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**PUBLIC SPEAKS LOUDLY ON TRANSPORTATION PRIORITIES:
PUBLIC OPINION SURVEY PROVIDES STRONG GUIDANCE ON
TRANSPORTATION ISSUES TO POLICYMAKERS
TRANSACTION 2030 TRANSPORTATION SURVEY RESULTS**

Frustrated with traffic, residents across Northern Virginia said they are willing to pay for the transportation improvements most important to them, according to a survey of 1,263 residents conducted for the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) by QSA Research & Strategy of Alexandria, Virginia.

Respondents were asked to identify their commuting patterns, the means of travel and transportation corridors they used most often, their priorities for improvements within those corridors, and how much they would be willing to pay on average each day to get their highest priority project built. According to the survey, two-thirds of residents are frustrated with the trips they take and of those almost nine in ten expressed frustration with “traffic” as the reason.

Half of the respondents said that public transportation is their top priority, while over one-quarter chose road improvements. Surprisingly, even about half of those who do not use transit picked that option as their top priority. There were no differences by jurisdiction. Respondents from Prince William County were as likely to favor public transportation improvements as respondents from Arlington County.

When asked about priorities for the corridors they frequently use, respondents voted for multi-modal transportation solutions. Sixty percent of respondents that travel the Route 7/Dulles Corridor reported extending Metrorail to Dulles Airport and Ashburn in Loudoun County to be their highest priority project. Respondents that travel the I-66 corridor favored widening I-66 between the Beltway and Gainesville. Respondents who travel the Beltway corridor were as likely to support the construction of a Metrorail link between the Dunn Loring Metrorail station and Maryland as they were of widening the Beltway.

When asked how much they would be willing to pay on average each day for improvements that would expand public transportation service and reduce crowding on Metrorail and VRE, eighty-five percent of respondents said they are willing to pay to expand public transportation and reduce crowding on Metro and VRE. More than seven in ten residents said they would be willing to pay to use high occupancy toll (HOT) lanes if they were available to avoid being stuck in traffic. Among revenue generating options, area residents find increases in the sales tax more acceptable than a gas tax. And seventy percent would vote for



state bonds backed by income taxes to pay for all types of transportation improvements in Northern Virginia.

For members of the Transportation Authority, whose members include state and local leaders, the results show that Northern Virginians are frustrated enough by their trips that they want more and better road and transit capacity and said they are willing to pay for their highest priority improvements.

Members of the NVTA will use the input provided by respondents to assist them in drawing up their blueprint for future investments in the region's transportation system. In addition to the survey, the Authority is sponsoring booths at community events and county fairs and will be hosting a public information meeting in the fall. A copy of the survey presentation is available at www.TransAction2030.com.

QSA Research and Strategies of Alexandria, Virginia conducted the telephone survey for the Authority between April 26 and May 10, 2005 with 1,263 respondents. The statistical margin of error is +/- 2.8 percentage points for the sample as whole.



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* indicates present at July 28, 2005 meeting when QSA Research & Strategy presented the results of the TransAction 2030 telephone survey.