C. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Introduction

A preliminary assessment of the six (6) transportation concepts presented in Section B of this paper was completed. Three of these concepts are recommended for further study in the I-95 future independent projects.

Within these preliminary recommendations, the majority of the I-95 highway improvements would be the responsibility of the Authority to implement, in coordination with federal, state, and local transportation and environmental agencies. Highway improvements beyond the interchanges, however, would be the responsibility of either the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) or local jurisdictions. Likewise, the transit concepts that merit further evaluation would be the responsibility of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), regional transit providers, and local jurisdictions. All projects are subject to funding availability and future project planning studies.

2. Highway Concepts

Table S-2 in the Summary presents a comparison of transportation concepts C-1 through C-6. The table also includes traffic operations anticipated in the year 2020 for both week**day** and week**end** peak periods (note that both the General Purpose lanes and Managed lanes levels of service are shown. Brief comments and observations on the overall traffic and transit operations are also provided. The traffic operations along I-95 north of MD 543 would be the same or better than the levels of service shown. The concepts are described in more detail in Section B.5 of this paper.

3. Recommended Highway Concepts

The concepts recommended for further consideration as a part of future independent projects are highlighted in light green on Table S-1 (specifically Concepts C-1: No-Build, C-5: Managed Lanes, and C-6: Full Build). Section B.5 of this paper presents these concepts (including a graphic sketch and typical sections) along with a summary of traffic levels of service in the year 2020.

Concepts C-5: Managed Lanes and C-6: Full Build represent broad families of alternatives. Geometric and operational variations are anticipated, for both Concepts C-5 and C-6, during future independent projects.

4. Conceptual Transit Alternatives

A variety of transit alternatives have been developed by other agencies including the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (Constrained Long Range Plans), the Maryland Transit Administration (Maryland Comprehensive Transit Plan Study and Baltimore Regional System Studies) and others. These alternatives are the responsibility of the Maryland Transit Administration, regional transit providers, local jurisdictions and others and are subject to future planning studies and funding availability by those parties. The following improvements are under study by MTA in their Maryland Comprehensive Transit Plan and approved Baltimore Regional Rail Plan:

- **Increased levels of service on existing Commuter Bus Routes -** Additional service on MTA Bus Routes 410, 411, 420, and 731.

- **New Express Bus Service** - Suburb to suburb service connecting areas such as Bel Air and White Marsh in the study area with Hunt Valley, Towson and Owings Mills.

- **Increased local circulator bus service** Intra-county service in Baltimore, Harford and Cecil counties as well as local shuttles to MARC rail stations and in towns such as Bel Air and Edgewood.

- **Light Rail** - Light Rail service connecting downtown Baltimore with White Marsh and continuing on to Middle River. This would also provide a direct access point/station from I-95 just north of White Marsh.

- **MARC Commuter Rail** - Station improvements, additional parking, and additional commuter train service.

- **Technology and Marketing Improvements** - A series of improvements to make transit more user friendly such as SMART fare card technology for seamless fare payment, improved bus/stops and shelters, enhanced customer information and marketing, enhanced security, and priority treatment for buses in congested areas.

A key foundation for future project planning studies will be the enhanced transit concepts recommended by the regional and local transit providers. As these concepts are adopted by the metropolitan planning organizations and implemented by the transit providers, they will serve to maintain the high level of transit service along the I-95 study area, providing local residents and through travelers with a wide variety of non-auto options. In summary, the adopted concepts will become a part of the base transit assumptions for future project planning studies.

5. Next Steps

On the basis of the agency concurrence for the **PURPOSE AND NEED STATEMENTS** for the I-95 study area developed as a part of the I-95 Master Plan and consistent with the May, 2000 streamlined guidelines developed by the Mid-Atlantic Transportation and Environmental (MATE) Task Force, the Maryland Transportation Authority in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration is **recommending initiation of project planning studies within Section 100 of the I-95 study area**. Section 100 of the I-95 study area extends approximately 8 miles from the I-895 (N) split to north of the MD 43/ Whitemarsh Boulevard interchange.

Section 100 of the I-95 study area is the most congested section of I-95 in Maryland, north of Baltimore City. The purpose of project planning for Section 100 will be to improve local and regional, vehicular and transit, interstate access and mobility by addressing safety and capacity needs.

As discussed in Section A.6, a **Purpose and Need Statement** for Section 100 was circulated July 5, 2001**.** Table A.4 presents the status of the agencies concurrence on the Independent Purpose and Need Statement for I-95 Section 100.