



Albemarle County

Legislation Text

File #: 22-132, **Version:** 1

AGENDA DATE: 1/19/2022

TITLE:

Transit Expansion Funding

SUBJECT/PROPOSAL/REQUEST: Presentation of Albemarle County Transit Expansion Study Plan Recommendations and Resolution for Microtransit Demonstration Grant

ITEM TYPE: Regular Action Item

STAFF CONTACT(S): Richardson, Walker, Herrick, Filardo, Rapp, McDermott, Hersh-Ballering

PRESENTER (S): Jessica Hersh-Ballering, Kevin McDermott, Boris Palchik, Foursquare ITP

LEGAL REVIEW: Yes

REVIEWED BY: Jeffrey B. Richardson

BACKGROUND: The Board of Supervisors previously supported the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission's application for technical assistance funding for an Albemarle County Transit Expansion Study. That application was awarded funding by the Department of Rail and Public Transit (DRPT), and work on this project will be wrapping up in early 2022.

The purpose of the Study was to identify opportunities for immediate expansion and improvement to transit service in three key study areas: Pantops, Monticello, and along Route 29 from the Albemarle County/City of Charlottesville line to UVA's North Fork Discovery Park.

Attachment A (Albemarle County Transit Expansion Study - Service Scenarios Presentation) gives an overview of the study and describes the potential transit service scenarios for each study area, as they were presented to the stakeholder committee and to the broader public in both a public presentation and an online survey.

Based on public feedback, discussions with the stakeholder committee that includes County staff, and conversations with representatives from DRPT, the study's consulting team recommends implementation of microtransit service for both the Route 29 North and Pantops service areas. Because of employment/population density and other factors, these areas are likely to be better served by microtransit (as opposed to fixed route transit) at this time. The study's consulting team recommends implementing microtransit service in both areas simultaneously to maximize resource efficiency for microtransit vehicles, start-up fees, etc. Further, microtransit service in these study areas is likely to be competitive for demonstration grant funding from DRPT. A representative from the consulting team will further explain these points in a presentation to the Board.

STRATEGIC PLAN: Infrastructure Investment - Prioritize, plan, and invest in critical infrastructure that responds to past and future changes and improves the capacity to serve community needs.

DISCUSSION: Additional investments are needed to implement the recommendations from this study.

Operating costs for new Microtransit service in the Route 29 North and Pantops study areas could be funded through a DRPT demonstration grant. A local transit provider would apply for and manage the grant and ensure the service is provided; the County would provide the 20% local match for operating funds.

Although estimates are still being finalized, the consultants anticipate that the annual cost of microtransit service would be between \$2,130,000 and \$2,250,000 for the first year and between \$2,120,000 and \$2,130,000 for subsequent years. The first-year operating costs would likely be higher than in subsequent years due to software installation/initiation fees.

Given these estimates and the 20% local share, the County would need to commit approximately \$450,000 in order to leverage funding from a DRPT demonstration grant to support microtransit implementation in both service areas.

DRPT requires a resolution of support and a commitment for the demonstration grant application.

BUDGET IMPACT: The total impact to the budget in Fiscal Year 2023 would be approximately \$450,000. Should the demonstration grant be awarded, the funding sources and impacts would be considered and reviewed as part of the FY 23 annual budget process. Additional costs related to staff time (potentially to include meetings with transit providers and attendance at stakeholder meetings, etc.) would impact the County Budget; however, it is not expected that the staff time commitment would reduce overall staff capacity.

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Board endorse the microtransit demonstration grant application by adopting the attached Albemarle County Microtransit Demonstration Grant Resolution (Attachment B).

ATTACHMENTS:

- A - Albemarle County Transit Expansion Study - Service Scenarios Presentation
- B - Albemarle County Microtransit Demonstration Grant Resolution