



Board Document

OVERVIEW			
PRESENTATION NAME	Authorization to Execute a Memorandum of Understanding with Alexandria, VA	DOCUMENT NO.	300138
ACTION OR INFORMATION	Action		
STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION PLAN GOAL	Service excellence; Financial and Organizational Efficiency;		
RESOLUTION	Yes		
EXECUTIVE OWNER			
EXECUTIVE TEAM OWNER	Rickard, David B.;		
ORGANIZATION	Finance		
DOCUMENT INITIATOR	Jacob A. Blair		
OTHER INFORMATION			
COMMITTEE	Board Meeting (Consent)	COMMITTEE DATE	7/23/2026
PURPOSE/KEY HIGHLIGHTS	Board approval is requested for authorization to execute a reimbursable funding agreement with the City of Alexandria in support of their student subsidy program. This is a new agreement requested by Alexandria in which WMATA will provide custom Smart Trip cards for students to tap on fare equipment when riding on Metro Bus and Metro Rail.		
DISCUSSION	At the July 23, 2026, Board of Directors meeting, staff will seek approval of a consent agenda item to execute an agreement with the City of Alexandria for a Student Subsidy fare program for Metro Bus. Board approval is required for this fare buydown agreement (Res. 2011-30, as amended). Additionally, staff will request the		



Board Document

	Board delegate to the General Manager and Chief Executive Officer authorization to approve future program expansion and other modifications that do not materially change the subsidy structure, so long as revenues to WMATA reasonably reflect the fare that would have been collected absent the subsidy. Metro will provide the City of Alexandria with monthly reporting and billing documenting all student rides taken on Metro Bus. The City of Alexandria will pay full program costs, including the current fare of \$2.25 per ride and any future fare increases. An estimated 8,000 Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) middle school and high school students are eligible for the program. Alexandria estimates this will generate 6,000 additional monthly Metrobus trips by students with potential growth to 8,000-12,000 monthly trips. The Alexandria Transportation and Environmental Services Department (AT&ES) will partner with ACPS to coordinate student enrollment and card distribution. Adoption of the Alexandria Student Subsidy Program will remove transportation barriers, facilitate data collection, and ridership trends. The program is also designed to broaden student access to transit services and jobs, while encouraging students to become lifelong Metro riders. This program also represents WMATA's commitment to advancing a universal student program and seamless regional travel. The program is similar to the existing student programs in the District of Columbia, Arlington County iRide, Montgomery County RideOn, and the Fairfax County student programs.
INTERESTED PARTIES	1. City of Alexandria 2. Alexandria Public School District 3. DASH
RECOMMENDATION/NEXT STEPS	Staff request approval to proceed with full activation of the Alexandria Student Subsidy Program, similar to the existing programs with Montgomery County, Fairfax County and Arlington County. AT&ES will market the program in the schools, engage and educate students on tap compliance, and safe passage. In collaboration with Metro's regional Student Outreach Campaign, AT&ES will host school distribution events, orientation sessions, and provide digital materials via ACPS platforms and printed quick-reference guides for the 2026-2027 school year.



Board Document

FUNDING IMPACT	Student programs are an outstanding way to prepare the next generation of riders for use on the revenue fare equipment. By tapping, students will become familiar with usage like regular full fare paying customers. The tap will provide usage data to Metro and the City of Alexandria will be billed monthly for the usage. The City of Alexandria estimates year-one will generate 6,000 monthly trips on Metrobus with an estimated revenue of \$162,000.

PRESENTED AND ADOPTED: July 23, 2026

**SUBJECT: AUTHORIZATION TO NEGOTIATE AND EXECUTE A FARE BUYDOWN
AGREEMENT FOR A STUDENT SUBSIDY PILOT PROGRAM FOR CITY OF
ALEXANDRIA**

2026-19

**RESOLUTION
OF THE
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
OF THE**

WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

WHEREAS, Resolution 2011-30, as amended, requires Board of Directors approval for fare buydown agreements; and

WHEREAS, The City of Alexandria desires to establish a Student Subsidy pilot program offering City-paid Metrobus fare to eligible middle and high school students enrolled in Alexandria City Public Schools by reimbursing WMATA for the full costs and full fares associated with Metrobus rides taken by students;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it

RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors authorizes the General Manager and the Chief Executive Officer or their designee to negotiate and execute a fare buydown agreement with the City of Alexandria that will provide City-paid Metrobus fare to eligible middle and high school students enrolled in Alexandria City Public Schools with the City to pay WMATA the full costs and full fares associated with Metrobus rides taken by students, substantially in the form shown in Attachment A; and be it further

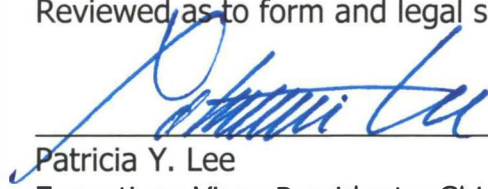
RESOLVED, That the Board of Directors authorizes the General Manager and Chief Executive Officer to negotiate and execute further amendments to the fare buydown agreement with the City of Alexandria that may include future program expansion and other modifications that do not materially change the subsidy structure, so long as the City reimburses WMATA for the full costs and full fares, including any future cost or fare increases; and be it finally

Motioned by Mr. McAndrew, seconded by Mr. Alcorn

Ayes: 8- Mr. McAndrew, Mr. Alcorn, Dr. Hadden Loh, Mr. Flowers, Ms. Weber, Ms. Burns, Ms. Worth and Mr. Bedell

RESOLVED, That in order to establish the City of Alexandria Student Subsidy pilot program for the 2026-2027 school year, this Resolution shall be effective immediately.

Reviewed as to form and legal sufficiency,



Patricia Y. Lee

Executive Vice President, Chief Legal Officer and
General Counsel

WMATA File Structure No.:
4.3.1. Fare and Fee Agreements

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

Agreement Number:

Between

City Of Alexandria

Department of Transportation & Environmental Service:

301 King Street, Alexandria, VA 22314

AND

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority

300 7th St SW, Washington, DC 20024

This Memorandum of Understanding ("MOU") is entered into this ____ day of _____, 2026 by and between the City of Alexandria ("the City"), a municipal corporation of the Commonwealth of Virginia, and the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority ("WMATA"), a regional transit agency serving Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia. The purpose of this MOU is to establish the terms, conditions, and responsibilities by which WMATA and the City of Alexandria will implement a pilot Student Subsidy program offering City-paid Metro bus fare to eligible middle and high school students enrolled in Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) under funding from Virginia's Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP) for school years 2026-2030. Taps will be identified by the fare instrument on the customized card. Button pushes for students not using a card will be programmed to be charged to the Alexandria Student Subsidy Program.

RECITALS

WHEREAS, WMATA is a regional transit agency established by an interstate compact among the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia, empowered to provide transit services in the National Capital Region; and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria has prioritized equitable transit access and reducing fare barriers in its transportation plans and studies, including the Alexandria Mobility Plan and a 2021 Low-Income Fare Pass Assessment, recognizing that transit affordability is a key equity consideration; and

WHEREAS, in support of these goals, the City implemented a fare-free policy on its DASH bus system in 2021, resulting in unprecedented ridership growth and demonstrating significant benefits for low-income riders and the community; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Virginia's Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP) has awarded grant funding to the City of Alexandria to support

this pilot, with \$1,025,000 in state funds, in order to improve transit affordability and increase ridership among students in the City of Alexandria; and

WHEREAS, neighboring jurisdictions, including Arlington County and Fairfax County, have implemented similar initiatives providing free bus transportation for students using Metrobus, reflecting a regional effort to improve student mobility and fare equity; and

WHEREAS, the City anticipates that this pilot program will generate approximately 6,000 additional Metrobus trips by students each month, displacing over 4,000 monthly automobile trips and reducing an estimated 16.6 tons of CO₂ emissions, with potential growth to 8,000–12,000 monthly student trips from about 4,000 low-income households.

NOW, THEREFORE, in consideration of the foregoing and of the mutual covenants herein contained, the Parties hereto agree as follows:

Scope

The pilot Student Subsidy program will begin in August 2026, coinciding with the start of the 2026–2027 Alexandria Public School District (APSD) school year, and continue for up to four years, or until TRIP funding is exhausted, if sooner. This pilot program aims to reduce transportation barriers for students, enhance access to education and extracurricular opportunities, and evaluate options for long-term youth transit solutions. Additionally, by expanding student access to public transit, the pilot may ease crowding on APSD school buses and encourage students to develop lifelong transit usage habits. A Metrobus student rider tapping the program-issued farecard (Smart Trip) at the bus farebox provides a record of Metrobus use by each rider. When a program farecard is not available, the student will tell the bus operator upon entry they are eligible for the Student Subsidy Program. The bus operator will record the ride on the farebox equipment through a manual electronic process. WMATA will invoice the City for combined all taps and bus operator manual entries. The program will serve 8,000 eligible students and add an additional 6,000 taps for APSD-enrolled middle and high school students. Program eligibility will be verified by the City in partnership with APSD. The City will not impose any restrictions on WMATA bus routes used by participants. Service is valid only on WMATA Metrobus services within the region and does not include Metro rail or paratransit services.

Responsibilities

City of Alexandria Responsibilities:

- Purchase SmarTrip® cards (\$3.00 per card, minimum order of 5,000).
- Provide card artwork for production, approved by WMATA Marketing.
- Distribute Smart Trip cards to eligible students and promote the program, and monitor usage to “hot-list” ineligible students
- Provide monthly program updates and participate in fare reconciliation with WMATA.
- Coordinate with Alexandria Public Schools District

- Create and disseminate marketing and educational materials
- Pay WMATA the current Metrobus fare for each APSD student that rides on Metrobus
- Participate with WMATA outreach campaigns to educate student riders, promote tap compliance, safe passage and community engagement.

WMATA Responsibilities:

- Set up applicable fare business rules for the rider class and fare instrument in its system.
- Provide monthly usage reports to the City and attend coordination meetings as needed.
- Provide additional documentation upon request from the City to verify monthly report findings and other usage dynamics to support program monitoring and evaluation
- Provide input on program materials
- Invoice the City of Alexandria, quarterly, in advance, the current Metrobus fare; reconciled annually to actual ridership

Program Rules

- Alexandria City Public School Students in middle and high school, with the custom card must tap their assigned Student Subsidy Smart Trip cards when boarding Metrobus. Eligible students without a card must identify themselves to the Metrobus operator.
- Student Subsidy Smart Trip cards are non-transferable and are to be used only by the eligible student.
- Lost or stolen cards may be replaced by the City as needed.

Registration and Distribution

The City will maintain records of card distribution and coordinate with APSD to ensure equitable access to the program for all eligible students.

Fees and Payment Terms

- The City shall purchase the Student Subsidy fare Smart Trip cards at a cost of \$3.00 per card.
- WMATA's current Metrobus fare is \$2.25 and is subject to change
- WMATA will invoice the City quarterly based on forecasted usage of the Student Subsidy program.
- The City and WMATA will exchange monthly updates on ridership; a comprehensive reconciliation of costs and usage will occur annually each July. The reconciliation total from the previous year will be carried over as a debit/credit and applied to the second quarter bill

Period of Performance

This MOU shall remain in effect from the date of execution through June 30, 2030, with an option to extend the program upon written agreement of both parties (contingent on additional funding and mutual consent).

Termination

Either party may terminate this MOU with 30 days' written notice. In the event of early termination, the City shall return any unused Student Subsidy Smart trip cards or reimburse WMATA for any outstanding costs incurred.

Notices

Notices and correspondence under this MOU shall be delivered to the following representatives:

For **WMATA** –

Robert M. Haas

Vice President/ Treasurer

2401 Mill Road, Alexandria, VA 22314

For **City of Alexandria** –

Michael Moon, Interim Director, Department of Transportation and Environmental Services

301 King Street

Alexandria, VA 22314

Signatures

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, the parties have executed this MOU as of the last date written below.

City Manager

City of Alexandria

Date: _____

Vice President & Treasurer

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)

Date: _____