

IN REPLY REFER TO:
NCPC FILE No. 7977

March 22, 2018

Ms. Donna Buscemi
Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration
707 N Calvert Street, MS C-301
Baltimore, Maryland 21202

Re: DC-to-Baltimore Loop Tunnel Project Environmental Assessment Scoping Comments

Dear Ms. Buscemi:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide scoping comments in preparation for an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the DC-to-Baltimore Loop Tunnel Project. The National Capital Planning Commission (NCPC) is the federal government's central planning agency for the National Capital Region, and as such, has a vested interest in orderly federal development throughout the region. We understand that the DC-to-Baltimore Loop Tunnel Project seeks to greatly improve long-distance transportation from the District to Baltimore, and that it may ultimately extend further. NCPC staff feels that this is an exciting new project for the region, and generally expresses support for the proposed concept.

In our review of the materials, it appears that the proposed below-grade alignment will follow federal and District property lines. We do not plan to provide comments on the alignment, but would like to note that any above-ground transportation facilities or related buildings proposed on federal or District-owned land in the National Capital Region as part of this effort is subject to Commission review. If such facilities or buildings are constructed on privately-owned land, please be advised that the Commission does not have jurisdiction to review these projects. As the alignment and stations are studied and further refined, we encourage consideration of how these transportation opportunities:

- Connect into the broader transportation system, including bike, pedestrian, transit, and road infrastructure.
- Support and connect to locations designated for growth and development, including the regional activity centers identified through the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.
- Support and connect to major federal employment centers in proximity to the alignment. NCPC works with major federal facilities and reviews master plans and projects, including transportation management plans intended to support multi-modal choices by federal workers. Frequently, federal employment centers connect to regional transit through shuttles, other transit connections, and pedestrian and bike trails.

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- Address natural and man-made hazards to ensure the safety and security of riders and infrastructure.
- Protect and strengthen existing parks and open space as a connected system.

Recognizing the linked nature of transportation and land use, we also encourage you to work collaboratively with nearby jurisdictions and federal agencies to ensure that any future development adjacent to station locations is mutually complementary to this new transportation project, and addresses the needs for supporting infrastructure (e.g., sidewalks, parking, trails, and roads) and amenities.

NCPC staff appreciates the opportunity to participate in the scoping stage, and looks forward to continued involvement in the process and project. If you have any questions regarding our comments, please contact Diane Sullivan at 202.482.7244 or diane.sullivan@ncpc.gov.

Sincerely,



Marcel Acosta
Executive Director
National Capital Planning Commission

cc: Peter May, Associate Regional Director, Lands and Planning, National Park Service
National Capital Region