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Paul Milde
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October 16, 2017

Honorable Aubrey Layne
Secretary of Transportation
Commonwealth of Virginia
1111 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

RE: Recommendations from FAMPO Regarding Proposed Smart Scale Accessibility Measure Changes

Dear Secretary Layne:

We appreciate the work that the Commonwealth is doing to improve transportation in the Fredericksburg region and addressing the two worst traffic problems in the Commonwealth: I-95 SB and I-95 NB between Fredericksburg and Northern Virginia. We are writing to provide FAMPO recommendations to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) on improving the Smart Scale program accessibility measure for Round 3. On April 17th, we wrote the Commonwealth concerning several recommendations for improving Smart Scale Round 3 based on the work of the FAMPO Smart Scale Task Force including two recommendations regarding the accessibility measure. The State office responded to the FAMPO letter on August 11th shown below with the FAMPO input on top and State response underlined below:

Regarding Accessibility Factor:

1. Either develop a decay curve for the Fredericksburg Region or group the Fredericksburg Region with NOVA for the decay curve analysis, instead of grouping Fredericksburg with the rest of the state. Review Access to Jobs highway and transit travel time thresholds for reasonableness for the NOVA and Fredericksburg regions.

This issue will be addressed for Round 3 of SMART SCALE by either (i) applying the NOVA decay curve to the FAMPO region, (ii) developing a FAMPO specific decay curve, or (iii) using a single decay curve statewide.

2. Consider including bicycle trips for first mile/last mile travel in transit accessibility calculations. Currently pedestrian travel is included, but not bicycle travel.

At this time the accessibility tool is not able to measure bicycle accessibility. For example there is an issue related to capacity of bicycle parking and of buses to carry bicycles, which is not captured in the tool used to calculate this measure.

As a result of this communication, we understood that the first item would be addressed in Round 3 of Smart Scale and this was what was presented to us at our District's Fall Transportation Meeting on August 29th. We were therefore surprised to learn in the State's October 3rd e-mail communication that the State had *"Restored the 45 and 60 minute cap for auto and transit job access respectively"* for the accessibility measure which the State had indicated was not reasonable to use for the FAMPO area in its August communication.

The Fredericksburg and Northern Virginia areas of Virginia have significantly longer average commute times than the rest of the state which exceed the proposed 45 and 60 minute caps for auto and transit job access for many travelers. A 2016 commuter skills survey conducted by the Fredericksburg Chamber of Commerce and Fredericksburg Regional Alliance estimated that about half of all Fredericksburg area commuter trips were more than 1 hour long. Based on Census data, the Fredericksburg Region has an average commute time of about 36 minutes compared to 27 minutes for the State of Virginia and 34 minutes for the DC metro area.

Because of the different travel characteristics for Fredericksburg and Northern Virginia regions compared to the rest of the state, we recommend that these regions should either have their own unique decay curves or a combined one for both areas and the 45 and 60 minute caps for auto and transit trips should be removed statewide.

We hope that the CTB finds this input helpful. If you have any questions regarding these recommendations, feel free to contact myself or Paul Agnello.

Sincerely,

Paul Milde
Chairman

**Cc: FAMPO Policy Committee
CTB Members
State Legislative Delegation
Congressional Delegation from George Washington Regional Commission Area**