



## **Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance Draft 2040 Countywide Transportation Plan**

### *Envision Loudoun - Public Input Comments*

November 7, 2018

The Northern Virginia Transportation Alliance (the “Alliance”) appreciates the opportunity to provide comments regarding the recently updated Draft Loudoun 2040 Countywide Transportation Plan (“Draft CTP”) as part of the Envision Loudoun public input process.

The Alliance applauds the elected officials, the staff and the many residents who have dedicated countless hours of input and good thought in the name of Loudoun County’s future.

Members of the Alliance have been actively involved with other jurisdictions (i.e. Fairfax County, Tysons Corner, Arlington County, Alexandria and VDOT) that have experienced the challenges of urbanization over the past 30 years. Because of this experience, the Alliance offers the following comments on the Draft CTP:

#### **New Potomac River Crossing**

First, the Alliance appreciates Loudoun County’s commitment and inclusion in the Draft CTP of a new Potomac River Crossing. The Alliance has long supported an additional Potomac River Crossing as a critical regional priority, perhaps the region’s highest priority.

The Alliance’s presentation to the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors in June 2017 demonstrated that this facility has been studied repeatedly for 60 years and there continues to be significant justification to support it.

The Alliance commends Loudoun County for identifying potential corridors D & E for the bridge as well as studying the impacts to residential and commercial property, the 100-year floodplain, parks, wetlands, existing transportation infrastructure, utilities, and regional connectivity. Identifying these locations encourages further action by Maryland to address this critical need.

A new Potomac River Crossing would benefit residents throughout the County. Carrying an estimated 100,000 trips per day, it will be integral to the potential game-changing multi-modal solutions proposed in the Draft CTP. Providing a general route location in the Draft CTP helps ameliorate traffic congestion along US Route 15, Route 7, and other east/west corridors in the County.

#### **Transportation Investment Focus**

While the Alliance respects the long-held policy of the County to focus development in the eastern part of the County, the stated policy that the County will prioritize transportation funding in Urban and Suburban areas where density exists has the potential to detrimentally impact the mobility for residents in every part of the County.



In addition, it could negatively impact those who travel into and through the western part of the County on the way to Loudoun employment destinations or points to the east.

In fact, this outcome is predicted by the County's own travel demand forecast model, which indicates a number of rural area capacity constraints by 2040.

Consequently, when evaluating future transportation investments, the County would be best served to weigh congestion relief as the priority for funding.

### **North-South Travel Demand**

Improving north-south mobility is critical to achieving the County's economic development and job creation objectives, not only in terms of enabling more residents who live in the County to work in the County, but also to enable Loudoun employers to attract the workforce they need from outside the County.

The County's planned improvements and extension of Northstar Boulevard and the Loudoun County Parkway are critical to that objective as are U.S 15 improvements.

With regard to U.S. 15 the Alliance encourages the County to study and identify the best right of way for a limited access parallel alternative north of Leesburg to improve travel reliability and safety as well as protect historic properties and way of life along this important section of the Journey through Hallowed Ground corridor.