

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JANUARY 21, 2015
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

The Washington Area Metropolitan Transit Authority (WMATA) continues to hold meetings to discuss the proposed FY 2016 Operating and Capital Budgets, which were proposed in December, 2014. The WMATA Board held a working session on the budget on January 8, 2015 which provided answers raised by staff and Board members. The WMATA Board is scheduled to have a special finance and administration committee meeting on January 22, 2015, followed by the Board meeting, to discuss a set of proposals to be considered for public hearings in February or March 2015.

WMATA continues to hold discussions with regional funding partners to determine the language and funding amount which should be contained within a regional Comprehensive Funding Agreement (CFA). Progress on this agreement may be delayed due to the change in administration in Maryland.

Three of the 70% projects for FY 2014 were approved for funding by the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority in December, 2014. These include:

- Bus shelters and Real Time Information
- Transit Signal Priority and Traffic Signal Upgrades
- Potomac Yard EIS continuance and design-build package development

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) required more time to produce a set of ratings of highway and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) projects necessary to comply with the provisions of HB599. VDOT provided its draft set of project ratings at a meeting held on January 5, 2015. It further provided its ratings at a Project Implementation Working Group on January 15, 2015. The only project which Alexandria submitted for review was real time adaptive traffic control and management, which received a rating in the middle of all ratings. These ratings are scheduled to be considered by the NVTA Board in February, 2015.

On January 14, 2015, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) awarded the City of

Alexandria a loan of \$50 million to construct the Potomac Yard Metrorail station. This loan will be coming from the Virginia Infrastructure Bank.

B. POTOMAC YARD METORAIL STATION EIS

The Draft Environmental Impact Statement is nearing completion. The City, WMATA, the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and the National Park Service (NPS) have reviewed and submitted comments on the document and are currently working together to address the comments. The document will be released to the public once FTA and NPS are satisfied that it meets their requirements. On January 14, 2015, the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) awarded the City of Alexandria a loan of \$50 million to construct the Potomac Yard Metrorail station. This loan will be coming from the Virginia Infrastructure Bank.

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. METROWAY (ROUTE 1)

Staff is continuing to work on implementing additional elements including real-time bus arrival information and off-board fare collection. The first real-time sign was installed at the Potomac Avenue Southbound station on December 30th. The remaining signs are expected to be installed and become operational this Winter.

Phase 2 of the Crystal City Potomac Yard Transitway is scheduled to open in the Spring of 2015 when the dedicated lanes from the Arlington County line to the Crystal City Metrorail Station are complete.

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. PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE MASTER PLAN UPDATE

Goals and objectives of the plan are being finalized with the Ad Hoc Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Committee. In addition, the process has begun to develop a bicycle network, and identify potential locations for pedestrian focus areas. The next Ad Hoc Committee meeting will occur on February 4, 2015.

Background: The City is conducting an update of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan, and development of the Complete Streets Design Guidelines, 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.

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

E. EISENHOWER WEST TRANSPORTATION STUDY

The transportation study consultant has completed an analysis of existing conditions, and is continuing to analyze multimodal bridge options, which have been narrowed to five alignment options. Staff has met with a number of property owners that may be affected by the bridge alignment options. The consultant has begun to develop the model for the 2040 baseline alternative. A steering committee meeting is scheduled for January 26, 2015 to discuss land use options, and a Community meeting will be held on February 9, 2015. Once a preferred land use option is identified, staff will work with the transportation consultant to develop “low” and “high” land use thresholds that will be analyzed in the 2040 Build scenarios modeling effort.

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