

URGENT NOTICE

Dear Resident:

For more than 15 years, I have been working on a transportation issue that could affect your daily life. As you know, the Franconia-Springfield Parkway is a heavily utilized road that connects directly to the Fairfax County Parkway. The one missing feature of this road is the fact that commuters from the west side of I-95, who use both Parkways, cannot enter the regular northbound lanes of I-95. Instead, they are only allowed to enter the High Occupancy Vehicle lanes (HOV), which require three or more persons per vehicle.

I have tried to get approval for ramps to allow our citizens, on the west side of I-95, to enter the regular northbound lanes by supporting the design and construction of a Low Occupancy Vehicle (LOV) ramps. These ramps would improve safety, vehicular circulation, air quality, travel times, and provide a more convenient commute. The ramps, while providing additional access to I-95, would also reduce congestion along Old Keene Mill Road. This concept has, in the past, been fully supported by the Board of Supervisors and appropriately recorded. Recently, however, there has been rising opposition from those on the east side of I-95 and those residing in the immediate vicinity of the proposed ramps. Those in opposition have flooded their local representatives with correspondence opposing the LOV ramps.

At a November 19, 2003, Public Hearing, the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) presented design plans for proposed direct access (LOV) ramps for all traffic from the Franconia-Springfield Parkway eastbound to I-95 northbound and from I-95 southbound to westbound on the Parkway. Concerns were raised about the existing and future operational problems at the signalized Bonnie Mill Road intersection. This at-grade intersection is a significant bottleneck for traffic heading to and from West Springfield on the Parkway. The previously approved Franconia-Springfield Parkway design plans (1986) recognized the need for a future grade-separated interchange to serve developments along Bonnie Mill Road, Neuman Street, and Hoes Road.

Currently, no funding exists for land acquisition or construction of the I-95 direct access ramps (LOV) to and from the Franconia-Springfield Parkway, the Bonnie Mill Road grade-separated interchange, or for the HOV lanes on the Franconia-Springfield Parkway to the Transportation Center. However, it is important for the long-term success of the area transportation network, to retain the capability to build these important infrastructure improvements in the future. VDOT should continue design, land acquisition, and construction

initiatives for the Bonnie Mill Road grade-separated interchange, the HOV lanes on the F-S Parkway and LOV direct access to the Franconia Parkway at I-95.

It is critical that you raise your voices in support of the full design for the Bonnie Mill Road interchange and the LOV ramp connections. Without your support, we risk losing forever the possibility of direct access to I-95 for LOVs by those opposing this connection. If this access is not constructed, I envision perpetual grid-lock along Old Keene Mill Road creating a future need to expand OKM Road to 6 or even 8 lanes.

Design consideration for the LOV access will be coming before the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors on June 21, 2004. I desperately need your support to keep the LOV direct access ramp connection alive. **Please write to your elected officials and let your voice be heard in support of the LOV direct access ramps prior to the June 21st meeting.**

Members of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors:

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Sincerely,



Elaine McConnell
Supervisor
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