



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** JUNE 20, 2018

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

**DOCKET TITLE:**

Consideration of a Resolution to Support Grant Applications to the Virginia Department of Transportation and Department of Rail and Public Transportation for FY 2024 to FY 2025 SMART SCALE Projects. [ROLL-CALL VOTE]

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**ISSUE:** Consideration of resolution to support Grant Applications to the Virginia Department of Transportation and Department of Rail and Public Transportation for FY 2024 to FY 2025 SMART SCALE projects.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the City Council:

1. Approve the submission of \$88.7 million in SMART SCALE applications; and
2. Authorize the City Manager to execute all necessary documents that may be required.

**BACKGROUND:** In 2014, HB2 was signed into law, and in June 2016, the program was renamed SMART SCALE. SMART stands for System Management Allocation of Resources for Transportation and SCALE stands for project scoring attributes: Safety, Congestion mitigation, Accessibility, Land use, Environmental and Economic Development. The State law assigns different weights to factors based on a project's location within a region of the State. In Northern Virginia, congestion mitigation is the highest weighted factor at 45%; land use at 20%; accessibility at 15%; environmental quality at 10%; economic development at 5%; and safety at 5%. The goal of SMART SCALE is to ensure the State invests its limited tax dollars into projects that meet critical transportation needs. The State will make awards in June 2019 for projects scheduled for implementation in FY 2024 to FY 2025.

**DISCUSSION:** The City has developed a list of five projects based on the guidelines and criteria outlined in the SMART SCALE process. The Transportation Commission approved a preliminary list of projects at its May meeting (Attachment 2). Since the May meeting, the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTa)

announced projects that would be funded in NVTa's FY 2019 to FY 2023 program. Because the West End Transitway received only \$2.2 million of the \$60.75 million requested, the West End Transitway Smart Scale request was increased by \$36 million and the Eisenhower Avenue North Entrance project was removed from the current application. The projects, in order of priority, are:

- **West End Transitway Corridor Investments: \$60,000,000** - This scalable project will design and construct the infrastructure necessary to support the phased implementation of transitway improvements including Transit Signal Priority (TSP), queue jump lanes, innovative stations, improved pedestrian and bicycle facilities, enhanced streetscape and new transit vehicles. Buses will operate at high frequencies, with limited stops to improve travel time and reliability.
- **Access Improvements to the Landmark Transit Hub: \$10,000,000** - This project is intended to complement improvements expected to occur as part of the re-development of Landmark Mall. These funds would build on redevelopment by improving access and connectivity to mass transit service provided by the West End Transitway and other regional DASH and Metrobus services.
- **Safety & Capacity Enhancements at Duke / Taylor Run / Telegraph: \$4,500,000** - This project will encompass design and general safety improvements to Duke Street, Taylor Run Parkway, and Telegraph Road. Major intersection safety improvements for walking, biking and driving as well as accessibility and bus stop improvements. New signalized intersections for access and safety could be provided. The project would also upgrade sidewalks and crosswalks throughout the project area, including a sidewalk along the west side of West Taylor Run approaching the Duke Street service lane that requires full reconstruction and utility relocation for ADA compliance.
- **DASH Zero Emission Fleet Program: \$12,000,000** - This project will allow DASH to upgrade its soon-to-be-expanded garage facility to accommodate a new zero-emission bus fleet, and purchase eight (8) zero-emission expansion buses. The capital improvements will include upgrades to existing utility infrastructure, new energy infrastructure, bus bay redesign, and additional specialized maintenance equipment. The implementation would also include approximately eight new buses, which would be used to provide new or expanded service in high-development areas including but not limited to Eisenhower Avenue, Van Dorn Street, and Potomac Yard.
- **Citywide TSP on Major Corridors: \$2,160,000** - This project includes the design, configuration, and construction of transit signal prioritization (TSP) system at 50 intersections along the major transit corridors of King Street, Seminary Road, Beauregard Street, Van Dorn Street and Duke Street. The scope also includes the installation and retrofitting of onboard TSP equipment for 80 buses in the DASH fleet so the buses can communicate with the sensors at each intersection and trigger a signal prioritization sequence. With the implementation of the Citywide TSP project, buses would be able to move through these congested areas more quickly, which would result in operational cost savings, improved service reliability and potential ridership increases.

One project considered but not proposed for FY 2024 to FY 2025 SMART SCALE funding is a south entrance at the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station. Because the current station is fully funded and expected to be complete by 2022, a south station entrance is not eligible as a component of the existing project. However, a south entrance may be eligible in future rounds of SMART SCALE. The City will need to approve a new, standalone "Potomac Yard South Entrance" project in a future Capital Improvement Program and prepare cost estimates. The next round of SMART SCALE funding will be for FY 2026 to FY 2027 with applications due in Summer

2020.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The funding provided through SMART SCALE does not require any City matching funds. However, there will be direct operating costs associated with the West End Transitway (additional subsidy to either DASH or WMATA, depending on the operator) and the DASH Zero Emission Fleet Program, which will require additional DASH subsidy

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Resolution
2. May 16, 2018 Transportation Commission Letter
3. PowerPoint Presentation

**STAFF:**

Emily A. Baker, Deputy City Manager

Yon Lambert, Director, Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES)

Hillary Orr, Deputy Director, T&ES

Allan Fye, Division Chief, Transit Services