

# *City of Alexandria, Virginia*

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## MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 15, 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 conducted a series of pop-up events around the region (including one event at the King Street – Old Town Metro station) and held a public hearing on Monday, January 30, 2017 to solicit input on the proposed FY18 Operating and Capital budgets. The public comment period ended on Monday, February 6. WMATA staff will prepare and submit an outreach and public hearing report to the WMATA Board for consideration.

#### **SMART SCALE Projects for FY22-23:**

On January 17, 2017 the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) was presented with an initial recommended funding scenario for FY 22-23 SMART SCALE projects ([http://smartscale.org/documents/2018\\_smart\\_scale\\_project\\_scores.pdf](http://smartscale.org/documents/2018_smart_scale_project_scores.pdf)). The CTB will consider potential revisions to the recommended funding scenario in March and April, hold a Public Hearing in April, review a revised funding scenario in May, and make a final funding decision in June. Projects recommended for funding will be incorporated into the FY 18-23 Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP), which is expected to be approved in June 2017.

Four of the five City projects received a score high enough to be placed in the top group out of three groups recommended for funding/ These projects, in order of scores highest to lowest, include West End Transitway (Southern Towers Alignment), DASH Facility Expansion, Traffic Adaptive Signal Control Fiber, and the Backlick Run Trail. The Multi-modal Bridge score did not qualify for any of the three funding groups.

#### **Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT):**

The City submitted a number of grant requests to DRPT by the February 1, 2017 deadline, including: a request for DRPT Operating Assistance; capital funding for DASH replacement

buses, DASH hybrid d bus battery packs, and Kiss and Ride improvements at the Van Dorn Metrorail station; a mid-cycle capital grant for off-Transitway bus pads and shelters; and a Transit Demand Management (TDM) operations grant that funds staff positions and related TDM expenses.

**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**

**The draft budget will be presented to Council on February 21, and a public meeting will be held on February 23, 2017 at Beatley Library. There will be a number of budget work sessions by topic during March and April. The Council will hold a public hearing on the Maximum Property Tax Rate on April 22. The Council will have a preliminary Add/Delete discussion on April 25, and a final Add/Delete discussion on May 1. The final budget is scheduled to be adopted on May 4. Staff will bring updates to the Commission at its March 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. MARK CENTER TRANSIT CENTER EXPANSION FEASIBILITY STUDY**

**The purpose of this WMATA study is to determine the feasibility of expanding the transit center along the north side of Mark Center Avenue. Analysis will include projected growth of transit services, both existing and new (West End Transitway, Envision 7 Bus Rapid Transit); technical feasibility and constructability; pedestrian safety improvements; and potential operational improvements for transit providers. The study kick-off meeting was held on January 12, 2017 and a Transit Provider Workshop was held on February 3, 2017.**

**The study is funded through WMATA’s Project Development Program; this program is funded by local jurisdictions through the WMATA subsidy and study concepts are developed by jurisdictional staff.**

**Background:** The Mark Center Transit Center serves as a transit hub for the Department of Defense (DOD) BRAC-133 facility. Currently, DASH, Metrobus, OmniTrans, Fairfax Connector, and DOD shuttles offer service to the Mark Center.

**D. OLD TOWN NORTH SMALL AREA PLAN**

**The Old Town North Small Area Plan (SAP) transportation study is currently underway, and anticipated to be completed by April 2017. The transportation study will incorporate**

**the proposed land use changes under a 2040 Build scenario that includes redevelopment of the Power Plant site. The study will also analyze existing conditions, as well as a 2040 baseline condition, which assumes regional growth and the full development potential in Old Town North allowable under existing zoning and site plan approvals. The 2040 Build scenario is analyzing a one-way to two-way conversion of Montgomery Street, extensions of N. Pitt Street, N. Royal Street and N. Fairfax Street to serve the Power Plant site, and a new street grid within the Power Plant site. The study is also examining improvements to local transit service, improved pedestrian and bicycle connectivity, use of the Norfolk Southern rail spur, parking and parking management. Based on the analysis, additional mitigation measures will be identified as needed for additional modeling. Updates on the transportation analysis will be presented to the Old Town North Advisory Committee on March 30 and April 27. A community meeting is scheduled for April 13. Staff will present the SAP to the Transportation Commission on May 17 for endorsement and consistency with the Transportation Master Plan, prior to going to the Planning Commission for approval on June 6, and Council on June 24.**

**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>

#### **E. VISION ZERO**

**A Vision Zero Action Plan is currently underway and anticipated to be completed by Fall 2017. City staff is currently forming an interdepartmental working group to develop the action plan. The City has posted a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) for a consultant to assist during this process. A series of three community workshops for the Vision Action Plan is anticipated to occur this spring, with the dates and locations to be determined. Staff will provide periodic updates to the Transportation Commission on the development of the Vision Zero Action Plan, and ask them to endorse the Plan upon its completion in fall 2017.**

**Background:** On January 24, 2017, the City of Alexandria adopted Vision Zero with the goal of eliminating all traffic deaths and serious injuries by 2028. City Council directed the City Manager City to form an interdepartmental working group to develop a Vision Zero Action Plan for future consideration by Council, based upon a comprehensive analysis of traffic deaths and injuries in Alexandria, which would identify associated funding needed for the City to reach this goal. For more information, please visit: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/VisionZero>

#### **F. COMMERCIAL PARKING STANDARDS STUDY**

**The public portion of this study was officially kicked off February 6, 2017 with the “Right-sizing commercial parking – a discussion with Todd Litman” event. At this event, Mr. Litman, who is a nationally recognized expert in parking and transportation issues, discussed trends in commercial parking and various parking management strategies. Many of the points raised at this event will be considered by staff and the Task Force in**

**their review of the City's commercial parking standards. The first Task Force meeting is anticipated for March with a review of current parking requirements in the Zoning Ordinance, parking requirements in surrounding jurisdictions, and examples of updated and progressive commercial parking requirements in other parts of the country. The Task Force will be meeting monthly over the next year.**

**To support the data collection and research that will be presented to the Task Force, staff will be working with a consultant. Similar to the work done for Phase 1 (Multifamily residential parking ratio study), the consultant will be surveying a number of commercial properties throughout the City to determine actual parking demand at different uses and locations. Using this data, staff will develop recommendations for updated standards to be reviewed by the Task Force.**

**Background:** In 2014, City Council directed staff to review the city's parking standards and propose an update that reflects current parking demand and market trends. Phase 1 of this project focused on multi-family residential parking standards and was completed in April 2015 with the adoption of updated parking requirements for multi-family residential buildings. Phase 2 will evaluate and propose recommendations for updated commercial parking standards for new development, including office, hotel, retail, restaurants, mixed use developments, and child care. The Parking Standards for New Development Task Force that participated in Phase 1 has been reconvened. This Task Force will review background material and parking data collected at commercial sites throughout the City and provide input on potential recommendations for updated parking standards.

#### **G. 72 HOUR PARKING RULE**

**Staff solicited feedback via an AlexEngage Questionnaire over a two-week period, beginning on January 6 and ending on January 20, 2017. The questionnaire was advertised via eNews, social media, and various news outlets including the Alexandria Gazette and WTOP's website. The questionnaire received 783 responses. On January 23, information from the questionnaire was relayed to a subcommittee of the Traffic and Parking Board, which is overseeing the review process. Staff is holding a citywide open house to solicit further feedback on the rule. The meeting will be held on February 16 at 7pm in the Sister Cities Conference Room (City Hall, room 1101). Input received at this meeting will be used to inform decisions by the subcommittee of the Traffic and Parking Board, which will meet again on February 27, 2017 at 6:30pm, just prior to the regularly scheduled meeting.**

**Background:** The City is in the process of reviewing City Code Section 10-4-8, which is known as the "72 hour rule". This rule prohibits vehicles from parking within the public right of way for a period of more than 72 hours. The rule applies to everyone--even residents who are parking in front of their homes or residents with parking permit stickers. When the Alexandria Police Department receives complaints about violations, an officer is dispatched to respond to the situation. An officer returns three business days later to check on the vehicle's status. If the vehicle has moved, no action is taken. If the vehicle has not been moved, the officer issues a \$25 citation and, when warranted, places notification on the car indicating that the vehicle will be impounded if it is not removed. The City is reviewing this rule per Council direction. As written, the rule supports parking availability by encouraging turnover, but can be generate

neighbor vs. neighbor disputes. For more information, please see the project website:  
<https://www.alexandriava.gov/tes/info/default.aspx?id=95263>