

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 5, 2012

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: ABI LERNER, P.E. DEPUTY DIRECTOR, T&ES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #3 - PRELIMINARY RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FY 2014-FY 2019 CONGESTION MITIGATION AND AIR QUALITY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (CMAQ) AND REGIONAL SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (RSTP) PROJECT FUNDING REQUESTS

ISSUE: Consideration of the FY 2014-FY 2019 Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) and Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) Project funding requests.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Transportation Commission review the proposed list of CMAQ/RSTP projects for FY2014-FY2019 and develop a recommendation for City Council consideration and approval at their September 25, 2012 meeting. This funding plan must be submitted to Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) before September 30, 2012.

DISCUSSION: Since 1993-1994, the Commonwealth has allocated CMAQ and RSTP funding to the northern Virginia region. CMAQ funds are allocated to metropolitan regions that do not meet Clean Air Act regulations. These funds must be used for activities that improve air quality and cannot be used to increase the capacity of roadways. RSTP funds are very flexible funds that can be used for a wide range of regional transportation activities.

The annual funding allocations for the entire region typically total approximately \$24 million for CMAQ funds and \$36 million for RSTP funds. NVTA distributes the funds to the jurisdictions based on jurisdiction requests.

City of Alexandria Annual CMAQ/RSTP Funding

Year	Alexandria Funding
FY 2009	\$3,080,000
FY 2010	\$2,490,000
FY 2011	\$2,500,000
FY2012	\$3,000,000
FY2013	\$3,100,000

In 2012, the Commonwealth adopted its first multi-year plan for CMAQ and RSTP funds. An FY2013-FY2018 plan was approved by Transportation Commission and Council and forwarded to NVTA. The final plan adopted by NVTA largely reflected what was requested by the City.

City of Alexandria FY2013-FY2018 Approved CMAQ/RSTP Funding Plan

	FY13	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18
DASH Bus Replacement	\$1,950,000	\$2,650,000	\$2,050,000	\$2,100,000	\$2,870,000	\$2,160,000
Bike Sharing	\$400,000	\$100,000	\$300,000	\$0	\$0	\$270,000
Bike Parking	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$25,000	\$225,000	\$0
Mount Vernon Trail	\$50,000	\$450,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Transit Store	\$0	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000	\$0	\$560,000
Transit Analysis Study	\$0	\$0	\$500,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Transportation Demand Management	\$700,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$700,000	\$560,000
Braddock Road	\$0	\$0	\$600,000	\$0	\$0	\$0
Parking Technologies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$110,000
Total	\$3,100,000	\$4,200,000	\$3,950,000	\$3,125,000	\$3,795,000	\$3,660,000

The City of Alexandria must submit its FY2014-FY2019 CMAQ/RSTP funding request to NVTA by September 30, 2012. The requests will be reviewed by jurisdictional staff and a recommended set of projects will be submitted to the NVTA Board for approval. The approved NVTA plan will be forwarded to the Commonwealth Transportation Board, which will approve the projects by June 2013.

Below is the recommended funding request for FY 2014-FY 2019, which is consistent with priorities previously defined by the Transportation Commission.

City of Alexandria FY2014-FY2019 Proposed CMAQ/RSTP Funding Plan

	FY14	FY15	FY16	FY17	FY18	FY19
DASH Bus Replacement	\$2,650,000	\$2,050,000	\$2,100,000	\$2,870,000	\$2,160,000	\$2,160,000
Bike Sharing	\$100,000	\$300,000	\$0	\$0	\$270,000	\$300,000
Bike Parking	\$0	\$0	\$25,000	\$225,000	\$0	\$100,000
Mount Vernon Trail	\$450,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Transit Store	\$500,000	\$0	\$500,000	\$0	\$560,000	\$0
Transit Analysis Study	\$0	\$500,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Transportation Demand Management	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$500,000	\$700,000	\$560,000	\$600,000
Transitway Enhancements		\$100,000				\$500,000
Braddock Road	\$0	\$500,000	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Parking Technologies	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$110,000	\$200,000
Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements						\$340,000
Total	\$4,200,000	\$3,950,000	\$3,125,000	\$3,795,000	\$3,660,000	\$4,200,000

The following eleven projects proposed for CMAQ or RSTP funding in FY2014 - FY2019 are listed in order of priority:

1. DASH Bus Replacement

For DASH to maintain its fleet, vehicles must be replaced after their useful life has been reached. In addition, new buses are added to address high demand on existing routes and to serve new transit markets. With the funds available the City should be able to buy three to four buses each year, using FHWA funds.

This program is recommended to be the City's first priority for CMAQ/RSTP funding.

2. Bicycle Sharing Initiative

Bicycling is a practical, cost-effective and efficient way to move through urban areas. Old Town and the Carlyle/East Eisenhower areas of Alexandria are both compact, dense areas of mixed use development with many low-speed streets and existing on- and off-street bicycle facilities. While the City is making improvements on many fronts to encourage more sustainable transportation choices, one major goal in the City's Transportation Master Plan is to implement a pilot bicycle sharing program. Public bicycle transit (also known as "bike sharing") is a service where public bicycles are made available for shared use. Users can pick up and drop off bikes at designated stations by either registering online or at a station.

Capital Bikeshare, the bikesharing program in DC and Arlington, is the largest bikesharing program in the United States. When the first stations were put in place in September 2010, officials predicted that 6,000 people would purchase the \$75 annual memberships in the first year. Instead, that target was reached in six months, and then doubled in 24 hours through a half-price promotion. In its first seven months, Capital Bikeshare generated 330,000 trips. Capital Bikeshare jurisdictions have found bike share to be well used by tourists and residents alike. In DC, revenues are already covering operating expenses.

Existing bike share programs have demonstrated that dense systems work best, and Capital Bikeshare trips are intended to be short. To accommodate this, stations are placed approximately a quarter mile apart and located at major origins and destinations, such as residential areas, commercial centers, and transit stations. Bike share helps solve the "last mile problem" of commuters getting to their destination by co-locating bike share stations with transit.

The Capital Bikeshare pilot program includes eight stations and will launch in September 2012. Funding for the Bicycle Sharing Initiative would add more stations in Old Town, Carlyle, and Braddock. Staff continues to identify additional funding sources to expand the program through Transportation Management Plan contributions and grants. The pilot program and planned expansion will provide critical information for decision-making about future program expansion.

3. Bicycle Parking at Major Transit Stops

Bicycle commuting has risen in Alexandria since 2005, in part due to improved on- and off-street connections to the City's bikeway network. However, the City still lags behind other local jurisdictions in providing safe, secure bicycle parking at its major transit stops. To address high demand and current use levels that meet or exceed capacity, the City is seeking funds for modular, enclosed, unattended bicycle parking "stations" at Metro stops. These stations are designed to provide a low-cost, high-capacity solution that will also encourage short bicycle trips to complement public transit usage. A recent study by WMATA of bicycle parking facilities showed a deficiency in bicycle parking at the King Street and Braddock Road Metrorail stations. The study also showed a need for secure bicycle parking at the King Street Metrorail station, where there are incidences of bicycle theft.

4. Rebuilding the Mt. Vernon Multi-Use Trail Parallel to E. Abingdon Drive

Currently, the Mt. Vernon multi-use trail is badly constricted in the section parallel to E. Abingdon Drive, south of Slaters Lane. Methods for widening this portion of the trail will be studied, an alternative chosen, and the path widened. Widening the trail will make this important link in the region's pedestrian-bicycle network safer and increase pedestrian and bicycle capacity.

This link is a high priority due to large volumes of commuter and recreational users on the Mount Vernon Trail. In July 2011, a pedestrian and bicycle count was conducted near this section of trail for the national bicycle and pedestrian documentation project. Out of the ten locations counted throughout the City, the Mount Vernon Trail section represented the largest number of pedestrians and bicyclists, 805 users over a two-hour count period. The trail is a major commuter route to and from Arlington and DC. Given the large number of users, widening the trail to a standard width is an important safety project.

5. Old Town Transit Shop

Funding the operations of the City's Old Town Transit Shop is a continuing priority for the City. The Transit Shop has relied on RSTP funds since 2002. The federal grants keep the store in operation providing transit assistance and transit media.

The Old Town Transit Shop is located directly across from the King Street Metrorail station to serve commuters, residents, and visitors. The Transit Shop provides residents and employees a convenient "one stop" destination for all their commuting needs. Commuters are able to purchase fare media for almost every transit system in the area, pick up transportation information and schedules, and get answers to transportation related questions. Sale of most forms of transit fare media have increased in recent years.

6. Transit Analysis Study

To ensure that the City continues to meet the mobility needs of its residents, workers, and visitors, it must periodically examine transit services throughout the City. The Community-Wide Transit Analysis, completed in 2010, provided the platform for a variety of enhanced transit

recommendations that are currently being studied in further detail and implemented. This study should be updated every five years, to analyze the effectiveness of previously implemented modifications and to ensure that transit supply is keeping up with changing population and land use patterns. The next Community-Wide Transit Analysis is scheduled for 2015.

7. Transportation Demand Management Advancement

The City's Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program is tasked with the goal of reducing the number of single person occupied vehicles (SOVs) during peak travel times. To do this, the program has developed an extensive set of techniques to encourage City residents and employees to use a variety of modes, such as transit, carsharing, ridesharing, and teleworking.

In 2011, the City completed a Long Range TDM Plan, outlining goals and strategies to enhance its TDM program. These TDM funds will help implement the recommendations of the Long Range TDM Plan, reduce congestion, and improve air quality in the City and the region.

8. Transitway Enhancements

The City of Alexandria is engaged in a program of implementing transitways in three travel corridors in the City: the Crystal City-Potomac Yard Transitway (Corridor A), the Duke Street corridor (Corridor B), and the Van Dorn-Beauregard corridor (Corridor C). This project will fund additional planning work, preliminary engineering, and construction of facilities which may be necessary for high capacity transit in these corridors.

The City is currently constructing the first segment of the Crystal City-Potomac Yard Transitway through a design build contract. The transitway is expected to be operational by early 2014. In addition, the City is preparing to begin an Alternatives Analysis (AA) and Environmental Assessment (EA) for the Van Dorn-Beauregard corridor. Completion of the AA/EA will position the City to compete for federal funds to construct the transitway in the future.

9. Braddock Road Metro Multimodal Connections

The Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan recommends studying the feasibility of building a tunnel connection under the freight rail tracks from Braddock Road Metrorail station to the neighborhood. According to the plan, the tunnel would "provide a grand new station entry from the west, saving pedestrians walking time by eliminating the existing need to walk south to the Braddock Road underpass to reach the station." In addition, the plan recommends studying a pedestrian-bike connection and a walking route to the northern gateway.

This project will fund the preliminary engineering, including the soil analysis, hydrology, utility analysis, and preliminary design to improve multimodal access to the station.

10. Parking Technologies

This study will fund the assessment and implementation of improved parking management techniques, such as multispace meters, real-time parking management, performance parking, and

pay-by-phone parking. Improving parking management in the City will reduce congestion and vehicle miles traveled by increasing drivers' ability to find and access parking. In addition, these funds will be used to update the City's parking webpage and create mobile parking applications.

11. Bicycle and Pedestrian Improvements

Several recently adopted Small Area Plans have identified the need for bicycle and pedestrian improvements throughout the City. This project will fund additional planning work, preliminary engineering, and construction of pedestrian and bicycle facilities throughout the City. Enhancements will include:

- Feasibility study for a riverside pathway or boardwalk on Dangerfield Island, as identified in the Waterfront/Old Town Small Area Plan;
- Implementation of enhanced signage and surface improvements to the Mount Vernon trail, and additional bicycle parking in Oronoco Bay park and at or near the foot of King Street in racks and/or covered shelters, as identified in the Waterfront/Old Town Small Area Plan; and
- Detailed planning for a network of bicycle and pedestrian trails through the Beuaregard area, as identified in the Beuaregard Small Area Plan.