

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: October 3, 2012
TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
FROM: T&ES STAFF
SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM # 4- STAFF UPDATES

ISSUE: Staff update to Transportation Commission on various ongoing projects

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive the staff update.

A. CRYSTAL CITY / POTOMAC YARD TRANSITWAY (ROUTE 1 BRT)

The City received a grant for the Crystal City/Potomac Yard Transitway totaling \$8.5 million. The grant will be allocated to the design/build of the Route 1 Bus Rapid Transitway (BRT) between Monroe Avenue and Potomac Avenue in a dedicated transitway.

90% design plans have been completed and reviewed by City Staff. 100% design plans are currently underway.

Construction began in July 2012 on the transitway and is anticipated to be completed in December 2013.

There is an issue with the depth of a Dominion Virginia Power (DVP) 230kv transmission line located north of East Glebe Road in the transition from the cross section including the transitway. The transition of the widened Route 1 northbound (NB) lanes to the existing right-of-way widens the area north of East Glebe into the easement of the transmission line. In addition, the depth of the transmission line is shallower than shown on the as-built plans. The City is in the process of evaluating options including the following:

- Raising the profile of the NB lanes to provide sufficient cover over the transmission line
- Repositioning the transitway to the west – removing the station stop in the southbound (SB) direction located south of East Glebe Road and placing a temporary stop westbound (WB) along East Glebe. This would allow for the entire cross section to shift 12-feet resulting in a shorter transition from the widened NB lanes to the existing right-of-way. It may also be necessary to narrow the NB lanes north of East Glebe from 12-foot lanes to 11-foot lanes to provide enough horizontal distance to skirt the shallowest portion of the transmission line

- Narrow the transitway to one lane (either reversible or one-way couplet with the NB transitway turning on Maskell). This would affect the ridership projections of the transitway as well as potentially the amount of funding available through the TIGER grant

We are working with DVP to find a solution.

Major construction will begin on the southern portion of the transitway (near Potomac Avenue) in October. The newly planted sod will be removed in the area as construction continues.

B. POTOMAC YARD METRO STATION

The Potomac Yard Metro project is an infill Metrorail Station to be located between the current National Airport and Braddock Road Metrorail Stations on the blue and yellow lines and be located in the vicinity of the Potomac Yard Development.

Impact assessments for various socio, economic, environmental, and transportation areas are currently underway with the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) anticipated in early 2013. The locally preferred alternative (LPA) is anticipated through City Council vote in mid 2013.

The next meeting of the Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Working Group (PYMIG) is scheduled for October 10, 2012 from 6:30-8:30 in the Council Workroom in City Hall. Topics of the meeting include impacts, preliminary cost estimates, and funding opportunities for each alternative.

C. TRANSPORTATION IMPACT STUDY GUIDELINES

At the June 6, 2012 Transportation Commission Meeting, a Transportation Planning Administrative Guidelines update was received by the Commissioners. Previously, at the April 4, 2012 Transportation Commission Meeting, the TMP Ordinance update was received by the Commissioners. The updates to both are as follows:

- **TMP Ordinance** - In May 1987, City Council passed the Transportation Management Plan (TMP) Ordinance which requires new development to reduce the Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV) traffic associated with their projects. The purpose of the ordinance was not to limit the number of developments or the size of a development but to address the problem of congestion by managing the transportation demand of a given development. The program requires development projects of a certain size to fund a TMP that includes programming to incentivize transit (example: offering transit subsidies) and provides disincentives to those commuters who drive alone (example: market rate parking fees).

TMP Ordinance is being reorganized and redrafted based on information received by stakeholders and as a result of drafting the Guidelines. The content as previously presented will remain the same; however, the organization will be more user-friendly.

- **Transportation Planning Administrative Guidelines**

As a companion piece to the Ordinance, the Transportation Planning Administrative Guidelines (Guidelines) has been drafted to supplement the Transportation Management Plan Ordinance. The Guidelines apply to development projects seeking a Special Use Permit of a certain size and type (i.e. land use changes and small retailers will not be subject to the Guidelines), as dictated by the Ordinance. The Guidelines create certainty for applicants and staff about the development process and content for submitting multimodal transportation studies and Transportation Management Plans.

The Guidelines were created using input from multiple divisions within T&ES, Planning and Zoning and the City Attorney. The draft dated May 15, 2012 was distributed and feedback was received from partner organizations, neighboring jurisdictions, transportation planners and engineers, and the development community. Public outreach and feedback will continue, and the Guidelines are being refined based on that feedback. The changes will be incorporated into the second draft which is expected in early October.

It is agreed that a multi-modal approach to required improvements is necessary, and this may include off-site mitigation. It is generally agreed that the text should be positively phrased and not about rectifying impacts; however, the details about how to accomplish this are being discussed.

- **Next Steps**

The Zoning Ordinance language and the administrative guidelines will be submitted to the Planning Commission in spring with final adoption anticipated by City Council in spring 2013. The Guidelines will be approved initially as part of the TMP Ordinance update, and will be updated annually. Staff will update the Commission in the winter.