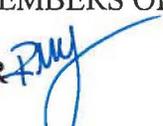


# *City of Alexandria, Virginia*

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 20, 2012

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: RASHAD YOUNG, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO #47: EXTENDING WMATA ROUTE 10E AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO LESS BLUE LINE SERVICE

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The purpose of this memorandum is to provide City Council members with information regarding a change to WMATA bus service in FY 2013 proposed to be funded from savings within the transit subsidies budget.

The WMATA Board has approved a change known as the "Blue Line Switch" which begins June 2012 and will allow additional Metrorail Orange Line service to travel through the Rosslyn-Foggy Bottom tunnel under the Potomac River. This switch involves placing some existing Blue Line trains on the Yellow Line to a termination point at Greenbelt. This switch is necessary to relieve overloaded Orange Line trains and will be needed to accommodate Silver Line trains when the Tyson's portion of the line is opened in 2013 (as well as the Dulles Extension when it is completed). This will impact Alexandria because in the initial stages, three out of ten Blue Line trips per hour will be diverted to travel across the Metrorail bridge from the Pentagon to L'Enfant Plaza, inconveniencing some people from Alexandria who want to go to points in the Crystal City-Pentagon City and Rosslyn-Ballston corridors or on the western side of the District of Columbia Central Business District (CBD). This will cause some patrons to wait longer for a direct Blue Line train, or cause them to make a transfer at Gallery Place, in the District, rather than at Rosslyn. This change will have a greater impact when the Silver Line is implemented and more Blue Line trains are diverted.

In order to remediate this situation, Mary Hynes (the WMATA Board member from Arlington County) and Mayor Euille had several meetings with WMATA staff to determine if some type of bus alternative could be provided from Alexandria, through southern Arlington County to Rosslyn. WMATA staff came up with the idea of extending the existing 10E service, which goes from the Braddock Road Metro station to the Pentagon on Mt. Vernon Avenue in Alexandria, during the peak hours. Their proposal extends this service to a final termination point at the Rosslyn Metrorail station. This service is expected to begin in late June 2012, and will continue as a pilot program for 18 months. The service will be rush-hour only operating from 6:30 AM to 9:00 AM and from 4:00 PM to 7:00 PM. Buses will operate every 15 to 20 minutes, with 32 trips being provided daily. The cost for this extension will be \$227,000, which

would need to be paid for by Alexandria and Arlington County, since it has been defined by WMATA as a cost reimbursable service, in which only the jurisdictions served bear the cost, instead of a regional service in which all of the jurisdictions in the WMATA compact share the cost. If the cost is divided evenly, it would be \$113,500 from Alexandria and \$113,500 from Arlington County annually.

City staff (OMB, TES) has reviewed the request and have concluded:

- This service extension is needed and, if demand projections are correct, that the bus service would be cost efficient (in comparison to other transit costs).
- The service would be a pilot to be reevaluated after 18 months.
- The service, while located in Arlington and Alexandria, is the direct result of regional rail service changes and, if permanently implemented, should be considered as part of the regional system and the costs more widely shared by other jurisdictions (FY15 or later).
- During this pilot period, the feasibility and cost of DASH or ART (Arlington's system) should be reviewed to see if it was cheaper than Metro's operating costs.

In FY 2012, the City's DOT paratransit expenditures are expected to end the year approximately \$100,000 below budget. Staff recommends that the City's cost of this additional bus service, if approved by the WMATA Board of Directors, be funded by a reduction of approximately \$100,000 in the FY 2013 DOT paratransit budget and NVTC State aid and gas tax revenues, if necessary, for the balance.