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Fairfax, VA 22032-3709

August 12, 2019

George Washington Memorial Parkway
Attn: Alexandria to Mount Vernon Safety Study
700 George Washington Memorial Parkway
C/O Turkey Run Park
McLean, VA 22101

Ladies and Gentlemen:

As a resident of Fairfax County who has traveled the scenic and historic George Washington Memorial Parkway, I wish to provide comments pertaining to the safety study currently underway.

Over the last few years traffic on the Parkway has increased significantly as the area has grown and especially so since shifts in personnel at Ft. Belvoir as a result of the impact of the Base Realignment and Closure Act (BRAC) resulted in a major increase in jobs at Fort Belvoir. As a result, many Fort Belvoir employees use the Parkway as a commuter route to access the Capital Beltway and Woodrow Wilson Bridge via Belle Haven Road, which has seen a significant increase in the number of traffic accidents.

Of special concern is that travel speeds on the Parkway are routinely well in excess of the posted limits. Speeding vehicles make it difficult to enter or exit the Parkway at scenic, historic, and picnic pull offs as well as at historic Dyke Marsh. Alternatively, most police patrol activity seems to be concentrated on the Northern reaches of the Parkway closer to Reagan National Airport and the crossings into Washington, DC. Finally, the prohibition against commercial vehicles using the Parkway has been increasingly ignored over the years, which serves only to add further congestion to the route.

An additional concern is the design of the stone arch bridge at Wellington. Tour buses can only pass under the bridge using the middle lanes. This is a concern as the Parkway serves as a major route for tour buses traveling to and from George Washington's Mount Vernon Estate. A redesign/reconstruction of the road and/or bridge would serve to enhance safety and flow of traffic.

In conclusion, I request that notwithstanding any modifications recommended by the Safety Study, the unique historic design and character of the Parkway that qualified it for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places be preserved and the requirements of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and its accompanying regulations (36 CFR part 800) be complied with as appropriate.

Thank you for your kind consideration.

Sincerely,



Robert E. Beach, Architect