

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 17, 2014
TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
FROM: T&ES STAFF
SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM # 2 – ITEMS FOR CONSENT

ISSUE: Staff update to Transportation Commission on various ongoing projects.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive the items for consent.

A. FUNDING UPDATE

No meetings were held on the new Capital Funding Agreement in August to fund WMATA capital activities from FY 2017 through FY 2023. A meeting is scheduled in September to review substantive issues regarding this agreement.

Since the Commonwealth's budget was passed without provisions restricting the use of NVTA 70 percent funds, the City is preparing applications for the funds it was awarded in FY 2014.

NVTA is beginning the process of developing a method for rating all projects (highways, transit, intelligent transportation systems, and non-motorized projects) in the FY 2014, FY 2015, and FY 2016 expenditure plan. The NVTA has received \$769,618,810 in requests for 70 percent funds and will receive approximately \$350,000,000 of funding from the three regional sources from FY 2015 through the end of FY 2016. The method being proposed involves passing a project through three tiers of evaluation. It is NVTA's intent that this evaluation methodology be approved by the NVTA board at its October 2014 meeting

The NVTA has changed the dates of submission for RSTP/CMAQ funds from September 30, 2014 to December 17, 2014. The submission date was changed to permit NVTA to have a better estimate of expected RSTP/CMAQ funds.

B. POTOMAC YARD METORAIL STATION EIS

Staff is continuing to work with WMATA, the Federal Transit Administration, and the National Park Service to finalize the Draft EIS so it can be released for public review and comment. The next Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Implementation Group (PYMIG) meeting is scheduled for October 23, 2014.

Background: The Potomac Yard Metrorail Station project is an infill Metrorail station located between the National Airport and Braddock Road Metrorail stations on the Blue and

Yellow lines in the vicinity of the Potomac Yard Development.

For more information on the project, please visit www.alexandriava.gov/potomacyard.

C. CRYSTAL CITY/POTOMAC YARD (ROUTE 1) TRANSITWAY

The ribbon-cutting for the Crystal City/Potomac Yard Transitway was held on Saturday, August 23, 2014. The ceremony was attended by members of City Council and representatives from a variety of regional agencies. Mayor Euille served as the master of ceremonies and provided opening remarks. Remarks were also made by representatives from Arlington County, the Transportation Planning Board, the Federal Transit Administration, the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation, and WMATA.

Metroway service between the Braddock Road and Crystal City Metrorail stations began on August 24, 2014. During the first week of operations, daily ridership was 30 percent above the average daily ridership on the 9S route, which Metroway replaced. In addition, drivers have reported that they are pleased with the route.

Background: During the first round of TIGER grants, the City received \$8.5 million to design and construct the Route 1 Transitway between Monroe Avenue and East Glebe Road. The City compiled additional grant funding and \$5.2 million in local funding to design/construct various elements of the Transitway project. The total cost of the Transitway including vehicles is approximately \$20 million.

For more information on the Route 1 Transitway project please see visit:
<http://www.alexandriava.gov/tes/info/default.aspx?id=58644>

D. WEST END TRANSITWAY

The West End Transitway (WET) Policy Advisory Group (PAG) met for the first time on July 30, 2014. City staff and the project consultant team presented an overview of the project, an overview of the Alternatives Analysis/Environmental Assessment (AA/EA) process required in order to apply for federal funds, and defined the role of the PAG and project next steps.

PAG members were presented with eight locations along the corridor where design option decisions will be made in order to define the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) build option. PAG members and members of the public asked questions and provided comments about several of the design options. Several of the design options require additional technical analysis and that work is ongoing.

The project team also presented technical, data-driven evaluation measures that will be used to compare the three options under review: No Build, Transportation System Management (TSM), and Build – BRT.

Representatives from the Alexandria Bike / Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) attended the meeting and requested that the WET include bike and pedestrian facilities and improved access to the corridor from neighboring areas. City staff accepted an invitation to attend the September 15, 2014 BPAC meeting to discuss bicycle and pedestrian opportunities along the corridor.

Upcoming WET Meetings

- **Interagency Technical Advisory Committee to be held Tuesday, September 16 from 2:30PM to 4:30PM, City Hall, Room 2000, 301 King Street.**
- **Second West End Transitway Policy Advisory Group meeting to be held Thursday, September 18 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m, City Hall, Sister Cities Room 1101, 301 King Street.**
- **Second Public Meeting to be held Thursday, October 16 from 6:30 - 8:30 p.m, Pavilion at Mark Center (5708 Merton Court, Alexandria, VA 22311)**
- **Third West End Transitway Policy Advisory Group Meeting to be held Thursday, October 23, 2014.**

Background: In December 2013, the City kicked off an Alternatives Analysis / Environmental Assessment (AA/EA) for the West End Transitway (also referred to as Corridor C) as part of the Federal NEPA Process. The AA/EA will analyze and refine the alignment as defined by the CWG and City Council and to identify any impacts and potential mitigation associated with the recommended alternative. The study is partially funded by a grant from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and is the first step towards applying for a federal Small Starts grant for project design and construction.

For more information on the West End Transitway, please visit:
<http://www.alexandriava.gov/westendtransitway>

E. LOWER KING STREET MULTIMODAL FEASIBILITY STUDY

Four functional alternatives for the Lower King Street Multimodal Study were presented at a public meeting on May 29, 2014, including:

- **Do nothing/existing configuration**
- **Open to traffic**
- **Pedestrian only street**
- **Pedestrian only street with transit access**

While input varied at the public meeting, there was significant oral comment regarding the potential impact of removal of on-street parking to adjacent residential streets. Since then, staff has refined alternatives to incorporate public input, and prepared an additional alternative that would open the street to traffic, and include widening of the sidewalks while still preserving some on-street parking. Recommendations will be brought to the Transportation Commission, Waterfront Commission, Traffic and Parking Board this fall, and the City Council in the first quarter of 2015.

Background: In response to the Waterfront Commission recommendation on the Union Street Corridor Study, the City began the Lower King Street Multimodal Feasibility Study in January 2014. The purpose of the study is to analyze and identify impacts associated with various shared street concepts for the 100 block (Union to Lee Streets) of King Street, including limited vehicular access, and improved pedestrian access. The study will identify traffic and circulation improvements, operational and maintenance needs, an implementation timetable and process, and budgetary requirements to convert the 100 block of King Street into a shared street to allow the public to enjoy as a meeting and gathering place, and for dining, shopping, and a range of programmed activities. The study will be coordinated with the other projects in the vicinity including the unit block of King Street. The study will

include an analysis of circulation (vehicular, pedestrian, bicycle), trolley access, bus (including tour bus) circulation and pick up/drop off, loading access, parking (on-street, garage access, valet, passenger drop off/pick-up areas), and emergency vehicle access.

F. PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE MASTER PLAN UPDATE

The project consultant (Toole Design Group) is in the process of collecting data to identify the existing conditions, and is in the process of developing guiding principles for the Complete Streets Design Guidelines. In addition, a number of civic engagement tools have been developed that are available to the public. These include an online crowdsourcing map (wikimap) and an online survey to provide input on and bicycle needs. Both the wikimap and survey are on the project website and will be available through early October.

Upcoming meetings:

- **The first public meeting will be held at 7:00 pm, Tuesday, September 30, 2014 at the Minnie Howard campus (Media Room) of TC Williams High School, 3801 W. Braddock Road.**
- **The second Ad Hoc Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Advisory Committee meeting will be held at 7:00 pm, Thursday, October 9, 2014 at TC Williams High School, 3330 King Street.**

Background: The City is conducting an update of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan, and development of the Complete Streets Design Guidelines Manual, which will be completed in late 2015. The City completed both the Transportation Master Plan, and a Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Plan in 2008 which is data rich and serves as an implementation tool for the Transportation Master Plan. Since that time, staff has completed many important projects to improve walking and bicycling in the City, and many more are currently underway. In 2011, the City adopted a Complete Streets Policy which expanded staff to include a full time Complete Streets Coordinator, and initiated a Capital Bikeshare Program (Bikeshare Program), both of which continue to expand citywide. Given the many pedestrian and bicycle projects and initiatives completed over the past five years, including the Bikeshare Program, as well as the adoption of the Complete Streets Policy, the City will undertake an effort to incorporate these additions into an updated Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and development of a Complete Streets Design Guidelines Manual.

The purpose of this update to the City's Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and development of a Complete Streets Design Guidelines Manual will be to:

- Develop a non-motorized system that addresses the needs of all users (pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles, and transit riders) and is consistent with the Transportation Master Plan that encourages transportation options, reducing dependence on the private automobile;
- Develop both a bicycle and pedestrian network and hierarchy, based on identification of major activity centers or destinations (including existing and projected development and Metrorail and fixed transit stations); and
- Develop a framework for implementing non-motorized policies and projects citywide

More information is available at: www.alexandriava.gov/pedbikeplan

G. EISENHOWER WEST TRANSPORTATION STUDY

A community meeting was held on July 28, 2014 at the Beatley Library which focused on “visioning” for the SAP area. The transportation study consultant is continuing to work on data collection, analysis of existing conditions, and analysis of multimodal bridge alignment options. A Steering Committee meeting was held on September 8, 2014 at Samuel Tucker Elementary School. The next community meeting will occur on September 29, 2014 at 7pm at Beatley Central Library.

Background: The Eisenhower West Transportation Study is being conducted in conjunction with the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan (SAP). A Steering Committee has been formed for the SAP and Transportation Study to provide guidance on various issues, including the identification of future land use thresholds within the SAP area. The Transportation Study began in spring 2014 and is anticipated to be complete by spring 2015. The Transportation Study will serve as the transportation element/analysis of the SAP, which will include the analysis of various land use scenarios to be further explored in the SAP, and will conduct additional analysis of the multi-modal bridge concept that was recommended in the Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan (adopted in 2009) to identify a more specific alignment. The multi-modal bridge would provide a direct connection between the Van Dorn Metrorail station and Pickett Street, and serve future anticipated development. In addition, the Transportation Study will include an update to the 1993 Clermont Avenue Interchange with I-95 Environmental Assessment (EA). The update will re-analyze a “No Build” alternative of the Clermont Avenue connector (Eisenhower Avenue to Duke Street) to determine if the connector is still needed, based on current planned land uses and transportation improvements.

More information is available at: www.alexandriava.gov/eisenhowerwest

H. OAKVILLE TRIANGLE/ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR PLAN

City Council directed staff to begin a planning effort that includes Oakville Triangle and adjacent properties as well as the Route 1 corridor north and south of the site. A community Advisory Group was established to assist in developing Plan principles for the site regarding potential land uses, open space, sustainability, transportation and connectivity, and potential community benefits, among other topics. The corridor study will review features such as streetscaping, undergrounding of utilities, and potential redevelopment sites along the western portion of Route 1. The corridor study will help to establish a unified streetscape for Route 1 and an integrated approach to potential redevelopment along Route 1.

Staff will be looking at potential connections to adjacent communities and analyzing transportation impacts of the development. The next Advisory Group meeting will be held on Monday, September 22, 2014 at 7 PM at the Mt. Vernon Recreation Center

I. PARKING RATIO STUDY

Staff is in the process of finalizing draft recommendations for the Parking Ratio Study. The next Parking Ratio Study Task Force Meeting will be held on October 22, 2014 at 7 PM, with the location to be announced. Staff will bring draft recommendations to the Planning Commission, Transportation Commission and City Council work sessions in the fall. A public meeting will be held in December to present Parking Ratio Study Task Force recommendations. Staff is planning to present the final recommendations

and findings of the study to Council in the first quarter of 2015.

Background: The study conducted in-house by TES and P&Z staff. The purpose of the study is to right size parking and update existing parking requirements for new residential multi-family development projects while minimizing spillover effect into nearby on-street spaces. City Council established a task force of nine representatives from various stakeholder groups to provide feedback to staff on proposed recommendations. More information is available at <http://www.alexandriava.gov/ParkingStudies>