

# WHAT CONGESTION LEVEL SHOULD WE EXPECT?

Congestion travel time penalties are related to size of the area, and Exhibit B-3 illustrates this. The Delay per Auto Commuter decreases as population does, but there is a significant amount of variation within the groups. Areas that have seen high rates of growth in recent years are more likely to be near the top of their population group because demand will increase much faster than the roadway, public transportation service, operational treatments and land use patterns.

- Areas with populations over 3 million (Very Large) should expect a minimum delay per auto commuter of 33 hours.
- Areas over 1 million (Large and Very Large) should expect a delay per auto commuter of at least 17 hours with a more likely value of around 31 to 52 hours.
- Areas over one-half million (all except Small) should expect at least 7 hours with typical values being closer to 21 to 52 hours.
- Areas less than a half million (Small) should expect a delay per auto commuter of up to 25 hours.

**Exhibit B-3. Congestion and Urban Area Size, 2010**

