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June 1, 2016

Northern Virginia Transportation Authority  
3040 Williams Drive  
Suite 300  
Fairfax, VA 22031

Dear Northern Virginia Transportation Authority,

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce is pleased to provide feedback with regard to the project section for the region's FY 2017 Program. Overall, we believe that the proposed list of projects realizes the vision of a scope of regionally significant, cost-effective investments that will reduce congestion and connect Regional Activity Centers. However, we maintain concerns that the FY 2017 Program fails to proportionately improve travel conditions for all modes. The recommended \$493 million Program provides funding for three transit projects and six highway projects. The transit projects account for 17% of the recommended funding package and highway projects make up the remaining 83%. It is critical for the success of our region to continue our dedication to the modal balance of our transportation alternatives. Therefore, we strongly encourage an increased emphasis on transit projects in this year's program.

The Arlington Chamber of Commerce specifically supports the inclusion of staff-recommended projects including the Lee Highway Corridor Intelligent Transportation System Enhancements as well as funds dedicated to the design and construction of the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station. These projects truly embody the ideal of regional benefit. In the interest of ensuring critically needed multimodal options for our region's commuters, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce highly recommends that the following projects be reconsidered to be included for funding in the FY 2017 Program, both of which were scored by NVTAA in the top half of projects considered:

- East Falls Church Regional Connection and Access: Arlington County is requesting \$6.5 million to provide two additional bus bays at the station, six Capital Bikeshare stations, and improve access for automobiles & buses entering and exiting the park & ride facility.
  - The East Falls Church Metro Station is a major regional transit facility for residents of the City of Falls Church, Fairfax County, and Arlington County. With limited park and ride spaces, the station is heavily dependent on bus service, walking, and bicycling. The

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project seeks to provide two additional bus bays that will allow for additional regional and local bus service to access the facility which is currently approaching capacity.

- Out of all of the Metrorail stations, East Falls Church has the highest number of bicyclists accessing the station in the AM peak. Adding Capital Bikeshare stations to the East Falls Church area and in neighboring areas of the City of Falls Church will enhance already robust bike to Metro patterns currently in existence while augmenting constrained park and ride spaces and reduce kiss and ride vehicular trips.
- The East Falls Church Station has a regional reach with only 27% of users coming from Arlington County with the remaining users split between Falls Church and Fairfax County. Adding a traffic signal, sidewalk extension, and crosswalk at the park and ride lot entrance on Washington Blvd. improves both vehicular and pedestrian access as well as safety for local users who walk to the station. The addition of a bus only access lane from North Sycamore Street and optimizing signal time will increase reliability of local and regional bus routes while reducing congestion for park/kiss and ride users.
- Crystal City Streets: Arlington County is seeking \$11.6 million to provide exclusive transit lanes on 12th Street South while realigning Clark & Bell streets and improving intersections.
  - Crystal City is a major activity center in Arlington County currently holding 73,400 jobs in 2015 and forecasted to reach 112,700 jobs by 2040. The project seeks to reconfigure the network of streets in Crystal City from a poorly functioning grid of one-way streets to a more convenient network that is more conducive to transit.
  - The project will also extend the Crystal City-Potomac Yard Transitway, Virginia's first BRT service from Crystal City to Pentagon City. The transitway connects Crystal City with Potomac Yard and the Braddock Road Metrorail Station in Alexandria reducing already congested Blue and Yellow Line Metrorail service for short trips. The rapid transit feature expires at Crystal City then runs as a normal slow surface bus between Crystal City and Pentagon City. Extending Metroway service will provide new rapid transit access to multiple activity centers, reduce congestion on Route 1, and add additional transit capacity at one of the Metrorail System's most congested points while reducing Metro's burden to carry short distance within the corridor.

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Thank you the opportunity to provide our feedback. While the Arlington Chamber of Commerce supports the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority's analysis and solicitation of regional transportation projects, we strongly encourage a more multi-modal funding balance of highway and transit projects. To the extent we are successful in improving our regional transportation network in ways that support the healthy growth of our regional economy, we will be creating the type of profitable and sustainable business environment sought by the members of our Chamber.

Sincerely,

Kate Bates  
President & CEO