CHAPTER 2

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON REGION TODAY

2.1 THE REGION DEFINED

The George Washington Region represents 1,429 square miles in four counties. Political jurisdictions in the area include: King George, Caroline, Spotsylvania and Stafford Counties, as well as the City of Fredericksburg and the Towns of Bowling Green Port Royal. In 2010, the GW Region had a population of 327,773. Over the past 25 years the Region, particularly Stafford and Spotsylvania Counties, have experienced dramatic growth. Much of this growth has been dispersed and with relatively low density, which has placed increased pressure on the Region's infrastructure and community services, especially the transportation system. This growth pattern is also threatening the natural and cultural landscapes of the Region. Primary drivers of this rapid growth in the Region are its affordable housing, and its proximity to the Northern Virginia/Washington D.C. area.

Downtown Fredericksburg

2.1.1 Built Environment

As shown in Chapter 3, the Region's population is projected to increase by 88% to 617,337 persons by 2040. Providing affordable housing, community infrastructure/services and economical transportation options are essential in ensuring the Region's economic competiveness and quality of life for our residents. The historic growth patterns of the Region may have to change to ensure the provision of these things are continued into the future. In 2007 a provision that required local government Comprehensive Plans to include Urban Development Areas (UDAs or Targeted High Growth Areas) Title 15.2, Chapter 22, part 23.1 (§15.2-2223.1)) was passed into law. The UDA law will be discussed in Chapter 4. This law is intended to ensure localities identify areas that are appropriate for higher density development due to proximity to transportation facilities, the availability of a public or community water and sewer system or proximity to a city, town or other developed area. If located and designed properly, these Targeted High Growth Areas could help to steer localities away from sprawl to a more compact development pattern that will foster economical growth and alternative transportation options.

The Region's transportation system is straining to keep up with the rapid growth that has taken place over the past 25 years. The Interstate and Primary Roadway Systems in the urbanized areas, at peak periods, are often operating at failing or near failing levels of service. Due to the recent economic "depression" and limited state financial resources, roadway maintenance is also becoming a challenge. Options for local public transportation service are limited due to the dispersed land use pattern, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities are also limited outside of the City of Fredericksburg. The transportation system will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5 of this plan.

Chatham Manor

2.1.2 Cultural Environment

The George Washington Region has a rich history that spans from Pre-Colonial America, through the formation of the United States, through the turmoil of the Civil War, to today's emerging urban environment. Preserving and protecting our Region's invaluable historic resources will be essential for future generations. There are approximately 100 entries (i.e., structures, historic districts and sites) on the National Register of Historic Places found in the GW Region that range from the Colonial Era through the early 20th Century.

Many of the Region's historic resources – Ferry Farm (George Washington's boyhood home), the City of Fredericksburg's Downtown Historic District, Belmont and the Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania National Military Park are tourist destinations that draw hundreds of thousands of visitors a year and contribute greatly to the local economy.

The Fredericksburg & Spotsylvania National Military Park was established on February 14, 1927 and encompasses 8,374 acres. It includes a number of sites in the City of Fredericksburg and in the Counties of Caroline, Spotsylvania and Stafford. It is the Region's largest historical resource and has the greatest economic contribution. The park encompasses four major Civil War Battlefields: Fredericksburg, Chancellorsville, the Wilderness and Spotsylvania Courthouse, as well as Chatham Manor, Salem Church, Ellwood and Guinea Station (where Stonewall Jackson died). The National Park Service (NPS) sites are comprised of battlefield parks, wayside exhibits, exhibit shelters, interpretive trails and numerous historic buildings that help to tell the story of the Civil War Battles.

Battlefields are landscapes that convey the sense and sweep of historic battles through preservation of topography, traditional land use and archaeological resources. In the George Washington Region, there are seven historic Civil War Battlefields: Aquia Creek, Fredericksburg I, Chancellorsville, Salem Church, Fredericksburg II, Wilderness and Spotsylvania Courthouse. These battlefields honor the lives that were

lost in the deadliest war in American history and symbolize the end of slavery and the reuniting of the nation.

2.1.3 Natural Environment

Spotsylvania County

The GW Region is divided by the Coastal Plain Physiographic Province, roughly, to the east of Interstate 95, and the Piedmont Province to the west of I-95. Virginia's Coastal Plain is a low-relief, terraced landscape that slopes gently toward the Atlantic Ocean from its highest elevations at the Fall Line. The Fall Line is a zone of geologic transition that marks the boundary between the older, resistant, metamorphic rocks of the Piedmont and younger, softer, mostly unconsolidated sediments of the Coastal Plain. The Piedmont Plateau Province is a rolling to locally hilly landscape that lies between the Fall Line on the east and the Blue Ridge on the west. The land surface of the province slopes gradually from a general elevation of about 1,000 ft. near the Blue Ridge to roughly 160 ft. at the Fall Line. There are three watersheds represented in the GW Region (the Rappahannock, York, and Potomac) all of which are tributaries of the Chesapeake Bay, requiring protection under the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act.

"Green infrastructure," the interconnected network of natural lands and other open spaces that conserve natural ecosystem values and functions, sustain air and water, and provide natural habitat and other benefits to people and wildlife. It involves a network consisting of core natural areas connected by corridors to help animals, seeds and people move across the landscape. Benefits of this interconnected network include: improving air quality, protecting water resources, providing recreation and public health benefits, enhancing community appearance, providing storm water management and protecting wildlife habitat. Green infrastructure planning, to date, in the Region has consisted of mapping a regional system of corridors and areas that provides a potential regional network of green infrastructure corridors and inventorying the amount and trends of change in tree canopy and impervious surface area. Healthy trees provide valuable environmental benefits through biological functions performed by their roots and leaves. These functions or "ecosystem services" include: reducing storm water runoff, increasing atmospheric carbon sequestration and storage, improving air and water quality.

The satellite imagery analysis determined that between 1996 and 2009, the GW Region lost 4.17% of its tree canopy that covers approximately 72% of the Region's land area and experienced a 43.5% increase in impervious area associated with additional rooftops, driveways, roadways, parking lots, etc. The loss of tree canopy resulted in the inability of the trees to remove approximately 2.89 million pounds of air pollutants annually, and 1.24 million pounds of carbon stored in trees' wood, and 9,616 pounds of annual carbon sequestration. The detailed study can be used to educate local government staff, planning

commissioners and elected officials on the value of green infrastructure and the associated indirect ecosystem costs of new development.

2.2 PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER INVOLVEMENT

The Fredericksburg Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, in accordance with the MAP-21, is committed to a significant and ongoing public involvement program as part of all plans and programs developed by the MPO. Documented in this chapter are the public involvement opportunities offered during the development of the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan, and how the feedback received has been incorporated into the Plan.

FAMPO developed an outreach plan from guidelines from the recently updated Public Participation Plan (PPP) which was adopted in November 2012. The updated PPP incorporated not only the traditional methods used in the past in the development of plans and programs, but it also included social media techniques frequently used today. As well as reaching the traditionally underserved, an important element was added to the PPP update that encouraged the citizen involvement from the Title VI populations in our region.

As part of the process of developing the 2040 LRTP public outreach, the following list represents the goals to be obtained during the public outreach effort:

- Interest, inform and involve a diverse public in a proactive manner in order to receive relevant input to the planning effort so FAMPO will have better decision-making tools and greater acceptance to the final LRTP;
- Involve the public early in the process and communicate with them continuously from start to finish;
- Create an understanding of the transportation planning process;
- Educate citizens on how transportation decisions are made;
- Maintain information that is visually interesting and easy to comprehend;
- Build consensus of support and foster a climate of rational discussion;
- Involve the traditionally underserved population/special audiences;
- Involve the Title VI community which is an enhancement to the recently updated PPP;
- Meeting Federal, State and other requirements for public participation (e.g., MAP-21).

Public Review and Comment Period

The official Public Review and Comment Period began on January 30, 2013 and concluded on March 18, 2013 during which a wide array of public outreach methods were used to help disseminate the information as effectively and efficiently to citizens and stakeholders within the George Washington Region.

2.2.1 Public Involvement Outreach Methods

Contact Database

FAMPO maintains and updates periodically a large database of individuals and organizations throughout the region which includes representation from all segments of the population. This database was significantly enhanced with the updated PPP which included over 140 Title VI leaders in our region who then disseminated the information amongst their citizens within their respected communities. The database represented from all segments of the population.

The objective of the database was to be as inclusive as possible to include the following:

- Interested citizens – those who requested to be added, those who have participated in other FAMPO projects and studies;
- Business organizations and councils;
- County and city Planning Boards, Boards of Commissioners;
- County and city social service, area agency on aging, diversified mailing lists;
- Cultural, business and advocacy organizations;
- Faith-based organizations;
- Business, civic and community groups; and
- Environmental Justice, the traditionally under-served contacts and the Title VI community.

Public Informational Meeting

A public informational meeting was held on February 28, 2013 from 6 p.m. until 8 p.m., and the meeting was held at the GWRC/FAMPO office located in Fredericksburg, Virginia. This meeting gave the attendees an opportunity to review the key transportation improvement initiatives through 2040 and to ask questions, review visual displays and most importantly, express their opinions. The meeting location was held an easy to access location and a Spanish interpreter was available upon request.

Public Meeting Materials included the following:

- Sign-in sheets for the attendees which included name, address, email, mailing list request
- PowerPoint presentation
- Presentation boards highlighting the current conditions and future needs
- Draft 2040 LRTP Summary Booklet (English and Spanish)
- Demographic Survey (English and Spanish)

Public Hearing

A public hearing was held during the FAMPO Policy Committee Meeting on March 18, 2013 at the GWRC/FAMPO office located in Fredericksburg, Virginia. Five citizens spoke regarding their concerns of the draft 2040 LRTP. The Policy Committee deferred the adoption of the LRTP until the next monthly meeting which was held on April 15, 2013 in which the 2040 LRTP was formally adopted.

Handout: A Summary of the Draft 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan

FAMPO published a Draft of the Executive Summary in both English and Spanish as handouts for the meeting as well as throughout the public review period. FAMPO published 500 English versions and 100 Spanish versions.

PowerPoint Presentation

A PowerPoint Presentation was developed to highlight the planning process and to graphically depict the deficiencies at selected locations where transportation improvements were proposed. The presentation was post online in both English and Spanish, presented during the public information meeting, speaker bureaus, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB), and during the FAMPO committee meetings.

Public Informational Meeting and Hearing Notifications

A very comprehensive notification process was conducted as part of the public outreach to inform the public of the upcoming public informational meeting and public hearing, and the following describes methods used to disseminate the information:

Newspaper Advertisements

Newspaper Advertisements were place in all the regional newspapers which included the Free Lance Star, The Stafford Sun, The Journal Press and the Caroline Progress.

Local Government Access Channels

Announcements in both English and Spanish were placed on the Local Government Access Channels that reached audiences in the City of Fredericksburg and the counties of Spotsylvania and Stafford via Comcast Channel 23 and/or Cox Channel 24 channels.

Email Notifications

Approximately 550 email were sent to the FAMPO mailing list to announce the public information meeting and public hearing to announce the date and how to review and comment on the draft Plan. Each email had an electronic flyer attached. The following received the email notifications:

Press Release

In advance of the public informational meeting, a press release was developed and distributed to the 15 media outlets.

Newspaper Articles

Two print articles were cataloged. Radio is more difficult to capture and thus, is not included in this summary.

Public Information Officer Outreach

All of the regional public information officers were contacted to promote the meeting and hearing on their websites.

Printed Flyers

Prior to the public meeting and hearing, over 1140 flyers printed on both English and Spanish were distributed.

Speakers Bureau

FAMPO staff made presentations to regional groups to broaden the face-to-face outreach to educate the public about LRTP and FAMPO overall. During these engagements, the LRTP Draft Summary was distributed.

Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) Outreach

The Transportation Advisory Group (TAG) is a citizen advisory group to the MPO and functions as a sounding board for public opinion on transportation issues, promoting ways to improve the quality of the region's transportation system. The TAG was established to help provide and encourage active citizen participation in the transportation planning process, and also to advise the MPO of the citizen's perspective on transportation planning, programs and projects.

This important group disseminated information by distributing flyers, business cards, and executive summaries to citizens within our region. Also, FAMPO and the upcoming public information meeting were highlighted in a large HOA newsletter and a military officer's group newsletter.

Website/Social Media

The FAMPO website, facebook page and twitter page were utilized to keep the public updated and aware of upcoming events throughout the transportation process of the LRTP. The facebook and twitter pages are new public outreach elements introduced from the previous 2035 LRTP. The website shared information about the different elements within the plan, the public meeting as well as giving the public the opportunity to comment via an online and downloadable comment form. A translation tool is available on the website for use to aid in easy translation when needed.

The FAMPO Website provided the document to be reviewed electronically and provided an online comment form. It also outlined other ways the citizens of the region could share their comments. The document was available on the Public Notices and LRTP webpages. All of which received a total of 846 page views.

FAMPO incorporated social media techniques in this outreach effort that was not previously used during the 2035 LRTP public outreach effort. Notices were placed on both the FAMPO facebook page and Twitter page. Stafford County included the links on both its website and facebook page.

Other Website/Social Media Links

The information regarding the public informational meeting and public hearing was posted on the Stafford County Government website and facebook page.

Involvement of Minorities and the Traditionally Underserved Groups

The transportation underserved are those that have greater difficulty getting to placed in their community, such as jobs, schools, recreation and shopping that the population at large. Examples of the traditionally underserved include persons with disabilities, low income, minority groups and the older adult population. As part of the PPP update adopted in November 2012, a large, enhanced outreach effort was incorporated in reaching the Title VI Community of our region which included persons with limited English proficiency. Concerted attempts were made to actively engage these residents.

Agency Review

Federal and State agencies were contacted and requested to review the plan to provide their comments on elements related to their specific program. A total of 47 letters were mailed which included the entire

draft plan on CD for their convenience. The cover letter provided the agencies different avenues to provide their comments either electronically or in writing.

Document Distribution

Printed copies of the draft document were sent to all of the regional libraries, local jurisdiction government planning offices and to the Title VI community that were not electronically connected. These printed documents included a cover letter, paper comment forms and an explained of the various ways the public could share their thoughts and comments. A printed copy of the draft document was also placed upon request in the Stafford County Permit Department and a comment box was provided for the public to utilize in sharing comments on the draft plan.

Conclusion

The 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan sets the direction for the utilization of the Region's limited transportation resources and the type of expenditures that we should make to meet our critical transportation needs. Because this is so important to the future of our Region, FAMPO staff would like to thank the stakeholders and citizens for taking the time and effort to review the draft Plan and provide comments.

2.2.2 Public Comments

A total of 16 public comments and one agency comment were received during the public review and comment period. These comments are noted in the Public Involvement Appendix I.

2.3 REGIONAL ATTITUDES TOWARD THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM AND FUNDING

The 2035 LRTP found that the Region's transportation issues consisted of a combination of inadequate funding levels and relatively low density regional development patterns. FAMPO commissioned a statically valid, random sample survey that was aimed at gathering resident's opinions in regard to transportation issues, policies and regional governance. The complete survey summary documents can be found in Appendix L of this plan. Major objectives of the survey included:

- Assess residents' ratings of the George Washington Region's existing transportation system overall.
- Identify residents' expectations – importance ratings – of different aspects of the George Washington Region's transportation system across key variables such as variety of transportation options, safety, convenience, dependability, ease of getting around, etc.
- Identify residents' ratings of George Washington Region's performance in delivering on these same aspects of the Region's transportation system.
- Identify the current gaps in performance.
- Assess residents' opinions regarding alternative transportation funding levels and alternative sources of funds.

There were 1,500 total respondents, 200 each from City of Fredericksburg, Caroline and King George Counties and 450 each from Spotsylvania and Stafford Counties.

Overall, about 34% of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied with the Region's transportation system. In contrast, a 2006 survey of Arlington County residents indicated that 78% of County residents were satisfied with the transportation system. The locality with the highest percentage of satisfied residents was the City of Fredericksburg (38%) while Caroline County residents showed the least amount of satisfaction with the system (32%).

The survey asked residents to rate the importance of different aspects of the transportation system. Residents indicated that personal safety, dependability, ease of getting around, time to make trips, being in control and convenience were the most important aspects of the transportation system. Aspects that were least important to residents of the Region included High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) availability, variety of transportation options and the cost of parking.

The survey then asked participants to rate the performance of the transportation system in regard to the same aspects that they had already rated for importance. Aspects of the system that participants indicated they were most satisfied with included parking cost, overall cost to the user and personal safety. Participants were least satisfied with the stress of traveling, price of gasoline and HOV availability.

A gap analysis was then performed between the aspects of the transportation system that the participants rated for importance and performance. The findings are summarized (See Figure 2.1 and Figure 2.2 on the following page). Ideally, you want to perform well in areas where there are the highest or most important expectations.

Figure 2.1

Gaps between Importance and Performance with Tier 1 Attributes

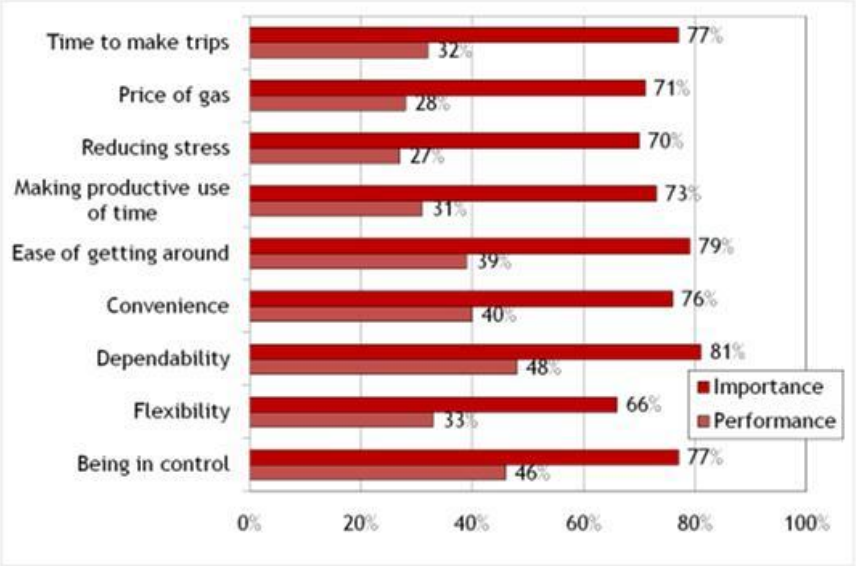
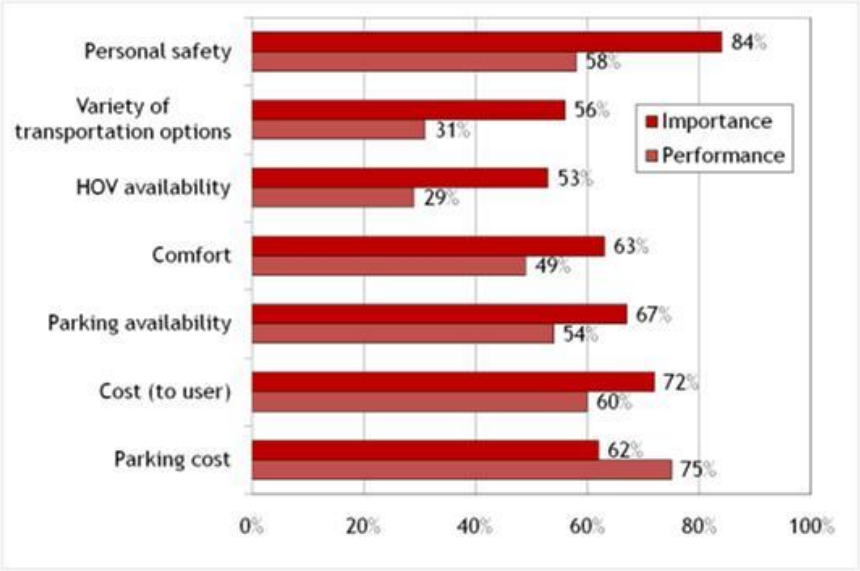


Figure 2.2

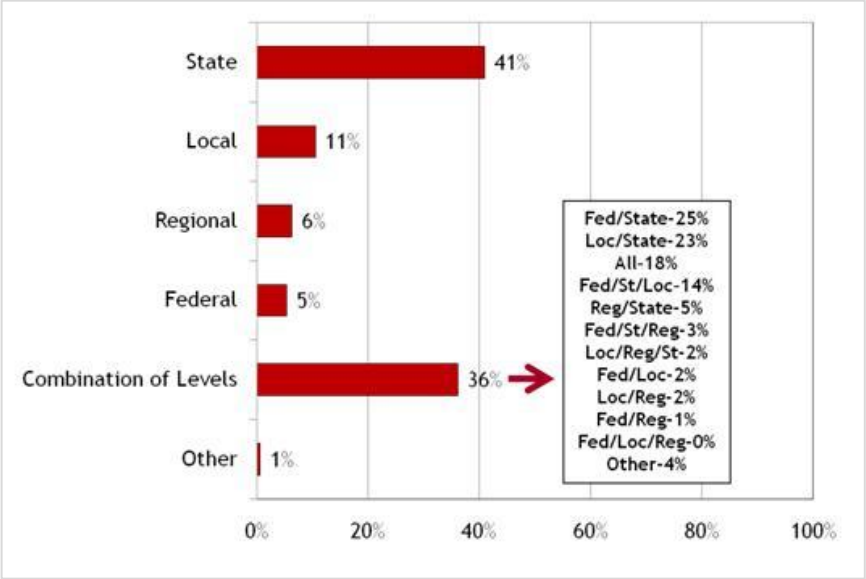
Gaps between Importance and Performance of Tier 2 Attributes



As described in the introduction, one of the major findings of the 2035 LRTP was that the Region is receiving an inadequate amount of transportation funding to deal with the area's rapid growth. To gather insight into citizen's perceptions on funding; the survey asked a number of questions. Approximately 41% of the citizens surveyed believed that the Commonwealth of Virginia was responsible for funding transportation infrastructure operations and maintenance. Figure 2.3, below, shows how respondents believe the maintenance and operations of the transportation system is funded. Similarly, 36% the respondents believed that the responsibility should come from a combination of levels.

Figure 2.3

Who Should Be Responsible for Transportation Funding?



As shown in Figure 2.4, on the following page, approximately 42% of respondents believed that the government spends too little on transportation and a majority (79%) would support an increase in transportation funding of at least 10% (See in Figure 2.5 on the following page). As shown in Figure 2.6, 35% of respondents think that new transportation funds should come from tolls and fare, and 26% say that new transportation funds should come from new taxes, followed by making cuts to other funding programs.

Figure 2.4

Government Spending on Transportation

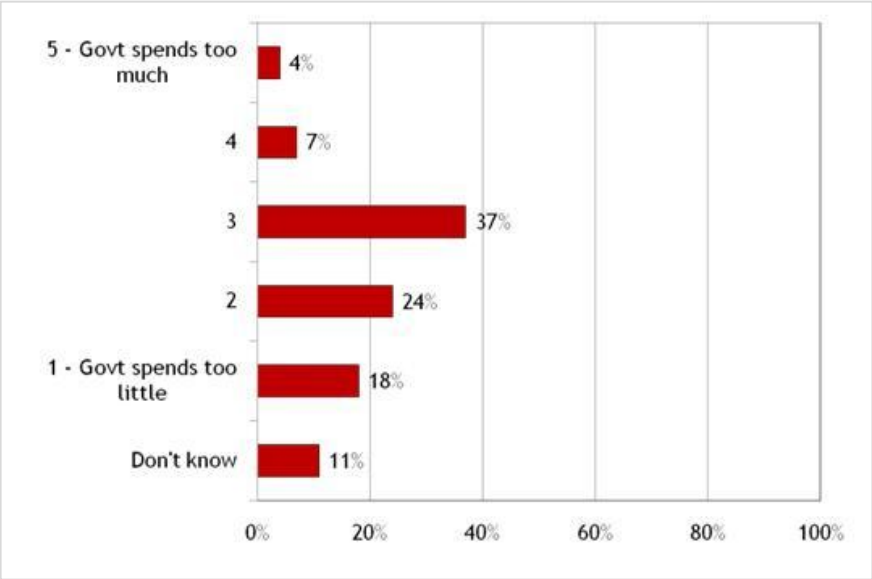
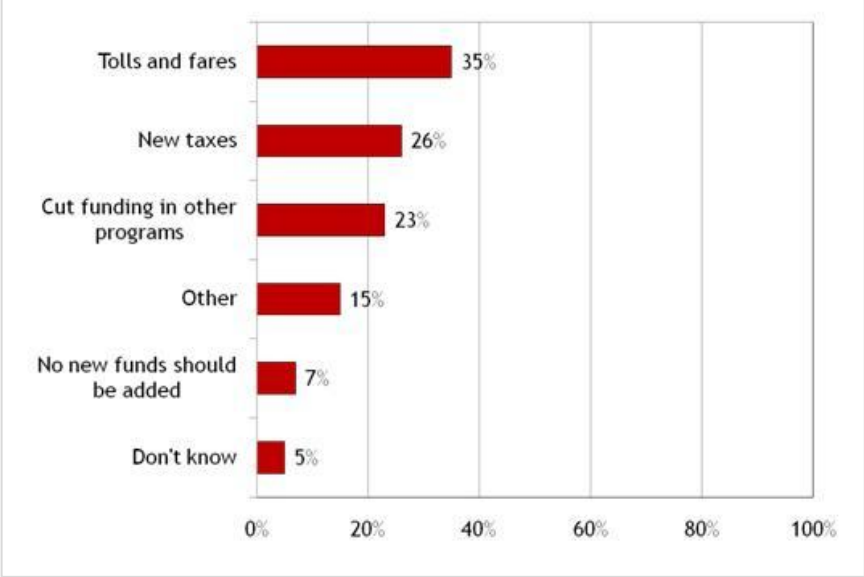


Figure 2.5

Where Should New Transportation Funds Come From?



2.4 REGIONAL ATTITUDES TOWARD GROWTH AND COMMUNITY VALUES

Also as a result of the findings in the 2035 LRTP, the Region's transportation issues are a combination of inadequate funding levels and regional development that have created an auto-dependent environment; FAMPO is leading the movement in Virginia to incorporate scenario planning in the process of developing its Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The purpose of this study was to promote community-based regionalism, aimed at guiding growth and coordinating decision-making processes for a more sustainable future, provide residents, business leaders and elected officials throughout the Region the opportunity to explore and debate regional growth visions, their trade-offs and alternative futures (study will be discussed more in-depth in Chapter 4).

In the spring of 2010, FAMPO commissioned another survey aimed at understanding resident perception towards growth and long range planning and assessing community values by locality in the Region.

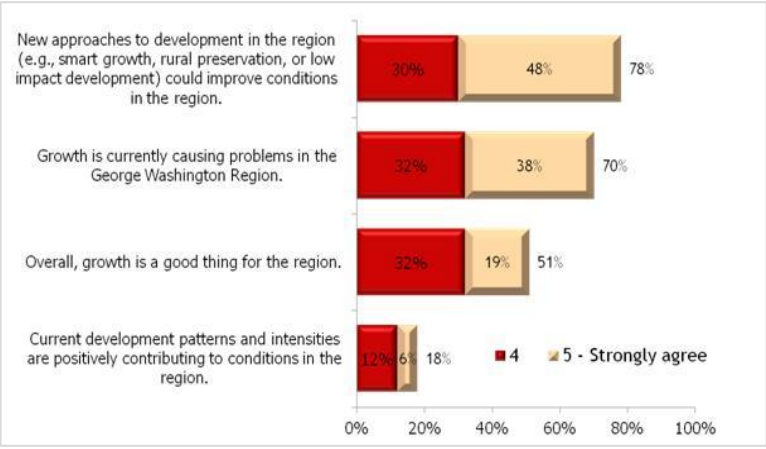
Overall, 61% of the respondents surveyed rated the quality of life in the GW Region as positive. The Region's rich history, the natural beauty and its proximity to Washington DC were listed as the top three attributes making the GW Region a good place to live. The bottom three attributes were the ease of getting around the area, the diversity of the Region's residents and the transportation system.

2.4.1 Growth

The next portion of the survey dealt with attitudes toward growth. Participants were asked if they believe that current growth patterns were causing problems and if new approaches to growth could improve conditions in the region. As shown in Figure 2.7, below, 78% of respondents believe that new approaches to growth could, in fact, improve conditions in the Region.

Figure 2.7

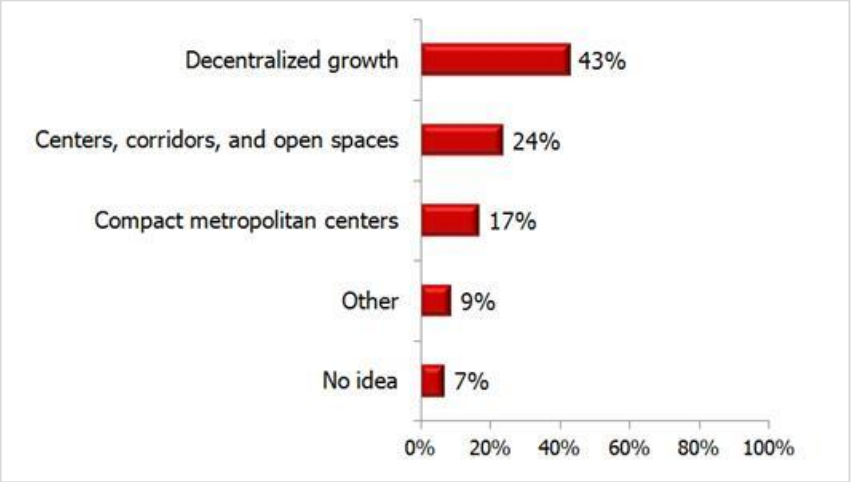
Types of Growth



When asked which types of growth are more desirable, 78% of respondents indicated that centers, corridors and open spaces were more desirable than compact metropolitan centers or decentralized growth. However, 43% of respondents believed that decentralized growth best describes the current state of growth in the Region.

Figure 2.8

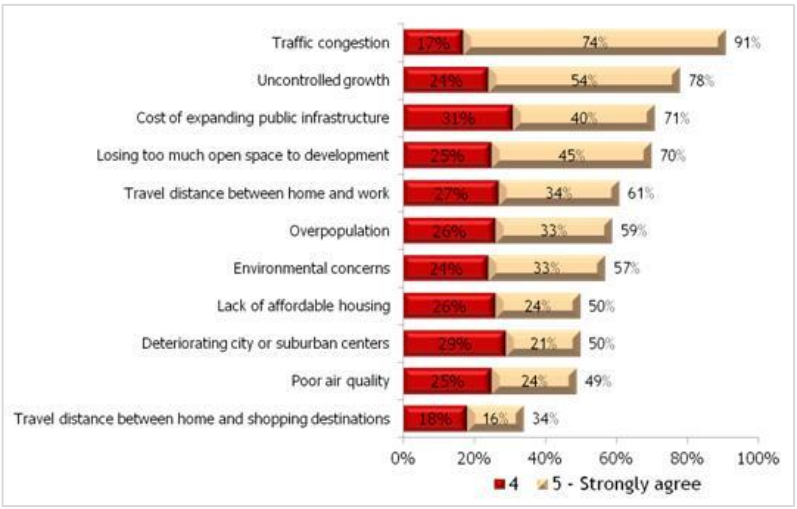
What Scenario Best Represents Current Growth Patterns?



The survey then asked what your concerns for the Region (using a scale of 1 to 5)? As shown in Figure 2.9, below, traffic congestion and uncontrolled growth topped the list. While poor air quality and travel distance between home and shopping destinations came in last.

Figure 2.9

Growth Concerns

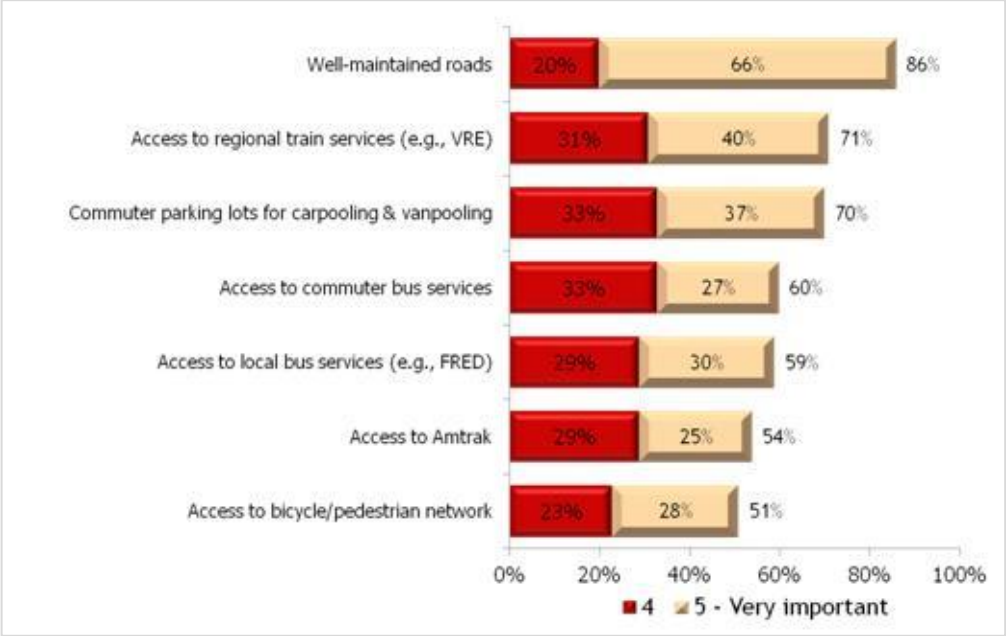


2.4.2 Transportation

Respondents indicated that a wide variety of transportation options were important to them, most notably well-maintained roads (86%), access to regional train services (71%) and the availability of commuter parking lots for carpooling and vanpooling (70%). Please refer to Figure 2.10, below, for attitudes to which modes of transportation are important.

Figure 2.10

Transportation Options

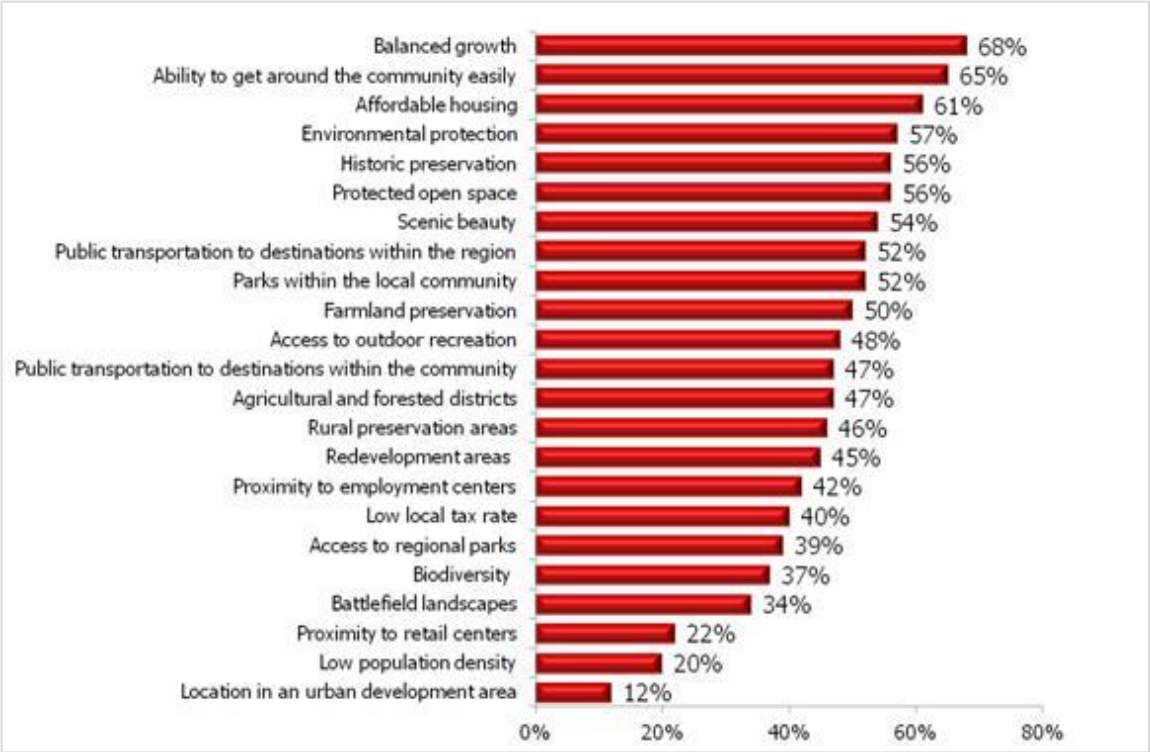


2.4.3 Community Values

When participants were asked which were their highest rated attitudes regarding what community values are “must haves” in a community, balanced growth, ability of get around easily and affordable housing. Location in an Urban Development Area (UDA), low population densities and proximity to retail centers were at the bottom of the list. Please refer to Figure 2.11, on the following page, for the complete breakdown.

Figure 2.11

Community "Must Haves"



Similarly, when asked what the three most important features of a community were; balanced growth, ability of get around easily and affordable housing topped the list and UDA's, access to regional parks and battlefield landscapes were rated lowest.

2.4.4 Survey Findings and Recommendations

A number of findings and recommendations were developed as a result of this survey. These recommendations were integrated into the Goals and Objectives (Section 2.4) of this plan. The recommendations are as follows:

1. Ensure that all plans have a focus on the rich history and natural beauty of the area – both are reasons why residents think the George Washington Region is a good place to live. While some historic preservation is essential, it may not be absolutely essential to preserve all historic sites and battlefields.
2. Focus development along I-95 and keep in mind that most respondents have a preference for centers, corridors and open spaces.
3. Traffic mitigation is crucial as traffic congestion is a primary concern of George Washington Region residents, and the ability to get around the community easily is one of the most

important community features. However, residents are willing to accept some traffic during peak travel times. Make sure plans include access to regional trains (such as VRE) and commuter lots.

4. Affordable housing is key aspect of a vibrant community. Respondents want a mix of different types of homes.
5. Make sure that plans include bike/pedestrian trails. There is a slight preference for local and regional trails, but not much would be lost by just offering local trails.
6. Ensure that there are adequate public parks in the Region – preferably within walking distance to most residents.
7. Retail space should be interspersed throughout the community. Respondents want retail space throughout the neighborhoods, in major activity centers and in smaller activity centers dispersed throughout the region.
8. Avoid putting heavy industrial space within communities. However, light industrial space near the community is fine with most.
9. If possible, keep the tax rate low. This is important for a number of respondents.
10. Continue to give residents the opportunity to have input into the land use planning process. They believe that current growth patterns are causing problems, but that new approaches to development could improve conditions. Further, they find balanced growth one of the most important features of a community.

2.5 GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Goals and Objectives of this plan build upon the Goals and Objectives adopted in the 2035 LRTP, the findings and recommendations from the two citizen surveys that were conducted in 2009 and 2010, the eight Federal Planning Factors, as well as state, local and regional policies and priorities.

MAP-21 Planning Factors (23 U.S.C. 450.306)

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency;
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
7. Promote efficient system management and operation, and
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

GOAL 1: Improve accessibility and mobility for all people and freight, while integrating all modes of transportation.

Objectives:

- Support the improvement of transportation services for the elderly, people with disabilities and others having no access to personal private transportation or who are otherwise unable to drive;
- Incorporate bicycle and pedestrian facilities into the design of roadways as appropriate and meet or exceed minimum standards of accessibility;
- Ensure that appropriate types, connections and levels of freight transportation service are provided to the entire region;
- Consider innovative land development patterns and site designs that prevent additional congestion, accommodate alternative modes of transportation and improve mobility and accessibility;
- Continue to support regional ridesharing/TDM programs.

Planning Factors, Policies and Priorities Addressed:

- Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.

GOAL 2: Encourage and promote the efficient development, management, operation and preservation of the surface transportation system.

Objectives:

- Work toward an optimum level of service on all transportation facilities in the region;
- Improve the effectiveness of the existing transportation system and services whenever possible;
- Maximize the use of limited highway funding;
- Encourage access management;
- Minimize long-term maintenance costs;
- Ensure public transportation infrastructure remains in a state of good repair.
- Assure major activity centers (residential, commercial, public) are designed to accommodate a range of transportation modes.

Planning Factors, Policies and Priorities Addressed:

- Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight;
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
- Promote efficient system management and operation, and
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

GOAL 3: Improve the physical characteristics and geometric design of transportation facilities to optimize safety for motorists, bus and rail users, park and ride lot users, pedestrians and bicyclists. Safety improvements will include standards to protect persons with disabilities.

Objectives:

- Reduce the number, frequency and severity of traffic accidents;
- Evaluate site plans for transportation safety during the review process;
- Improve the physical characteristics and geometric design of transportation facilities to optimize safety for motorist, pedestrians (including those with disabilities) and bicyclists;
- Draw increased attention to public awareness of construction zone safety hazards for workers and motorists.
- Utilize the George Washington Regional All Hazards Mitigation Plan, should a natural or man-made disaster strike.

Planning Factors, Policies and Priorities Addressed:

- Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
- Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.

GOAL 4: Protect and improve the environment, promote energy conservation and sustainability and improve the overall quality of life.

Objectives:

- Promote the use of alternative modes of transportation;
- Incorporate environmentally/context sensitive design into roadway, bicycle/pedestrian facilities and transit improvements, to improve or maintain the aesthetic values for the surrounding environment and to minimize environmental impacts;
- Reduce dependence on single occupancy vehicles through the promotion of transportation alternatives (i.e. bicycles, walking, local transit, commuter rail and car/vanpools;
- Protect the region's scenic vistas and corridors through the designation of scenic byways;

- Develop plans and projects that are compatible with historic, cultural and environmental concerns.
- Promote the use of alternative fuel vehicles which reduce or eliminate harmful emissions.
- Avoid encroachment on all of the Fredericksburg/Spotsylvania National Military Park and other historic properties in the Region.

Planning Factors, Policies and Priorities Addressed:

- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.

GOAL 5: Support economic vitality of the region, especially by enabling global competiveness, productivity and efficiency.

Objectives:

- Strengthen multi-modal and trans-shipping facilities which expedite the transportation of material, goods and people.
- Design improvements and retrofit the existing system (i.e. the provision of bicycle and pedestrian/transit facilities) in a manner which ensures access to tourist destinations in a fitting manner.
- Plan and develop facilities designed to ease the flow of goods by rail and truck.

Planning Factors, Policies and Priorities Addressed:

- Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity and efficiency;
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight.