



COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Committee on Public Works and Transportation
moveDC Multi-Modal Long Range Transportation Plan

Statement of Meg Maguire
On behalf of The Committee of 100 on the Federal City

June 27, 2014

I am Meg Maguire, chair of the Transportation Subcommittee of the Committee of 100 on the Federal City. I appreciate this opportunity to comment on the draft *moveDC Multi-Modal Long Range Transportation Plan*, and am indebted to my colleagues whose chapter reviews form the basis of my testimony.

While the document contains considerable useful information, it seems to stop at our borders, leading to recommendations that are too timid. A stunning lack of regional perspective is evident in the failure to recognize that 75% of the cars on DC streets during the day belong to out-of-District commuters and that we cannot solve congestion and improve air quality by in-District solutions only. *moveDC* fails to thoroughly examine the tough issues of how we can expand commuter, passenger and freight rail. Mr. Clark and Mr. Edwards discussed this deficiency on several occasions with both the Task Force and consultants, but *moveDC* does not reflect the information we provided nor does it acknowledge the anticipated development of a DC Rail Plan. Monte Edwards will cover this topic in his testimony.

Getting in and out of the city is an issue not only for suburban commuters but also for DC residents. To integrate DC's transportation system with the region's network – a stated goal in the document -- growth of employment centers in the metropolitan area and the increasing number of DC residents must be recognized. With more reverse commutes – i.e. an increasing number of DC residents who travel to work in other jurisdictions -- we can't rely on a transit model that assumes that DC residents' transportation needs will all be met within DC.

moveDC should focus on mobility rather than modalities. The document should take a problem-solving approach rather than just catalogue modes and projects. "Intermodal connectivity" between commuter rail, Metrorail, buses and streetcars would be a more useful paradigm than "choice." Focusing on transporting people relatively short distances within DC is not going to address the commuter issue nor is it likely to create a major shift from automotive to non-automotive modes. Further, it risks diverting job growth and commercial activity to other jurisdictions.

moveDC's parking policies are based on inadequate and misleading data. Data on car ownership should be projected from the U.S. census and DMV data. Both the rate of car ownership – about .9 cars per household – and the percentage of carless households in DC have been remarkably consistent since at least 1990. As a result, when the District's population increases, so does the number of cars in the city. *DMV statistics indicate that over the past 5 years the number of cars registered in DC has risen by about 20,000.* While the number of cars owned by city residents is growing, the amount of curbside parking is decreasing as curbside lanes are repurposed for a variety of other uses. Parking management alone cannot overcome this degree of scarcity (especially in mixed-use neighborhoods, where there is also significant non-residential demand for curbside parking), so it is crucial that new residential construction provide an adequate supply of off-street parking for future occupants.

We strongly support additional data gathering on parking availability. Real-time information about where and when spaces are available could have a significant impact in decreasing traffic congestion and in facilitating the efficient use of existing parking. But that impact will only be felt if such information also includes off-street public parking availability.

moveDC should be a real plan that sets priorities. The current draft is a plan to plan, or a plan to prioritize. We need actual data and proposed priorities rather than statements about the need to collect data after the priorities have been set. For meaningful public discussion and in light of scarce federal funding, the document would be more useful if it proposed priorities under various funding scenarios.

Engaging the public in both understanding the document and setting priorities is essential. We will live with this plan for the next 30 years and it will probably constitute the transportation element of the next comprehensive plan, so it is important that moveDC is the best possible plan.

First, the initial draft must be modified to address its deficiencies, some of which we cite here. The too-often confusing maps need to be improved and described in the text so that people can easily understand how streets in their neighborhoods will be affected by corridor improvements, parking policies, transit-dedicated lanes, bike and pedestrian accommodations.

Second, the revised document should be presented to the ANCs and the public at easily accessible locations throughout the city focusing on its implications for each area. Feedback from these sessions should influence the final document that comes before Council for approval.

The Committee will follow these brief comments with a more detailed submission by July 6.

Thank you.