

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 18, 2016
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

Washington Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

In April 2016, the WMATA Board approved the FY 2017 capital budget. The total planned FY 2017 capital expenditures for the FY 2017 are \$950 million (as compared to the original December 2015 proposal of \$1.13 billion) and are supported by Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grant programs and a one-year extension of the current Capital Funding Agreement (CFA).

In the third quarter of FY 2016, WMATA achieved a positive net operating position of \$31.5 million (a gross operating position of \$54.6 million less \$23 million of planned preventive maintenance expenses transferred to the capital budget). Operating expenses for the first three quarters of FY 2016 were \$95.8 million below budget, while operating revenues were or \$41.2 million below budget.

The positive operating expense is the result of savings in salary/wages, services, fuel, and utilities. The operating revenues are unfavorable to the budget primarily due to decreased ridership and fare revenue on rail and bus. Metro is focused on improving system safety and increasing service reliability in order to rebuild rider trust and encourage ridership.

There were two significant events during the third quarter that impacted Metro's operating budget:

- The 'Jonas' blizzard in January resulted in financial impact estimated at \$14 million.
- The March 16 cable fire incident at McPherson Square station that necessitated a one day closure for emergency safety inspections. This resulted in a passenger revenue loss estimated at approximately \$2 million, while operating costs for overtime were approximately \$500,000

Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC)

Transform 66 – Inside the Beltway Toll Funding

The City submitted an application to fund the installation and operation of real time multimodal transportation information screens at key transportation and employment locations. The City requested \$190,000 in funding with a local match of \$10,000 and a total project budget of \$200,000.

NVTC has scored the projects and initiated public hearings on the applications. The next public hearing is scheduled for May 18, 2016 at the Wiehle-Reston Metrorail station.

Following the public hearings, NVTC will submit a program of projects to the Commission for its approval at the June 2016 NVTC Commission meeting. Upon approval, the program will be forwarded to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) for final approval.

Background: The City's transportation program has many sources of funding from federal, state, regional, and local sources. City staff coordinates regularly with representatives from each agency listed above to discuss funding opportunities from state and regional sources and the City's funding obligations for WMATA.

B. WMATA OPERATIONS BALANCE

As a result of operational efficiencies through the State of Good Operations Report for FY 2017, there is a balance of \$566,000 that was initially anticipated to go toward the City's operation contribution to WMATA. Therefore, with the new balance, the Council has requested that the staff work with the Transportation Commission to identify project priorities that the balance should be used toward. Staff will come back to the Commission later this year with some candidate projects, and ask the Commission to identify priority projects.

Background: See the detailed information above, under the WMATA update.

C. VISION ZERO

Staff is proposing to work with the Transportation Commission to develop a Vision Zero Policy for Alexandria in upcoming months. The intent of this program is to expand on existing efforts and investments, as well as include new strategies to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries and improve safety for all roadway users. Dedicated staff time and funding will be essential to the success of this program.

Background: Vision Zero is an international program based in the idea that all traffic fatalities and serious injuries are preventable. Vision Zero combines engineering, education, enforcement and other strategies to address traffic safety issues, with the express goal of eliminating traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Chapters of the Transportation Master Plan (amended on May 10, 2016) recommend conducting an evaluation of traffic fatalities and developing a Vision Zero policy and program that outlines the framework, budget, and staffing needed to work towards eliminating pedestrian and bicycle related deaths and serious injuries in Alexandria.

D. ROUTE 1 METROWAY

The performance monitoring plan for the TIGER grant that partially funded construction of the Route 1 Transitway (Metroway) requires grantees to conduct a rider survey approximately two years after the project has been completed. The survey will provide valuable data on how transit ridership has changed along the Route 1 corridor since the opening of Metroway. The survey will take place in early June and will include hard-copy surveys handed out to passengers at high-ridership stops. The information to be collected includes:

- **Origin-to-destination travel patterns**
- **Travel purposes**
- **Mode of access to (and egress from) Metroway**
- **Socio-economic characteristics**
- **Customer satisfaction**

Metroway ridership continues to show strong growth. With the opening of the Arlington section of the Transitway in April, Metroway has had its highest average weekday ridership since opening. The April 2016 average of 1,788 riders per weekday was 35% higher than in April 2015.

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. The Alexandria portion of the facility, also known as the Crystal City/Potomac Yard Transitway, opened in August 2014.

E. KING STREET METRORAIL STATION

The King Street Metrorail Station is going through its final phase to get to 100% design. Currently the design consultant is finalizing the changes based on city comments. City, DASH, and WMATA staff have also been working to complete the items required for the design-build contract package. The package will include a plan for the temporary locations for transportation services currently using the facility, as well as a comprehensive outreach strategy to help the public understand where and how to access those services. Per the last meeting with WMATA staff, the bid package for the design-build contract should be complete this summer.

Background: The King Street Metrorail Station is Alexandria's largest transit facility and requires significant updates, expansions, and safety improvements. The City began addressing these needs by requesting that WMATA conduct a feasibility study for rebuilding the access facilities at the lot in 2006. The result of this study was released in March 2008. Through an extensive vetting process with the general public and stakeholders, the City developed a design for the station that improves non-motorized access, bus access, shuttle and taxi access, short-term rental car access, and aesthetics. In 2012, the design was endorsed by the Transportation Commission, the City Council, and the Planning Commission. After approval, the design was refined, and the City determined that some of the features of the facility needed to meet City standards rather than WMATA standards. A long discussion between WMATA and the City resulted in a decision that allowed the facility to be designed using City standards. WMATA

gave the City a permanent easement to construct a transit facility, and the City agreed to maintain the facility in perpetuity. After this agreement, a more detailed design was produced for the facility and the cost was higher than budgeted. The improvement was placed in the FY 2016 CIP budget process, and eventually acquired sufficient funding to be constructed.

F. EISENHOWER AVENUE METRORAIL STATION

The Eisenhower Avenue Metrorail Station is proceeding as the City's Department of Project Implementation (DPI) has moved to 100% design of the traffic and transit elements. Currently the proposed grading on the WMATA plaza plan has been revised to coordinate with previous grading adjustments. With these adjustments, the entire Eisenhower Metro Plaza and proposed street network project as envisioned by the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) will be comprehensively designed. These efforts will help move the project closer to the construction phase, once the developer has a definitive decision on the property.

Background: The Eisenhower Avenue Metrorail Station project will use Federal Transit Authority (FTA) and Commonwealth funds to reconstruct the entrance of the Eisenhower Metrorail station, which will include improved amenities for transit patrons such as better weather protection and a prominent plaza. This improvement is necessary to accommodate all of the high-intensity growth adjacent and/or in close proximity to the station.

G. KING STREET/BEAUREGARD STREET IMPROVEMENT

The bid for Phase I of this project was awarded to Sagres Construction in late April 2016. A pre-construction meeting is scheduled in May with the contractor. A public meeting is scheduled for May 24th to discuss the construction schedule and impacts. Construction of Phase I will begin in summer 2016 and is estimated to be completed by the end of 2016. For Phase II of the project, the design plans have reached 90%.

Background: This project creates a multi-modal environment, enhances safety for pedestrians and motorists, and provides for traffic flow improvements at the King Street and North Beauregard Street intersection. Improvements include additional left turn lanes in each direction on King Street, medians, and a 10' shared use path on portions of King Street. The improvements will increase capacity and safety through the corridor. Once completed, this project will provide a safer intersection with transportation infrastructure for bicyclists and pedestrians, supporting the City's Complete Streets Policy. Completion of this project will also help mitigate some of the BRAC-133 impacts.

H. WEST END TRANSITWAY

Staff is working on the following tasks to complete the Alternative Analysis (AA) / Environmental Documentation Phase and transition to the design phase: review of the Alternatives Analysis report; review and submission of the Environmental Documentation to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) in the summer of 2016; coordination with FTA to enter Project Development (PD); and, coordination with the City's Department of Project Implementation (DPI) to develop scopes of work for the design phase.

At the April 2016 Transportation Commission meeting, a request was made for an updated project schedule related to project advancement and a future application for

Small Starts funding. (Attachment 1) provides this information. Please note that this schedule is subject to change based on completion of the current phase and funding availability.

Background: In December 2013, the City kicked off an Alternatives Analysis (AA) / Environmental Documentation process for the West End Transitway (also referred to as Corridor C) as part of the Federal NEPA Process. The AA/Environmental Documentation will analyze and refine the alignment as defined by the Corridor Work Group (CWG) and City Council in 2012, and will identify any impacts and potential mitigation associated with the recommended alternative. The study is partially funded by a grant from the FTA and is the first step towards applying for a federal Small Starts grant for project design and construction.

I. MOTORCOACH TASK FORCE

The two data collection tasks have been completed and data are being compiled and evaluated. Data from task two (an on-street parking occupancy study of potential future motorcoach loading/unloading and short term spaces), along with additional evaluation indicators, will be presented to the Motorcoach Task Force at their second meeting on May 31, 2016.

Background: Due to pending development along the Waterfront and within Old Town, the City faces the loss of three of its current short-term motorcoach parking locations (15 spaces total), as well as the loss of space used for unloading and loading on the Strand where queuing occurs during the peak season. This loss necessitated a re-examination of motorcoach parking and loading/unloading spaces. The Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force, which operated 2004-2005 and 2008-2010, has been reconstituted, and will provide input to staff regarding future short-term parking and loading/unloading locations.

J. OLD TOWN AREA PARKING STUDY (OTAPS)

Staff is currently developing a pilot program for a residential pay by phone program per the recommendations of the OTAPS Work Group. The Traffic and Parking Board (TPB) will be reviewing the proposal at their May 23, 2016 meeting and providing feedback before the program is formally reviewed at the June TPB meeting. If recommended by the TPB, the Council would review the proposal in the fall of 2016.

Additional funding for parking wayfinding was included in the FY 2017 budget. Staff is evaluating existing locations with wayfinding signage to determine where additional signage would be most useful.

Background: At their legislative meeting on February 9, 2016, the Council voted to receive the revised parking management work plan that summarizes the recommendations of the OTAPS Work Group and outlines the timeline for consideration of each recommendation. This action allows staff to begin review and work on the short term recommendations. A summary of the Work Group's recommendations was presented to the Transportation Commission in September 2015. All of the 2015 OTAPS Work Group meeting materials are posted online at: <http://alexandriava.gov/tes/info/default.aspx?id=77053>.

K. OLD TOWN NORTH SMALL AREA PLAN

Staff is currently studying Phase 1 items, which includes a preliminary analysis of the

potential two-way conversion of Madison/Montgomery Streets, identifying potential railbanking needs / considerations of the Norfolk Southern rail spur, streetscape improvement needs, street connectivity options, and considerations for transit in the area. This analysis was presented to the Old Town North Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability/Transportation Subcommittee on April 13, 2016.

Work has also begun on Phase 2 (parking study) and Phase 3 (transportation study). Staff has developed a scope of work and will be working with a consultant this May to collect parking occupancy data at on-street and select off-street locations in the study area. This data will help identify on-street areas where parking demand is high and will also evaluate garages for potential shared parking. Staff has also developed a scope of work to issue this summer for a consultant to do a larger, more detailed transportation study that will incorporate proposed land use changes and potential changes to the street network such as one-way street conversions and new street connections into NRG.

Background: The current Old Town North Small Area Plan was adopted in 1992. The planning effort to update this small area plan began in September 2015 with the appointment of an Advisory Group and is anticipated to conclude in January 2017 with the Plan adoption. As part of this process, a week-long charrette was held in November to identify issues, needs, and ideas for a broad range of categories including transportation, housing, land use, and open space. The transportation analysis for this update will be conducted in three phases over the planning period. For more information, please visit: <http://www.alexandriava.gov/86032>

L. I-395 EXPRESS LANES

The Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) hosted a public meeting in Alexandria on April 13, 2016. The meeting provided attendees with an overview of: the proposal to convert existing High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes to High Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes along I-395 to the DC border; the roles and responsibilities of the Commonwealth and TransUrban; and the Transit / Transportation Demand Management (TDM) study.

Approximately 100 members of the public attended and, after a presentation by VDOT, asked questions of VDOT, DRPT, and TransUrban.

City staff is participating in both the Environmental Assessment (EA) and the Transit/TDM studies and will provide regular update to the Transportation Commission on this VDOT project.

Background: On November 20, 2015 the Secretary of Transportation sent a letter to the City and other jurisdictions noting the State's planned action to improve travel along the I-395 Corridor. VDOT will conduct an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the conversion of the existing HOV lanes to dynamically priced Express lanes into Washington D.C. DRPT will conduct a Transit / Transportation Demand Management (TDM) study to identify transit, carpool, vanpool and other demand management strategies to improve travel along the corridor.