



Tri-County PARKWAY Location Study



A NEWSLETTER TO INFORM, EDUCATE AND INVOLVE THE PUBLIC
FALL 2003 · ISSUE 2

Welcome to the second in a series of newsletters developed to keep you informed and involved in the Tri-County Parkway (TCP) Location Study. We hope this newsletter will provide a better understanding of the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process and encourage your participation.

To assist you, a list of regularly used acronyms is provided in the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section of this newsletter. In addition, Page 3 includes the Candidate Build Alternatives (CBAs) shown on a Study Area map to provide a visual understanding of the possible "build solutions" and to serve as a reference as you read the newsletter.

We invite you to visit the project Web site at <http://www.virginiadot.org/projects/tcp.asp> for detailed information about the topics introduced here. Please share this newsletter with a friend or neighbor. Encourage them to call the project information line at 1-866-874-5286 or to visit the Web site to be added to the project mailing list to receive future newsletters and an announcement of the Location Public Hearing.

Thank you for your interest and involvement in the Tri-County Parkway Location Study.



Initial Screening Is Complete

Candidate Build Alternatives Selected for Detailed Review

The initial range of preliminary alternatives that were shared with the public during the December 2002 Public Information Meetings were expanded to consider additional segments.

The alternatives were put through a screening process and in May 2003, the TCP Advisory Task Force, whose role is to review study information, analyses and recommendations and provide feedback to the Study Team, concurred with the Study Team's recommendation to eliminate segments A, B and D from further consideration.

Next, the study was coordinated through VDOT's interagency partnering process. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Environmental Protection Agency and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service recommended segment D and variations of segment B for additional evaluation of impacts to the environment. Segment B was ultimately eliminated; however, segment D along with segments C, E, F, and G remain as viable options.

This comprehensive process along with input from the public and the Advisory Task Force has resulted in the development of the Candidate Build Alternatives (CBAs) shown on Page 3. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) concurs with the alternatives under review.



THANK YOU FOR SHARING YOUR COMMENTS

- After the December 2002 meetings, over 340 comments were read and analyzed to aid the Study Team in their review of the Preliminary Alternatives.
- Since March 2002, over 500 comments have been received and reviewed.
- 75% of the comments received identified a build alternative.

What's Next?

The Study Team will continue to evaluate, analyze and refine the CBAs as well as the Transportation Systems Management (TSM), Mass Transit, and No-Build Alternatives. The impacts and effectiveness of the CBAs illustrated here will be presented in the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS). Once the DEIS is signed by the FHWA, it will be made available in the Summer of 2004 for review and comment at numerous public places in the study area. After the Location Public Hearing is held in the Fall of 2004, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) will select a build location or other alternative described in the DEIS. Following CTB action, a Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) will be prepared to identify the alternative adopted by the CTB, address comments received on the DEIS and describe the mitigation measures.

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Project Schedule

Scoping/Public Participation	March 2002
Begin Environmental, Engineering and Field Work	Fall 2003
Draft EIS	Late Summer 2004
Public Hearings	Early Fall 2004
CTB Action	Late Fall 2004
Final EIS	Winter 2004

This schedule may be further adjusted for unforeseen events.



TO LEARN MORE: VISIT OUR PROJECT WEB SITE FOR THE LATEST NEWS ON THE TRI-COUNTY PARKWAY LOCATION STUDY.

Other Transportation Studies in the Region

As Northern Virginia looks for solutions to the region's growing traffic congestion and road safety problems, several transportation projects are underway. Since there is some amount of overlap in the study areas, the key project members from each team meet regularly to share information and data. The Manassas National Battlefield Park Bypass Study is managed by the FHWA for the National Park Service and all other listed studies are managed by the Virginia Department of Transportation. For more about related studies, visit: <http://virginia.dot.org/projects/pr-novamain.asp>

Route 606 (Old Ox Road/Loudoun County Parkway)

Web site: www.virginiadot.org/projects/nova/nuts-and-bolts-Loudoun.asp
Project is currently under construction

Manassas National Battlefield Park Bypass EIS (Routes 29 & 234)

Web site: www.battlefieldbypass.com
E-mail: battlefieldbypass@parsons.com

Route 28 Corridor Improvements

Web site: www.28freeway.com
Information Line: 703-668-0288
E-mail: 28_freeway@28freeway.com
Project is currently under construction

I-66 Corridor Study (Outside the Capital Beltway)

Web site: www.infoi66.com
Information Line: 1-866-463-6466
E-mail: comments@infoi66.com

Understanding the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) Process

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) is an important element of the Tri-County Parkway Location Study Process. Some elements of this process include:

I. Identification of Needs and Scoping	II. Alternatives Development	III. Evaluation of Impacts <i>current phase</i>	IV. Draft Environmental Impact Statement and Public Hearing	V. Final Environmental Impact Statement and the Record of Decision
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The Scoping process and identification of needs began in March 2002 with public meetings to introduce the Tri-County Parkway Location Study and seek community input. Next, Preliminary Alternatives were developed and presented at the Public Information Meetings held in December 2002. Based on the needs identified, a number of preliminary build alternatives were developed and presented to the public. 250 citizens attended the meetings and 340 comments were collected as input into the project's development. Next, the number of build alternatives were screened by transportation, environmental and engineering criteria and further reduced to include only the most feasible alternatives.

The Study Team is currently evaluating the impacts of the Alternatives. These studies become the basis for major sections of the DEIS. This part of the process analyzes the potential effects of building each alternative. The issues analyzed include, but are not limited to:

- Air Quality
- Cultural Resources
- Hazardous Materials
- Indirect & Cumulative Impacts
- Land Use
- Natural Resources
- Noise, Park, Recreation & Open Space Easements
- Relocations, Social & Economic Impacts
- Traffic & Transportation Impacts
- Visual Quality

The DEIS document is then made available to the public for review and comment. Location Public Hearings are held. After the public hearing is held and all the comments are received on the DEIS, the CTB will adopt a location or other alternative.

The FEIS is prepared by VDOT and FHWA and documents the action of the CTB, responds to comments received on the DEIS, and summarizes mitigation measures. FHWA reviews and approves the final document and issues a Record of Decision (ROD). The ROD is a public document that reflects FHWA's final decision, the rationale behind that decision and commitments to monitoring and mitigation.

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After the FHWA has approved the FEIS, they will issue a Record of Decision (ROD) to represent the final federal approval of the selected alternative.

Study Background

The Tri-County Parkway Location Study kicked off in March 2002 with three Public Scoping Meetings. After the meetings, the Study Team, using citizen and agency input, documented the needs of the study area and developed a range of preliminary alternatives. Numerous potential build alternatives resulted from this process and were presented during three Public Information Meetings in December 2002. The segments, labeled A, B, C, D, E, F, and G, joined together in various combinations to form numerous alternatives to connect the northern and south-

ern points of the study area. Alternatives west of the Manassas National Battlefield Park utilize the existing VA 234 Bypass south of I-66 to link with the southern terminus of the project.

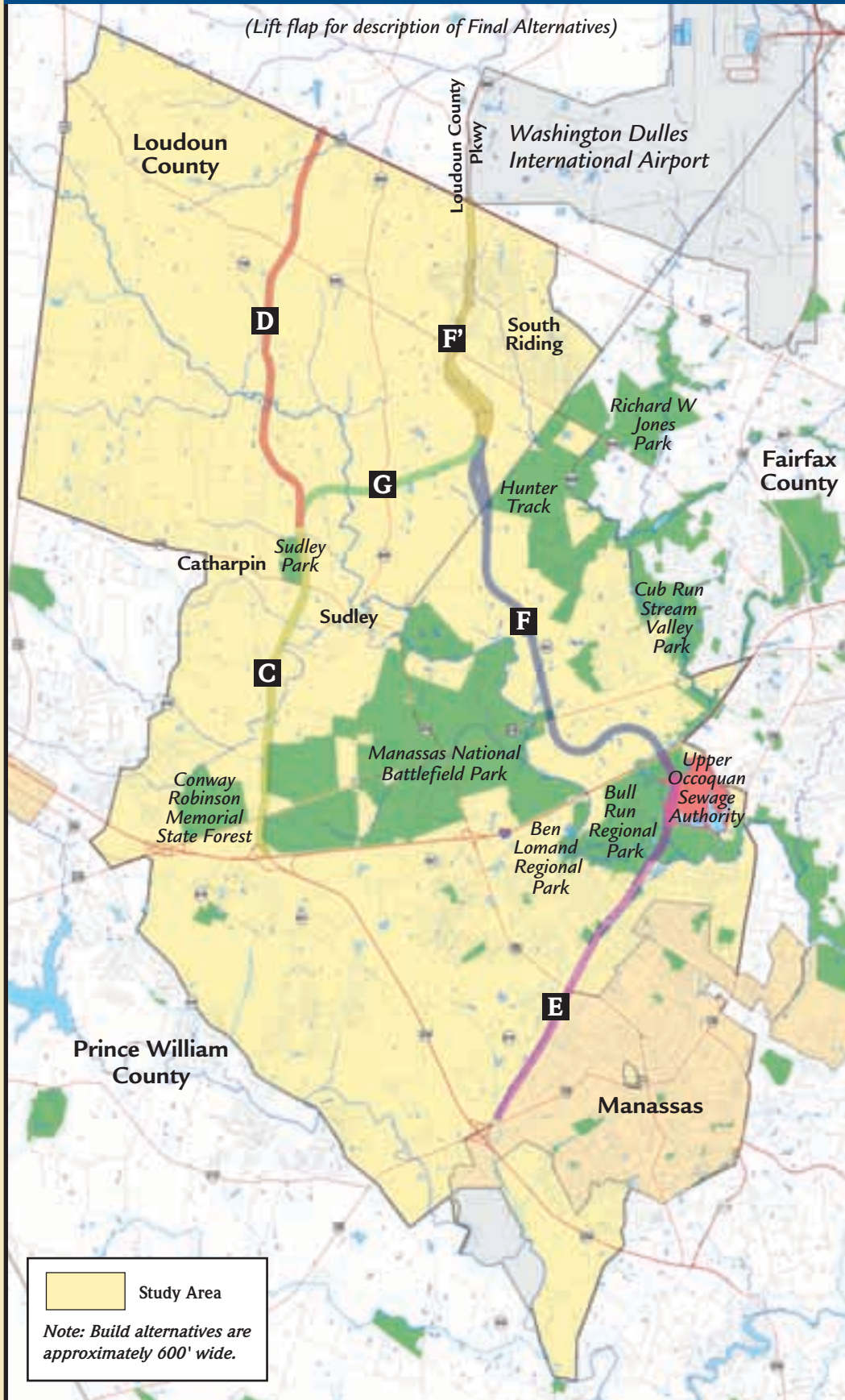
Casting a Wide Net

Help us get the word out. Please tell others about the TCP Location Study.

Several strategies were used to inform citizens of the March and December 2002 public meetings. Those include: newspaper advertising, E-mail messages, direct mail, newsletters, Web site and community postings, to name a few. Since this project's inception, over 500 comments have been received and reviewed by the Study Team and close to 2,000 people have been included on our mailing list.



Tri-County Parkway Study Area Candidate Build Alternatives



Alternatives Selected for Further Review

As mentioned on the cover of this newsletter, the remaining Alternatives selected for further analysis for the Tri-County Parkway study area include the following options:

No-Build

Under this scenario, the TCP would not be constructed. No-build conditions include only the improvements already listed in the Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) for the region EXCEPT the Tri-County Parkway.

Transportation Systems Management (TSM)

This Alternative incorporates improvements to the existing system and may include:

- Optimizing traffic signal timing and coordination;
- Left and right turn lanes to improve intersection and roadway flow.

Mass Transit

Options such as adding or increasing bus and rail will be considered.

Build Alternatives

The following Candidate Build Alternatives are advanced as potential solutions that meet the Purpose and Need of the project.

Please refer to the map to view each of the three alternatives.

- **West Two**
This alternative is west of the Manassas National Battlefield and consists of Segments **D** and **C**.
- **West Four**
This alternative is west of the Manassas National Battlefield and consists of Segments **F'**, **G** and **C**.
- **Comprehensive Plan**
This alternative is east of the Manassas National Battlefield and consists of Segments **F'**, **F** and **E**.

FAQ's about the Study

What is MWCOG?

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. A regional organization of Washington area local governments whose mission is to enhance the quality of life and competitive advantages of the Washington region.

Who are the TPB and MPO?

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board and Metropolitan Planning Organization. The TPB is the federally-designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the region, and plays an important role as the regional forum for transportation planning.

Who is the NVTA?

Northern Virginia Transportation Authority. This is an advisory group of locally-elected officials that make recommendations to the state on transportation projects for Northern Virginia. The NVTA replaced the Transportation Coordinating Council effective July 1, 2002, by the Virginia General Assembly.

What is the CLRP?

Constrained Long Range Plan. The official long-range transportation plan developed by the TPB for the National Capital Region. It identifies the capital improvements, studies, actions and strategies that the region proposes to carry out by the year 2025.

What is the TIP?

Transportation Improvement Program. This program provides detailed information showing which projects in the CLRP will be completed over the next six-year period. It is administered and developed by the TPB.

How does the removal of the Western Transportation Corridor from VDOT's Six-Year Plan affect the TCP Study?

The removal of the Western Transportation Corridor Study from the Six-Year Improvement Program has no effect on the range of preliminary alternatives under consideration for the Tri-County Parkway. The alternatives that are studied for the TCP are potential solutions to the problems identified in the Purpose and Need for the TCP.

For more acronyms, visit the following Web sites:


www.virginiadot.org/projects/tri-acronyms.asp


www.mwcog.org/transportation/tpb/glossary.asp



Look inside to see *Alternatives Selected for Further Review*

Do you know how fast the Study Area is growing?

 The Dulles Corridor will increase in population and employment more rapidly than the averages for the rest of the Metropolitan Washington Region. According to MWCOG, the Corridor will experience a 71 percent increase in jobs compared to a regional increase of 39 percent for the years 2000 to 2025. Population in the Corridor is expected to increase 56 percent compared to a 33 percent regional population growth over the same period.

 The Washington Dulles International Airport is projected to carry 65.7 million passengers in 2025.

Source: Washington Dulles International Airport, "Draft Aviation Activity Forecasts," June 2000, prepared by HNTB Corporation for the Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority.

Tri-County Parkway Advisory Task Force

The members of the TCP Advisory Task Force represent the key counties and agencies within the study area. The role of the task force members is to review study information, analyses, and recommendations, and provide feedback to the Study Team.

Chairman:

Mr. Leonard S. "Hobie" Mitchel
Commonwealth Transportation Board

Members:

Mr. Kirby Bowers
Loudoun County Administrator

Mr. Gary Fenton
Director, Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority

Mr. Craig Gerhart
County Executive, Prince William County

Mr. Anthony Griffin
County Executive, Fairfax County

Mr. James E. Bennett
President & CEO, Metropolitan Washington Airports Authority

Mr. Ulysses X. White
Council Member, City of Manassas

Ex Officio:

Mr. Thomas F. Farley
District Administrator, VDOT–Northern Virginia

Mr. Ken Wilkinson
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Virginia Department of Transportation
1401 East Broad Street
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Purpose and Need for the Tri-County Parkway

The Purpose and Need Report serves a vital function in an environmental study. By defining problems, it guides the identification of possible solutions or alternatives, allowing for comparison of different solutions in terms of their ability to solve transportation problems. The Purpose and Need Report is reflective of local government comprehensive plans, the Northern Virginia 2020 Transportation Plan, the regional Constrained Long Range Plan, and the Transportation Improvement Plan. The need for this project is defined by a problem statement containing several key elements. These elements reflect the overall

transportation problems identified in the communities being served under the proposed action. Key elements include:

1. Improve transportation mobility and capacity and by doing so, improve north/south access within the study area and reduce congestion.
2. Enhance the linkage of communities and the transportation system that serves those communities. This linkage includes the modal interrelationships between the various transportation systems in the region.
3. Improve safety, and by doing so, reduce accidents on the roadway network.

We want to hear from you. Stay involved.

- Visit the Web site for updates
- Plan to attend a future public meeting
- Send your comments:

PROJECT CONTACT INFORMATION

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Richmond, VA 23219

E-mail: tricityparkway@virginiadot.org

Toll Free Info Line:
1-866-TRI-LCTN (1-866-874-5286)

Web site: www.virginiadot.org/projects/tcp.asp

VDOT ensures non-discrimination in all programs and activities in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. For further information, contact the Virginia Department of Transportation, Office of Civil Rights, 14685 Avion Parkway, Chantilly, Va 20151, Telephone: toll free (888) 383-VDOT or TTY (800) 307-4630.