

Subject: City of Alexandria's Comments on the Draft FY 2018 – FY 2023 Six-Year Improvement Program

Date: May 3, 2017, 6:00 PM

Location: Northern Virginia - District Office, Potomac Room, 4975 Alliance Drive, Fairfax, VA, 22030

Staff Contact:

Good Evening Secretary Layne, Commissioner Kilpatrick, Director Mitchell, and members of the Commonwealth Transportation Board. My name is Stephen Klejst and I am the Vice Chair of the City's Transportation Commission and a Board Member of the DASH Board of Directors for City of Alexandria. I am here to present the City of Alexandria's comments on the draft FY 2018 – 2023 Six-Year Improvement Program.

The City of Alexandria continues to work towards providing a multi-modal transportation system that encourages the use of alternative modes of transportation. With the Commonwealth's support, we continue to invest in vital transportation infrastructure to make our neighborhoods more pedestrian, bicycle, and transit-friendly, resulting in and a more vibrant, healthier, and sustainable Alexandria. Continued leadership and funding from the Commonwealth is essential to continue the progress which has been made. Continued leadership and funding from the Commonwealth is essential to the realization of this vision. Thank you for your help.

- The City of Alexandria believes SMART SCALE is one of the better processes in the entire nation for prioritization of transportation investments. Overall, SMART SCALE has implemented a transparent prioritization process for making transportation investments for capacity enhancing projects within the Commonwealth Transportation Board's Six-Year Improvement Program.
- As part of the Round 2 funding cycle for SMART SCALE, the City of Alexandria submitted five projects, four of which have been recommended in the draft funding scenario, which include the DASH Bus Service and Facility Expansion, the West End Transitway Southern Towers Transit Facilities, the Traffic Adaptive Signal Control Fiber

Optic project, and the Backlick Run Trail Phase I. The four projects recommended in the draft funding scenario are all key components to the City's vision of a multi-modal transportation system. The City strongly supports the inclusion of funding for these four SMART SCALE projects the final FY 2018 – FY 2023 Six-Year Improvement Program.

- As the SMART SCALE process continues in the future, it is important that Northern Virginia continues to receive its fair share of statewide revenues, as required by language included in HB 2313 (2013) that states that Northern Virginia's regional funds cannot be used to calculate or reduce the share of local, federal, or state revenues otherwise available to participating jurisdictions.

In addition to comments on SMART SCALE, the City of Alexandria also wishes to comment on the following:

- 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 projects. We are encouraged that that Transportation Alternatives funding continues to be prioritized for bicycle and pedestrian improvements, and that a portion of these funds are available to large urban areas.
- The Revenue Sharing Program is essential for the City of Alexandria – this program has allowed more projects throughout the Commonwealth to move forward. The City strongly supports increase funding for the Revenue Sharing program.
- The Virginia Railway Express (VRE) offers a safe and reliable commuting option for nearly 20,000 riders per day which greatly reduces congestion on roadways. As the VRE continues to grow, the VRE will need resources to meet its growing demand. Without dedicated support from the Commonwealth, the VRE's financial analysis shows that the VRE would need to reduce service and eventually shut down its operations. The loss of the VRE service would severely increase congestion throughout Northern Virginia and

would negatively impact the economy and health of the region. The City of Alexandria believes the partnership between VRE, the region, and the Commonwealth is vital to ensure the long-term viability of this system.

- In closing, we again would like to reiterate our appreciation to the State's partnership in extending the City a \$50 million loan through the Virginia Transportation Infrastructure Bank (VTIB) for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station.
- As always, we thank the staff members from VDOT and DRPT who have provided assistance in flexing funds to various transportation projects and in helping to obtain necessary planning input.
- The City of Alexandria requests that this testimony be made part of the Draft Six-Year Improvement Program public hearing record, and that full consideration be given to these comments in preparing the FY 2018 – 2023 Six-Year Improvement Program. Thank you again for the opportunity to speak today. Please let me know if I can provide any clarification regarding the City's testimony.