

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 1, 2011

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: ABI LERNER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, T&ES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #7 - FY 2012 TEN-YEAR TRANSPORTATION PROJECT PLAN

This memorandum details the revised proposal for the City's new ten-year transportation project plan (the "Plan") whose new added funding level of \$144.8 million was approved as part of the adopted FY 2012 City budget and FY 2012 to FY 2021 Capital Improvement Program (CIP). This is a new funding level above and beyond the standard City CIP funding of transportation projects. The attached Plan maintains, within the projected funding over a ten-year period, nearly all of the priorities which were developed and proposed by the Transportation Commission as part of commercial add-on tax transportation funding option developed for City Council consideration as part of the recent City budget process.

Council approved a reservation of real property tax revenues (2.2 cents), cash capital, and bond funding for transportation purposes. While the reservation totals \$144.8 million over a ten-year period for transportation projects, the initial proposed 12.5 cent transportation add-on tax on commercial property proposal would have generated \$174.3 million (\$29.5 million less overall revenue). The attached proposed ten-year transportation project Plan reflects the reduced funding of \$144.8 million and as such, some of the projects in the initial Plan are proposed to be either delayed or eliminated from the new ten-year Plan. **We are asking the Transportation Commission for input prior to finalizing a City Manager proposed ten-year Plan for City Council consideration on June 14, 2011.**

In developing the revised Plan, the focus was on maintaining previous priorities and funding projects that most efficiently improves mobility across transportation modes Citywide and moves the most people. While funding for the Corridor 'A' Conversion to Streetcar project is proposed to be delayed, the proposed Plan maintains funding in FY 2013 to complete the environmental assessment (EA) work currently being done in cooperation with Arlington. This EA project was identified as an important project to complete so that the City maintains the ability to look for future Federal funding for the project, although the possibility of identifying the necessary level of funding is looking increasingly unlikely.

The result of this proposal will be to operate the Corridor 'A' Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system (from Arlington through Potomac Yard to Braddock Metrorail Station) for a longer

period of time. While the new funding plan delays the streetcar implementation, staff will continue to look for opportunities to identify alternative funding strategies which could result in accelerating the streetcar implementation back to the original plan. The actual development plan schedule in Landbay F (Potomac Yard Retail Center redevelopment) will likely be the main driver of the streetcar implementation schedule due to development phasing and construction coordination needs.

The Corridor 'A' dedicated busway is expected to be operational sometime in 2013, which will increase transit capacity and mobility in the Route 1 corridor. The design and construction of the streetcar conversion in this corridor was delayed from starting in FY2014 until FY 2020 as the transit demand is not expected to grow to levels that would require conversion to streetcar before FY 2021. However, coordination with the start of Arlington's proposed system remains desirable. Using available City transportation funds for Corridors 'B' and 'C' will have a greater impact on increasing overall transit capacity and mobility. These projects are considered a more efficient use of the limited funds than streetcar conversion in Corridor 'A'.

Since the transportation add-on tax was not approved, the state-law imposed restrictions on use of the add-on tax funds associated with the add-on tax no longer apply and therefore this Plan includes a few new, high priority projects. These include the expansion of the King Street trolley (shorter headways and expanded hours of operation are under study), as well as the purchase of BRT vehicles and funding for the operations of transit corridors Citywide. Operations of the transitways are proposed to be funded at \$1 million annually over the ten-year Plan and the funds would initially be used for the operation of the Corridor 'A' transitway beginning in 2013. Over time, as modes are selected for the corridors, detailed operations plans are developed, and additional corridors come on line, additional operating funding above this \$1 million will be required for the operations of the City's three transitway corridors.

Moving forward, the City will continue to look for additional funding sources including Federal grants. At this time, it is unclear what Federal transportation funding, including grant programs, reauthorization of the transportation bill and earmarks (if any), will be available in the future. This week U.S. Senate leaders outlined their timetable for a six-year reauthorization during this calendar year of federal transportation funding. House leaders have a similar timetable, although the plans between the two houses of Congress likely will vary significantly. The goal to leverage the City's investment with federal, state and private funds to the greatest extent possible still stands firm.

Below are the changes to the Plan as it was proposed in Budget Memo #48 (which itself was a revision of the Plan included in the proposed FY 2012 budget and CIP). The numbering below references the attached worksheet:

- 3. Transit Corridor 'A' BRT Rolling Stock:** This is a new project added to purchase BRT branded buses for operation on the Crystal City-Potomac Yard Busway. Each vehicle is estimated at \$1 million, two BRT buses would be funded by Alexandria and two would be funded by Arlington to provide BRT service in the corridor. The purchase of the vehicles is planned for FY 2016.

4. **Transit Corridor ‘A’ Streetcar Conversion (Route 1)**: Funding for the streetcar project was delayed from starting in FY 2014 to starting in FY 2020.
- N/A. **Streetcar Maintenance Facility**: Funding for the streetcar maintenance facility was delayed from FY 2017 to beyond FY 2021.
- N/A. **Bradlee Transit Center**: Funding for the transit center was delayed from FY 2020 to beyond FY 2021.
9. **Landmark Transit Station**: Funding for the transit station was delayed from starting in FY 2016 to starting in FY 2018.
11. **Transportation Technologies**: Funding was reduced by about 50% for this project over the ten-year plan.
12. **Old Cameron Run Trail**: Funding was delayed by two years to FY 2015 to begin design and construction of this regional trail connection in conjunction with the Holmes Run / Eisenhower East project.
13. **Backlick Run Multi-Use Paths**: Funding was delayed by two years to FY 2016 to begin design and construction of this regional trail connection.
16. **Mt. Vernon Avenue/Russell Road Intersection**: Funding for this project was delayed from FY 2012 to begin design and construction in FY 2015.

In addition to the changes to the capital project list, a number of changes were made to the operating element of the Plan. These changes include:

- An additional \$200,000 starting in FY 2012 to Trolley Operations to increase service (headways and/or hours of service) on the King Street Trolley.
- \$1 million annually over the ten-year Plan was included for operations of the transit corridors Citywide.

ATTACHMENT: FY 2012 TEN-YEAR TRANSPORTATION PROJECT PLAN