

**Attachment 1: Draft Comments from the City to the CTB at the Public Hearing on the Revised Transportation Plan and Needs Assessment**

October 16, 2014

The Honorable Chair and Members  
Commonwealth Transportation Board  
1111 East Broad Street, Room 3054  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Re: Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) Testimony Letter

Dear Secretary Layne and Members of the Commonwealth Transportation Board:

This letter presents the City of Alexandria's ("the City") comments on the proposed FY2016 to FY2021 Six-Year Improvement Program.

As you know, the City of Alexandria is working towards a transportation system that encourages the use of alternative modes of transportation and reduces dependence on the private automobile. We have been building this multi-modal network with the Commonwealth's support, and it is resulting in the establishment of transit-oriented, pedestrian friendly village centers, forming a more urban, vibrant and sustainable Alexandria. Continued leadership and funding from the Commonwealth is essential to the realization of this vision.

- In the past, the City has asked the CTB to identify new, dedicated funding sources for transportation. We are very appreciative of the work of the General Assembly and CTB in approving and starting to implement HB2313, which provides a real opportunity to address the backlog transportation project that are critical to our region's connectivity and economy. The success of HB2313 relies on continued coordination at all levels of government, particularly as the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) implements HB 599 and HB 2. We urge CTB and VDOT to work closely with the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) to refine a methodology for rating projects in a transparent and timely manner.
- Approximately \$60 million a year of bonds has been invested by the Commonwealth in major capital investments. It is our understanding that this significant source of funding will expire in 2018, unless the Commonwealth takes action to replace these funds. We would urge the CTB and the legislature to address this issue, before it drastically affects DRPT's ability to invest in needed transit infrastructure.
- We do understand that transportation revenues are not being received in the quantify originally projected. We appreciate the efforts VDOT, DRPT, and the CTB have made to minimize impacts on the jurisdictions in Virginia who have received FY2015 funds, We

would urge that careful measures be used to adjust the Six-Year Program in future years to provide scarce resources to meritorious activities.

- We also appreciate the continuing efforts of DRPT to implement the statewide transit assistance formula. And we thank DRPT for working with the region to address concerns regarding how Metrorail ridership is counted, which is essential to the new operations formula.
- The City requests that \$1 million of the Surplus Seminary Road HOV ramp funds be allocated to resolving a major fire suppression design flaw on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge. The current dry pipe system reduces response times, which increases risk to the bridge and its users until first responders arrive. Given the dollar amount of the Six-Year Program, this is a small amount in comparison to the multi-billion value of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge.
- We appreciate the assistance the Commonwealth has provided in improving vehicular access to the Mark Center BRAC-133 site, including the programming of significant monies for a new variable direction transit ramp from the HOV lanes at I-395 to Seminary Road the construction of short and mod-term improvements at the site. Since the construction of the HOV ramp is imminent, we would ask that the CTB fund interim pedestrian connections across the Seminary Road Bridge, especially for school children.
- We appreciate the continued support of regional and local transit services, including Metrorail and Metrobus service in the City. In particular, we are grateful for the Commonwealth's \$50 million match to the federal PRIIA grant, which funds the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's capital improvements. We ask that the Commonwealth continue to provide the funding to ensure that our rail system is in a state of good repair.
- WMATA adopted its 10-year strategic plan-*Momentum or METRO 2025*-which calls for a number of critical investments in transit over the next decade. We are very appreciative for the match DRPT is providing in FT2016 to help fund the first year of this plan. As WMATA continues to discuss the long-term implementation and funding of *Momentum*, we ask that the CTB consider significant additional long-term funding for this plan as a possible economic investment in the region's future and the impact this has on the state's tax receipts.
- The City is currently conducting an Environmental Impact Statement for the proposed Potomac Yard Metrorail station. This Station will be the largest transit investment in the City in modern times. We have just filed an application for funding of this project through the Virginia Transportation Infrastructure Bank. We would urge that the CTB look favorably on it.

- We thank the CTB for all of its assistance in funding the local portion of the Metroway service on Route 1. We are currently performing an environmental assessment of the West End Transitway on Van Dorn and Beauregard. If a build alternative is chosen, we would expect the Commonwealth to assist this transit project, when finances are assembled.
- The City supports the continuation and expansion of VDOT's revenue-sharing program. This program allows localities to match state funding to match state funding to make crucial improvements to the local street and highway system.
- The City has made significant enhancements to its bicycle and pedestrian network over the last several years, offering residents and commuters additional transportation options. Federal and state funding have been critical to the success of these programs. We urge the CTB to continue funding for bicycle and pedestrian facilities at a high level in the Six Year Transportation Program.
- As always, we thank the staff members from VDOT and DRPT who have provided significant assistance in flexing funds to transit projects and in helping to obtain necessary planning inputs for several projects.

We want to thank you for your time, efforts, and dedication in seeking solutions to the Commonwealth's many complex transportation issues.

Sincerely,

Rashad M. Young  
City Manager