

Crossing critic wants light rail, not bridge

BRIDGE from **A1**

Because nothing is finalized yet, it's not certain whether money will be allocated to a study on a Potomac River crossing, said VDOT spokeswoman Joan Morris.

"Right now, the six-year plan is being reviewed," she said. The new transportation improvement plan, she said, includes 1,400 projects across the state, several hundred of which are in Northern Virginia.

"Clearly we don't have the money to build all of them," Morris said, referring to the new plan as realistic.

Last May, Rep. Frank R. Wolf, R-10th District, asked the Federal Highway Administration to cancel the "techway" study of a second Potomac River crossing after he helped secure \$2 million from Congress to pay for it.

He said disinformation has alarmed residents in Herndon and Reston, where one of the bridge's pro-

posal sites would connect western Fairfax County's high-tech corridor to the biotech corridor of Gaithersburg and Rockville in Montgomery County, Md.

More than eight out of 10 drivers in Maryland and Virginia support another Potomac River crossing, according to a AAA Mid-Atlantic Transportation Poll released in February.

Proponents of the bridge, including a large number in the business community, say the crossing would provide tens of thousands of suburb-to-suburb travelers with an alternative to the Capital Beltway.

The Coalition for Smarter Growth, based in Washington, D.C., has opposed another Potomac River bridge from its inception.

Federal and state money would be better spent in bringing light-rail transportation and a mix of retail and commercial development around Metrorail stations in Virginia and Maryland, Stewart Schwartz, director of the coalition, said Wednesday.