THE INNER LOOP AND THE NATIONAL CAPITAL --

CRISIS IN TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Is Yesterday's "Solution" Tomorrow's Mistake?

(A Report of the Northwest Committee
for Transportation Planning)

Washington, D. C.
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Findings of This Report

1. Analysis of the Inner Loop cannot be divorced from the entire freeway program, of which it is an integral part. That analysis shows that both the Inner Loop and the related system of radial freeways and widened streets and expressways would not achieve their original purpose of relieving Washington from traffic congestion, but instead would foster worse congestion with irreparable injury to the National Capital.

2. During the 1950's, the District Highway Department, in cooperation with other agencies, evolved a master freeway plan that would involve the expenditure of about one billion dollars within the District of Columbia for new freeways, street widening and related highway improvements. The foundation of this plan was a proposed Inner Loop costing about $325 million.

1/ The reader is cautioned to note that although estimates of costs, tax revenue losses, population and land use figures in this report are as accurate as presently available information permits, most of the problems discussed have not been analyzed by the local planning agencies. Undoubtedly a more comprehensive and detailed analysis of the questions raised by this report would result in upward or downward adjustments in the estimates used.

3. This freeway plan was part of a "Transportation Plan" submitted to Congress in 1959 that proposed the expenditure of two billion dollars within the metropolitan area by 1980 for highway improvements (one-half within the District) and only one-fourth that amount for rapid transit.

4. After extensive hearings on the "Transportation Plan", Congress in 1960 enacted the National Capital Transportation Act which rejected the highway emphasis in that plan and established the National Capital Transportation Agency to develop a new Transit Development Program giving emphasis and priority to a rapid transit system.

5. Congress found:

A. "The most important fact that was brought to light by the hearings was the almost universal approval of the proposed rapid transit system."

B. "At the same time, the November hearings produced relatively little support for the idea of an expanded highway program. Indeed, many witnesses protested that even the highways already planned will damage the beauty and livability of the Nation's Capital, while taking valuable property off the tax rolls."

C. ". . . the use of existing railroads and new rapid transit lines to carry people between downtown Washington and the suburbs may permit a substantial reduction in the number of highways that must be built into the city, leading to a substantial saving in public funds and avoiding the harmful effects often attendant on the construction of freeways through residential areas."

D. "In any case, any additional highways that will eventually be built should be deferred until the railroads and rapid transit lines have had an opportunity to develop their full patronage, since experience has shown that a new highway provides competition that no rail line can meet." (House and Senate Committee Reports)

6. The mandate of Congress has not been followed. In the fifteen months since the National Capital Transportation Act became law, the District's highway program has been stepped up to a record pace. Whereas an average of $5 million annually was spent on highway construction in the first decade after World War II, the District Highway Department now plans to spend over $60 million annually on new freeways and street widenings.

7. The District cannot afford this freeway program and it should be immediately curtailed for the following reasons:

A. The Inner Loop and related street widenings and arterial freeways would not solve traffic congestion problems but rather would create an even worse strangulation of the city by automobile traffic, further injuring public transportation and rendering remote the opportunity for a self-sustaining rapid transit system.

B. The freeway program would result in a net loss in population within the District of at least 75,000 residents, principally among middle or upper-middle income families that the District can ill afford to lose.

C. The District's freeway program would take over three square miles (about 2,000 acres) from existing residential, commercial, park or recreational use to be devoted exclusively to the movement of motor vehicles.

D. The freeway program would further cripple the District's finances by causing the loss of about $1 million in gasoline and other road user taxes, about $3 million in property taxes, and about $4 million in income, sales and excise tax revenues each year, while adding about $2.5 million annually in road maintenance requirements and adding further strains to the education, health and welfare requirements of the District budget.

E. The freeway program would accentuate the existing trend of suburban sprawl and central city decay that can be corrected only through prompt steps to introduce an efficient rapid transit system.

8. Except for freeways or street projects now in active construction, a complete moratorium should be declared prohibiting any further expenditures on the freeway program until the completion by the National Capital Transportation Agency of its Transit Development Program.

This will take more than one year.

The Issue Is Raised

Over a decade ago, in 1950, the National Capital Planning Commission adopted a "comprehensive plan" as a guide for future planning that contemplated the construction of an "Inner Loop" -- a mammoth freeway that would encircle the central business district. This line, superimposed on the map of the Federal City, was the product of its times -- springing from a consciousness of the growing population pressures upon the Washington metropolitan area, the upsurge in automobile ownership and alarming increases in auto travel which, projected into the future, made it appear evident that if strangulation of the downtown streets was to be averted a conduit was necessary to divert through traffic around the central business district.

Today, eleven years later, the Inner Loop is no longer a line on a planner's map. Bulldozers and construction crews have long been at work in the Southwest constructing the first "leg" of the Inner Loop. As this elevated highway rises, many acres of land are being condemned in Foggy Bottom for another

portion of the Inner Loop system. The Highway Department, avalanched with an accelerated flow of millions of dollars of Federal aid, is embarked on a crash program to speed the completion of the Inner Loop within ten years. The money is there, as it never was before; the plans are there. From the Engineer Commissioner, from the D.C. Highway Department, from the highway enthusiasts -- led by the American Automobile Association -- come the persistent demands that yesterday's "solution" be permitted to be completed. — also today's and tomorrow's

On October 5, 1961, the District Highway Department went to the National Capital Planning Commission for approval of four more segments of the Inner Loop -- the "South Leg" tunneling beneath the Lincoln Memorial, the "Center Leg" slicing through the middle of downtown, the "East Leg" taking a block-wide area from K Street, N E., to K Street, S.E., and "Interchange C", a sprawling cloverleaf that would connect the Southeast Freeway, East Leg and Anacostia Freeway in the area surrounding 11th and K, S.E. Approval was expected to be routine, as it had been the Planning Commission itself which had first proposed the Inner Loop.

The initial reaction, however, was "Do we really need it?" Alexander C. Robinson, III, of Cleveland, Ohio, raised the issue, noting, "I've watched the damage done in other cities and I'm wondering if there aren't better ways. I believe we are

justified in taking another look at this, in the light of what is happening elsewhere. We should find out whether we really need all the Inner Loop projects that have been proposed, and whether we may not be spoiling the City of Washington." (New York Times, October 22, 1961, p. 56) By a vote of 4 to 2, the Planning Commission voted to defer decision until its next meeting, scheduled for November 9, 1961.

As a legal matter, the four Inner Loop projects now before the Planning Commission could not be built without the formal approval of the Planning Commission. By the terms of Section 6 of the National Capital Planning Commission Act of 1952, any thoroughfare plan or mass transportation plan for the District of Columbia or any revision thereof requires the joint approval of both the Planning Commission and the District Commissioners. The 1959 Transportation Plan relating to an overall freeway program including the Inner Loop was approved by the Planning Commission, but was never adopted by the District Commissioners and was rejected by Congress. The specific Inner Loop plans now before the Planning Commission are not submitted to the Commissioners unless first adopted by the Planning Commission. The fate of the Inner Loop could therefore be critically affected by the next meeting of the Planning Commission.

Can Washington turn back? Should Washington turn back? It is the conclusion of this report not only that Washington can and should, but that it has no alternative if it is to avert a fate worse than that of Los Angeles.

Today, with the benefit of eleven years' hindsight, it is evident that the freeway is not the solution to the city's transportation problem as it once appeared but rather the beginning of a much larger, more frightful problem -- urban sprawl and the disintegration of a central city into scores of scattered shopping centers, a steady erosion of the tax base that leaves the city government unable to meet its public service obligations, the forced eviction of thousands of families to the suburbs, the destruction of parks, schools, playgrounds and institutions that can never be replaced, and a serious impairment to Congressional and municipal plans for rapid transit. Another solution must be found -- a solution that requires not only a fresh start but also a new look at yesterday's premises and tomorrow's hopes. It will not be an easy solution, but its search must start now, with the conscientious guidance of the new National Capital Transportation Agency and with full support from the Planning Commission, the District Commissioners, the area's governments, the Congress and the public.

That such a new look be made was, in fact, the mandate of Congress when, by an overwhelming vote of approval, it enacted the National Capital Transportation Act of 1960.

History of Inner Loop Planning

What had started as a loop on a map in 1950 became in 1955 a detailed blueprint of a huge figure eight. In that year, DeLeuw Cather & Co., engineering consultants, submitted their recommendation for the Inner Loop which no longer was one loop but two: one circling the White House, the other the Capitol and Union Station with a common "Center Leg" in the middle. This Inner Loop soon became the foundation of the District's transportation program. Added impetus for it came when Congress passed the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1956, authorizing 90% Federal aid for a nationwide network of 41,000 miles of new freeways, financed primarily from gasoline taxes.

With financing seemingly assured, the D.C. Highway Department launched one of the largest highway programs in any city's history. In 1958, it evolved a massive $871 million freeway master plan. Over 40% of this plan represented "interstate" highway projects. Foundation for the plan was the Inner Loop. The location of various legs of the 17-mile figure eight had been pinned down, at least tentatively, by the D.C. Highway Department. Varying between six lanes and eight lanes in width, the huge freeway was then estimated to cost $272 million, or almost $20 million a mile. With the cooperation of the Bureau of Public Roads, portions of the Inner Loop were designated as parts of the new "interstate" system and a network of radial

freeways proposed that stretched from the Inner Loop through the city's existing park and residential areas to mushrooming suburbia.

The first evaluation of this blueprint was undertaken in 1958-59 by the National Capital Planning Commission in the preparation of its "Transportation Plan" for 1980. Unfortunately, however, this study was limited to too narrow an inquiry. Starting with the premise that all highways then proposed (including the Inner Loop) would be built, the study made no comprehensive analysis of whether they should be built. Instead, the study confined itself to the inquiry of what, if any, additional traffic arteries should be constructed to meet the metropolitan area's projected 1980 requirements. Particularly when the study's limitations are recognized, its conclusions become significant:

1. The study concluded that the Inner Loop would be rendered obsolete as a cure to congestion before it was constructed. On the basis of estimated 1980 area population and a projection that the auto-oriented sprawl of 1945-60 would continue to 1980, the study concluded that the proposed Inner Loop and the freeway system could handle only a fraction of the transportation requirements twenty years hence; intolerable congestion would exist in the downtown area. The study recognized that the proposed freeways would generate as much

new traffic as they could carry, so that the District's street system, both downtown and in radial traffic corridors, would remain loaded to capacity even after an Inner Loop, Intermediate Loop and radial freeways were built.

2. Only by construction of a rapid transit system, with subway lines radiating from the central business district, could the transportation needs of 1980 be met.

Rejecting what it considered an "auto-dominant" transportation plan for 1980, the Planning Commission proposed what it styled a "balanced" transportation plan. In retrospect, however, it is difficult to recognize much "balance". The Plan proposed that two billion dollars be spent in the Washington metropolitan area on 1,800 lane-miles of highways (including both the highways, like the Inner Loop, that had previously been planned by the D.C. Highway Department, and new highways that had been added to fill the interstices of a freeway network); only one-fourth of that amount was proposed to be spent for rapid transit, a limited 66 lane-miles. Starting with the premise that all previously-proposed freeways would be built, the Plan never explored alternatives that questioned this assumption.

Annual Cost?

Critics were soon to point out the defects of the Transportation Plan. To build all the highways contemplated by it would require the condemnation of ten square miles -- 30% of it within the District of Columbia. Already, at the time the

Plan was issued in 1959, thirty percent of the land area in the District was devoted to the moving of automotive vehicles -- yielding not a penny of revenue except for the construction of more highways. If the lines in the Transportation Plan became reality, one out of every twenty blocks in the District would be added to this highway network in 1980, raising to about 35% the amount of the land area devoted exclusively to the movement of motor vehicles.

Neither the Planning Commission nor the District government appear to have evaluated the overall impact of this plan. An estimate was made of the direct costs. But what of the other costs? For a city that had suffered a severe drop in population between 1950 and 1960, how many more thousands would be forced to leave to find homes in suburbia? What would be the resulting loss to the District in real estate taxes, sales taxes, income taxes, gasoline taxes, and license fees? What would be the impact on the city's schools, on its limited park and playground areas, on its dwindling residential neighborhoods, on requirements for public housing, relief, etc.? Would the freeway plan even help relieve traffic congestion? Or would such freeways simply make congestion worse by generating more new motor-vehicle trips than the freeways, its interchanges, ramps, approaches or the downtown streets and parking facilities could handle?

National Capital Transportation Act of 1960

The life of the Transportation Plan was colorful but brief. Verbally assaulted from all quarters (except the most avid highway enthusiasts) in extensive hearings before Congress, the Plan served at least as a catalyst for bold new action -- the National Capital Transportation Act of 1960. By this new legislation, Congress established the National Capital Transportation Agency (NCTA) with the mandate to start anew with a Transit Development Program for the Washington metropolitan area with rapid transit as its foundation. Finding that rapid transit had universal support but that the highway network proposed by the Transportation Plan had valid and widespread opposition, Congress directed that emphasis and priority be devoted to the development of a subway system and that highway projects be at least deferred where possible in the hope that their construction (and their destructiveness) could be avoided. Two specific projects -- the Northwest Freeway and Glover Archbold Parkway -- were stopped until after rapid transit had first received a fair trial; as to the remainder, the local highway planners were directed thereafter to coordinate their plans with the new NCTA so that the legislation's objectives could be achieved.

This Congressional purpose is demonstrated in the following excerpts from the committee reports:

> "The National Capital Transportation Agency . . . would have various functions, mainly of a nonrevenue producing nature. Those would include preparation of a comprehensive up-to-date transit development program, consisting of plans, proposed routes and locations for the transportation of persons in the region, together with a timetable for the provision of facilities and financial estimates of costs and revenues."
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> "The most important fact that was brought to light by the hearings was the almost universal approval of the proposed rail transit system. This was endorsed by the Bureau of the Budget, by the Board of Commissioners of the District of Columbia, by several other Federal agencies, by representatives of local governments and planning agencies, and by a host of business and civic groups."
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> "At the same time, the November hearings produced relatively little support for the idea of an expanded highway program. Indeed, many witnesses protested that even the highways already planned will damage the beauty and livability of the Nation's Capital, while taking valuable property off the tax rolls."
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> "Washington, like every other large American city, has been suffering from steadily worsening traffic congestion. For more than a decade after World War II, there was a steady decline in transit ridership, and a rapid increase in the number of private automobiles on the streets and highways. The Highway Departments of the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia have never been able to catch up with this increase in traffic,

nor does it appear likely that they can do so in the near future. Furthermore, it is becoming increasingly evident that any attempt to meet the area's transportation needs by high ways and private automobiles alone will wreck the city - it will demolish residential neigh borhoods, violate parks and playgrounds, desecrate the monumental portions of the Nation's Capital, and remove much valuable property from the tax rolls."

* * * *

"It is now generally recognized that a healthy mass transportation system is essential to every metropolis. In no other way can large numbers of people be carried quickly and economically to their places of work each day. In no other way can the downtown area be revived as a center of business, finance, cultural events, and other activities that draw people from all parts of the metropolis. * * * It is further clear that prompt action, in the case of new rapid transit lines, will contribute to orderly metropolitan growth and hence simplify and ease transportation problems in the future; while delays in providing the needed rapid transit will allow further deterioration of central city business districts and employment centers, and accelerate suburban sprawl, and thus make it still more difficult to provide mass transportation in future years."

* * * *

"[N]ew rapid transit lines to carry people between downtown Washington and the suburbs may permit a substantial reduction in the number of highways that must be built into the city, leading to a substantial saving in public funds and avoiding the harmful effects often attendant on the construction of freeways through residential areas. In any case, any additional highways that will eventually be built should be deferred until the railroads and rapid transit lines have had an opportunity to develop their full patronage, since experience has shown that a new highway provides competition that no rail can meet."

* * * *

> "While the Transportation Plan of 1959 is a valuable starting point for the new Agency, the joint committee believes that it would be a mistake to accept that plan without further study. * * * No other government agency is well suited to continuing the comprehensive job of transportation survey and planning that was begun by the Mass Transportation Survey. If this job is not continued, there is a danger that efforts to meet transportation needs will suffer from the separate and perhaps conflicting activities of a number of different government agencies, all for the lack of up-to-date areawide data and plans, embracing all forms of transportation. For these reasons, the committee has added a requirement that the Agency continue the research and survey work begun by the Mass Transportation Survey, and proceed with the experimental, design, and development work as called for by changing conditions."

What has been the impact on the Inner Loop of this new direction in planning? Thus far, nothing. Indeed, if there has been any reaction to the Congressional mandate of 1960, it has been only redoubled efforts to speed the Inner Loop to an early completion.

In this, the District highway planners are not entirely to blame. They can truthfully point to conflicting instructions from Congress. For, as Congress was first considering and then deciding on the course which transportation planning should take in the Washington metropolitan area, the effects of earlier legislation relating to interstate highways (the Federal-Aid Highway Act) were beginning to be felt.

During the fiscal years 1946 through 1955, the District spent about $5 million annually on new road construction. Under the impetus of the Federal-Aid Highway Act and its 90% subsidy, however, this figure rose rapidly. By fiscal 1958, highway expenditures had almost tripled, to $15 million. By fiscal 1960, they had vaulted to $28 million. In fiscal 1961, they jumped again to $45 million. In fiscal 1962, they may reach $70 million. The Engineer Commissioner and District Highway Director forecast that this spending level will continue at $60-70 million over the next five years. And most of this money has been funneled into the Inner Loop and its supporting freeway complex.

The Crash Program to Build Inner Loop

When the National Capital Transportation Act was passed by Congress in July 1960, only the Southwest Freeway and the 12th Street Expressway were under construction. Otherwise, the entire Inner Loop and its huge interchanges and ramp connections were only on the drawing boards.

Since that time, however, there have been fifteen months of unprecedented activity in spurring the completion of the Inner Loop, contrary to the basic policies announced by Congress to guide transportation planning for the Nation's Capital.

1. Southwest Freeway. Started in 1958, this $40.4 million elevated eight-lane freeway was already well under construction by mid-1960 with completion expected by 1964. In September 1960, the District Highway Department announced that $4-5 million would be diverted to this project for earlier construction of an interchange in the area between D, F, 1st and 2nd Streets, S.W. The contract was awarded in November 1960, and completion of the entire freeway from the Fourteenth Street bridges to the foot of Capitol Hill is now expected by early 1963, one year earlier than formerly planned.

Congress had asked, in the report accompanying the Transportation Act, that the District Highway Department cease further construction on the related 12th Street Expressway (costing $5.4 million) to permit coordination with the new NCTA. This suggestion was quickly rejected, and the D.C. Highway Department has also moved ahead to an early completion of this underpass.

2. Southeast Freeway. As originally planned, this leg would be an extension of the Southwest Freeway from the interchange at the southern foot of Capitol Hill eastward to the Anacostia River. By February 1961, the D.C. Highway Department had announced its intention to finish this freeway by fiscal 1966 with acquisition of the right of way to commence this year.

3. Interchange "C" and 11th St. Bridge. Inner Loop plans had also provided for a huge interchange in the area surrounding 11th and K, S.E., with the Southeast Freeway continuing eastward to the Pennsylvania Avenue Sousa bridge, and the East Leg proceeding south to a new "twin" bridge at 11th Street where the road meets the $41 million Anacostia Freeway, also under construction. Expedition of these plans was announced by September 1960 with the addition of a budget request for fiscal 1962 to start construction for the $11.8 million 11th Street bridge, to be completed by 1964. The $14.1 million Interchange "C" itself was scheduled for completion by fiscal 1966.

4. East Leg and Northeast Freeway. The East Leg had been planned as a part of Interstate Route 95, proceeding on a north-south course from the 11th Street Anacostia River crossing to an intersection with the North Leg at Florida and K, N.E., razing the block between 11th and 12th Streets. On July 23, 1960, the D.C. Highway Department unveiled a 45-page engineering study by the Clarkeson Engineering Co. which proposed the further northward extension of this freeway as the "third route to Baltimore" -- 4.14 miles of six and eight-lane freeway within the District costing an estimated $74 million ($85.1 million if a median strip were provided for rapid transit). This estimated cost included $31 million for right-of-way

acquisition that involved the razing of 1,290 properties (1,095 homes, 103 apartment buildings, 51 commercial buildings, 39 industrial sites and one church).

On November 7, 1960, the D.C. Highway Department presented its proposal to the Commissioners in public hearings, revealing that the East Leg would be constructed in sections for completion by early 1967 and that the Northeast Freeway would be finished "about 1970". The eight-lane depressed East Leg was estimated to cost $60 million, including $25 million for the right-of-way. Over 300 persons attended the hearings, with widespread opposition expressed by civic groups in the affected areas. At the suggestion of William E. Finley, staff director of the Planning Commission, the District Highway Department agreed to study shifting the East Leg westward one block (to raze the area between 10th and 11th rather than 11th and 12th) in order to save intrusion on Lincoln Park and the demolition of "Philadelphia Row". Civic opposition persisted, however, as to either route with the recommendation advanced that, if constructed at all, the East Leg should follow the west bank of the Anacostia River serving the new Stadium. The D.C. Highway Department rejected such an alignment, however, and went to the Planning Commission with the proposal that the 10th-11th Street route for the East Leg be approved, together with a Northeast Freeway adjoining the B & O Railroad tracks. Cost estimates were shaved to $58.5 million for the East Leg and $55.8 million for the Northeast Freeway.

Civic opposition persisted, with renewed pleas to look for a less destructive location. In August, 1961, however, the D.C. Highway Department announced that the timetable for the Northeast Freeway would be advanced four years with construction beginning in 1964 for completion by fiscal 1966. It was proposed that $4.0 million be spent for right-of-way acquisition commencing in 1962.

On September 29, 1961, the D.C. Highway Director went before the District Commissioners to explain his stand on the East Leg and Northeast Freeway. Pleas to consider the west bank of the Anacostia as a substitute location for the East Leg were rejected; instead, he recommended that such a highway also parkway be built along the river as a supplement to the East Leg to serve the Stadium. He urged proceeding with earlier plans for the East Leg freeway between 10th and 11th with slight modifications for the interchange and spur roads at Florida Avenue, N.E., suggesting that the entire East Leg and Northeast Freeway be completed by fiscal 1968. His estimate was that the total cost of the two connecting freeways would be $102 million. An estimated 3,460 dwelling units would be destroyed; over 10,000 District residents displaced.

5. Center Leg. While irate civic opposition clamored in vain for sidetracking the East Leg and Northeast Freeway, Congressional opposition stymied the D.C. Highway Department's

plans for the Center Leg, which had been proposed to extend from the entrance to the Southwest Freeway near the third House Office Building directly north to another large interchange near Florida Avenue, N.W., crossing the Mall by tunnel and proceeding as a depressed freeway between 2nd and 3rd Streets, N.W. Capitol Architect, J. George Stewart, in September 1960, said that there was "still some question whether the center leg is needed". In 1961, the District Highway Department sought to avert this opposition by proposing to move the Center Leg westward, taking the block between 5th and 6th Streets, N.W. Stewart and the Congressional leaders were unmoved. In September 1961, Stewart announced to newspaper reporters that Congress wished to keep freeways away from the Capitol grounds and even the westward shift of the Center Leg would take property needed for expansion of the Botanical Gardens. Subsequently, the District Highway Department expressed alarm over planned private improvements in the central business district that would, it was asserted, increase the cost of the Center Leg from $55 million to $75 million.

6. South Leg (Lincoln Memorial Tunnel). Until 1961, the leg of the Inner Loop from the 14th Street bridges to the Theodore Roosevelt bridge interchange was proposed to be a six-lane parkway, not part of the Interstate system and closed to truck traffic. In September 1960, the National Park Service

unveiled plans for this leg which involved a 1,435 foot tunnel beneath the Lincoln Memorial grounds. Total cost, including approach roads in the area, was forecast to be $18 million, funds that neither the Park Service nor the Highway Department thought they could spare. Efforts were therefore initiated by the Highway Department to obtain the Bureau of Public Roads' consent for adding the two mile link to the Interstate system with its guarantee of 90% Federal aid. Success of this venture was obtained by June 1961, whereupon the District Highway Department announced that engineering work would start immediately, with construction to begin in 1962 and the work completed by 1965.

7. Roosevelt Bridge and Potomac Freeway Approach. With the $24.5 million Theodore Roosevelt bridge under construction and due for completion by mid-1963, the District Highway Department pressed to implement the interchanges that would tie this bridge to the Inner Loop. On October 1, 1960, the District Highway Department announced that it had obtained the consent of the National Park Service to tap the George Washington Memorial Parkway on the Virginia side of the bridge. Meanwhile, plans for the interchange with the Inner Loop and an E Street Expressway (depressed to 20th Street) were being formulated and, on March 15, 1961, the Fine Arts Commission gave its reluctant approval to this triple deck interchange, reiterating that it

remained "strongly opposed" to the intrusion of the bridge approaches and Inner Loop on park land and that it was forced to "disavow all responsibility" for the project. In September 1961, condemnation proceedings were filed to acquire a three-block area for the construction of this interchange.

In July 1960, immediately after passage of the National Capital Transportation Act, the Highway Department let the first contract for its proposed $39 million eight-lane Potomac River Freeway, paralleling the Whitehurst Freeway, that would link with the Inner Loop immediately east of Rock Creek Park. The contract provided for construction of the sub-structure for a ramp over Rock Creek Drive just north of the Water Sports Center. At virtually the same time, work commenced on the $4.4 million K Street Expressway (with tunnel beneath Washington Circle) and within weeks the Highway Department announced an acceleration of its long-range plans to construct not only the Potomac River Freeway but also a new river crossing at Three Sisters Islands. With plans for this eight-lane bridge approved by the Planning Commission in July 1961, the Highway Department then announced that still another river crossing at Arizona Avenue was being added to its six-year program. The Three Sisters Bridge had been justified by the assertion that the six-lane Theodore Roosevelt Bridge would not be wide enough to accommodate increased motor vehicle traffic from Arlington. By the summer of the 1961 it was

asserted that even this additional eight-lane bridge would not be enough and a third bridge at Arizona Avenue, previously disapproved by the Highway Department, also would be necessary.

The Theodore Roosevelt Bridge was scheduled for completion in mid-1963. Acquisition of land for the right-of-way for the Potomac River Freeway and Three Sisters Bridge was scheduled to commence by early 1963, with both to be completed by 1966. Acquisition of right-of-way for the Arizona Avenue bridge was scheduled for fiscal 1968 with the $11.1 million project completed by 1970.

8. West Leg, North Leg and North Central Freeway. Existing plans of the Highway Department for the northwest section of the Inner Loop proceeding along the east side of Rock Creek from K Street to Massachusetts Avenue and 21st, N.W., or the long-arching North Leg paralleling Florida Avenue northwest of DuPont Circle to 11th Street, N.E., have not been publicly announced. One newspaper, however, claimed in October 1960 that the tentative timetable for the North Leg provided for work to start in 1966 and that the Northwest section would be built in about ten years. An eight-lane North Central Freeway is planned, costing $87 million, that would connect with the North Leg near Griffith Stadium at another large interchange.

Re-Evaluating the Inner Loop

In recent years, millions of dollars have been spent on planning with regard to the Inner Loop and its related freeway network, but not one cent has been devoted to studying the fundamental issue of whether it should be built at all, if the District is, as Congress has decided, to give top priority to rapid transit.

Millions of dollars have been appropriated for detailed studies of route alignments, construction costs, motor vehicle traffic projections, and design plans, but they all have simply assumed that the planning decision first made eleven years ago is still a correct one.

The tragedy of this course is that there is no longer any persuasive reason why the Inner Loop should be built, and substantial evidence that it would be a disastrous blunder for the Nation's Capital.

In 1950, the plan had some logic. Then it could be argued that the Inner Loop was necessary to save the central business district from strangulation by motor vehicles. On the premises that the area's population growth would be limited, that there would be a steady growth in automobile use for commuting, and that there would not be traffic justification for rapid transit, it was arguable that an Inner Loop

could siphon off sufficient through traffic to permit a free flow of vehicular traffic on the downtown streets.

By 1961, the Planning Commission virtually conceded that the former panacea, the elaborate freeway system and the Inner Loop, could not do its intended job and would soon become a white elephant. Looking to the year 2,000, the Commission concluded: "Even if the freeway system were to make possible greater volumes of traffic to the central area, it is doubtful whether the surface street system in that area could handle these greater volumes." It therefore suggested the necessity in the future for discouraging use of the freeways by such means as "control of the number of vehicles allowed on freeways during peak hours" and "limitation of long-term parking in employment areas."

All more recent inquiries have proven the premises of 1950 to have been incorrect. Between 1950 and 1960, the metropolitan area population increased 35 percent from 1.5 to 2.0 million. The latest projections of the Planning Commission forecast 2.6 million by 1970, over 3.0 million by 1980 and about 5.0 million by the year 2,000. The Planning Commission's 1950 Comprehensive Plan, however, had predicted that an area population of 2.0 million would not be achieved until 1980. This figure was passed in ten years, rather than thirty, with a further increase of fifty percent now predicted by 1980. In view of

this change, no element of the 1950 plan can go without a critical re-examination, least of all the Inner Loop.

By 1959, the Planning Commission had concluded that rapid transit -- once dismissed as a mere pipe-dream -- was not only economically feasible but an absolute necessity. Without rapid transit and with continued dependence on the private automobile, the Transportation Plan issued in 1959 concluded that the District would be intolerably congested with auto traffic. Even with a limited rapid transit system (but assuming that both the Inner Loop and other then-planned highways would be built), the Plan concluded that the Inner Loop would fail to achieve its purpose and therefore added a second "Intermediate Loop" to the freeway network. As previously noted, however, the study did not -- on finding the then-planned freeway system could not achieve its purpose -- re-evaluate the need for that freeway system in the first place.

It must be apparent now that the Inner Loop cannot and will not achieve its original purpose of saving the central city from inundation by automobiles. In fact, all evidence now points to its having the opposite effect. Converging on the Inner Loop and Central Washington, would be traffic from at least 36 new lanes of arterial freeways: four more from Shirley Highway (under the proposal to expand that artery to eight lanes), six more from Theodore Roosevelt Bridge, at least four more from the Potomac River Freeway, eight more from a proposed North Central Freeway, at least six more from the Northeast Freeway, at least

eight from spurs from the Anacostia River crossings to the East Leg, not to mention additional traffic from widened arterial streets such as North or South Capitol Streets. In anticipation of the avalanche of added auto traffic that these freeways would funnel onto the Inner Loop and the downtown streets, the District Highway Department is steadily condemning valuable downtown land, cutting trees and widening streets to make room for more automobiles: the 12th Street Expressway, the 9th Street Expressway, the K Street Expressway, the E Street Expressway, etc. This activity and the rising demands for more downtown parking facilities from such groups as the AAA are rather curious responses, if it is still believed that the Inner Loop would siphon traffic away from the central city rather than induce more traffic into it.

Mere conjecture on this point is not necessary. The design model is at hand in the city of Los Angeles, a city many years "ahead" of Washington in its freeway program. In the words of S. S. Taylor, manager of the Department of Traffic of Los Angeles (Traffic Quarterly, July 1959, pp. 356-57):

> "One freeway interchange in Los Angeles is consuming approximately 80 acres of land area, and each average mile of freeway is requiring about 30 acres. One-third of our entire Los Angeles land area is already required for transportation facilities.
>
> "Ultimately, it appears that Los Angeles will have a freeway network forming a city of square colossal blocks where topography will allow them,

> with approximately 4 miles of freeway on each side. * * *
>
> "The inability of our present streets and parking facilities to continue to carry this ever-increasing transportation load threatens to choke off the economic breath of our metropolitan area. Meanwhile, its vehicle exhaust fumes aggravate the breathing citizenry under a unique atmospheric inversion."

Today, Washington is not far behind Los Angeles. Whereas about 66% of central Los Angeles is now devoted to the movement and storage of motor vehicles, the corresponding figure in Washington's central business district had already passed 56% by 1960. If the Inner Loop, its access roads and interchanges and presently planned street widenings are completed, it is probable that downtown Washington will soon surpass Los Angeles in the percentage of land area devoted to motor vehicles.

Even without the Inner Loop and a radial freeway network, Washington already surpasses Los Angeles in one dubious distinction -- a far larger percent of all rush hour trips to the central business district are made by private automobile (two-thirds) than is true in Los Angeles or in any other major United States city. This has been Washington's heritage from the L'Enfant Plan and its wide avenues and the invention 100 years later of the automobile. Mass transportation has been limited to surface streetcars and buses which, with no reserved right-of-way, have been rendered steadily less attractive to the

traveling public as they have had to cope with more and more private vehicles. Even the Planning Commission's 1959 transportation plan would not have changed this unhealthy development. By proposing that four dollars be spent on new highway facilities for every dollar spent on rapid transit, the plan forecast that the percentage of total travel to the central business district by private automobile would remain virtually the same in 1980. What would have been the result if the District's freeway plans had been abandoned, the study did not say, for it did not even make that inquiry.

If the "why" that justified the Inner Loop has disappeared, the "why nots" are becoming increasingly evident:

Direct Costs. In 1958, it was estimated that the Inner Loop would cost $272 million. Each subsequent estimate has increased that amount. The latest published estimate (September 1960) placed the price tag at $325 million.

These figures relate only to the Inner Loop itself. The total freeway and street improvement program, now moving at an accelerated pace, would result in the expenditure by the District of close to one billion dollars.

Too little concern has been expressed over these figures. To many, they contain a hollow ring, divorced from reality because the funds are "automatically" available for highway construction and not available for any other public works,

however much more deserving of attention they may be. Most of the highway money comes from the Federal treasury in ever-increasing quantities, replenished by Federal taxes on gasoline, tires and accessories. The remainder is also funded automatically from the District's Highway Fund, sole custodian of all local gasoline tax revenues.

The fact that the burgeoning Federal and local highway funds are now earmarked for "highways only" does not mean that this practice should be accepted as inevitable in transportation planning or in overall municipal planning. If sound planning leads to the conslusion that more roads are not needed or that they are less essential in the public interest than rapid transit, improved schools, hospitals or other public works, it becomes pointless to insist that taxes derived from road users must continue to be spent on roads. Any such compartmentalization of the public treasury renders government policy and planning no longer the instrument of public interest but the victim of its own sources of revenue. It has no place in transportation planning any more than in the allocation of other public resources.

It is recognized that these observations strike at a basic credo of some highway advocates. Purporting to speak for the motoring public, the American Automobile Association frequently has asserted that the public will not tolerate the use of gasoline taxes for any purpose other than building roads.

The limited evidence available is to the contrary. A persistent theme of witnesses appearing before the District Commissioners at recent hearings on the budget crisis was the recommendation that funds be diverted from the highway fund for essential school needs. A recent Gallup poll on "What America Thinks", published August 26, 1961, disclosed that 72% of the general public favored financing freeways by tolls rather than by taxation.

Other Costs. The public expenditures for highway planning, acquisition of right-of-way and highway construction are not the only costs of the Inner Loop and the related freeway system. Too little attention has been devoted to these other costs -- financial and social. A few that require the conscientious attention of planners, the government and the public are set forth below:

1. Land Use. Even without the freeway program, a disproportionate amount of the District's land area has been devoted to streets and highways. The total land area of the District is only 61.5 square miles (39,360 acres). Of this, an ever-increasing amount has been devoted to streets and highways. District-owned streets and alleys increased from about 7,900 acres in fiscal 1940 to about 8,400 acres in fiscal 1950 and to about 9,000 acres in fiscal 1960. Including Federally-owned roads, approximately 11,500 acres or 30% of the total

land area was devoted to streets and highways in the District by fiscal 1960. This is substantially higher than in other cities.[1/]

In contrast, residential, commercial and other tax-yielding land has been steadily shrinking. In fiscal 1935, such land area was 17,989 acres in the District; by 1960 it had declined to 14,325 acres or only 36.5% of the District's land area.

The experience in other cities has been that each mile of freeway consumes 30 acres of land and that interchanges can consume up to 90 acres of land. Although the District Highway Department has endeavored to minimize land-taking by proposing elevated freeways or depressed freeways with sheer stone walls, it nevertheless is likely that the total freeway program, including street widenings, would devour about 2,000 acres of land when completed. This would mean about 35% of the total land area of the District would be devoted to streets and highways by 1980. Conversely, other land uses -- residential, commercial, educational, religious and recreational -- would have to be curtailed. Indeed, it is inevitable, if the

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1/ The Planning Commission's 1950 comprehensive plan reported that the average for Dallas, Louisville, St. Louis and Memphis was 19.5%.

present freeway program is continued, that the District would have more land in tax-free streets and highways by 1980 than it would have in all forms of private land use combined.

2. Population. Between 1943 and 1960, the District population dropped from 900,000 to 764,000. In the ten years between 1950 and 1960, the District lost five percent of its residents even though the metropolitan area grew by 35%. Estimates of the further loss that will result from the District's freeway program, including the Inner Loop, vary between a low of 17,000 (Francis X. Servaites, N.C.H.A. director, May 2, 1961) to a high of 75,000 (William E. Finley, staff director, Planning Commission). Planners may differ as to whether this will cause a further net loss in District population because of off-setting new residential construction (Southwest redevelopment, etc.),[1/] but there is no denial of the fact that residential land taken for freeways will effectively reduce the number of persons that would otherwise be able to live in the District. It is the estimate of the Northwest Committee for Transportation Planning that if the District could adequately and comfortably house 800,000 residents without the proposed freeway network,

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1/ Economist Jerome P. Pickard, Urban Land Institute, has forecast that the District's population will drop to 733,000 in 1970 and 700,000 in 1980.

this potential would drop to 700,000 if the pending highway program is completed.

Whether this difference is 100,000, or more than that, or less than that, the consequences are very real to the entire metropolitan area. Immediately, as for the 10,000 or more District residents living in the path of the East Leg and Northeast Freeway, the freeway program means eviction from their homes, their neighborhoods, their schools, and their churches. For the District, it means a corresponding loss of residents -- either the evicted residents must find new homes in the suburbs or, as is more likely, a chain reaction is started that results in a corresponding number of residents leaving the District who are far removed from the actual location of the freeway itself. The ultimate loss would occur primarily among residents who are white, upper or middle income, with children. The Negro family is not welcomed in the suburb; the lower-income family cannot afford the suburb; the childless family has little incentive to move to the suburb. Therefore, even where (as is usually the case) it is the Negro family or the low-income family that initially is evicted to make room for the freeway, the migratory pressures would end, as they have over the past twenty years, with a further shift in the District's population mixture toward a higher percentage of the metropolitan area's total nonwhite, lower income or childless

residents than would otherwise be the case.[1/]

3. Neighborhoods. Also very real but difficult to measure in terms of numbers or dollars is the adverse effect of the Inner Loop and related freeways upon residential neighborhoods -- not the dwelling units that are taken but those that are not. Any new freeway creates a barrier between the homes that are left. Where, as is often the case, a freeway bisects existing neighborhoods (as would the East Leg), neighborhood patterns are shattered and new ones must be created. Furthermore, even where skillful engineering permits the location of a freeway around, rather than through, existing neighborhoods, the adjoining residential areas are adversely affected.

4. The District Budget. One of the most surprising facts regarding the planning for the Inner Loop and the District's freeway master plan has been the total absence of analysis of its impact on the District budget -- either on revenue sources or on expenditure requirements. Such an analysis is

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1/ In Southwest Washington, where families were displaced in the 1950's by the Southwest Urban Renewal project and the Southwest Freeway, only six percent moved directly to the suburbs. A special study by the R.L.A. of such families leaving the District in a three-block area in the Southwest found that 100% of them were white and most of them were middle-income. The remaining 94% -- mostly Negro -- relocated within the District, primarily in areas which according to the 1960 census lost substantial numbers of middle-income white families during the decade.

long overdue. Among the facets of this problem that need examination are:

(a) Road User Revenues. In December 1960, Engineer Commissioner Clarke was quoted as observing that by building freeways the District was encouraging the loss of gas tax revenue. Estimates by the oil companies at that time forecast that the gallons purchased in the District would decline from a peak of 205 million to 195 million by 1965, causing an annual loss of $500,000. After 1965, if more freeways are finished, this loss in annual revenue would increase. Corresponding losses would also occur in auto registration fees and driver license fees as the number of District residents (and drivers) declined by reason of population displacement. By the time the proposed freeway system is completed, the total loss in road user taxes should exceed $1 million annually.

(b) Road Maintenance, Repair and Traffic Control Requirements. The proposed freeway system, as previously noted, would increase from 30% to about 35% the total land area in the District devoted to the movement of motor vehicles. It is likely, moreover, that the annual requirements for maintenance, repair, snow-removal and traffic control would increase by at least the same degree. If there has been any reliable estimate of these added burdens to the District budget, they have not been publicized. It is likely, however, that the annual requirements

for maintenance, repair, snow-removal and traffic would be substantial. Annual maintenance costs are currently estimated to be about $40,000 per mile for modern freeways. At this rate, the District would be incurring additional budget requirements of about $2.5 million annually.

(c) Property Tax Revenues. The presently-envisaged freeway program, if completed, would involve the expenditure of over $200 million for acquisition of the rights-of-way in the District of Columbia. Assuming the appraised tax value 55% of the cost of the property acquired, the District's general fund would lose about $3 million annually from this tax source alone at current rates. This tax loss is subject to fairly exact measurement, yet there is no indication that planners have given it consideration.

(d) Income Tax Revenues. Just as real but more difficult to measure with any precision is the net loss in income tax revenues resulting from the displacement of income-earning District residents and private businesses by non-taxyielding freeways. A concervative estimate of the net loss from this source would be five percent of the yield in fiscal 1961 or about $1.8 million annually at current rates.

(e) Sales and Excise Tax Revenues. There would, of course, be corresponding losses in sales and excise taxes as former District residents, evicted to the suburbs by the

District's new freeways, purchased their food, clothing, appliances, liquor and cigarettes at suburban shopping centers rather than from the District's merchants. Even if this loss, too, were only 5% of current tax yields, it would mean the additional loss of $2.3 million annually by the District government at current rates.

This is, or course, only a partial listing of the consequences of the freeway program upon the District's budget. To be measured against the minimum annual loss of $8 million in tax revenues must be weighed the increased demands upon the District's General Fund for more traffic police, new sewer construction resulting from freeways, even added health and welfare requirements. It is not at all inconceivable that for every dollar in revenue lost by reason of freeways displacing tax sources, another dollar in added disbursements would be required. In any event, neither the planners nor the responsible government officials should any longer refrain from analyzing these fiscal consequences of the Inner Loop and the related arterial freeways.

5. Park and Recreational Facilities. There has been a natural tendency for freeways to gravitate to publicly-owned lands. The land is "cheaper" because no condemnation is required. The civic outcry is less because no dwelling unit or commercial property is razed. This does not render the

freeway a bargain, however. Land presently devoted to park or playground use, once taken for highways, cannot effectively be replaced. The entire public is the loser.

No estimate is available of the total loss to the District's park and recreation system that would result from the entire freeway proposal. However, if the past is prologue, it threatens to be staggering. The new 14th Street bridge and the Washington channel crossing of the Southwest Freeway eliminated one football field and 36 tennis courts. The Anacostia Freeway caused the loss of 4 softball diamonds, 2 baseball diamonds, 2 handball courts, 1 football field, 1 volleyball court, 1 18-hole golf course, and 1 miniature golf course. The Lincoln Memorial tunnel and related facilities would eliminate 8 softball diamonds, 1 baseball diamond, 1 soccer field, 1 field hockey area and 1 lacrosse field. The Southeast freeway would eliminate 1 softball field, 1 basketball court, 1 tennis court, a basketball apparatus area, a volleyball court, a playfield and a recreation building.

Writing to the Board of Commissioners about these developments in March, 1961, Milo F. Christiansen, Superintendent of Recreation, ruefully remarked, "Rather than parks and playgrounds for the enjoyment of life, the symbol of Washington's future appears to be the onrushing blade of the bulldozer and the grinding concrete mixer producing ribbons of concrete and masses

of mortar and stone."

6. Public Transportation. A fully adequate public transportation system is one of a city's most important public assets. It is plainly evident from the consensus of planners that the Washington metropolitan area direly needs a rapid transit system. Yet the adverse impact of freeways upon public transportation appears too frequently to be overlooked.

The vast road improvements since World War II -- removing streetcar tracks, repaving streets, widening streets, one-way traffic regulations, timing of traffic signals, curbside parking limitations, left-turn limitations, added traffic police and, of course, new freeways -- have substantially increased the convenience and attractiveness of auto commutation with no material benefit to public transportation. For example, the maximum running time, (i.e., the running time during the hours of peak traffic congestion) for a streetcar from Mount Pleasant to Union Station is now 42 minutes during the morning rush hour compared with 38 minutes in 1946. Even where buses have replaced streetcars, as on the Wisconsin Avenue line, the results have been comparable. The maximum running time for bus service from Friendship Heights to Capitol Hill (1st and Independence) is now 61 minutes compared with the streetcar time of 53 1/2 minutes in 1946.[1/] Having to contend with an

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1/ During off-peak hours, running times have remained comparable or shown a slight improvement. On the Mount Pleasant-Union Station run, the minimum running time was 24 1/2 minutes in 1946, 22 minutes in 1961. On the Friendship Heights-Capitol Hill run, the minimum running time was 30 minutes in both 1946 (streetcar) and 1961 (bus).

an ever-mounting horde of automobiles, averaging less than two occupants each, the existing public transportation vehicles have been increasingly handicapped from serving their function.

As might be expected, public patronage of the District transit company has steadily declined -- from 44 million riders per month in 1944 to 33 million in 1949, 18 million in 1954 and 14.5 million in 1960. The burden of this loss is not borne alone by the investors; it is shared by the entire public -- transit riders must pay higher fares; the District budget and all taxpayers must share the burden of servicing the steadily rising number of private vehicles on the District's roads.

But, if the highway program has been crippling to existing public transportation, it could be destructive to rapid transit. The underlying premise of Congress when it approved the National Capital Transportation Act of 1960 was that the prompt construction of a subway network would avert the need for heavy public expenditures on freeways. If a freeway network is first rushed to completion without regard to any priority for rapid transit, Congress well might look askance at the justification for rapid transit appropriations. However, even if the freeway network did not defer or destroy rapid transit plans, it would seriously impair the chances for a

self-sufficient rapid transit system capable of earning adequate revenues.

The danger of deleterious competition is apparent from the experience in other cities which already had rapid transit systems before the construction of new urban freeways. In Chicago, the Northwestern Railway consistently operated its rail commuter service at a profit until its services were paralleled by a Northwest Expressway. In Boston, the operating deficit of the M.T.A. has mounted as each new freeway or freeway extension has been completed. Similar experience has occurred in other major cities such as New York, Philadelphia and Los Angeles.

7. Area Growth. For over twenty years, the Washington metropolitan area has been drifting to a formless auto-dominant sprawl. The present freeway fever would accentuate that trend; only a substituted dependence upon rapid transit can restore structure and orderly development to the metropolitan area.

Throughout the country, other cities and city planners are coming to a realization of this fact. San Francisco belatedly called a complete moratorium upon freeway construction in order to launch a rapid transit system that would restore order to its metropolitan growth and preserve its central city. Similar planning revolutions are occurring with other

cities throughout the United States. The planners have seen what can happen when cities depend upon the freeway and are in general agreement that the results are indefensible.

The primary example is usually Los Angeles, a vast sprawling urban area that no longer has a downtown. What originally had been the city's core now primarily serves the function of a funnel to channel endless lines of auto traffic from one sub-city to another. For mile after mile there stretches an unending sea of suburbs enmeshed among ribbons of freeways. What was once green is now gone before the bulldozer.

The lesson of Los Angeles has been learned by the Planning Commission. It needs only implementation. In the Commission's "Year 2,000 Plan", there is belated recognition of the necessity to structure Washington's metropolitan growth by dependence upon rapid transit lines radiating from the city's core. Only in this way, the plan finds, can "green spaces" be preserved and formless sprawl be avoided.

The critical defect of the "Year 2,000 Plan", however, is that it would start 20 years too late. It does not start with the transportation system that Washington has <u>today</u>. Instead, it starts with what a prior plan had visualized for the year 1980, a plan that would have perpetuated the Washington sprawl of the past 15 years for another 20 in the future, and a plan that Congress found unacceptable when, in 1960, it

established the National Capital Transportation Agency to develop a new Transit Development Program based on rapid transit, rather than freeways, as the means for structuring future growth.

8. Community Acceptability. The freeway plan, as it was encompassed in the Transportation Plan of 1959, was never adopted by the District Commissioners. Their position, as stated to Congress by General Welling in November, 1959, was as follows:

> "Although the subject goes beyond the scope of the transportation survey, the Board of Commissioners, in weighing the advantages and disadvantages of the plan, must consider to what extent, if any, the plan assists in the solution of one of the most critical problems in the District of Columbia, namely, the conditions and welfare of the population living in the deteriorated sections of the city with their ever-increasing requirements for services and for facilities other than transportation. That problem is related to the continuous loss by the District to the suburbs of middle and high-income families, a situation which would be intensified by the provision of freeways on which people can travel quickly, even when traffic is the heaviest.
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> "Within the District there have been from some public quarters marked and valid objections to certain new highway proposals of the plan, and the majority of the Board of Commissioners has stated objections to one such proposal. On the other hand, the public may be disposed to welcome a subway system; so would be the Commissioners.

> "In light of all the above factors, the Board of Commissioners cannot commit the District to the total plan."

Elaborating on this testimony, the former Engineer Commissioner explained, "If this committee had not been established, had not held these hearings, I firmly had in mind that the Commissioners should have public hearings running over a period of days in order to determine what the community wants, [for] the plan must be considered, amongst other things, in terms of community acceptability."

At the same Congressional hearings and thereafter, by testimony, resolutions, letters and telegrams, the District residents have reacted with a unanimity that has rarely been duplicated -- "Subways, yes; but freeways, no."

Conclusions and Recommendations

1. Neither the ready availability of District and Federal highway funds for freeways nor lines drawn on a map in the 1950's should bind the Nation's Capital to a course that is no longer justified.

2. Pending a complete re-evaluation of the need for and total impact of presently-planned freeways, all further expenditures for the planning, design, acquisition of rights-of-way or construction of new highway facilities in the District of Columbia should be stopped, except for the completion of

facilities already close to completion, such as the Southwest Freeway, the Theodore Roosevelt Bridge, the K Street underpass and the 12th Street Mall underpass.

3. The National Capital Transportation Agency, as required by Section 204(f) of the National Capital Transportation Act of 1960, should assume the primary responsibility for this re-evaluation, working in close cooperation with the Board of District Commissioners, the National Capital Planning Commission, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Commission, and other Washington area agencies and private organizations. Such re-evaluation should include, but not be limited to, the problems outlined in this report.

4. The National Capital Transportation Agency, in cooperation with the area's other planning authorities, should work toward early fulfillment of the Congressional mandate to provide a new, comprehensive Transit Development Program, giving emphasis and priority to rapid transit.

5. District and neighboring governmental bodies should undertake to give the NCTA their complete cooperation in perfecting and implementing the Transit Development Program.

6. Immediate steps should be taken to permit the use of available District and Federal highway funds for any project contemplated by the Transit Development Program, without artificial limitation to roads to the exclusion of rapid transit.

7. Immediate steps should be taken by the District, Maryland and Virginia governments, in cooperation with the National Capital Transportation Agency and the Bureau of Public Roads, to terminate interstate Routes 66, 70-S and 95 at the Capital Beltway, pending completion and Congressional approval of the Transit Development Program. Maximum effort should be directed to an early completion of the Capital Beltway, permitting interstate traffic to bypass the urban area.

8. Immediate steps should be taken by the responsible area government agencies, including the National Capital Transportation Agency and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Commission, to improve the speed, convenience and attractiveness of existing mass transit facilities and to discourage commuting by private automobile by such means as reserved lanes for bus service, improved rush hour express bus service to suburban areas, new commuter passenger service on existing railroad routes, and, if necessary, special tolls or taxes for rush-hour commuting by private automobile or all-day parking in employment areas.

9. Civic planning groups, including but not limited to the Federal City Council, the Committee of 100 on the Federal City, the Washington Housing Association, and the various civic and citizens associations and federations, should lend their full counsel and support to the achievement of the

goals of the National Capital Transportation Act of 1960 and the Transit Development Program of the NCTA developed thereunder.

NORTHWEST COMMITTEE FOR TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

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