

Financing Up to Uncle Sam

\$107 Million Va. Road Ideas Add to Area Planning Snarl

By Sam Zagoria

Post Reporter

A year-long, \$30,000 study of Northern Virginia's road problems yesterday wound up with recommendations for 107 million dollars worth of improvements, but with little idea—other than Uncle Sam's aid—of how they could be financed.

The 103-page report by Wilbur Smith and Associates, New Haven, Conn., engineering firm, set off further confusion in an already crowded planning snarl about Potomac River bridges and ring highways.

The report was ordered by the Virginia General Assembly last year and was delivered to Governor John S. Battle yesterday by the State Highway Commission. The Commission made no comment on the contents. There was quite a bit in the Greater Washington area.

The engineering firm recommended construction of two expressways to help Old Dominion commuters get in and out of Washington, a bridge at Three Sisters Islands above Key bridge and another across Hains Point, an "intermediate circumferential route" linking the expressways, and 12 million dollars worth of improvements in existing roads.

The firm warned that "highway improvements in the area are absolutely essential" now and laid out its program in terms of execution by 1973.

The report put the cost of the Potomac bridges at 21 million dollars and hoped the District of Columbia would pick up this tab. The remaining \$86,300,000 would take about 65 years for Virginia to provide at the current rate of allocations, so the firm put its hand out in the direction of the Federal government.

Tools for both roads and bridges were considered, but were given little chance of success even if the formidable task of "bringing together two states and the Federal government in a toll collection plan" could be accomplished.

"Some assistance might be rendered by the cities and counties in the region," but this would solve "only a relatively small part of the important and costly road problem," the Smith firm declared.

This brought the report to arguing that "the traffic problems of northern Virginia are largely the problems created by Washington. The origin-destination data indicated that about 50 percent of all auto trips on the Virginia side have one trip end on the D. C. side."

The firm suggested consideration of a plan whereby the Na-

NCPC Studies Costs; Highway Officials Here

NCPC holds all-day closed session to discuss alternate Potomac bridge proposals. Page 29.

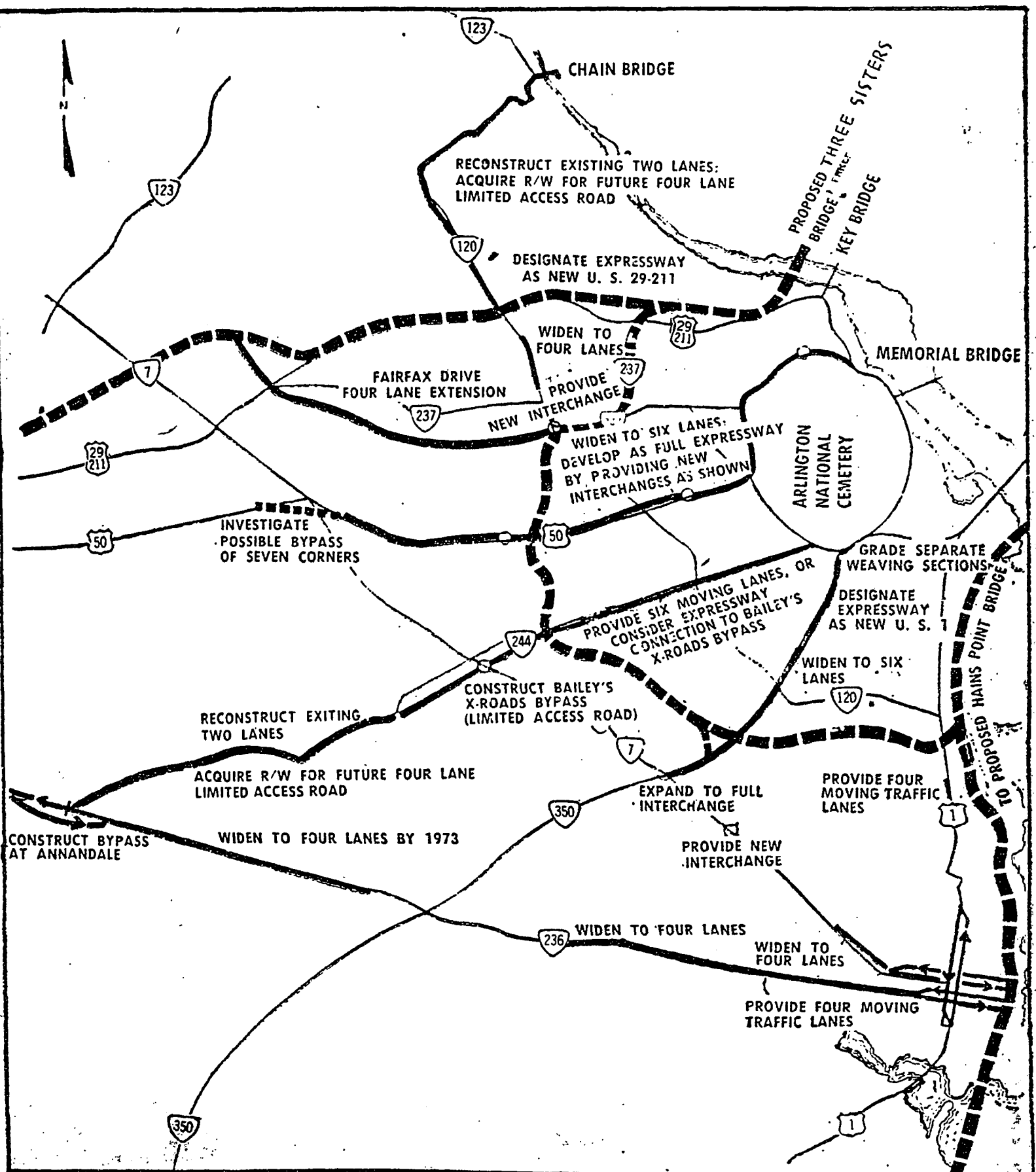
Highway officials from 36 states hear conflicting views on the Nation's highway problems. Page 29.

tional Park Service would finance the Potomac River Expressway as an improvement of the Mount Vernon Memorial Highway. The mere mention of the word "expressway" in Park Service circles sends blood pressures soaring.

The New Haven experts' selection of bridges gave the National Capital Planning Commission staff a boost since they have urged a bridge from Roaches Run across Hains Point (spelled Hanes throughout the report) to the Southwest Freeway. The NCPC was involved in the long-running Battle of the Bridges yesterday and will continue the forensics today.

However, the report proved cool to long-cherished NCPC plans for an "Outer Circumferential" ringing northern Virginia and tying in with Maryland's Inter-County Belt at Cabin John and Jones Point. "The 1953 usage of the Outer Circumferential is quite light . . . the low volumes on its northern portions, even by 1973, throw serious doubt on the advisability of its complete development," the report stated.

Such a route is high on the priority list of the National Capital Regional Planning See VIRGINIA, Page 29, Col. 5



Map shows proposed bridge and highway needs and road improvements for nearby Virginia, designed to meet traffic needs for the next 20 years. Major new expressways appear

in heavy dashed lines, improvements to existing roads in heavy solid lines, and unimproved sections in fine lines. The report is that of Wilbur Smith & Assoc. consulting firm.

Virginia Road Report Adds to Plan Snarl

VIRGINIA—From Pg. 1

Council, the Maryland State Roads Commission and is in the Regional Highway Planning Committee comprehensive plan.

E St. Idea Ignored

The report ignored the District highway builders' long-sought E st. bridge and found little use in the proposed Jones Point bridge. Such an attitude brought response from several Washington officials.

Rep. Joel T. Broyhill (R-Va.), sponsor of a bill for the Jones Point bridge, termed the Virginia report "a little belated." He said the authors "couldn't be the only ones in step, coming in here with a report contrary to all plans. It should not have too much weight and certainly shouldn't hold up our bridge planning."

Brig. Gen. Louis W. Prentiss, D. C. Engineer Commissioner, said that he had not yet studied the plan closely, but "if accepted, it will require some major revisions of our highway program."

Bartholomew Sees 'Merit'

Robert M. Watkins, chairman of the Regional Planning Council and the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission, said he was "surprised that they could reach such a conclusion on the Outer Belt Loop."

John A. Remon, vice chair-

man of the NCPC, said he still felt a "central area and Jones Point bridges were needed," but Harland Bartholomew, NCPC chairman, said he found "much merit" in the report after a quick study.

The principal projects proposed in the Virginia report follow:

Potomac River Expressway and Bridge—The four-lane limited-access expressway would begin near U. S. 1 at Hybla Valley, and extend 9.1 miles to a new bridge just downriver from the existing Railroad Bridge. The bridge would connect with the proposed Southwest freeway in Washington. The expressway would traverse major streets on the Potomac River side of Alexandria and follow the line of the Mount Vernon Memorial highway after leaving the city. Road and bridge would cost 39.5 million dollars.

Falls Church Expressway and Bridge—Route would cover 8.8 miles between Arlington Blvd. and a new bridge upriver from Key Bridge. From Arlington Blvd., it would swing northward to bypass Falls Church and connect with Arlington Blvd. Road and bridge cost: 18.3 million dollars.

Intermediate Circumferential Expressway—This route would link the two proposed new expressways. It would begin at the

Spout Run pkwy. and end just north of Alexandria, 10.6 miles. Cost: 19.4 million dollars.

Improvements to existing roads:

Columbia Pike—Ultimately, a parallel express road will have to be built to replace this route. Right-of-way restrictions make location of such an expressway difficult, but studies indicate it should be parallel to, and southeast of, the present road to tie into a proposed bypass at Baileys Crossroads. South of this point, the pike should be reconstructed. Cost: 11 million dollars.

Shirley Highway—Traffic volumes for 1973 show this four-lane expressway should be widened from four to six lanes between Route 1 and Leesburg pike. A grade separation also should be built at Washington Blvd. near Pentagon network. Cost: 1.9 million dollars.

U. S. Route 1—With new expressways, Route 1 should be redesignated a state road and would require minor improvements costing \$800,000. Without the new expressways, Route 1 improvements would cost 5.5 million dollars.

Leesburg Pike—Widening is needed near Alexandria end of pike and at Baileys Crossroads, with grade separations at key intersections. Extensive reconstruction is required at Seven Corners. Cost: 1.1 million dollars if proposed expressway system is built; otherwise: 1.2 million dollars.

Lee Highway, U. S. Route 29-211—The Falls Church expressway should be redesignated Route 29-211, with Lee highway becoming a State road. If the expressway is not built, widening of Lee would be required, at a 7.7-million-dollar cost.

Arlington Boulevard—Regardless of other expressways, this route should be developed as an expressway, with grade crossings eliminated, from Memorial Bridge to Fairfax Circle. Traffic volumes estimated for 1973 show the road should have six lanes

as far as Seven Corners. Cost: 5.4 million dollars.

Glebe Road—Extensive improvements are needed between Chain Bridge and Washington, with stretch between Chain Bridge and Lee highway rebuilt immediately. Cost: 3.8 million dollars. If new expressways are not provided, total cost would be 4.5 million dollars, due to improvements needed east of Washington Blvd.

State Route 236—Widening of this route at several points between Alexandria and Annandale recommended. Cost: 2 million dollars.

Washington Boulevard—Extensive improvements recommended, including a grade separation at Wilson Blvd., and an extension west of Glebe road on a new alignment. Cost: 3.2 million dollars.