

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 18, 2017
TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
FROM: T&ES STAFF
SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #3 – ITEMS FOR CONSENT

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

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive the items for consent.

A. 395 Express Lanes Toll Revenue

As a condition of the Commonwealth's approval of the 395 Express Lanes project, the Concessionaire (TransUrban) is required to provide an annual payment of \$15M (to be escalated annually) to the Commonwealth to fund transit and TDM (Transportation Demand Management) projects along the I-395/I-95 corridor.

Currently, a MOA (Memorandum of Agreement) that defines the roles and responsibilities of each party regarding the use, distribution, and management of toll revenues is being negotiated between the following parties: NVTC (Northern Virginia Transportation Commission), PRTC (Potomac and Rappahannock Transportation Commission), DRPT (Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation), VDOT (Virginia Department of Transportation), and the CTB (Commonwealth Transportation Board).

The City of Alexandria is an eligible applicant and it is anticipated that the funds will be awarded on a competitive basis. Eligible projects would include transit capital and operations, park and ride lots, TDM, and roadway operational improvements. Similar to the I-66 Commuter Choice Program, projects selected for funding must benefit the toll payer and would need to support the goals of the agreement: 1) move more people, 2) enhance transportation connectivity, 3) improve transit service, 4) reduce roadway congestion, and 5) increase travel options.

The Express Lanes project is expected to be operational and initial tolls to be collected by the end of 2019. Once NVTC provides program guidance, Staff will provide an update on the program and application process to the Commission.

B. FY18-23 NVTA 70% Program

On October 12, 2017, the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) approved TransAction, NVTA's long-range transportation plan, and issued a call for projects seeking 70% regional transportation funding for NVTA's first six-year program, FY 2018 – FY 2023. Projects submitted for NVTA's first six-year program must be in the approved TransAction plan. At the May 18, 2016 Transportation Commission meeting, the Commission endorsed a recommended project list to be included in TransAction. It is anticipated that NVTA will allocate approximately \$1.5 billion (based on revenue projections) within its six-year program. Staff has discussed potential projects which could be submitted internally and in November will ask the Transportation Commission to endorse a proposed program of transportation projects for submission to the NVTA for 70% regional transportation funding for FY 2018 – FY 2023 and recommend City Council consideration and approval of the proposed program at the November 28, 2017 Legislative session. Projects which are being considered include the following:

- 1) WET - Northern Segment
- 2) TSP on Routes 7 and 236
- 3) DASH Technology
- 4) DASH Fleet and Facility Expansion
- 5) King Street Bike/Ped Improvements/TSP/ITS
- 6) Duke Street BRT (NEPA & Design)

C. D.C. to Richmond, V.A. (DC2RVA) High Speed Rail Project

The DC2RVA project corridor is a 123-mile stretch of railroad between Richmond, Virginia and Arlington, Virginia. Both freight and passenger rail services would operate along the corridor, with Amtrak providing intercity passenger rail service and Virginia Railway Express (VRE) providing commuter rail service. The overall goals of the DC2RVA project are to:

- Improve reliability and on-time performance
- Reduce travel time and improve trip times
- Increase frequency by adding up to 9 Amtrak round-trips daily between DC and Richmond from the current service of 10 trips per day

Currently, Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) is engaged in a Tier II Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) process that evaluates the benefits, costs, and environmental effects of several possible alternatives. The Tier II Draft EIS (DEIS) identifies a preferred rail alignment and a series of improvements for the corridor. DRPT held public scoping meetings (November 2014 in Arlington), preliminary alternative process development public meetings (June 2015 in Alexandria) and an alternatives review meeting (December 2015 in Springfield). DRPT has also provided two updates to the Alexandria Transportation Commission (June 2016 and January 2017).

The DEIS was released in September 2017. A 60 day comment period began on September 8, 2017, and ends on November 7, 2017. A public hearing is scheduled for October 17 at 7:00 p.m. the Hilton Alexandria Old Town. Staff have reviewed the Draft EIS, and staff main high-level concerns include:

1. Impacts related to shifting of existing tracks toward residential areas
2. Property acquisition
3. Noise and Vibration impacts and mitigation
4. Impacts to Union Station parking

D. Central City Traffic Study

In response to resident concerns about increased traffic and traffic diversion to neighborhoods in central Alexandria, City Council has directed to staff to conduct a comprehensive traffic study, which will examine traffic volumes, speeds, and traffic origins and destinations. The study analyzes traffic diversion through neighborhood streets in the Seminary Hill, Seminary Ridge, Clover College Park, and Taylor Run neighborhoods in response to resident concerns about increasing regional traffic.

Data was collected in May 2017 using Bluetooth sniffers along with other conventional traffic measuring devices. The most recent presentation summarizes the data that was collected and presents some key takeaways, including the following:

- Arterial roads are serving their function, carrying most of the traffic
- Some collector/local streets have cut-through traffic
- This project can't solve regional traffic congestion
- More cut-through traffic on local/collector roads in the southbound direction
- Some factors contributing to cut-through traffic:
 - High congestion levels during peak periods
 - Back-up from Telegraph Road in afternoon peak hours
- Existing traffic calming measures keep speeds down in some areas

The study did not look at internal trips within the study area, but it does indicate that there are clear travel patterns of vehicles moving from Telegraph Road through Central Alexandria to the NW (towards 395/Arlington/Falls Church/Tysons Corner) in the AM, and doing the reverse in the PM.

City staff is currently collecting feedback and input from the Task Force members and residents of the above-mentioned neighborhoods to define a list of priority concerns and develop mitigation strategies to address them. Presentations are publicly available on the website:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/tes/info/default.aspx?id=92722>

E. Environmental Action Plan

The office of Environmental Quality is updating Environmental Action Plan 2030 (EAP) with input from staff across City departments. The Environmental Policy Commission (EPC) works with Transportation & Environmental Services Department to provide community input and

public outreach. This year the EAP Phase 1 short-term action updates are planned for June 2018 Council consideration and/or approval. In addition, the City's Green-Ventory is also being updated and shows how Eco-City EAP actions and principles have inspired new programs into City services to support a healthy, sustainable lifestyle.

The EAP 2030, along with Green-Ventory, serves as a road map for city leaders, staff and citizens to implement sustainable visions and principles started in 2007. Our City is moving forward growing a greener economy, mitigating climate change, and going towards a sustainable quality of life while decreasing the city and our citizen's ecological footprints.

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