

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 15, 2016
TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
FROM: T&ES STAFF
SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #2 – ITEMS FOR CONSENT

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

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive the items for consent.

A. FUNDING UPDATE

Transform 66 – Inside the Beltway Toll Funding

The City submitted an application to the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission to fund the installation and operation of real time multimodal transportation information screens at key transportation and employment locations. Following project review and scoring and extensive public comment, the City's project was not selected for funding in the initial funding program.

Background: The City's transportation program has many sources of funding from federal, state, regional, and local sources. City staff coordinates regularly with representatives from each agency listed above to discuss funding opportunities from state and regional sources and the City's funding obligations for WMATA.

B. ROUTE 1 METROWAY

As part of the performance monitoring plan for the TIGER grant that partially funded construction of the Route 1 Transitway (Metroway), there is a requirement for grantees to conduct a rider survey approximately two years after the project has been completed. On May 24 and May 25, 2016, 1,429 surveys were handed to people boarding and alighting at several stops on the corridor (in Alexandria, surveys were handed out at Braddock Road Metrorail station, and stations at E. Custis Avenue, Swann Avenue, and East Glebe Road). In addition, the survey was available online through the end of May. Results will be shared with the Transportation Commission once they have been received and compiled.

Metroway ridership approached 2,000 riders per day in May. The average weekday ridership in April and May 2016 was 47 percent higher than for the same period in 2015.

Background: During the first round of TIGER grants, the City received \$8.5 million to design and construct the Route 1 Transitway between Monroe Avenue and East Glebe Road. The City compiled additional grant funding and \$5.2 million in local funding to design/construct various elements of the Transitway project. The total cost of the Transitway, including vehicles, is approximately \$20 million. The Alexandria portion of the facility, also known as the Crystal City/Potomac Yard Transitway, opened in August 2014.

C. KING STREET/BEAUREGARD STREET IMPROVEMENT

The bid for Phase I of this project was awarded to Sagres Construction in late April 2016. Construction of Phase I is scheduled to begin on June 20, 2016 and is estimated to be completed by the end of 2016. For Phase II of the project, the design plans have reached 90%. The City has scheduled a groundbreaking for the project on Saturday, June 18, 2016 at 8am at the King Street/Beauregard Street intersection.

Background: This project creates a multi-modal environment, enhances safety for pedestrians and motorists, and provides for traffic flow improvements at the King Street and North Beauregard Street intersection. Improvements include additional left turn lanes in each direction on King Street, medians, and a 10' shared use path on portions of King Street. The improvements will increase capacity and safety through the corridor. Once completed, this project will provide a safer intersection with transportation infrastructure for bicyclists and pedestrians, supporting the City's Complete Streets Policy. Completion of this project will also help mitigate some of the BRAC-133 impacts.

D. POTOMAC YARD METRORAIL STATION

The Potomac Yard Metrorail Station has reached several key milestones in the past month. The Board of Architectural Review (BAR) unanimously endorsed the height, scale, mass, and general architectural character of the concept design and the proposed conditions on May 18, 2016. On June 7, the Planning Commission unanimously recommended approval of the Development Special Use Permits, Master Plan Amendment, and Map Amendment (rezoning) necessary for the station to move forward. City Council will consider these actions at a special public hearing on June 16, 2016.

In addition, the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS) has been released and is available for review through July 11, 2016. Following the public review period, the National Park Service (NPS) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) will each issue a Record of Decision (ROD). WMATA will advertise the design-build contract following issuance of the NPS ROD.

Background: The Potomac Yard Metrorail Station project is an infill Metrorail station located between the National Airport and Braddock Road Metrorail stations on the Blue and Yellow lines in the vicinity of the Potomac Yard Development. For more information on the project, please visit www.alexandriava.gov/potomacyard

E. KING STREET METRORAIL STATION

The King Street Metrorail Station is going through its final phase to arrive at 100% design. Currently the design consultant is finalizing changes based on city comments. City, DASH, and WMATA staff have also been working to complete the items required for the design-build contract package. The package will include a plan for the temporary

locations for transportation services currently using the facility, as well as a comprehensive outreach strategy to help the public understand where and how to access those services. Per the last meeting with WMATA staff, the bid package for the design-build contract should be complete this summer. City Staff will provide City council with a memorandum detailing the progress and next steps of the King Street Metrorail Project in the summer of 2016.

Background: The King Street Metrorail Station is Alexandria's largest transit facility and requires significant updates, expansions, and safety improvements. The City began addressing these needs by requesting that WMATA conduct a feasibility study for rebuilding the access facilities at the lot in 2006. The result of this study was released in March 2008. Through an extensive vetting process with the general public and stakeholders, the City developed a design for the station that improves non-motorized access, bus access, shuttle and taxi access, short-term rental car access, and aesthetics. In 2012, the design was endorsed by the Transportation Commission, the City Council, and the Planning Commission. After approval, the design was refined, and the City determined that some of the features of the facility needed to meet City standards rather than WMATA standards. A long discussion between WMATA and the City resulted in a decision that allowed the facility to be designed using City standards. WMATA gave the City a permanent easement to construct a transit facility, and the City agreed to maintain the facility in perpetuity. After this agreement, a more detailed design was produced for the facility and the cost was higher than budgeted. The improvement was placed in the FY 2016 CIP budget process, and eventually acquired sufficient funding to be constructed.

F. OLD TOWN NORTH SMALL AREA PLAN

Staff has completed most of the Phase 1 transportation analysis, which includes a preliminary analysis of the potential two-way conversion of Madison/Montgomery Streets, identifying potential railbanking needs / considerations of the Norfolk Southern rail spur, streetscape improvement needs, street connectivity options, and considerations for transit in the area. This analysis was presented to the Old Town North Infrastructure and Environmental Sustainability/Transportation Subcommittee on April 13th and the subcommittee chair provided an overview to the full committee on April 28th. A community meeting was held on May 12 to provide a status update on work completed to date, including transportation.

The parking study for Old Town North is nearly complete. Data was collected during May, and the consultant is in the process of preparing the summary and preliminary recommendations. This data will help identify on-street areas where parking demand is high and will also evaluate garages for potential shared parking. Staff is in the process of preparing development, population and employment projections, which will be discussed at the next Advisory Group meeting scheduled for June 8. A mini-charrette is scheduled for June 23-25, which will be used to begin developing small area plan recommendations based on the community input received to date. A larger transportation study (Phase 3) is anticipated to begin in summer 2016. The transportation study will incorporate the proposed land use changes and potential changes to the street network such as one-way street conversions and new street connections into NRG (under a 2040 Build scenario), and analyze the Build scenario against existing conditions, and a 2040 baseline scenario.

Background: The current Old Town North Small Area Plan was adopted in 1992. The planning

effort to update this small area plan began in September 2015 with the appointment of an Advisory Group and is anticipated to conclude in January 2017 with the Plan adoption. As part of this process, a week-long charrette was held in November to identify issues, needs, and ideas for a broad range of categories including transportation, housing, land use, and open space. The transportation analysis for this update will be conducted in three phases over the planning period. For more information, please visit: <http://www.alexandriava.gov/86032>

G. OLD TOWN AREA PARKING STUDY (OTAPS)

At the May Traffic and Parking Board meeting, staff introduced the concept of a residential pay by phone pilot program, which was one of the Work Group’s recommendations to help preserve parking for residents. The Board provided feedback on the draft program, which staff has incorporated into the details for the program. The final draft of the pilot program will be reviewed by the Board as a public hearing item at their June 27th meeting. Staff will work with interested residents over the summer and City Council will review the program for approval in the fall.

Background: At their legislative meeting on February 9, 2016, the Council voted to receive the revised parking management work plan that summarizes the recommendations of the OTAPS Work Group and outlines the timeline for consideration of each recommendation. This action allows staff to begin review and work on the short term recommendations. A summary of the Work Group’s recommendations was presented to the Transportation Commission in September 2015. All of the 2015 OTAPS Work Group meeting materials are posted online at: <http://alexandriava.gov/tes/info/default.aspx?id=77053>.

H. MOTORCOACH TASK FORCE

The city collected data for on-street loading zones and short term parking zones during April 2016. At its May 31 meeting, the Motorcoach Task Force reviewed the results of the data collected for short term spaces, provided input on the spaces, and prioritized the evaluation criteria that will be used for evaluating potential short term parking locations. The next Task Force meeting is scheduled for July 11. At this meeting, staff will review data collected at existing and potential loading/unloading zones. The City has piloted an Ambassador Program that places an ambassador near Market Square and the foot of King Street between March and June. The purpose of this program is to have a representative interact with motorcoach operators, providing information on loading and short term parking locations, and contacting enforcement officials as needed.

Background: Due to pending development along the Waterfront and within Old Town, the City faces the loss of all three of its current short-term motorcoach parking locations (15 spaces total), as well as the loss of space used for unloading and loading on the Strand where queuing occurs during the peak season. This loss necessitated a re-examination of motorcoach parking and loading/unloading spaces. The Ad Hoc Motorcoach Task Force, which operated 2004-2005 and 2008-2010, will provide input to staff regarding future short-term parking and loading/unloading locations. More information is available at <https://www.alexandriava.gov/MotorcoachTaskForce>

I. I-395 EXPRESS LANES

City staff is participating in the I-395/95 Transit / Transportation Demand Management (TDM) study as part of the Key Stakeholder Group (KSG). The KSG is composed of

jurisdictions and transit operators along the I-95/395 corridor and regional transit organizations. The May 24, 2016 KSG meeting focused on data gathering to establish a baseline, discussion of origin/destination patterns, review of an upcoming public survey, and currently identified transit needs. VDOT will hold a public hearing on the project in the fall of 2016.

Background: On November 20, 2015 the Secretary of Transportation sent a letter to the City and other jurisdictions noting the State's planned action to improve travel along the I-395 Corridor. VDOT will conduct an Environmental Assessment (EA) to analyze the conversion of the existing HOV lanes to dynamically priced Express lanes into Washington D.C. DRPT will conduct a Transit / Transportation Demand Management (TDM) study to identify transit, carpool, vanpool and other demand management strategies to improve travel along the corridor. VDOT held a public meeting on April 13, 2016 in Alexandria to receive feedback on the project.

J. ENVISION ROUTE 7

At the May 2016 Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) meeting, the NVTC project team presented the Commission with a staff recommendation for the alignment and mode of high capacity transit along the Virginia Route 7 corridor. The staff recommendation is for Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) operating from Tysons Corner to the Mark Center with a diversion to the East Falls Church Metrorail station. The proposed BRT line would connect to the planned West End Transitway and advance plans for a growing BRT network in Northern Virginia.

Throughout June 2016, the NVTC is seeking public input on the staff recommendation. A public meeting was held on June 6, 2016 at the Pavilion at Mark Center in the West End.

The NVTC will be asked in July 2016 to adopt a resolution to advance the staff recommendation for additional analysis and continued coordination with jurisdictions along the Virginia 7 corridor.

Background: The NVTC received funds from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to do an Alternative Analysis of high-capacity transit in the Route 7 corridor from Tysons Corner to Alexandria. The project was split into two phases. First, a consultant ran a preliminary feasibility analysis of the need for such a service, as well as analyzed possible origins, destinations, and modes of travel. After completion, NVTC received 70% funds from the NVTA to finish its study and develop a set of recommendations. The consultant has been working on demand forecasts and cost projections for several alternatives.

For more information on the Envision Route 7 visit the project's website: EnvisionRoute7.com

K. WMATA SAFE TRACK PLAN

Since the announcement of the SafeTrack plan, staff has been involved in several ongoing planning and communication efforts to develop alternative travel options for riders directly impacted by each maintenance surge. For each surge impacting the City, staff will develop and post up-to-date plans to the City's SafeTrack webpage. The second SafeTrack maintenance surge, June 18 to July 3, while not located in Alexandria or immediately adjacent to Alexandria, will result in no bus or rail (Blue Line) service

between Arlington Cemetery and Rosslyn. The Blue Line will operate only between Franconia Springfield and Arlington Cemetery. Riders should use the Yellow Line into the District of Columbia and must transfer at either L'Enfant Plaza or Gallery Place-Chinatown to access all other rail lines. WMATA will operate Yellow Rush Plus service all day. Following Surge 2, there are two upcoming surges that directly impact Alexandria travelers:

- **Surge #3:** July 5-11, Blue and Yellow Line Segment Shutdown, between National Airport and Braddock Road
- **Surge #4:** July 12-18, Blue and Yellow Line Segment Shutdown, between Pentagon City and National Airport

The City is actively working with WMATA, other regional partners to develop response plans for the surges directly impacting Alexandria, and will be providing the response plan for Surges 3 and 4 during the week of June 13th.

Background: SafeTrack is an initiative of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), which operates the Metrorail, Metrobus, and MetroAccess system in the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. The focus of SafeTrack is a work plan to address safety recommendations and rehabilitate the Metrorail system to improve safety and reliability. SafeTrack accelerates three years' worth of track work into one year, from June 2016 through March 2017. As a result, the plan significantly expands maintenance time on weeknights, weekends and midday hours. A key element of SafeTrack is that the entire Metrorail system will close at midnight, seven days a week. For more information, please visit: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/SafeTrack>

L. NORTH POTOMAC YARD SMALL AREA PLAN UPDATE

A project kickoff public meeting was held on April 18, 2016. An Advisory Group meeting was held on May 16, 2016, and a presentation was provided on the preliminary concept by the developer as well as current market conditions. The Advisory Group provided input on the preliminary concept. A workshop with the Advisory Group and staff was held the following day (May 17) to discuss the preliminary concept and develop additional development concepts. Since then, staff, and the developer have been refining development concept alternatives, which were presented to the Advisory Group on June 6, 2016.

Background: The North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan was approved in 2010. The North Potomac Yard developer representative recently indicated a desire to begin the process for redevelopment of the North Potomac Yard, which may necessitate amendments to the 2010 North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan and Design Standards. A North Potomac Yard Advisory Group was established by Council in February 2016. The Advisory Group will serve as the community engagement forum to review the Plan and proposed amendments.

M. VISION ZERO

At the May 18, 2016 Transportation Commission meeting, the Commission requested that staff provide an update on Vision Zero and the process for moving forward with this program. Staff will work with a subcommittee from the Commission over the summer to draft a Vision Zero Policy that will be presented to City Council in September 2016 for

approval. The policy will outline elements of the program that will lay a framework for the development of the program in Alexandria.

The policy will address essential components of the program such as identifying the goals and setting a deadline for achievement, crash analysis, staffing, funding, and the development of an action plan for achieving the City’s stated goals.

Background: Vision Zero is a concept that began in Sweden in 1997 with the premise that all traffic fatalities are preventable. The first step in the Vision Zero process is setting a deadline for ending, and pledging to implement the changes necessary to reach that goal. It is a system-wide effort to end pedestrian, cyclist, and driver traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries through a collaborative effort of engineering, enforcement, and education.

The recently adopted Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan lists Vision Zero as a programmatic strategy in both its “Pedestrian” and “Bicycle” subsections. The strategy states that the City will *“Conduct an evaluation of traffic fatalities and develop a Vision Zero program that outlines the framework, budget and staffing needed to work toward eliminating pedestrian and bicycle related deaths and serious injuries in Alexandria”*. The City’s first step toward implementing this strategy is to develop a Vision Zero Policy to be adopted by City Council.