

April 21, 2021

Hon. Charles Allen  
Chair, National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

Re: **Call for a climate-friendly Visualize 2045 update**

Chair Allen and Board members:

Tomorrow is the 51<sup>st</sup> anniversary of Earth Day, and 2030 is just 9 years away. By which time we must slash greenhouse gas emissions by 50%. Transportation is our largest emitter and electric vehicles will not be enough. We must reduce VMT by 15 to 25%, and increase non-auto mode share by 15 to 20%.

You voted 22 to 0 with 8 abstentions (VDOT changed from No to Abstain) to **require** that members "*prioritize investments on projects, programs, and policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, prioritize the aspirational strategies, and achieve COG's land use and equity goals.*"

But in response, your DOT staffs are arguing their road projects reduce VMT and emissions, and without showing how. Building new highways and widening highways and arterials **does not** reduce VMT or GHG emissions. Nor do HOT lanes. This is because induced demand is a proven fact. New capacity fills up in just a few years with more vehicle trips and VMT, and sparks more auto-dependent sprawl. Not to mention the impact of highways in loss of thousands of acres of forests, more impervious surface and stormwater, and the negative health and equity issues.

You are the leaders who can and must break us out of business-as-usual and craft a plan that focuses on TOD and proximity, correcting the E-W jobs divide, transit-first, and local connected street grids with safe bike/ped networks.

The DC region can and must be a leader in smart growth and sustainable transportation -- starting with a new climate-friendly CLRP.

Stewart Schwartz  
Executive Director

Bill Pugh  
Senior Policy Fellow