



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Office of the Governor

Aubrey L. Layne, Jr.
Secretary of Transportation

December 21, 2015

The Honorable Tim McLaughlin
Chairman
Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
406 Princess Anne Street
Fredericksburg, VA 22401

Dear Chairman McLaughlin:

Thank you for your letter dated November 19, 2015 regarding the implementation of House Bill 2.

As transportation needs far outweigh available resources, it is critical that Virginia make wise use of its transportation funds to improve economic competitiveness and quality of life. I look forward to continuing to move forward with the first round of House Bill 2 (HB2) and discussing the evaluations of projects with the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) in early 2016.

The CTB adopted a policy governing the development of the Six-Year Improvement Program for HB2-eligible programs at its October 2015 meeting. This policy addresses how the Board will develop a program of projects from the project evaluations. The HB2 policy adopted in June governs how projects will be evaluated.

The CTB limited the application process for both the High Priority Projects Program and the Construction District Grants Program to local governments, regional planning bodies and transit agencies. This was done to allow the Board to operate as an impartial arbiter of the benefits of projects submitted by others as determined by the HB2 evaluations. In the past, the Board developed a program without a formal application process and selected projects based on politics and other factors. It was not a transparent process.

During the development of the HB2 Policy Guide, the Board had significant discussions regarding whether to determine a project's relative cost benefit using its total cost or the amount of funding requested. The adopted policy dictates that Board is to be provided with two relative cost benefit scores one considering total cost and another based on requested funding. There were strong feelings on both sides of this debate and the adopted policy reflects these feelings.

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I believe there may be some confusion between the evaluation of projects under the HB2 process and the identification of needs through the VTrans2040 process. The HB2 evaluation process for congestion mitigation evaluates the benefits provided by projects in 2025 compared to the projected conditions in 2025 without the project. The VTrans2040 Needs Assessment did use INRIX speed data from 2014. Hap Connors, the Fredericksburg CTB representative, raised this issue at our December 2015 Board meeting where a resolution was under consideration to accept the VTrans Needs Assessment.

Thanks to Mr. Connors due diligence, the resolution directed staff to update the needs assessment for areas of the Commonwealth where there have been significant changes to the transportation network since the collection of data used in the original needs assessment. Staff will be updating the congestion data along I-95 in Stafford based on the direction provided in the resolution.

Thank you again for you interest in transportation and the HB2 process.

Sincerely,



Aubrey L. Layne, Jr.