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ARTBA begins new ad campaign

December 7, 2007

The men and women of the U.S. transportation design and construction industry possess the expertise, technological sophistication and creative thinking to solve the enormous challenges facing the nation's surface transportation network. That's a core message in a new print and online ad campaign unveiled by the American Road & Transportation Builders Association (ARTBA).

The December 4 launch included the first in a series of advertisements—featuring ARTBA members—that highlight ARTBA's global vision of a modernized transportation system that has the capacity to manage population growth and congestion, increase global competitiveness and provide safety and security to consumers. The first ad is appearing in "Roll Call" this week, and will be featured next week in "Congress Daily."

A companion ad running online at www.politico.com highlights the association's legislative proposals for the reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU. In a recently released 72-page report, ARTBA called on Congress to "reform, refocus, restructure and refinance" the federal surface transportation programs, with two major components.

One would be an expanded core federal highway/transit program to protect past infrastructure investments and improve the quality of life for all Americans. Incumbent in this initiative is the need to dramatically increase investment in surface transportation improvements.


ARTBA recognizes, however, additional resources alone will not solve the nation's transportation challenges. The association has developed a series of specific operational recommendations to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the existing programs. The second component, a "Critical Commerce Corridors," or "3C," program, would be focused on adding new highway and intermodal

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The Free Lance-Star

Caroline studying a rail station

Caroline County receives almost \$100,000 to study rail station in Carmel Church area



Date published: 12/10/2007

By KELLY HANNON

Caroline County has received nearly \$100,000 in state grant money to study building a passenger rail station in the Carmel Church area.

The study, expected to finish around May, will look at three possible locations, said Kevin Page of the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation.

"It's a passenger rail design concept," said Page, DRPT's chief of rail transportation. The station design would accommodate commuter rail, Amtrak or high-speed rail in the future, he said.

Caroline County residents and the county Board of Supervisors have expressed interest in bus service to the Virginia Railway Express station in Fredericksburg. The VRE runs weekday commuter service to Northern Virginia and Washington employment centers.

FREDericksburg Regional Transit just launched bus service to VRE from Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania to ease a tight parking situation near the downtown station.

Caroline economic development director Gary Wilson said the station concept is in the early stages.

"There are engineers and those kind of folks looking at dry numbers and patches of ground and trying to make some sense out of the ideas we have," Wilson said.

Close to 60 percent of Caroline's workers are employed outside the county.

The county was named the 10th fastest-growing in the nation by the U.S. Census Bureau in 2005. With

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Local

Senior citizens to ride Metro buses for free

Joe Rogalsky, The Examiner

2007-12-15 15:28:10.0

Current rank: # 1,646 of 11,103

WASHINGTON -

Senior citizens and people with disabilities will be able to ride Metro buses for free in Montgomery County beginning Jan. 1.

The county will pay Metro \$220,000 a year to waive the 60-cent fares for those riders, the only Metro jurisdiction to do so. Montgomery County's Ride On service also will be free in January for senior citizens, who must be 65 or older, and the disabled.

"We're trying to help people who have limited mobility opportunities to get around the county," said Gary Erenrich, Montgomery's transit coordinator. Passengers will have to obtain an identification card from Metro to prove they qualify for the free rides. The transit system already requires such identification cards for seniors and the disabled to obtain the 60-cent fare, which will be 65 cents cheaper than the regular fare once Metro's fare increases kick in Jan. 6.

Senior citizens and the disabled began receiving free Metrobus rides in Montgomery County in October 2006, but on a limited basis. Initially, fares were waived only on weekdays between 9 a.m. and 3 p.m., but Erenrich said demand has been high enough to merit extending the free service.

Senior-citizen and disabled riders are not the only ones receiving free rides on Metro buses in Montgomery County. Since January 2003, the system has waived the fares for county schoolchildren on weekdays between 2 p.m. and 7 p.m.

"We started the free fares for the students so they will be free to run errands or go to after-school activities without their parents having to drive them everywhere," Erenrich said.

Students in Virginia and the District of Columbia do not receive discounted fares, but Prince George's County and Metro agreed this summer to allow students in that county to ride for free. Prince George's County is paying Metro \$300,000 to reimburse the system for the fare revenue it will lose.

jrogalsky@dcexaminer.com

Examiner

He joined VDOT's Northern Virginia District as a senior engineer in 1989.

From 1985 until 1989, he worked for a Virginia land development company. Prior to that, he was a research associate at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he was significantly involved in several transportation policy projects in Egypt.

Earlier he was an associate professor of civil engineering at Tehran University.

Salehi succeeds Dennis Morrison, who retired from VDOT this summer and joined a consulting firm.

For more information about VDOT's leadership team, visit VirginiaDOT.org/about/leaders.asp.

(END)

EDITORS AND REPORTERS: A high-resolution image of Salehi is available [here](#).

Page last modified: 12/17/2007 3:56:44 PM

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What this method lacks - which should be inherent in all agency public relations matters - is the immediacy (and cathartic nature, perhaps) of a real-time interaction with transit decision-makers. The reason only seven percent of the cards were returned is most likely due to the fact that riders assumed their thoughts would fall by the wayside.

The MTA is up against a politically unpopular decision, one in which riders must be given all possible opportunities to voice their opinions – and hopefully in the process learn a bit more about what exactly a fare increase will get them. In brainstorming how agencies can derive the most data while upholding high standards of customer service, we keep coming back to the idea of immediacy. Whether it means placing transit delegates outside of subway stations or contracting out to host additional information sessions, agencies must be sure to offer their constituents a fair chance to be part of the decision-making effort and to become familiar with the management process.

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Production starts next week. "We want to measure twice and cut once," McBride said.

The biggest increases will be for subway riders who park and travel during the morning and afternoon rushes. The rush-hour base fare is increasing 30 cents, to \$1.65 per trip, and the maximum fare is increasing 60 cents, to \$4.50. There are no increases for off-peak rail travel or for MetroAccess, the paratransit service for disabled people.

Rush hour is defined as weekday mornings from 5 to 9:30 and weekday afternoons and evenings from 3 to 7. (The higher fares are also in effect from 2 to 3 a.m. Saturday and Sunday.)

Daily parking fees, now as much as \$4, will increase 75 cents for six months. The Metro board has the option of raising fees an additional quarter in July. Metrobus fares will increase a dime for cash-paying customers but remain \$1.25 for riders paying with electronic SmarTrip cards.

Metro will give about 50,000 SmarTrip cards to social service agencies in the District, Maryland and Virginia for free distribution to low-income bus riders so they won't have to pay \$5 for rechargeable fare cards. Each agency will set its own criteria for giving away the SmarTrip cards. Metro is developing a distribution schedule, but no dates have been announced.

Metro will distribute cards based on bus ridership, with the largest numbers going to the District (about 20,000 cards) and Prince George's County (10,350).

To encourage use of SmarTrip cards, Metro will also sell them at eight stations near popular bus transfer points from 4 to 7 p.m. during the week beginning Jan. 3. The stations are Anacostia, Minnesota Avenue, Columbia Heights, Potomac Avenue, Union Station, Silver Spring, Ballston, and Brookland.

Bus tokens, the one-day bus pass and a multi-day rail pass for convention-goers have been eliminated, and riders will pay more for a variety of bus and rail passes. But Metro will continue to accept bus tokens as full fare, even if someone paid \$1.25 each for them, officials said.

Metro officials said more than 200 people are working on the changeover, but they did not have an estimate of the cost. In addition to replacing station and parking lot signs, Metro has to print thousands of maps and brochures, including the popular pocket guide, to show the new fares.

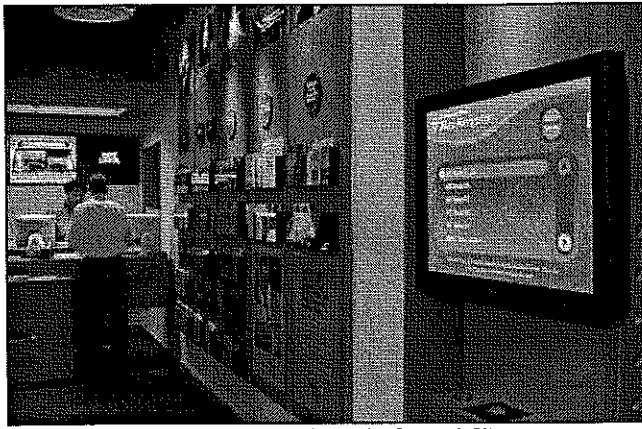
McBride said the layout for the charts and signs was done two months ago, when it became clear that fare increases were likely. But budget officials could not start refiguring fares until after last week's board meeting, when the fare plan was approved.

Officials are hoping Mother Nature cooperates. The employees who have to install the signs are the same ones responsible for clearing ice and snow.

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The Commuter Store in Crystal City

The Commuter store is just one of the tools Arlington County uses to combat traffic congestion. Arlington is the leading jurisdiction in Virginia -- and a pace-setter nationally -- in creating innovative alternatives to the auto-centric society. It has come as close as anyone to finding the formula for reconciling population growth, commercial development and quality of life.

In contrast to most urban-core jurisdictions, Arlington's population is growing -- faster than one percent per year since 2000. What's more, Arlington is growing up, not out, which means that population density is increasing. At 7,700 inhabitants per square mile, Arlington's density is exceeded in Virginia only by Alexandria's. It is three times that of neighboring Fairfax County.

Remarkably, new development is concentrated overwhelmingly in the 11 percent of the land that is zoned commercial. Since 1970, the square footage of office space in the Ballston-Rosslyn corridor has increased from 5.5 million square feet to 20.5 million, the number of jobs from 22,000 to 90,000 and the number of residential units from 7,000 to 26,200. Developer proposals for that kind of focused, high-density growth are normally met with fear and loathing across Virginia. In the public mind, density = congestion. But, as Arlington has irrefutably demonstrated, density need not create congestion at all.

The proof is in the numbers. While secondary roads across Virginia are clogging up with more traffic, several Arlington thoroughfares have seen *less* traffic over the past 10 years. Most show modest growth, averaging around 1/2 percent per year. Admittedly, some major traffic corridors like Interstate 66 are overloaded, but they facilitate regional traffic flows for the most part and are funded, designed and maintained by the Virginia Department of Transportation.

Fund. (See [details.](#))

Other clients include:

AgilQuest: Contract publication of electronic newsletter; writing.

Commonwealth Biotechnologies: contract publication of newsletter.

Greater Richmond Partnership: Contract publication of four electronic newsletters (*Greater Richmond Catalyst, Greater Richmond BioSynthesis, Greater Richmond Logistics, and Working Capital*).

CEO Intelligence Services. I am a principal in CEO Intelligence Services, a company that conducts marketplace and political research. ([View website.](#))

cycling, the county requires developers to include bike racks in their projects and, in new projects, to equip office buildings with shower facilities where cyclists can change from their biking clothes into their work clothes.

But simply providing the rail service, buses routes and biking amenities will not get people to use them. Transportation facilities must be integrated with each other, and with the urban fabric. As Bob Brosnan, director of the county planning department, puts it, "We wanted a transportation system, not just a commuter rail line running through our community."

Density around the Metro stations is key. People are generally willing to walk a quarter mile to catch the Metro. That means filling the space around the Metro stations with buildings, not parking lots. Arlington has encouraged "pyramid" style development around its Metro stations, in which the tallest buildings are clustered around the station, and buildings drop in height the nearer they get to surrounding neighborhoods of single-family houses.

Arlington County encourages mixed uses: office buildings apartment/condominium buildings, with restaurants, shops and services accessible in street-level store-fronts. Adding 19,600 housing units since 1980, the Ballston-Rosslyn corridor accounts for most of the county's residential growth. Planners and developers work hand-in-glove to create streetscapes where people feel comfortable walking, sitting and congregating. The five Metro station areas in the Ballston-Rosslyn corridor are adorned with wide sidewalks, shade trees, mini-plazas and pocket parks. Corridor streets are narrow, with no more than four lanes of moving traffic, and speed limits are low -- crossing the street on foot is a normal experience, not an intimidating one. Although the county provides limited on-street parking, there are very few parking lots -- most parking is located underneath the buildings.

The result is a string of urban islands where people can reach many of their destinations -- including the Metro -- on foot. According to Arlington County statistics, 10 percent of the people living in the Ballston-Rosslyn corridor walk to work. The number for the county as a whole is six percent -- about six times the national average. (The bicycling program, by contrast, has yet to make a serious dent. The percentage of Arlington workers biking to work is about one percent, in line with national averages.)

Infrastructure and land use are critical, but there's one more essential step: marketing. Americans are so accustomed to relying on their automobiles, they need some hand-holding to learn how to use the subway and bus. That's where Chris Hamilton's commuter services come in. Arlington County aggressively markets the transit alternatives. Besides supporting the three commuter stores, Arlington maintains an elaborate

Americans can save \$25,000 to \$30,000 over a five-year period by dispensing with just one car. And that doesn't include the health advantages of walking/cycling more or the environmental benefits of burning less gasoline. The county was so taken by Bailish' message that it partnered with him to re-publish the book with a chapter devoted to car-free living in Arlington County.

The message seems to be sinking in as Arlingtonians discover that they truly can live with a single car. (See "Loving the One-Car Lifestyle," in the *Bacon's Rebellion* blog.) A measure of the growing trend is the growing market for Zipcar and Flexcar, companies that provide hourly car rental services for those occasions when subscribers just absolutely have to have a car. Between them, the two companies have nearly 4,000 customers in Arlington, says Hamilton. The county provides on-street parking where the cars are parked between jaunts. Demand has gotten so strong that the county is planning to double the number of car-sharing slots on the streets.

It should be clear to any open-minded observer that Arlington County has tackled the traffic congestion problem more successfully than anyone else in Northern Virginia. If you don't find the traffic statistics convincing, take the trouble, as I did, to spend a day -- including rush hour -- driving and walking around the Ballston-Rosslyn corridor.

The big question is this: How much does it all cost? Heavy rail, buses and commuter stores don't come free. If Arlington County is subsidizing alternative transportation, how much comes out of the pockets of county taxpayers?

According to Arlington Communications Director Diana Sun, the major expenses can be summarized as follows:

**Local Tax Support for
Alternate Transportation
(in thousands of dollars)**

	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
Metro Rail and Bus	13,000	14,700	17,400
Local Bus (ART)	7,331	6,382	6,614
Commuter Services	538	186	186
Total	20,869	21,268	24,200

It's important to note that those numbers may understate the total subsidy for alternate transportation. They don't include state or federal contributions to the programs, or miscellaneous items such as the in-kind value of providing free parking spaces to Zipcar and Flexcar. But it provides a reasonably fair account of what Arlington taxpayers are paying.

The expenditures for Fiscal 2008 work out to about \$120 per Arlington County resident. If you're a dual-income

BACON'S REBELLION

The Op/Ed Page for Virginia's New Economy

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Gooze Views

Peter Galuszka



Forget Passenger Rail

Norfolk Southern's CEO provides clarity regarding the high cost of infrastructure and the lack of political will to pay for it. So much for the dreamy-eyed fantasies of those pricey consultants.

For Charles W. Moorman, it was a moment of truth. When the president and CEO of rail giant Norfolk Southern spoke at The World Affairs Council of Greater Richmond early this month, question after question popped up about what, if anything, a profitable freight hauler like NS could do to boost passenger rail. After all, passenger rail service is seen by many as the no-brainer panacea for severe car traffic congestion and pollution.

Trying to be diplomatic, Moorman dodged and weaved. Virginia, he said, has always been good to the Norfolk-based railroad, which runs more than 21,000 miles of track in 22 eastern states and Canada. "North Carolina," he allowed, "brings money to the table to add trains." California likewise has spent millions for one of the best regional rail passenger service in the country.

Yet the questions kept coming. Finally, Moorman laid it on the line. Bringing passenger service to any appreciable level beyond Amtrak would require tremendous infrastructure costs. "There isn't the political will to do it," he said. And, freight carriers like NS owe it to their shareholders to stay profitable with what they do best.

Finally, a moment of clarity, I thought, since I was the one who asked the question. It might not be what many people want to hear, but Moorman should be saluted for his honesty.

Why? Every consultant that comes down the pike cites improving high speed rail as a panacea for ills of all sorts. There are dreamy plans for gleaming new locomotives whisking people from Washington to Richmond and points south, conjuring up images of the old purple and aluminum Atlantic Coast Line streamliners with their sloped-nosed E-6 diesels. Or, the bright, citrus-colored Seaboard Air Line ones, such as the "Orange Blossom Special." New liners could fly down former Southern Railway lines from D.C. to Charlotte and Atlanta, following the famous route of the crack green and cream liveried Southern Crescent

Peter Galuszka is a veteran journalist living in Chesterfield County. View his profile [here](#).

(Photo credit: Maria Galuszka.)

follow Interstate 81 and on, linking what Moorman calls "Austin to Boston." Another leg would link the I-81 corridor with Memphis, a major east-west transshipping point. Moorman says the project might take a million truck loads off the highways annually, which may be a good thing for Virginia motorists on truck-clogged and safety-challenged I-81.

NS also is heavily investing in another route called the "Heartland" that would improve container shipments from Hampton Roads to Columbus, Ohio and the Midwest. Doing so involves adding double tracks and making mountain tunnels higher so more efficient double-stacked trains can move through.

For Virginia, one of the major drivers is the explosion of imports arriving at Hampton Roads, which Moorman notes has exceptional qualities. Trade from places such as China is so brisk that Danish carrier Maersk recently opening the most expensive port facility ever in the U.S. Federal funding seems likely to turn the old dredge spoil site of Craney Island into a mammoth new container facility.

Moorman says the U.S. must keep up with emerging economic giants such as China and India, which plan enormous transport improvements. He notes he recently visited an island about 20 miles off Shanghai that was being dynamited to make one great container terminal that would have the capacity of the entire Norfolk area. That's what emerging economies are doing. If U.S. East Coast ports, including those in Virginia, want a piece of the coming action, they'll have to keep coming up with big money as the railroads must.

Too bad such big questions have to be answered by such little people, particularly the anti-tax zealots in the state's Republican Party, many of whom live in the distant past and can't comprehend how the global economy is changing equations. As for passenger rail, forget it.

-- December 10, 2007

pedestrian-friendly streetscapes and mass transit. Yet some of the election victors who claim the label of smart growth may be more accurately described as anti-growth, in that they want to halt growth, not reshape it. Corey Stewart, the anti-growth chairman of the Prince William County Board of Supervisors, for instance, steadfastly opposes Transit Oriented Development and advocates massive spending on road improvements to catch up with growth.

Additionally, the shifting economic landscape adds a handful of wild cards to the game. The crisis over sub prime mortgage lending, easy credit and skyrocketing adjustable rate mortgages is forcing developers to postpone or cancel thousands of housing starts. As housing prices drop, households are finding that locations close to the urban core are more affordable, taking growth pressure off the counties on the frontier of development.

Another factor is the inevitable slowdown of spending on defense and homeland security that has turbo-charged the Northern Virginia economy since 2001. If Democrats take the presidency in 2008 and if there are no more terrorist attacks on U.S. soil, the spending slowdown could turn into a spending decline. Between the sub-prime mess, the weakness of the dollar, rising gasoline prices and the increasing odds of a national recession, the newly elected anti-growth supervisors could find that there's no growth left to control.

"Any time you have a downturn in housing, it is the areas the farthest from the job centers that are hardest hit. We're talking Stafford, Culpeper, outer Prince William and Frederick," says Michael Toalson, executive director of the Home Builders Association of Virginia, the leading developer lobby. Toalson says his industry is in near crisis and is likely to ask the General Assembly for emergency relief. Such succor could come in the form of a roll back of the 33-year-old system of "proffers" whereby developers make payments upfront to help cover the social costs of building. Smarter growth advocates such as Schwartz strenuously oppose tinkering with proffers.

Some of the fiercest battles over growth have taken place in Loudoun County, the fourth fastest-growing municipality in the country. Voters replaced four out of five of the county's supervisors, who had approved a rash of development projects. Pro-development supervisors Jim Clem, Mick Staton, Bruce E. Tulloch and Stephen J. Snow, were all tossed out of office, leaving only one pro-growth supervisor, Eugene Delgaudio, a political activist and Republican fund raiser who runs hard-right lobbies attacking homosexuals and illegal immigrants. All of the losing supervisors had received considerable money from the construction and real estate industries over the

As in Loudoun, thousands of new homes have been approved. Construction has just started on Magnolia Green, a 2,000-acre project encompassing single-family homes, multi-family homes and a Jack Nicklaus-designed golf course. The project is located in a district of the county that has seen some of the county's worst road congestion and school crowding.

Meanwhile, about a month before the Nov. 6 election, the Chesterfield board, by a 2-1 vote with two members abstaining, approved another mega project in the eastern part of the county. The Branner Station project will include nearly 5,000 homes and apartments plus 470,000 square feet of store space – the biggest ever in that part of Chesterfield.

The new board will soon face a big test: the largest proposed rezoning in Chesterfield's history. The project, called Roseland, would squeeze 5,140 homes and 1.5 million square feet of retail and office space into 1,395 acres. Developers are touting Roseland as the very kind of New Urbanism-inspired, compact, mixed-use development favored by smart growth advocates. But it would push the growth frontier farther west, past the busy Midlothian turnpike strip. The new boards in Loudoun and Chesterfield will have plenty of company in grappling with growth. In Hanover County, pro-smart growth supervisors were elected as a backlash against moves to change the county's comprehensive plan. In Albemarle, supervisor candidates won a majority over public disgust with sprawl-inspired traffic jams on U.S. 29 that runs through the middle of Charlottesville. Smarter growth candidates also won in Orange, Warren, Spotsylvania and Augusta Counties.

On the state level, the anti-growth backlash was less sevident. The Democratic win in the state Senate means that Dick Saslaw of Fairfax is in line to become Senate Majority Leader. Saslaw received a large amount of campaign money – at least \$90,000 -- from the construction and real estate community, according to the Virginia Public Access Project. If the home builder's lobby does decide to go after proffers, they'll likely get help from Saslaw.

At the same time, the Democratic win means that committee assignments will be scrambled. "The number of women and minorities will be much more visible," says Lisa Guthrie, executive director of the Virginia League of Conservation Voters. Although the Democrats are still sorting out committee assignments, it is likely that pro-smart growth choices, such as Mary Margaret Whipple of Arlington will head the Rules Committee and Janet Howell of Fairfax, will get privileges and Elections, which will have the hugely important task of overseeing upcoming election redistricting. Chuck Colgan of Manassas may be the Finance Committee and Phil

BACON'S REBELLION

The Op/Ed Page for Virginia's New Economy

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Articles

The Marine Highway

As head of the Maritime Administration, Sean Connaughton proposes fighting traffic congestion by moving cargo from Interstates to waterways. The James River could become a pilot project.

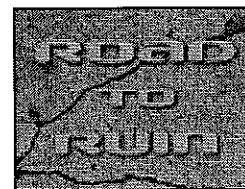
by Peter Galuszka

For centuries the James River has served as a vital commercial thoroughfare shaping Virginia's history. With the rise of railroads and Interstate highways, the brackish, winding waterway lost its status as a primary transportation artery. But now there's a chance that the river, and other Virginia waterways, could see a resurgence: helping relieve traffic congestion by taking container-bearing trucks off the highways.

That idea is part of a countrywide initiative spearheaded by the U.S. Maritime Administration, a federal agency now headed by Sean Connaughton, a Northern Virginia lawyer who chaired the Prince William County Board of Supervisors and ran unsuccessfully for Lieutenant Governor before taking a job with the Bush administration. The goal of the "Marine Highway" program is to make greater use of inland waterways, such as the Mississippi River system and Chesapeake Bay, to haul materials and goods.

The U.S. faces a flood of imports as global economies become more inter-connected and rising economies in China and other countries gear up to export consumer goods from televisions to refrigerators to clothing. Most imports enter the U.S. atop mammoth ships carrying thousands of containers. Yet very few containers actually are transshipped along America's extensive inland waterways from big ocean ports to their final destinations. Instead, most finish their journeys via trucks or railroad trains.

That's something Connaughton wants to change. Taking trucks off roads would provide congestion relief for clogged urban transportation systems like that of Hampton Roads. Shippers already suffer from traffic delays at bridge-tunnel bottlenecks caused by increasing container shipments and heavier commuter



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rationalize the law, noting that the federal government has surplus of funds already to handle harbor upkeep

At least one shipping firm enjoys a good business taking containers up and down Chesapeake Bay. Columbia Coastal Transport, a firm based in Liberty Corner, N.J., has been moving container shipments by barge in most major ports along the U.S. East Coast and some on the Gulf of Mexico. "Our biggest run is twice a week between Norfolk and Baltimore," says Max Kowalski, port manager for Columbia Coastal's Norfolk office.

All in all, the firm has 16 barges specially configured to carry up to 950 containers in different sizes. It takes the barges 18 hours to make the twice-weekly trip. Trucks would take only about six hours, but each truck load can handle only one container. If the shipper needs many containers arriving at the same time, barges are the way to go. "We have an advantage when we can move the containers under the same bill of lading at one time," says Kowalski, who supports the Marine Highway idea.

The Chesapeake Bay is a natural waterway because it is deep and protected, and it stretches for 200 miles. Coastal also runs barge loads to Philadelphia and the New York area and to southern ports as well. One problem with heading south, a factor that could limit the "Marine Highway" to some degree, is that the Intracoastal Waterway, a 12-foot-deep ditch running along the U.S. East and Gulf Coasts is not wide enough to handle the 250- to 350-foot-long barges that Columbia Coastal uses. So, for southbound shipments, tugboats must steer offshore around Cape Hatteras where the winter weather can be nasty. Columbia does make the runs, though, and can go to Latin America as well.

To boost the water highway idea, Connaughton is trying to arrange seed money for two pilot routes. One would go from the ports of New York and New Jersey up Long Island Sound to Bridgeport, Conn. The other is in Virginia, connecting Hampton Roads to Richmond's small container port on the James River, beside Interstate 95.

Gravel and sand barges, among others, regularly make the James River run, along with small, seagoing container ships from Iceland and Belgium. But problems of geography and economics make shipping containers with high end products problematic. The 90-mile route is just short enough to be over or under the break-even point for shippers, cost-wise.

According to David Host, president of Norfolk shipping agent T. Parker Host, it typically costs about \$400 per container for an overnight trip up the James. It costs

traffic congestion problems could get some relief from
the earliest mode of transit known to mankind.

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TECHNOLOGY

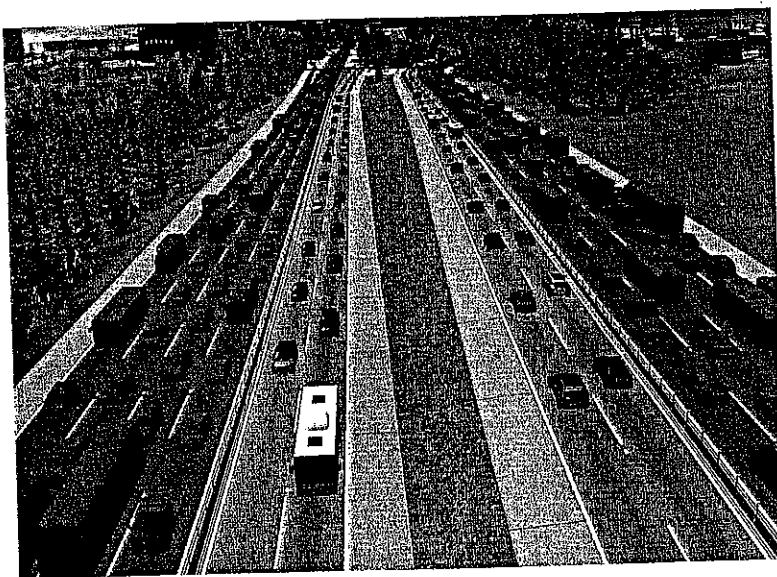
SCAN FANS

Virginia HOT Lanes Could Turn to Infrared

Virginia transportation officials plan to put HOV lanes on parts of the Capital Beltway around Washington, D.C. Solo drivers who want to ride in the less-congested lane would pay a fee, and drivers with carpoolers could ride the HOT lane for free. But who belongs in the free lane, and who doesn't? "You have to police the rules," says Jeffrey Caldwell, a Virginia transportation spokesman.

One approach that is on the state's radar screen is a new technology that uses infrared scanning. It relies on the blood and water content in the body to count how many living, breathing passengers are in a car.

Deploying this new technology, which would require both state and federal ap-



Future high-occupancy toll lanes in Virginia

proval, raises privacy concerns. One is over how the pictures taken by this system might be used and who would be allowed to see them. The original version, developed by a British company, puts a

green dot over the passengers' faces before anyone—let alone a lawyer's office or insurance company—ever sees the photo. Dot or not, those who support the system argue that drivers are making a choice to have their picture taken by driving in the HOV lane.

The infrared technology, dubbed "dtect," is expensive and not currently in use anywhere in the United States. To deploy it in HOT lanes, Virginia would have to ask riders

to install a special transponder—much like EZPass—that they can turn on and off, depending on whether they qualify for a carpooler's toll-free ride.

—Heather Kleba