

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority
Board Action/Information Summary

☒ Action ☐ Information

MEAD Number:
202267

Resolution:
☒ Yes ☐ No

TITLE:

Compact Hearing for Franconia-Springfield

PRESENTATION SUMMARY:

Staff worked with Fairfax County and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) on options to extend Frontier Drive at Franconia-Springfield Metro Station to improve connections to the nearby employment center that includes the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) headquarters. A Compact public hearing is needed on the proposed addition of bus bays, modifications to the station area's road network and the Mass Transit Plan.

PURPOSE:

Request Board authorization to hold a Compact public hearing on proposed changes to Franconia-Springfield Metro Station.

DESCRIPTION:

Since 2017, Metro, Fairfax County (the County), and VDOT have been coordinating on the design of the Frontier Drive extension and various Metro transit facility improvements at the Franconia-Springfield Metro Station. Staff now seeks to hold a Compact public hearing to receive input from residents surrounding the station, commuters, and users of road network on the proposed road improvements and proposal to add three bus bays and a bus layover area, as well as removal of the pick-up/drop-off area on Metro property.

Key Highlights:

- As part of a VDOT project, Frontier Drive is proposed to be extended to improve vehicular and pedestrian access at Franconia-Springfield Metro Station, which includes two new intersections along Metro Access Drive, three new bus bays, a new layover bus area, and the elimination of the pick-up/drop-off area.
- These changes will improve connection to the employment center, the new TSA headquarters along Frontier Drive to the Metro station.
- A Compact public hearing is required to receive input on the proposed changes to Metro's transit facility at Franconia-Springfield Metro Station,

which would represent a change to the Mass Transit Plan.

Background and History:

Located between Franconia-Springfield Parkway and the CSX Railroad right-of-way, the Franconia-Springfield Station includes 12 bus bays, 5,069 Park & Ride spaces, 145 Kiss & Ride spaces, and a pick-up/drop-off zone. While Metro does not operate bus service at the station, bus services are provided by the County and private regional operators.

In August 2008, the County published the Springfield Connectivity Study Framework Plan which proposed an extension of Frontier Drive.

In 2017, VDOT published an Interchange Modification Report that included a traffic analysis of the proposed project concept plan and identified the impacts to the greater road network and Metro facilities. Metro has since been working together with VDOT and Fairfax County Department of Transportation to ensure that transit facilities and Metro station access are not impacted negatively by the Frontier Drive extension. The parties now have a mutually agreeable concept ready for public comment.

VDOT is required to hold a public hearing on the project (as required by the National Environmental Policy Act); Metro is required to hold its Compact public hearing on proposed changes to Metro facilities, which would represent a change to the Mass Transit Plan. VDOT and Metro propose holding a joint public hearing to ensure comprehensive discourse about the project in Fall 2021.

Discussion:

Staff has coordinated the conceptual design for the Frontier Drive extension project with the County and VDOT. The road project and associated changes to Metro property will be delivered by VDOT with federal, state, and local funds. The project will improve pedestrian access to Metro and is expected to expand the station's walkshed. The Frontier Drive extension will connect to the new TSA headquarters, located within a quarter mile of the Franconia-Springfield Metro Station, which opened in August 2020. The TSA headquarters houses more than 3,000 employees, with another 1,200 jobs affiliated with the Northern Virginia Community College - Medical Education Campus. The proposed road network improvements will place the campus within walking distance of the Franconia-Springfield Station. In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and 23 CFR Part 771, an Environmental Assessment is being prepared by VDOT for this project and will be available for review at a future public hearing.

A Compact public hearing is required to receive input on the proposed changes to Metro's transit facilities and Mass Transit Plan, which include: (1)

new signalized intersection and reconfigured access to the parking garages; (2) three additional bus bays; (3) a new bus layover area; and (4) elimination of a pick-up/drop-off area. The desired timeframe for conducting the Compact public hearing is Fall 2021, concurrent with the public hearing being organized by VDOT.

FUNDING IMPACT:

There is no impact on funding to conduct the proposed Compact public hearing. Any costs incurred by Metro are subject to reimbursement by VDOT.	
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Project Manager:	Steven Segerlin
Project Department/Office:	CFO/LAND

TIMELINE:

Previous Actions	None
Anticipated actions after presentation	Fall 2021 – Hold the Compact public hearing in conjunction with VDOT’s public hearing. Winter 2022 – Seek Board approval of the Compact public hearing staff report and changes to the Mass Transit Plan.

RECOMMENDATION:

Authorization to hold a Compact public hearing on proposed changes to Franconia-Springfield Metro Station.

SUBJECT: APPROVAL TO HOLD A COMPACT PUBLIC HEARING FOR AMENDMENTS TO
THE MASS TRANSIT PLAN AT FRANCONIA-SPRINGFIELD METRORAIL
STATION

RESOLUTION
OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE
WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, Section 15 of the Compact requires the Board of Directors to transmit proposed amendments to the Mass Transit Plan to certain enumerated agencies and to conduct a public hearing; and

WHEREAS, Staff has prepared a plan for proposed changes to the Franconia-Springfield Metrorail Station to (i) add two new or reconfigured intersections; (ii) add three additional bus bays; (iii) add a new bus layover area; and (iv) eliminate the pick-up/drop-off area;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED, That, in accordance with § 15 of the Compact, the Board of Directors authorizes staff to transmit the proposed Mass Transit Plan amendments to the enumerated agencies and to hold a public hearing on the proposed amendments to the Franconia-Springfield Metrorail Station; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors authorizes the General Manager and Chief Executive Officer to release the Public Hearing Staff Report to the public for comment prior to Board approval; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Resolution shall be effective 30 days after adoption in accordance with § 8(b) of the Compact.

Reviewed as to form and legal sufficiency,

/s/ Patricia Y. Lee

Patricia Y. Lee

Executive Vice President and General Counsel