



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

**County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of January 22, 2022**

DRAFT FOR TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

DATE: December 22, 2021

SUBJECT: Transportation Capital Funding Application to the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission (NVTC) I-66 Commuter Choice Program Round Five (FY 2023-FY 2024) for the Ballston-MU Metrorail Station West Entrance

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

1. Adopt the resolution (Attachment A) authorizing Arlington County's application to the NVTC for up to \$4,500,000 in regional transportation funding for the subject project.
2. Authorize the County Manager, or his designee, to execute all documents associated with a Standard Project Agreement (SPA) for the subject project upon funding award and subject to approval of such agreement as to form by the County Attorney.

ISSUES: There are no known issues at the time of this report.

SUMMARY: County Board authorization and a resolution of support are required to submit applications for regional transportation funding to the NVTC for the I-66 Commuter Choice Program Round Five (FY 2023 and FY 2024) update.

The attached resolution (Attachment A) authorizes and directs that an application be submitted to the NVTC for the for the I-66 Commuter Choice Program Round Five (FY 2023 and FY 2024) update for the following project and indicates the Board's support for the application:

- Ballston-MU Metrorail Station West Entrance: \$4,500,000

BACKGROUND: The County [applied](#) to the NVTC for \$10,000,000 in funding for the subject project in January 2020 during the I-66 Commuter Choice Program Round Four Update (FY 2021 and FY 2022). That application was the top scoring project in the initial program evaluation; however, following the sharp decrease in toll-paying travelers along I-66 inside the Capital Beltway due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I-66 Commuter Choice Program revenues,

County Manager:

County Attorney:

Staff: Rich Roisman, Department of Environmental Services

which are typically \$30,000,000 for a two-year program, fell to levels below \$10,000,000. Following a request from NVTC staff, the County withdrew its application for the Ballston-MU West Entrance in August 2020. I-66 Commuter Choice Program revenues have still not fully recovered from the effects of the pandemic, and so for Round Five the County has lowered its funding request from \$10,000,000 to \$4,500,000.

This is the fifth round of funding under the I-66 Commuter Choice Program, and NVTC has moved to a two-year solicitation and funding award cycle. NVTC staff anticipates a two-year program funding level of at least \$12,000,000. Project applications and resolutions of support are due to NVTC on January 28, 2022. Project applications will be evaluated and scored during the winter and spring. NVTC will approve a slate of recommended projects for final approval by the Commonwealth Transportation Board (CTB) under the terms of the programmatic Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) between the two entities. CTB's approval will formally place the projects in the new FY 2023-2028 Six Year Improvement Program (SYIP) that begins on July 1, 2022.

DISCUSSION: Since the County's 2020 application to the NVTC, staff and County on-call consultants have continued to advance the project's development. A Project Construction Coordination Agreement (PCA) has been executed with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). The updated 35% design plans for the project are nearly complete and work on bridging documents for a planned design-build procurement will soon be under way. The updated design work, including detailed discussions with WMATA on required project elements and design waivers, has allowed the County's external cost estimator to refer to a greatly updated plan set and working assumptions for the project to provide a much firmer cost estimate that will ultimately serve as the basis for the project's next Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) update later this year. Cost items that were unknown in the previous cost estimate and subject to WMATA design waivers are now known and accounted for in the upcoming estimate, as well as items required by WMATA that were also not known previously. The updated cost estimate for the Ballston West Entrance is \$140,000,000, a \$10,000,000 increase over the 2019 cost estimate. The use of the known information on items such as station entrance layout and elevator location from the design updates instead of previous assumptions in the 2019 cost estimate, along with the impact of inflation, are the two drivers of the cost increase.

The County's funding plan for the Ballston-MU Metrorail West Entrance has shifted since the onset of the COVID19 pandemic and its associated impacts to local, regional, and state funding. The Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) focused its limited resources on providing transit operating assistance and State of Good Repair (SGR) funding during its last completed grant cycle, although it was able to recently award capital funding to another County transportation project (the Arlington Transit [ART] Operations and Maintenance Facility in Shirlington) thanks to an unexpected budget surplus. Additionally, as noted earlier in this report, NVTC has seen a significant decrease in the funding available for the I-66 Commuter Choice Program, which is generated by toll revenues from I-66 inside the Beltway. Therefore, a proportion of planned project funding for the Ballston West Entrance now unrealized from DRPT and NVTC is covered by the County's application to the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority (NVTA) for \$80,000,000 that the Board [approved](#) in October 2021. The \$10,000,000 project cost increase was covered in the funding plan by the submitted NVTA application, and increasing the local funding commitment by \$5,000,000, from \$25,000,000 to \$30,000,000. Staff

now recommends applying to NVTC for \$4,500,000 in funding for the Ballston-MU Metrorail Station West Entrance for I-66 Commuter Choice Round Five (FY 2023-FY 2024).

The goals of Commuter Choice on the I-66 Corridor are to maximize person throughput and implement multimodal improvements that improve mobility, support new and diverse travel choices, and enhance transportation safety and travel reliability. The funding request for the expansion of the Ballston-MU Metrorail Station will build upon previously awarded funding for design. This request to NVTC is a component of the construction funding plan. The project provides a second entrance to the station at North Fairfax Drive and North Vermont Street, almost a quarter of a mile west of the existing entrance, greatly expanding multimodal access to the station and providing greater capacity to and efficiency for Metrorail. The project will include two street-level elevators and stairs connecting to an underground passageway and a new mezzanine with stairs and elevators to the train platform.

To demonstrate the importance of the Ballston-MU Metrorail West Entrance to the regional transportation network and to further underscore the County Board's commitment to the successful completion of the project, there are two clauses in the resolution (Attachment A) that outline the County's financial commitment to the project until it can be included in the next 10-year CIP update:

WHEREAS, the County Board has demonstrated its financial commitment to the Ballston-MU Metrorail West Entrance by identifying an additional \$30,000,000 in local funding that will be programmed to the Ballston-MU Metrorail Station West Entrance during the FY 2023 – FY 2032 update to the County's Capital Improvement Program ("CIP").

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the County Board hereby identifies this project as a top priority for the allocation of the Commercial and Industrial ("C&I") Tax under the County's Transportation Capital Fund ("TCF") for the exclusive purpose of developing the County's FY 2023 – FY 2032 CIP and directs the County Manager to use the above guidance when preparing the proposed CIP.

The next full 10-year CIP will be the FY 2023 – FY 2032 CIP, to be proposed by the County Manager this spring and adopted by the County Board this summer.

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT:

Level of Engagement: Communicate

Outreach Methods: Candidate projects are selected based on reviewed program eligibility requirements and project evaluation criteria as well as major County, State, and regional transportation plans. The resulting list of projects is reviewed for each annual funding cycle by the Transportation Commission (TC). As grant applications are successful and funds are awarded and projects progress through the regular development cycle into design and construction, they follow the County's Six Step Public Engagement Guide for Capital Projects.

Community Feedback: The TC reviewed this item at their regular meeting on January 6, 2022 and voted **X to Y to INSERT RESULTS OF TC ACTION.**

FISCAL IMPACT: This project was included in the County’s adopted FY 2019 – FY 2028 Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) and is included in the currently adopted FY 2022 – FY 2024 CIP. The Ballston-MU Metrorail West Entrance will be included in the County Manager’s proposed FY 2023 – FY 2032 CIP that will be presented in the spring. The updated total project cost received from the outside estimator will be used to update the project in the CIP as the plan is developed. The total estimated project cost is \$140,000,000. No local matching funds are required for NVTC Commuter Choice Program awards. The balance of project funding is covered by existing SMART SCALE and NVTA awards, developer contributions, local funding (TCF-C&I), and the current funding request to the NVTA.

Attachment A

**RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING APPLICATIONS TO THE NORTHERN VIRGINIA
TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION FISCAL YEAR 2023-2024 (ROUND FIVE) I-66
COMMUTER CHOICE PROGRAM**

WHEREAS, the County Board of Arlington County, Virginia (“County Board”) desires to submit applications to the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission as part of the solicitation under the Fiscal Year 2023-2024 (Round Five) I-66 Commuter Choice Program; and

WHEREAS, \$4,500,000 will be requested for the Ballston-MU Metrorail Station West Entrance; and

WHEREAS, the County Board has demonstrated its financial commitment to the Ballston-MU Metrorail West Entrance by identifying an additional \$30,000,000 in local funding that will be programmed to the Ballston-MU Metrorail Station West Entrance during the FY 2023 – FY 2032 update to the County’s Capital Improvement Plan (“CIP”).

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the County Board hereby supports the making of applications and authorizes and directs the County Manager to make applications to the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission for up to \$4,500,000 of FY 2023-2024 I-66 Commuter Choice Program funds for the above-described project, and further authorizes the County Manager, or his designee, to execute a Standard Project Agreement (SPA) for each approved project, subject to approval of such agreement as to form by the County Attorney.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the County Board hereby identifies this project as a top priority for the allocation of the Commercial and Industrial (“C&I”) Tax under the County’s Transportation Capital Fund (“TCF”) for the exclusive purpose of developing the County’s FY 2023 – FY 2032 CIP and directs the County Manager to use the above guidance when preparing the proposed CIP.