



August 31, 2006

Mr. David Joyner, Chairman
North Carolina Turnpike Authority
1578 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1578

Dear Mr. Joyner:

The members of the Capital Area Metropolitan Planning Organization's Transportation Advisory Committee would like to express our appreciation to the North Carolina Turnpike Authority (NCTA) for its efforts to date. The efforts put forth in exploring the feasibility of constructing the I-540 Western Wake Freeway, including the Triangle Parkway, as a toll road are greatly appreciated. Based on the findings of the Preliminary traffic and revenue studies, the Capital Area MPO is hereby requesting that the NCTA proceed further by undertaking the investment-grade financial feasibility study for the Triangle Parkway and Western Wake Freeway.

Additionally, the Capital Area MPO requests that the NCTA undertake the necessary environmental documentation and additional design work to ensure that both projects will be prepared to proceed to construction expeditiously should the findings of the investment grade study be favorable and a sound financial plan developed.

The Capital Area MPO also requests that the NCTA initiate environmental studies and a study of all feasible financing options on the Southern Wake Freeway to allow for its construction as a toll road at the earliest possible future date. The MPO also urges the NCTA Board to work with the NC General Assembly to identify potential sources of new revenue, which could be used to fill the financing "gap" needed to complete this project and the remainder of the entire I-540 system.

The MPO is requesting that the Authority study the feasibility of tolling that portion of I-540 currently under construction between NC 54 and NC 55. The purpose of this feasibility study would be to determine if tolling this portion of the roadway would significantly reduce the funding gap and lower the toll rate required on the Western Wake Freeway and Triangle Parkway.

The MPO members understand and appreciate that the NCTA recognizes the importance of working closely together with the MPO on potential turnpike projects in our planning region. They look forward to continuing to be closely involved in upcoming work associated with implementing this important turnpike project including updates that will be needed to the Long-Range Transportation Plan and the

Metropolitan Transportation Improvement Program both of which require MPO approval.

The information presented at the Transportation Advisory Committee of the MPO on August 16, 2006 was well-received and provided answers to many of the questions from member agencies. Members present at that meeting requested that the NCTA and MPO staff work together to formulate a Memorandum of Understanding to clearly define and clarify issues including, but not limited to:

- 1) Any funds raised as a result of tolls on this project be used on this project and not diverted to other projects or areas of the state;
- 2) A sunset of tolls when improvement costs are satisfied;
- 3) NCDOT be included in the discussions relating to any funding shortfall; and
- 4) The road must be designed and constructed to meet or exceed NCDOT standards.

The TAC appreciates the efforts of the NC Turnpike Authority, fully supports the emerging MPO/NCTA partnership and looks forward to working closely with the Authority to develop the Memorandum of Understanding.

Sincerely,

Joe Bryan, Chair
Transportation Advisory Committee
Capital Area MPO

cc: Mr. Perry Safran
Capital Area MPO TAC Members
Ed Johnson, Director, Capital Area MPO Lead Planning Agency