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**RECOMMENDATIONS RELATING TO THE VDOT OFF-RAMP &
OTHER POLICY CHANGES NEEDED TO REDUCE TRAFFIC AROUND
BRAC**

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The proposal to build an off ramp into BRAC from the south while important for the 40% to 48% of the BRAC tenants expected to come from the south addresses only a portion of the people coming to work at the site. While important this ramp is not going to solve the problems relating to traffic conjection associated with this site.

The Access Ramp at Seminary From 395

People who live on Van Dorn and the surrounding area are going to be concerned about the impact of the access ramp coming along 395 going north. In the summary of the proposal put forward by VDOT they state that this ramp will start at Sanger. People in this area are concerned that this will result in the hillock of land between 395 and Van Dorn being removed and all the trees taken down.

People in the West End really love their trees and the removal of all of the trees on the BRAC site is one of the things they do not like. It provides no screening or visual enhancement of the view of the BRAC site from 395 or from Van Dorn and Seminary. From any direction you look at the BRAC Building it is just plain ugly. It looms over and brutally dominates the local landscape. That is why it has been called the Behemoth on Beauregard and the Darth Vader building by local West End citizens. If this same approach is employed on the Van Dorn side our residents will be left with:

- An ugly eyesore. Our view will be of traffic streaming up to Seminary Road
- Further this will result in additional noise pollution and air pollution.

The traffic on 395 and Van Dorn has gotten worse and worse and worse, so has the noise from those roads. We and other neighbors have installed windows on our homes to deal, not only with making our homes more comfortable with regard to heat loss, but also because we are trying to deaden the sound of the traffic on 395. Even with the installation of such windows my family also has to employ a white noise generator to screen the sound of the traffic. In addition to their value as visual screening trees also reduce air pollution. They actually eat up CO2 and thus help to keep our air cleaner. Trees also reduce the intensity of heat on roads during the summer months. Eliminating the hillock and trees for the ramp will do great harm to our neighborhood. It will affect our view, increase the traffic noise, provide no visual screening, and lower our property values.

Living next to an off ramp is not a positive value if you are trying to sell, or rent your house, condo, or apartment. If that ramp is wide, ugly and destroys what little noise and visual traffic screening we currently have we will have really serious problems in the neighborhood. Some of this could be resolved with a high, but attractive, barrier wall. But we would still like to have a line of trees on our side to screen such a wall and make it more attractive. We hope you will do everything you can to see that these concerns are part of the solutions that are employed as we address the building of an off ramp.

Fixing and Improving other Intersections Leading to BRAC

Faced with a back up from the ramp at Seminary people are going to take other routes and they will be trying to get to the site using the surrounding intersections: via Van Dorn and Duke; Van Dorn and Seminary; Little River and Beauregard; Braddock and Little River (coming off the Beltway); from Route 7 coming east turning in at Skyline and connecting to Seminary from the east; up Janey's Lane and Seminary; via Duke and Quaker Lane to Seminary; and or Duke to Van Dorn; coming off the beltway at the Van Dorn exit and traveling up Van Dorn; coming from the north via 395 south and getting off at Shirlington and coming via Four Mile Run to George Mason Drive and up to BRAC; off on Glebe Road on the east side and up to Route 7, and over to Beauregard and Route 7.

The new ramp will not address these issues. We already know that many of the critical intersections in and around BRAC are at failed levels of service (LOS) with ratings of D and F currently. Additional traffic is going to make all of these intersections worse. We will need money to retime these lights, and make fixes and adjustments to make them more useful and facilitate the flow of traffic. We need state and federal funds for these problems as well.

More Funding For Mass Transit

Nor does this proposal, as it stands, provide for the increased city, state and federal funds that will be necessary for funding mass transit. We need to get additional people on to mass transit as soon as possible. That means additional new or refurbished buses coming from Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax and coordination of the plans and routes by all three jurisdictions so that people can get to work, not only at BRAC but other destinations that will be affected by the increasing gridlock on our streets and roads.

There are many researchers who focus on development and transportation trends and policies. Among them, Christopher Leinberger of Brookings, who recently addressed our Stakeholders Group. In his presentation he noted that while the capital cost of additional mass transit is significant, the life cycle cost of providing mass transit rather than road construction and maintenance is far and away more cost effective. We need to pursue solutions that are efficient, and cost effective over the long run or we shall be revisiting this issue frequently with more

expensive solutions on down the road.

For this reason it is important for citizens, businesses, and elected officials at the local, state and federal level to pursue, work for, and lobby for, solutions that allow and facilitate the expenditure of state, local and federal transportation funds to be applied to mass transit as well as roads. In some cases this will require changes to the laws and regulations that govern the expenditure of local, state and federal transportation programs. For example, federal transportation formulas historically favor road building rather than mass transit. While there has been some improvement in funding it still disadvantages urban and suburban areas. If such funding sources both allow and encourage the expenditure of funds on mass transit and other traffic mitigation solutions they will cost the taxpayers less money, encourage the more efficient and faster resolution of traffic problems and a more pleasant trip to the office for commuters who are now sitting in traffic.

It would also provide for a more efficient use of the commuters time as they could read a newspaper or book or do work if they can travel to work using mass transit. It will also save money on gas, reduce pollution and reduce road rage. This will also reduce gas, and insurance costs for current drivers and reduce pollution and its attendant health costs to individuals and communities.

Push For Changes in Federal and State Transportation Laws to Provide More Funds For and Flexibility In Resource Allocation To Improve The Flow of Traffic.

We encourage our elected officials to use their experience with these problems to advocate for, and lobby for such changes with the Federal and State Agencies, the appropriate Congressional Committees and organizations such as the National Association of Counties, the National League of Cities and the National Governors Association and the Chamber of Commerce. These organizations need to advocate for more resources for mass transit and other policy changes, which make money spent for transportation improvements more flexible, efficient and cost effective.

The City of Alexandria is going to be a poster child for policies that have frustrated efforts to address modern transportation problems in urban, and dense suburban areas that so often provide the lions share of the taxes used to support state programs and services but have a difficult time getting the fiscal resources they need to fund needed transportation improvements. The business that benefit from better transportation policies are much better served and more productive if their people can get to work as rapidly and efficiently as possible.

Telecommuting

We also need to push the military on other low cost solutions that do not impact our budgets. That is to greatly increase the number of people telecommuting to BRAC and other worksites next door. In a previous BRAC Advisory Committee Meeting Donna Fossum, Chair of our Stakeholders Group and a long time Commissioner of Planning, noted that when faced with similar problems related to traffic when the Patent Trade Office (PTO) was opened half of the people coming to the site were able to telecommute. She asked what DOD was doing to push for and implement such solutions. The military responded that currently about 2% of their employees could telecommute and that the Obama Administration has signed directives to encourage telecommuting but they did not outline any special efforts they had advanced to encourage telecommuting.

This is a very cost effective way to ease traffic congestion and it enjoys strong bipartisan support. The leading champion of telecommuting is in fact Republican Congressman Frank Wolf. And this is a solution that is popular with the workers themselves. Many employees would prefer to work from home and or work partly from home and partly from the office. It would be very productive, from a fiscal stand point, if the elected officials and all other stakeholders would press the Department of Defense to do all that it can to expand the number of people who telecommute as quickly as possible.

Many will argue that they cannot do this because of the sensitive nature of their work. It is possible to create software with strong firewalls so that communications are not breached. Presumably the military and the CIA already uses secure software when they are communicating with military personnel and field agents in Afghanistan and Iraq. The people in the BRAC offices could utilize the same high security software.

Further not every person or office that is going to the Washington Headquarters requires that their work be protected with ultra, super secret, security protocols. Some people's work is not that sensitive. Further as has been disclosed many times numerous documents labeled "top secret" are not in fact that sensitive. Often the so-called secret information has been information freely available in newspapers, magazines and other forms of public information.

We request that the elected officials do everything they can to encourage telecommuting because this is a solution that is relatively low cost and immediate, while building off ramps and improving roads and intersections and adding more buses and other forms of mass transit are not.

Set Up A Meeting Between the BRAC Agencies and Government Contractors That are making the Decisions on the Allocation of Parking Spaces and The City Elected Officials, Staff and Citizens to discuss BRAC Parking Policies.

At Thursday's February 10th Permit Parking meeting we learned that the various government agencies and private contractors who are scheduled to move into BRAC 133 will themselves establish their own criteria for who gets to park inside their garage at the building. We respectfully request that a meeting be set up between members of this community and ours. Our Elected Representatives, City Staff, and the public members of the community who have been working on these issues for the last two and a half years would welcome the opportunity to be allowed to speak directly to the people who are actually going to be making the decisions about who can park in the building. This would allow those of us who have been engaged in the policy issues related to parking and transit to speak to them and encourage them to employ some of the solutions and criteria that we have advanced in our meetings.

For example these suggestions include allocating spaces on a priority basis to those who are car-pooling. Commercial buildings that currently house federal employees and federal contractors have frequently employed this. They could also employ market centered financial incentives such as charging people who park in the building by having the parking administered by a private commercial company, as well as providing assistance to those taking mass transit by helping them pay for their mass transit costs. We also previously suggested that there be Flex cars on site so that if a person who had taken mass transit or car pooled to work they could use the Flex car to do either private or work related business that requires a car during the day.

Funding for all of this will have to come from the City, Fairfax and Arlington Counties and or the State of Virginia and or the federal government via a revised version of the Defense Access Roads Program and other sources. We must impress upon you and you must impress upon DOD, the State of Virginia and the Federal Department of Transportation that in order to fix this problem we will need more than an access ramp off 395.

In summary we will need:

- A solution to the installation of an off ramp at Seminary and 395 that takes into account the views, problems and concerns of the residents right next to the off ramp with regard to noise, air pollution and the appearance of the off ramp. And please allow us some trees to screen the off ramp and the probable barrier wall to make it less of an eyesore and source of visual pollution.
- Much more mass transit and more funding for mass transit.
- More money and resources for traffic mitigation on other surrounding roads and intersections,
- Attention to traffic coming from the east, north and west as well as from

the south.

- More and better coordination of mass transit and road improvement by Alexandria, Arlington and Fairfax providing local funds, and funding from the State of Virginia Department of Transportation and the federal government with assistance provided by the Federal Department of Transportation, and the Department of Defense utilizing resources under the Defense Access Roads program. We need letters from our elected officials to the parent agencies and policy committees to improve laws and regulations to allow and encourage money for mass transit and other forms of traffic mitigation in addition to road building.
- A much greater focus by the tenants of BRAC 133 and current and future business tenants along the Beauregard Corridor on such low cost and effective traffic mitigation techniques as telecommuting. This is the least costly
- and fastest form of traffic mitigation available.
- A meeting to facilitate joint efforts by; the local elected officials, City Staff, and citizens of the West End to work with the tenants, and tenant organizations who are going to be making the parking decisions within the BRAC Building regarding the allocation of the parking spaces within the building.