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City of Falls Church

Meeting Date: 01-27-20	Title: NORTHERN VIRGINIA TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION ENVISION ROUTE 7 BUS RAPID TRANSIT (BRT) PROJECT-PHASE III PRESENTATION	Agenda No.: 9 (a)
Proposed Motion: None. For information and discussion.		
Originating Dept. Head: Paul Stoddard, AICP Planning Director 703-248-5040 PS 1-23-20	Lead Staff: Jeffrey Sikes, Senior Planner 703.248.5296 JPS 01/23/20	Disposition by Council:

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REQUEST: Council is requested to review materials from the Phase III Route 7 BRT project and provide direction to staff on a list of key items to be addressed in the planned Phase IV study.

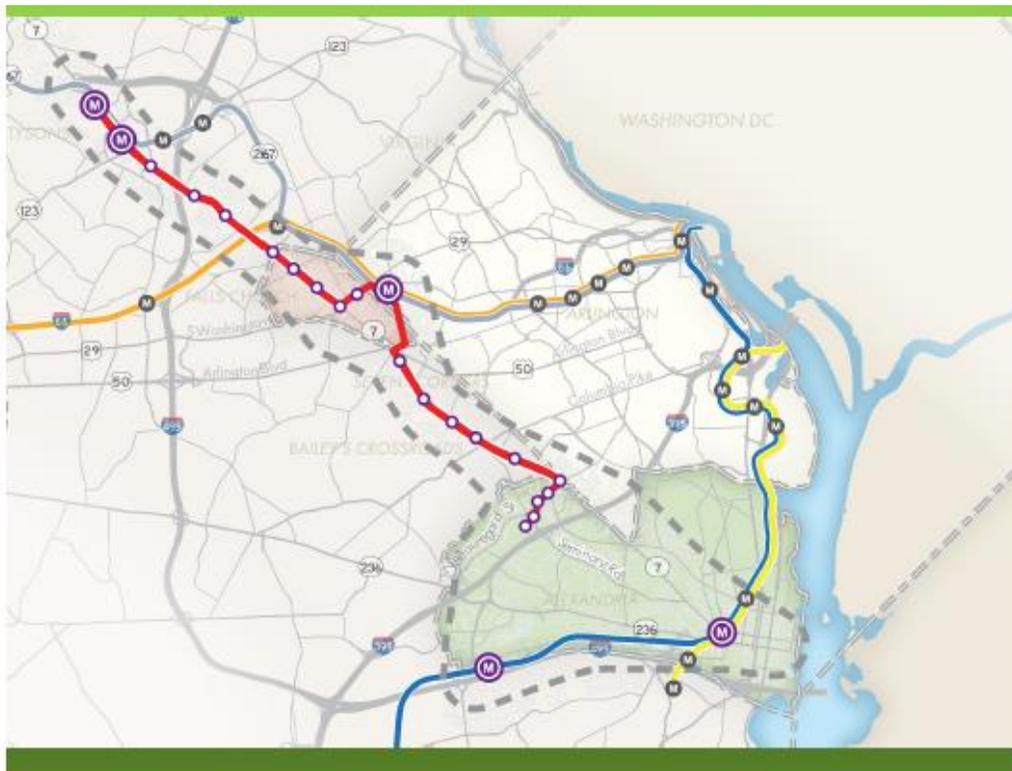
RECOMMENDATION: To support coordination and planning for BRT in Falls Church, staff recommends the following elements or questions be considered as part of the Phase IV study:

1. **Ridership Estimates** Provide ridership estimates specific to the City of Falls Church, including the number of riders starting a trip (boarding) within the City and the number of riders ending a trip (alighting) with the City. Also, provide destinations and origins (respectively) for these trips.
2. **Turning Movements** The Phase III study shows a lane configuration in which the outside lane is used as a Business Access and Transit Lane (BAT Lane). Explore how this configuration will accommodate traffic operations (especially left turns) at intersections in the city that do not have dedicated left turn lanes.
3. **Lane Configuration** Understanding that the BAT lane is designed to promote transit use for the purposes of efficiently using the available roadway, evaluate reconfiguring the outside lane from a BAT Lane to a BAT and High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Lane to avoid a situation on having a potentially underutilized travel lane.
4. **West Falls Church** Evaluate the opportunity for a direct connection to the West Falls Church Metrorail station, especially in light of potential redevelopment and reconfiguration of the street network surrounding the station.
5. **Seven Corners** Continue coordination with Fairfax County and planned redevelopment in Seven Corners.
6. **Station Design** Consider a station design that can utilize existing curb heights and bus shelters to avoid the need for separate BRT shelters.
7. **Station Locations** Continue to evaluate station locations relative to ongoing and planned redevelopment.

BACKGROUND: The Transportation Element of the City’s Comprehensive Plan, “Mobility for All Modes” identifies transit goals for the City to encourage transit ridership and access to transit. It states that the City should strengthen the pedestrian,

bike, and bus service connections to nearby Metrorail stations. It also calls for increasing reliability, frequency, and comfort of bus service to attract new riders.

The Envision Route 7 project is an evaluation of the benefits and costs of operating BRT service along Route 7 beginning at the Spring Hill Metrorail station in Tysons and following Route 7 through the City with a connection to the East Falls Church Metrorail station, then terminating at the Mark Center in Alexandria.. The proposed route would connect four jurisdictions – Fairfax County, City of Falls Church, Arlington County, and City of Alexandria. It would run through several regional activity centers such as the City, Seven Corners and Bailey’s Crossroads. The proposed service would be a significant improvement over currently available transit service. Currently, the only corridor-long service is the 28A, which runs on 20 minute frequencies. Commonly 10 or 15 minute frequencies is considered the minimum for high frequency transit.



Envision Route 7 is being developed by NVTC with consultant assistance. The project was initiated in 2012. Three phases have been completed to date. The dates of the three project phase are given below:

- Phase I-completed 2013
- Phase II-completed January 2017
- Phase III-completed November 2019

Phase I of the Envision Route 7 Bus Rapid Transit project identified the need for high quality transit in the corridor from Tysons to Alexandria based on land use, population and future employment.

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Phase II of the Envision Route 7 Buss Rapid Transit Project identified the recommended alternative (Bus Rapid Transit) after the evaluation of several transit options including light rail.. Phase II also identified the alignment of the BRT project which include a connection to the East Falls Church Metrorail station.

Phase III of the Envision Route 7 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Project focused on a conceptual engineering analysis of the project to determine where right of way will be needed, where stations are located and the route alignment. The study also addressed roadway cross-sections which will determine travel lane configuration. Phase IV of the project will likely begin later this year and will focus on traffic analysis between I-66 and Seven Corners.

FISCAL IMPACT: City contributions to completed study phases were included in previous Fiscal Year budgets. The City’s expected contribution to Phase IV is approximately \$50,000 and can be included in the City’s Fiscal Year 22 budget. The current project estimate is \$506.8 Million (2030 dollars). No funding has been identified for the project.

TIMING:

- Phase I-completed 2013
- Phase II-completed January 2017
- Phase III-completed November 2019
- Phase IV –expected start date Summer 2020.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Phase III Final Report for Envision Route 7 Bus Rapid Transit Project
2. Phase III Final Report Executive Summary