

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 19, 2020

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: HILLARY ORR, DEPUTY DIRECTOR T&ES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM 5 – PROPOSED APPLICATIONS FOR COMMONWEALTH SMART SCALE PROGRAM (FY26-27)

ISSUE: Consideration of proposed projects to be submitted to the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) and Department of Rail and Public Transit (DRPT) for FY26-27 SMART SCALE Funding.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Transportation Commission endorse the submission of five projects and maximum funding amounts.

BACKGROUND: In 2014, HB2 was signed into law, and in June 2016, the program was renamed SMART SCALE. SMART stands for System Management Allocation of Resources for Transportation and SCALE stands for the six-road project scoring attributes: Safety, Congestion mitigation, Accessibility, Land use, Environmental and economic development. SMART SCALE requires the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to develop and implement a quantifiable and transparent prioritization process for making funding decisions for capacity enhancing projects within the six-year improvement program. The goal of SMART SCALE is to ensure the state invests limited tax dollars into projects that meet critical transportation needs.

The fourth round of SMART SCALE will be for projects seeking funding for FY26-27. Pre-applications are due by April 2, 2020. After pre-applications are submitted, staff from VDOT and DRPT will screen candidate projects to determine if they qualify to be scored. Final applications for eligible projects will be due August 3, 2020. Selected projects will be scored in fall and winter 2020. In January 2021, a list of all submitted projects and their scores will be submitted to the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) and will be posted on-line. In April or May 2021, the draft Six Year Plan, which will include SMART SCALE projects, will be released by the CTB, followed by public hearings and a public comment period to gather input. The CTB is expected to make its final decision on which projects to fund through SMART SCALE in June 2021.

The following factors will be used to score submitted projects: congestion mitigation, economic development, accessibility, safety, environmental quality, and land use. Different weights will be assigned to such factors based on a project's location within a region of the state. Within Northern Virginia, congestion mitigation is the highest weighted factor at 45%; land use at 20%;

accessibility at 15%; environmental quality at 10%; economic development at 5%; and safety at 5%.

DISCUSSION: Staff has identified five projects believed to be good candidates for funding based on the guidelines and criteria outlined in the SMART SCALE process. Because the timeline for submissions of pre-applications is significantly sooner than the application deadline in previous years, staff will develop detailed cost estimates over the next several months. Staff is requesting that the Transportation Commission endorse of the following project list with maximum amounts, which will later be refined for the applications.

Route 1 at E. Glebe Road Intersection Improvements	\$10,000,000
Route 1 South Improvements	\$3,500,000
Duke Street Transitway	\$100,000,000
Upper King Street Multimodal Improvements	\$40,000,000
Landmark Transit Center	\$15,000,000
TOTAL	\$148,500,000

- Route 1 at East Glebe Road: Up to \$10 million** – This project was recommended in the North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan and the Oakville Triangle and Route 1 Corridor Plan. The project will design, acquire Right-of-Way and construct improvements at the intersection of East Glebe Road and Route 1, including a dedicated left turn, thru and right turn lane for eastbound traffic. The project will also improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities along this portion of the road, between East Glebe and Laverne Avenue. The project will be constructed in coordination with future development at Oakville Triangle. The project would be leveraged with \$1.6 million in funding required by the Oakville Triangle development. The design and construction would also be coordinated with the Route 1 Metroway Extension project (between East Glebe Road and Evans Lane).
- Route 1 South Improvements: Up to \$3.5 million** - This project was recommended in the South Patrick Street Housing Affordability Strategy. The project entails installing a 10-12’-wide landscaped median and pedestrian refuge islands on South Patrick Street (Route 1) from Wolfe Street to Jefferson Street (from the current 4’-wide, concrete median) and narrowing the travel lanes to calm vehicular traffic. The project addresses safety and accessibility across South Patrick Street. The Vision Zero Action Plan also identified South Patrick Street as a high-crash corridor. During the South Patrick Street Strategy, residents have also identified the width of South Patrick Street and its traffic as a barrier for people to access other parts of Old Town.
- Duke Street Transitway: Up to \$100 million** – This project will include Right-of-Way and construction for the Duke Street Transitway between the King Street Metro Station and Landmark Mall. The project is one of the City’s three transitways identified in the Transportation Master Plan. A first phase includes acquisition of electric buses, dedicated transit lanes along portions of the corridor, new stations, queue jump lanes, Transit Signal Priority, and pedestrian and bicycle improvements. The City currently has \$12 million secured in NVTVA 70% funds for the planning, environmental work and design. The City is currently seeking FY24-25 NVTVA 70% funds for Phase 1 construction and will know

by June 2020 if any amount is awarded. The Smart Scale request is based on the maximum amount needed for phase 1 Right-of-way and construction improvements, assuming no funding is secured through NVTA.

- **Upper King Street Multimodal Improvements: Up to \$40 million** – This project will fund the design, Right-of-Way and construction of improvements for people who drive, walk, bike and use transit along King Street between King/Quaker/Braddock and North Hampton Street. Today, there is a significant lack of these facilities, contributing to safety needs along this corridor. The project was ranked as the most important pedestrian improvement project, and priority #8 for bicycle improvements in the Pedestrian and Bicycle chapter of the Transportation Master Plan, adopted in 2016.
- **Landmark Transit Center: Up to \$15 million** – This project includes the design and construction of a new transit center within the redeveloped Landmark Mall. The project is recommended in the Landmark Van Dorn Corridor Plan and the Alexandria Transit Vision Plan. The station would serve local transit as well as two transitways – the Duke Street Transitway and the West End Transitway, to provide a seamless connection between transit routes. The transit center would be located along a new “transit street” including new roadway made of reinforced concrete, sidewalks, six transit bays, platforms and shelters, lighting, and street furniture. The project would be coordinated with the redevelopment of the mall.