



NARC

Building Regional Communities

National Association of Regional Councils

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Norman Y. Mineta
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington DC 20590

Dear Mr. Secretary,

As the President of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC), and on behalf of our 250 member Councils of Government (COGs) and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), I urge you to support the administration of the National Personal Transportation Survey (also known as the National Household Transportation Survey). This important data-gathering survey is due for collection in 2008, and is the only national source of information on personal travel. Although authorized, the NPTS has not been funded or placed on the Department's schedule of activities.

COGs and MPOs rely on the NPTS to supply data to their transportation models that forecast facility improvement needs. Further, the NPTS helps define trends in travel behavior within and beyond each region. The NPTS has been an invaluable source for tracking changes in travel patterns, such as the decline in work trips and the increase in travel for familial and social/recreational purposes. Analysis of travel trends by special needs population groups—such as the elderly and young adults—have provided important data to the local governments that provide them with services.

The cost of the survey is miniscule when compared with the benefits. Cost estimates for the survey range between \$8 million and \$12 million. The NPTS' data will be the primary or supporting information used to make decisions on over \$22 billion of federal transportation funding. The Department of Transportation has performed this survey six times since 1969, and is the only entity—public or private—that can be relied upon to produce the reliable, impartial, and accurate data found in the NPTS.

Travel forecasting is a changing field, and transportation planning agencies need the time-series data from the NPTS series to inform policies, planning and spending at the local level. Thus, I urge you to secure the funding and administrative capacity to complete the NPTS on schedule in 2008.

Sincerely,

Randall C. Morris
President, National Association of Regional Councils
Commissioner, Seminole County, Florida
Member, METROPLAN Orlando

Cc: J. Richard Capka, Acting Administrator, Federal Highway Administration
David Horner, Acting Deputy Administrator, Federal Transit Administration
Nicole Nason, Administrator, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Ashok G. Kaveeshwar, Administrator, Research and Innovative Technology Administration