

# *City of Alexandria, Virginia*

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## MEMORANDUM

DATE: JANUARY 18, 2017  
TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION  
FROM: T&ES STAFF  
SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #2 – ITEMS FOR CONSENT

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

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Commission receive the items for consent.

### **A. FUNDING UPDATE**

**Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA):**

WMATA has released their proposed FY18 Operating and Capital budgets. For Alexandria, the operating budget requests an increase of \$6.5M, from \$33M in FY2017 to \$39.5M in FY18; the capital contribution and long term debt requests an increase of \$26M, from \$11M in FY17 to \$37M in FY18. In December 2016, the Board approved holding a public hearing (Monday, January 30, 2017) and other public outreach events to solicit opinions about the budget throughout January and February of 2017. These hearings involve a potential increase in local subsidy, fare increases, organizational trimming, using Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grants to pay for some capitalized maintenance, and decreases in service. WMATA's goal is to approve the FY18 budget in March 2017.

**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. FY 2018 – 27 BUDGET UPDATE**

On November 9, 2016, City Council held a Legislative Meeting where they established the FY 2018 Budget Guidance in preparation of the forthcoming budget and multi-year Capital Improvement Program. At the November 16, 2016 Commission meeting, the Commission approved a letter that was later sent to Council providing the Commission's guidance on the FY2018-27 budget. The memo reiterated the Commission's priorities as outlined in the previous FY 2017-26 budget. In addition, the memo highlighted the need to preserve the 2.2 cent property tax for the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and the need to continue funding the Complete Streets program, as well as a state of good

repair for the City's transportation system. The memo noted that lower priority should be given to bridge repairs, traffic control upgrades and signage and wayfinding. It also reiterated that Council continue to seek other funding sources toward the City's contribution to WMATA. The draft budget will be presented to Council on February 21, and a public meeting will be held on February 23 at Beatley Library. Additional online engagement will continue through the spring, and public hearings are scheduled for March 13 and April 22. The budget is scheduled to be adopted on May 4. Staff will bring updates to the Commission at its February meeting, and will hold a public hearing at the April Commission meeting.

**Background:** Each year the City Manager presents a proposed City Budget to the City Council for consideration and action. As part of the budget process, a ten-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) is developed that programs funding for major capital projects in the City. Funding for the CIP comes from the City's general fund, grants, and other non-City sources such as developer contributions. The City has begun the process for the FY 2018-27 budget. The draft budget will be presented to Council on February 21, 2017. Public hearings are scheduled for March 13, and April 22, and the budget is scheduled for adoption on May 4, 2017. More information is available at: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/Budget>

#### **C. KING STREET METRORAIL STATION**

**A 95% design packet has been produced for the King St-Old Town Metrorail station project. Staff is working with WMATA and the design consultant to complete the final design. This should be accomplished in Spring 2017 with construction starting later in the year. Since this will be a complicated and disruptive project, Staff will work with WMATA, DASH, and other stakeholders to prepare residents and riders for the construction impact. Construction will take approximately two years to complete.**

**Background:** The King Street Metrorail Station is Alexandria's largest transit facility and requires significant operational and safety improvements. 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, Planning Commission, and City Council. WMATA has given the City a permanent easement to construct the improvements and the City agreed to maintain the facility in perpetuity.

#### **D. MOTORCOACH TASK FORCE**

**The Motorcoach Task Force held its last meeting on November 10, 2016. At this meeting, the Task Force unanimously approved location recommendations for short term parking and passenger loading/unloading. The Task Force chose to recommend the Masonic Memorial as the best near-term option to absorb losses to short-term parking. The Task Force also recommended additional motorcoach loading/unloading at Market Square to meet capacity needs during construction around the waterfront. The group's location and policy recommendations can be found on the [project website](#). The recommendations will also be compiled into a report for review by the Director of Transportation and Environmental Services, and will be incorporated into the City's parking work plan as appropriate.**

**Background:** Due to pending development along the Waterfront and within Old Town, the City faces the loss of all 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, will provide input to staff regarding future short-term parking and loading/unloading locations. More information is available at <https://www.alexandriava.gov/MotorcoachTaskForce>

**E. NORTH POTOMAC YARD SMALL AREA PLAN UPDATE**

**The project Advisory Group has recommended moving forward with development Option 2 which aligns Potomac Avenue through the center of the development on its current alignment. This option provides an additional 1.5 acres of open space, creates a more active and pedestrian friendly space at the future Potomac Yard Metro station (north entrance), allows for a phased development of the Potomac Avenue and Transitway, maximizes ridership for the Metroway, and provides flexibility of for continued study of the design and character of Potomac Avenue. The developer’s transportation consultant is continuing to complete the transportation analysis for Option 2. Staff will provide the preliminary results of the transportation analysis at the January 31, 2017 and February Advisory Group meetings. It is anticipated that the Small Area Plan will be brought to the Transportation Commission at its May meeting for endorsement.**

**Background:** The North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan was approved in 2010. The North Potomac Yard developer representative recently indicated a desire to begin the process for redevelopment of the North Potomac Yard, which may necessitate amendments to the 2010 North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan and Design Standards. A North Potomac Yard Advisory Group was established by Council in February 2016. The Advisory Group will serve as the community engagement forum to review the Plan and proposed amendments. More information on the plan can be found at: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/PotomacYardPlan>

**F. KING STREET COMPLETE STREETS PROJECT**

**The King Street Complete Streets project was constructed over the summer / fall 2016. The project narrowed the street to two travel lanes and a center turn lane, landscaped medians and pedestrian refuges at some intersections, buffered bike lanes, ADA improvements, and other traffic calming improvements at intersections, such as at Scroggins Road. The City will continue to monitor the corridor after construction is completed in order to compare traffic volume, speeds and queues with pre-construction data and the results of the project traffic study results. Staff will be collecting data on King Street this spring and anticipates providing a review of the results to the Traffic & Parking Board meeting later this year.**

**Background:** King Street, between Radford Street and Janney’s Lane, was resurfaced in summer 2016 and was therefore identified for Complete Streets improvements. Three public meetings were held and staff met with resident groups, where three options were presented for input. An online survey for the project received responses from over 750 people and staff received over 200 additional comments through this process and via the comment form posted on the project website. At the last meeting held on April 21, 2016, staff presented the recommended option (Option 3) based on its greatest safety benefits to all users of the road, and

that this option had the most community support. More information is available at:  
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/localmotion/info/default.aspx?id=86423>