

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: DECEMBER 18, 2019

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: HILLARY ORR, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, TRANSPORTATION

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM # 5 - FY 2021 DRPT STATE AID GRANT APPLICATIONS

ISSUE: Consideration of endorsement for grant applications to the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) for the FY 2021 State Aid Grant Programs.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Transportation Commission provide an endorsement to City Council for the approval of DRPT FY 2021 State Aid Grant applications.

BACKGROUND: In 2018, there were numerous changes related to mass transit in the Commonwealth as well as administrative changes for revenues associated with mass transit.

- The 2018 General Assembly passed HB 1539, which requires the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) to allocate state aid for operating assistance solely based on performance metrics beginning in FY 2020.
- DRPT, in conjunction with the Transit Capital Project Revenue Advisory Board, developed a prioritization framework for capital assistance based on three categories: State of Good Repair, Minor Enhancement and Major Expansion.

DRPT's intent was to implement a statewide prioritization process, similar to SMART SCALE, for the use of funds pursuant to § 33.2-365, or allocated to the Commonwealth Mass Transit Fund established pursuant to subdivision A 4 of § 58.1- 638. The new proposal was adopted for FY 2020 Capital and Operating Assistance Grant Programs, for the development of a Six-Year Improvement Program, and for transit capital expenditures adopted annually by the CTB.

DISCUSSION: As a result of HB 1539, the City has been using a new the process to request State Aid Grants administered by DRPT and which have historically been managed administratively by NVTC. These funds provide support for transit (WMATA, DASH and DOT/Paratransit) and Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs, projects and services. The City is proposing three applications (one operating, one capital, and one technical assistance) based on the guidelines and criteria outlined in the DRPT Grant Program Application Guidance:

FY 2021 Operating Assistance State Aid

City of Alexandria Operating Assistance (Total eligible expenses - \$26,000,000): Operating assistance to jurisdictions is allocated based on system size and system performance. The amount the Commonwealth can provide in operating assistance varies based on the amount and number of requests made to the Commonwealth. In FY 2020, the City received \$4,168,337 or 21.1% of the eligible expenses for operating assistance.

FY 2021 Technical Assistance Grant

Transit Agency Strategic Plan (\$150,000): All public transit systems in the Commonwealth of Virginia are required to do a Transit Agency Strategic Plan on a rolling timeline. For DASH, the deadline for completion of this work is June 30, 2022. While much of the work required by this plan has been assembled by the Alexandria Transit Vision and will be assembled by the City's Mobility Plan, there is still a significant amount of work to do additional analyses and to assemble all components into one plan. This grant will fund the efforts of a consultant to undertake these tasks and provide a final document. The total project cost is estimated at \$150,000, of which this grant from DRPT would provide \$75,000 and the City of Alexandria would need to provide a \$75,000 match.

FISCAL IMPACT: Funds provided by DRPT do not have definite match rates per year but vary with the number of applications received that year. Based on the rates of funding from FY 2020, the City could expect to be awarded approximately \$4,218,337, however the certainty of this is low. The Technical Assistance Grant, if awarded, will require a local match of \$75,000.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: DRAFT Transportation Commission Letter of Support