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Capital Results

May 09, 2014

The Honorable Anthony Foxx
Secretary of Transportation
U.S. Department of Transportation
Office of the Secretary of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave SE
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Secretary Foxx:

I am writing on behalf of Virginians for High Speed Rail, the Commonwealth's largest rail advocacy organization who promotes fast, frequent, and reliable intercity passenger rail service linking our communities to regions up and down the east coast.

We are writing in support of Richmond's 2014 TIGER Grant application for Bus Rapid Transit on the Broad Street Corridor. In addition to the economic opportunities that BRT will provide the Richmond region, it will also provide the users of Virginia's intercity passenger rail network a vital last mile connection from one of our passenger rail stations to their homes or places of work. A trip from the West End of Richmond to downtown only takes about 10 minutes by car but over 30 minutes by bus. Transitioning over to BRT on the Broad Street Corridor will increase bus speeds by 65 percent and reduce the travel time by about 33 percent, making the trip car competitive. This improvement of service will allow our transit system to capture the important choice traveler and tourist.

Further, Greater Richmond is one of only 13 urban areas with over a million citizens that lack a rapid transit system, and one of the even fewer that is sandwiched between two of the top 26 most congested regions in the Nation with the average commuter wasting 46 hours annually in traffic. Combined Richmond, Greater Washington/Northern Virginia, and Hampton Roads make up the Commonwealth's Urban Crescent which is home to 7 in 10 Virginians, 70.5 percent of Virginia's jobs and economy confined on only 15.2 percent of the Commonwealth's landmass. Additionally, our Urban Crescent is home to over 270,000 college students, a majority of whom don't want an automobile. Lastly, the Commonwealth partners with Amtrak to operate five trains on portions of Virginia's Urban Crescent and which all serve Greater Richmond and which also account for three of the top five most financially successful Regional corridors in Amtrak's network.

All of this goes to show that Richmonders and Virginians want, and will use, other modes of transportation. We strongly support Richmond's 2014 TIGER Grant application and hope that you fund this worthwhile project.

Sincerely,



Danny Plaugher
Executive Director