south between the counties. For example: Gum Spring Road has a 55% higher accident rate than similar roads in the rest of the Commonwealth; US 15 in Loudoun County has a 20% higher crash rate than the average for US 15 statewide; and, US 15 in Loudoun saw 20 head-on collisions in the most recent five-year period. The Bi-County improvement will save lives and reduce injuries because of:

- Fewer conflicts with entering or crossing vehicles.
- 10-foot wide safety shoulders.
- A wide median separating opposing traffic.
- A straighter path with better sight lines.

In sum, the Bi-County Parkway means more jobs for Virginia, preserving our rich history, safer travel for our citizens, and less congestion for our commuters. With the project having been on both counties' comprehensive plans for approximately the past 20 years, and it having been under study by VDOT since 2001, the time has come to build the Bi-County Parkway.

We look forward to your response and the opportunity to meet with you in person to share more information on the need to move forward with the Bi-County Parkway. Thank you.

Sincerely,



Eric Wells, NSCIG Co-chair
Mercure Business Park Association



Jim Larsen, Executive Director
Dulles Area Transportation Association



Robert Clapper, President and CEO
Prince William Chamber of Commerce



Mark C. Looney, Chairman
Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance



Eileen Curtis, President
Dulles Regional Chamber of Commerce



Keith Meurlin, President
Foreign Trade Zone – 137



Anita Grazer, President
Committee for Dulles



Leo Schefer, President
Washington Airports Task Force



Anthony J. Howard, President and CEO
Loudoun County Chamber of Commerce



Scott C. Plein
President, Dulles South Alliance

Attachments:

- 1) An article in the *Washington Post* by Edwin Bearss, the National Park Services Chief Historian Emeritus, stressing the importance of moving traffic out of the park to its perimeter.
- 2) A statement by Dr. Ángel Cabrera, the President of George Mason University, on the need for this road. A former President of George Mason University has noted that the university would not have risen to world renown if the Fairfax County Parkway had not been built to serve the university's Fairfax campus.
- 3) A letter from the three Chambers to Congressman Rob Bishop, Chairman, Subcommittee on Public Lands and Environmental Regulation, Committee on Natural Resources.