

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 18, 2019

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: HILLARY ORR, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, T&ES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM # 7 – ITEMS FOR CONSENT

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

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive the items for consent.

A. 395 Commuter Choice Grant

This spring, DASH and the City of Alexandria applied for funding through the FY2020 I-395/95 Commuter Choice Program for increased service on the AT-1 and AT-9 lines. Over the summer, NVTC and PRTC Staff scored projects based on technical merit, jurisdictional priority, and ability to begin on Toll Day One (late October). The AT-1 application was the second highest scoring, and the AT-9 application was ranked high enough to be eligible for funding, well below the total funding amount of up to \$22 million.

At NVTC's meeting of September 5, 2019, the NVTC Commission authorized the executive director to brief the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) at its September 17th workshop on projects being considered for the Commuter Choice Program funding under the FY 2020 I-395/95 Commuter Choice Inaugural Program.

The briefing will address the complete list of applications to the program, the availability of funds, the scoring criteria used to evaluate the projects, and a summary of input from the public comment process that is currently underway. The CTB will be provided the [FY2 020 Project Profiles](#), which include project descriptions, maps and scores, and the FY 2020 I-395/95 Commuter Choice Program Application Technical Evaluations, which includes detailed project scoring.

B. Dockless Mobility Pilot Update and Evaluation Process

The City provided a [mid-pilot update](#) to City Council regarding the status of the [Dockless Mobility Pilot Program](#) in July. Since then, staff has implemented a few key items to better manage and get feedback on the program including:

- Identifying appropriate areas for dockless parking (“Parking Corrals”) and working with companies to encourage use of these locations for deployment of the devices and encouraging users to park their devices in these on-street designated areas to better organize them. Parking corrals are visible in company apps.
- Working with companies to implement "geofencing" to prohibit devices from starting or ending a trip in areas such as Market Square, the City Marina, Waterfront Park and areas around Metrorail stations that are currently closed for construction.
- Hosted four Scooter Education Events with providers to provide information to and receive feedback from the community. Many people came out to talk to staff, vendors and test the e-scooters.
- Released a public feedback form to gathered input from the community on the pilot program and how it could be improved. Staff received nearly 3,000 responses.
- Staff is in currently conducting group interview and intercept surveys to get targeted input from specific groups and users.

In August, the City Manager extended the pilot through the end of the year in order to evaluate the data collected through September and compile a comprehensive report and recommendation for City Council in November.

Staff is currently working to develop draft recommendations regarding a path forward that are based on community input, leading practices, coordination with neighboring jurisdictions and data from the pilot. The draft recommendations will be available for public comment in October. Staff will get input from various Boards, Commissions and stakeholders on the recommendations, including a public hearing at the Transportation Commission, before presenting a final recommendation to City Council in November.

C. WMATA Metro Platform Improvement Project Status Update

After a three-month long closure, [all Metrorail stations within Alexandria reopened](#) on September 9. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) closed all four Metrorail stations (Van Dorn St, Eisenhower Ave, King St-Old Town and Braddock Rd) between May 25 and September 8 for critical platform repairs. WMATA completed these repairs in line with the revised schedule and also implemented additional improvements to the customer experience. These customer experience improvements include:

- New slip-resistant tiles throughout the stations
- Brighter energy-efficient LED lighting and illuminated handrails.
- New stainless-steel platform shelters will include charging ports and digital map/information displays
- More Passenger Information Displays (PIDs) with larger digital screens to improve visibility. The new PID screens will display train arrival times continuously, while service alerts scroll along the bottom of the screen.
- New surveillance systems (CCTV)
- Clearer speakers for important announcements

- Safety call buttons with direct contact to station managers and the operations control center.

WMATA saw over 2 million trips on their shuttles and a 30% increase in ridership on Metroway over the summer. The City is working with WMATA on marketing efforts to ensure that passengers return to Metrorail service and will release a feedback form for community input this month.

Staff is compiling a final report with data and findings that will be presented to Council later this fall. Due to the success of the morning water taxi, the City Manager waived a leased restriction for the Water Taxi's operator, the Potomac Riverboat Company, on operations before 9:30 a.m. to enable the water taxi service to continue until the end of the year. City Council will then decide if this service should continue into 2020.

D. Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Update

Over the summer, the contractor began construction staging and continued developing the design for an enhanced southwest entry, including further analysis and modification of Idea #1 (a southwest access pavilion with a bridge to the north entrance) using the \$50 million in funding the City received as part of the Amazon incentive package. The design is currently being value-engineered to reduce the cost to \$50 million.

The State Water Control Board (SWCB) held a public hearing on September 6, 2019 in Richmond, to receive comments and make a final recommendation on the Water Protection Permit, which was preliminarily approved in June by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ). The SWCB took action to unanimously support and issue the permit. This is one of two remaining permits required before construction can begin in earnest.

The next Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Work Group meeting is scheduled for September 25, at 7:30 p.m. at the Charles Houston Recreation Center.