

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JANUARY 15, 2020

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: HILLARY ORR, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, T&ES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM # 8 – ITEMS FOR CONSENT

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

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive the items for consent.

A. Capital Bikeshare E-Bikes

The regional Capital Bikeshare (CaBi) program is re-launching e-bicycles as a small percentage of the system's fleet in early 2020. It has been proposed that CaBi e-bicycles would cost the user an additional \$1 to unlock. It has also been proposed that CaBi e-bicycles would be dockless, i.e. a CaBi e-bike rider could elect to end their trip not at a CaBi station for an additional \$1 fee. The intent of this is to provide CaBi service to Alexandria community members who may not live or work near a CaBi station. CaBi e-bikes would not operate under the City's Phase II Pilot Program MOU for dockless mobility as they system is owned by the jurisdictions. However, CaBi e-bike riders are subject to existing and recently updated City Code as approved by City Council in December 2020 for e-bicycle riders, including a ban from riding on sidewalks in Alexandria.

B. Dockless Mobility Pilot Program Update

Staff has begun working on an implementation plan for the Phase II Dockless Mobility program. During January, the key element will be reviewing and issuing permits to companies that apply and meet all of the requirements specified in the MOU. Permits are due by January 22, 2020.

Also, as part of the Phase II Pilot Program, City Council approved the formation of an Ad Hoc Scooter Task Force. The City will release applications to apply for a position on the Ad Hoc Scooter Task Force early 2020. The Task Force will consist of thirteen (13) members, to be appointed by the City Manager, representing a diversity of interests related to shared mobility. The first meeting will be held later this winter or early spring.

Additionally, staff is working to create signage and identify locations for posting notice that riding scooters on sidewalks is not allowed. Companies permitted for the Phase II program will

be required to provide in-app messaging to users alerting them of these new regulations. Staff is also working to identify locations for more scooter parking corrals to be installed this spring.

C. Long Bridge and Passenger Train Service through Alexandria

Last month, Governor Northam announced that [Virginia and CSX reached a landmark rail agreement](#) that will create a pathway to separate passenger and freight operations along the Richmond to D.C. corridor. This agreement supports the vision of the DC to Richmond Southeast High-Speed Rail (DC2RVA) project for frequent, higher speed train service between these two major cities. In September, the U.S. Department of Transportation and the Federal Railroad Administration issued a record of decision accepting the preferred alternative issued in Final Environmental Impact Statement.

As part of the agreement, Virginia will build a new rail bridge (the Long Bridge) over the Potomac River connecting Arlington and the District to significantly expand commuter and passenger train service over the next decade. The Long Bridge, along with other associated improvements will allow a 75 percent increase in frequency of Virginia Rail Express commuter trains and a doubling of Amtrak service between the District and Richmond. As part of this project, DRPT is planning to add a fourth track approaching the bridge from Alexandria, costing approximately \$185 million. The City is still assessing the impacts of this announcement, including any improvements to Union Station, and will provide updates to the commission as more information is available.

D. WMATA Budget

In December, the WMATA Board of Directors decided to defer approval of the the public hearing docket for the WMATA budget until the January 16 meeting in order to provide jurisdictions more time to review the proposed changes to bus service. Alexandria staff did not provide any changes to the docket. This delay will result in a one-month delay of the budget cycle. The public hearings will now take place in February/March and approval of the budget will be in April.

E. Legislative Package

Each year, the City of Alexandria produces its General Assembly Legislative Package. The goal of the package is to organize, prioritize, and communicate the City's legislative and budget priorities to the community, stakeholders, and legislators. In addition, because Virginia is a Dillon Rule state, localities only have the authority expressly granted to them by the legislature by state statute or in their charter. Localities in Virginia, including Alexandria, therefore often request legislation to grant them enabling authority for specific powers they do not already have, which are included in the Legislative Package.

The requests in the draft Legislative Package generally originate from the City Council, City staff, and boards and commissions, with additional input coming from the public through the public hearing process. For the past several months, staff has worked with Council members,

City departments, and boards and commissions to develop the proposals included in the City's 2020 Legislative Package.

The proposed 2020 Legislative Package has the proposals organized into two sections - Legislative Principles and Legislative Priorities.

The section of Legislative Principles is structured around the City's Strategic Plan and creates a clear nexus between the City's goals and the legislative and funding measures necessary for us to achieve these goals. The Legislative Principles are, generally, broadly crafted and focus on comprehensive legislative strategies rather than specific legislative tactics. **The one most directly tied to transportation states:**

As we work to support a wide variety of safe, connected, multimodal transportation options in our City that enable access to daily activities in our community and our region, the City supports legislation and budget priorities that ensure Alexandria has safe, reliable and frequent mobility choices regardless of resources or ability. As we work to create a community where various forms of transportation use and share our roads safely and efficiently, the City supports legislation that protects vulnerable road users, including bicyclists and pedestrians. The City supports efforts in the General Assembly that help us achieve our Vision Zero goal to eliminate all traffic deaths and serious injuries in our community by 2028.

The Legislative Priorities are, generally, specific revenue and legislative proposals that the City has identified as the issues of greatest impact to the City. These are the issues the City intends to continue expending significant political capital on and the issues that we intend to ask our General Assembly delegation to engage in on behalf of the City. **The ones related to transportation issues include:**

- *The City supports efforts to protect existing multimodal transportation funding and identify revenue options that will fully restore funding to the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA).*
- *The City supports efforts to modernize the local tax structure.*

The full Legislative Package can be found on the [Council Docket](#) page.