

# *City of Alexandria, Virginia*

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## **MEMORANDUM**

DATE: DECEMBER 06, 2017

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: T&ES STAFF

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #3 – 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**

At the November 28, 2017 Legislate Meeting, City Council unanimously approved the following Staff-recommended and Transportation Commission-endorsed grant and funding applications: 1) FY24 CMAQ (Congestion Mitigation & Air Quality) / RSTP (Regional Surface Transportation Program) Request, 2) FY19 TDM (Transportation Demand Management) Operations Grant, and 3) FY18-23 NVTA 70% Program Application.

It is anticipated that NVTA will award FY18-23 funding in June 2018 and that the CTB (Commonwealth Transportation Board) will approve the CMAQ/RSTP program and the TDM Operations grant in June 2018. City staff will remain engaged with each grantor agency to provide additional information as needed.

### **B. CAPITAL BIKESHARE UPDATE**

The Capital Bikeshare system has continued to grow since the City of Alexandria joined the regional program in September 2012, with the system expanding from eight stations in 2012 to 31 stations in 2016.

For the next round of expansion, the City will add 10 additional bikeshare stations in FY 2018, using grant funding. The City has identified 16 suitable station locations in total and developed an online survey for the community to provide input on specific station locations. The survey was opened on May 12 and closed on June 15, and during this time the City received over 400 responses. In addition, City staff notified civic associations and businesses adjacent to proposed Capital Bikeshare stations with the goal of addressing as many concerns as possible at an early stage.

Staff summarized and evaluated all feedback received on the 16 proposed station locations to determine the 10 most suitable locations for installation in FY 2018. Staff recommended the 10 station locations to the Traffic & Parking Board at their public hearing on July 24. The Traffic & Parking Board approved the installation of bikeshare stations at the following locations:

- Braddock Road Metro Station - South
- Duke Street & Holmes Run Trail
- Eisenhower Avenue & Holmes Run Trail
- Glebe Road & Main Line Boulevard
- Potomac Avenue & Reed Avenue
- Holmes Run Parkway & N Pickett Street
- Barrett Library
- Reed Avenue & Edison Street

The Traffic & Parking Board instructed staff to return in September after conducting further community outreach and site analysis for the following proposed locations:

- Green Street & Washington Street (South Old Town)
- Ben Brenman Park & Somerville Street

Staff conducted outreach in-person and launched another online survey to receive additional feedback on these two proposed station locations. Staff evaluated all feedback received in-person and online in evaluating alternate sites. A sign was posted at the proposed location to notify the public in advance of the Traffic and Parking Board public hearing. For the South Old Town site, Staff proposed both the original site on the south side of Green St and Washington St (1A) as well as an alternate site on the north side (1B) which would not require any on-street parking modifications, although it does require the relocation of a recently planted tree. Staff recommended these locations to the Traffic & Parking Board on November 27, and received approval for the north side of Green Street and Washington St (1B) as well as the original Ben Brenman Park & Somerville Street location. After securing approval by the Traffic & Parking Board, staff will provide appropriate documentation on station locations to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) for their review before placing an order. The 10 stations typically take six months to deliver from the time the order is placed, and installation is expected to occur in Summer 2018. Staff will provide notification to the civic association and adjacent businesses to inform them of the impending installation of the station.

### **C. ALEXANDRIA'S PROPOSED 2018 LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE UPDATE**

At the November 28, 2017 Legislative Meeting, City Council discussed the following issues:

Funding for WMATA—The other major item in this Package is funding for WMATA. The Metro system needs \$500 million annually from the region in dedicated funding. Virginia's share using the existing WMATA formula would be 28% or about \$140 million annually. The WMATA members have not yet agreed on a new source (e.g., tax) for this funding, but the City

agrees that new dedicated funding is needed, and the legislation necessary to provide this should be passed in 2018.

Regional Motor Fuel Sales Taxes—The 2013 General Assembly changed the state gas tax from a specific amount per gallon (17.5¢ for gasoline) to a percentage sales tax (3.5 percent for gasoline). The General Assembly also set a floor price (the statewide average wholesale price of a gallon of unleaded regular gasoline on February 20, 2013) by which the state taxes on motor fuels are calculated. Based on the fuel prices that day, the effective minimum tax rates on a gallon of gasoline and diesel are 16.2¢ and 22.2¢, respectively, throughout Virginia.

In addition, the 2013 law established an additional 2.1 percent regional sales tax for the local transportation projects in the Hampton Roads area, much like the local 2.1 percent tax already in effect throughout Northern Virginia.

Unfortunately, neither the Northern Virginia nor the Hampton Roads regional sales taxes were provided a floor. If we had a floor like the State tax, Northern Virginia would have collected nearly \$17 million more than it did in FY 2017. The City recommends the introduction of and support for legislation to create a floor for the Northern Virginia and Hampton Roads regional motor fuels sales taxes.

Transit Fiscal Cliff— In recent years, the Commonwealth has provided funds to local transit to help pay for their capital needs. The remainder of capital funding has come from local governments and, in some cases, federal agencies. For the last ten years, State transit capital funding has come in large part from State revenue bonds—but the proceeds from these bonds will be gone in the next biennium. It is crucial that the General Assembly find a replacement for this revenue during the next biennium.

Funding for VRE (the Virginia Railway Express)—The VRE has developed a 2040 System Plan, and an accompanying Financial Plan that identifies capital and operating requirements needed to implement the plan. A key finding in the Financial Plan is the clear need for increased funding. The local jurisdictions that are members of VRE cannot increase their VRE financial support to the level needed to continue VRE services at their current level. VRE will be seeking additional State funding; the City supports VRE in this regard.