

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

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MEMORANDUM

TO: TPB Scenario Study Task Force

FROM: Ronald F. Kirby
Director, Department of Transportation Planning

SUBJECT: Project Components for TIGER grant application

DATE: July 9, 2009

Purpose and Need

The Washington region has a very successful public transit network, consisting of the world-class Metrorail system complemented by commuter rail systems and by regional and local bus systems which combine to support the regional core and dense activity centers.

To ensure continued success and provide greater levels of transit service, challenges to existing bus service must be addressed. These challenges include traffic congestion, overcrowding, schedule adherence, and reliability. Priority bus treatments can improve the capacity and efficiency of bus service.

The Washington region currently has numerous high performance bus projects under development or implementation. These include WMATA's proposed Priority Corridor Network, the District of Columbia's K Street Busway, express bus enhancements as part of the Shirley Highway High-Occupancy/Toll (HOT) Lanes project, the Intercounty Connector Enhanced Transit Plan and a series of existing and planned intermodal transit centers. Funding for many of these projects is uncertain, as state and county budgets have been tightened due to the current economic situation.

Federal Funding Opportunities

The *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* (ARRA) provides the region with hundreds of millions of dollars in formula funding, as well as the opportunity to seek discretionary funding under a new \$1.5 billion multimodal program. The members and staff of the TPB Scenario Study Task Force have developed a plan for the first phase of a regional priority bus network, with the intention of seeking funding for this plan through the new *Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery* (TIGER) discretionary multimodal grant program.

The federal ARRA legislation provided general criteria for projects to compete under TIGER, and detailed guidance was published by the U.S. DOT Office of the Secretary on June 17th, 2009.

Prior to the release of the detailed guidance, several overarching criteria were already known. Projects were expected to:

1. Have significant impact on the Nation, a metropolitan area, or a region
2. Be completed by February 17th, 2012
3. Have an overall funding component between \$20 million and \$300 million
4. Maximize job creation and economic benefit

History

Development of this grant proposal began well before ARRA was passed. A small group of transit planners and advocates, including representatives from WMATA and local jurisdictions, met in early January of this year to discuss the development of a pilot project of enhanced bus corridors. It was hoped that this project would be eligible for federal funding under the yet-to-be-finalized “stimulus package” that was under development at the time. The group met again in late January and was then folded into the Scenario Study Task Force. At the February meeting of the Task Force, members charged TPB staff with the development of small but regionally significant package of priority bus transit projects for consideration. Staff subsequently developed a financially unconstrained, regional priority bus list, based upon on-line submissions from local and state agencies. The TIGER grant selection criteria described above were applied to develop the draft list of eligible projects described below.

Additionally, the TPB sponsored a Regional Priority Bus Conference which was held on July 24, 2009. With 200 people in attendance, this conference galvanized support for the region’s transportation planning efforts by bringing together key stakeholders to learn about options for prioritizing bus transit and building consensus for a regional priority bus network. The keynote speaker Roy Kienitz, Under Secretary of Transportation for Policy, US Department of Transportation, encouraged decision makers in the Washington region to employ creativity when crafting an application for the discretionary grant program. He also expressed hope that this first TIGER grant program would be the first of many, suggesting a possible new, multi-modal approach to funding transportation projects of regional or national significance.

Finally, during 2008 the TPB the Scenario Task Force developed the “CLRP Aspirations” transportation and land use scenario for 2030 which links the shifting of households and jobs into activity centers with a regional bus priority transit network operating on tolled lanes and major arterials. Implementing a pilot regional priority bus initiative under a TIGER grant by 2012 would demonstrate how increased transit speeds and reliability enhance regional mobility, and would provide a first step toward the regional priority bus transit network envisioned for 2030.

Application Timeline

- July 15: TPB approval of TIGER Grant package components.
- August 1: Deadline for project data submission and determination of inclusion in package
- September 4: Review and approval of TIGER grant application by TPB Steering Committee.
- September 15: Grant submission deadline.

Overview of Project Components

This set of projects will create a regional network of priority bus transit service that will increase regional mobility and access.

- The centerpiece is the **K Street Transitway**, which has been in the CLRP for nearly a decade: \$95 million.
- A **collection of priority bus corridors and services** that extend the reach and benefit of the K Street Transitway: \$93 million.
- A **bike-sharing system** in the core of the region that will expand the areas accessible by transit and other alternative modes: \$10 million.
- Improvements to **two Metrorail stations** and the creation of **one new transit center** will reduce congestion and increase safety in three significant, high-ridership areas: \$37 million.
- **Existing and planned managed (HOV/HOT) lanes** in Northern Virginia can provide quasi-dedicated right-of-way to bus transit: \$170 million.
- Additional **bus priority treatments across two Potomac River crossings** and along three arterials can support the Northern Virginia managed lanes: \$7 million

Financial Summary

These components would combine to create a regional system of priority bus transit which would be funded by the TIGER grant program as well as other sources:

- Total TIGER grant request: \$400 million
- Additional funds being leveraged: \$410 million, from local, state and federal sources
- Percentage of TIGER funding for projects: 49%

It should be noted that the total cost is currently in excess of the \$300-million cap on TIGER grants. It is anticipated that some of these components will be reduced or removed by August 1, when the detailed analysis of the grant application components will begin.

Facilities Summary

Once implemented, this new transit system will bring online the following new facilities by February 2012:

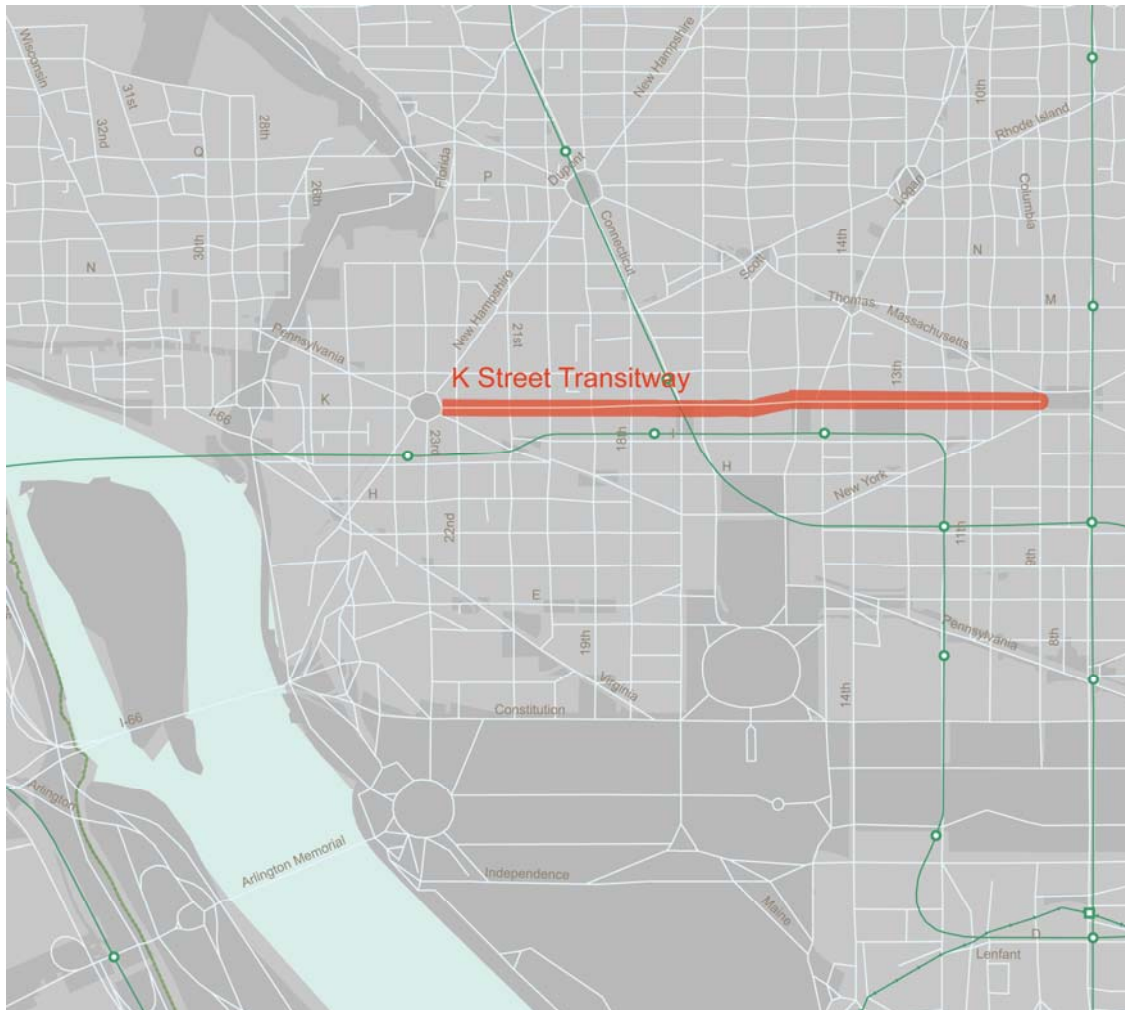
- **26** new **dedicated transit lane** miles in the region
- **92** new or improved **bus stops/stations**
- **99** intersections with new **transit signal priority**
- **107** new or rehabilitated **bus maintenance stalls**
- **2,100** new **parking spaces** at park-and-ride lots
- **11** dedicated bus/HOV **ramps**

The following sections describe these project components in greater detail.

K Street Transitway

- 3-lane, 1.3-mile transitway, running from 9th Street to 23rd street in NW DC
- \$95 million (100% TIGER grant)

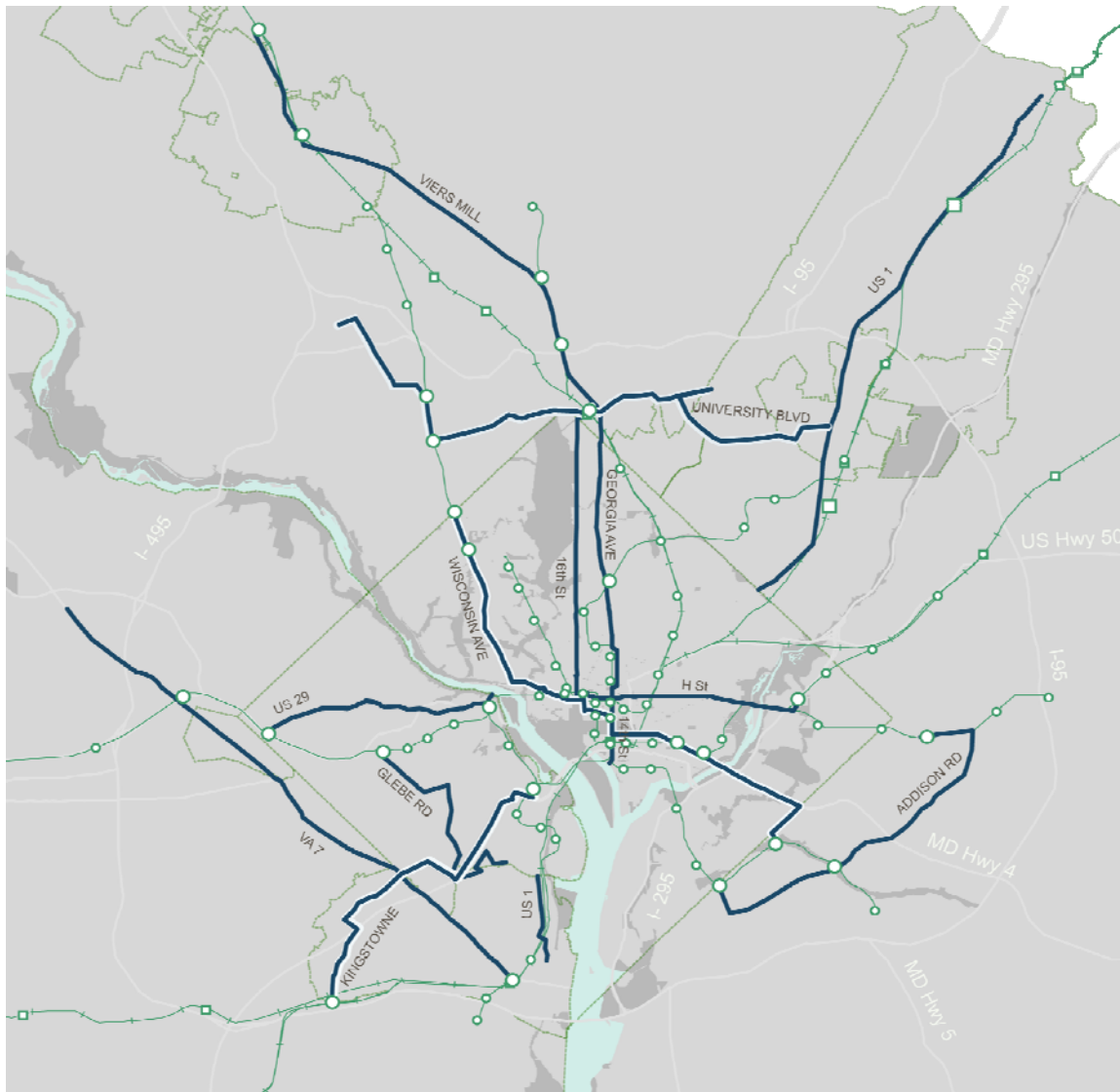
The K Street Transitway will enhance the performance for all modes of movement: pedestrian, bicycle, transit, vehicles (resident, commuter, and visitor), taxi, and delivery services. The goals of the project are to create a Great Street experience that is high-performing and safe for all modes, including pedestrians, bicyclists, transit, and automobiles; ensure efficient management of loading and unloading areas and access to parking; reinforce K Street NW as a defining and organizing corridor for the city with connections to other great destinations north and south; and develop K Street as a signature green street, featuring highly innovative ways of achieving sustainability. Specialized transit service to operate on the transitway, the DC Circulator's Georgetown to Union Station route, is already in place.



Priority Corridor Enhancements

- Enhanced bus transit service along 12 existing bus corridors in the District, the City of Alexandria, and in Arlington, Prince George's, Montgomery and Fairfax counties, including dedicated bus lanes, transit signal priority, queue jump lanes and enhanced bus stops.
- Create one new high-quality bus corridor, from Van Dorn Street Metrorail station to the Pentagon.
- \$93 million (62% of \$150 million total cost)

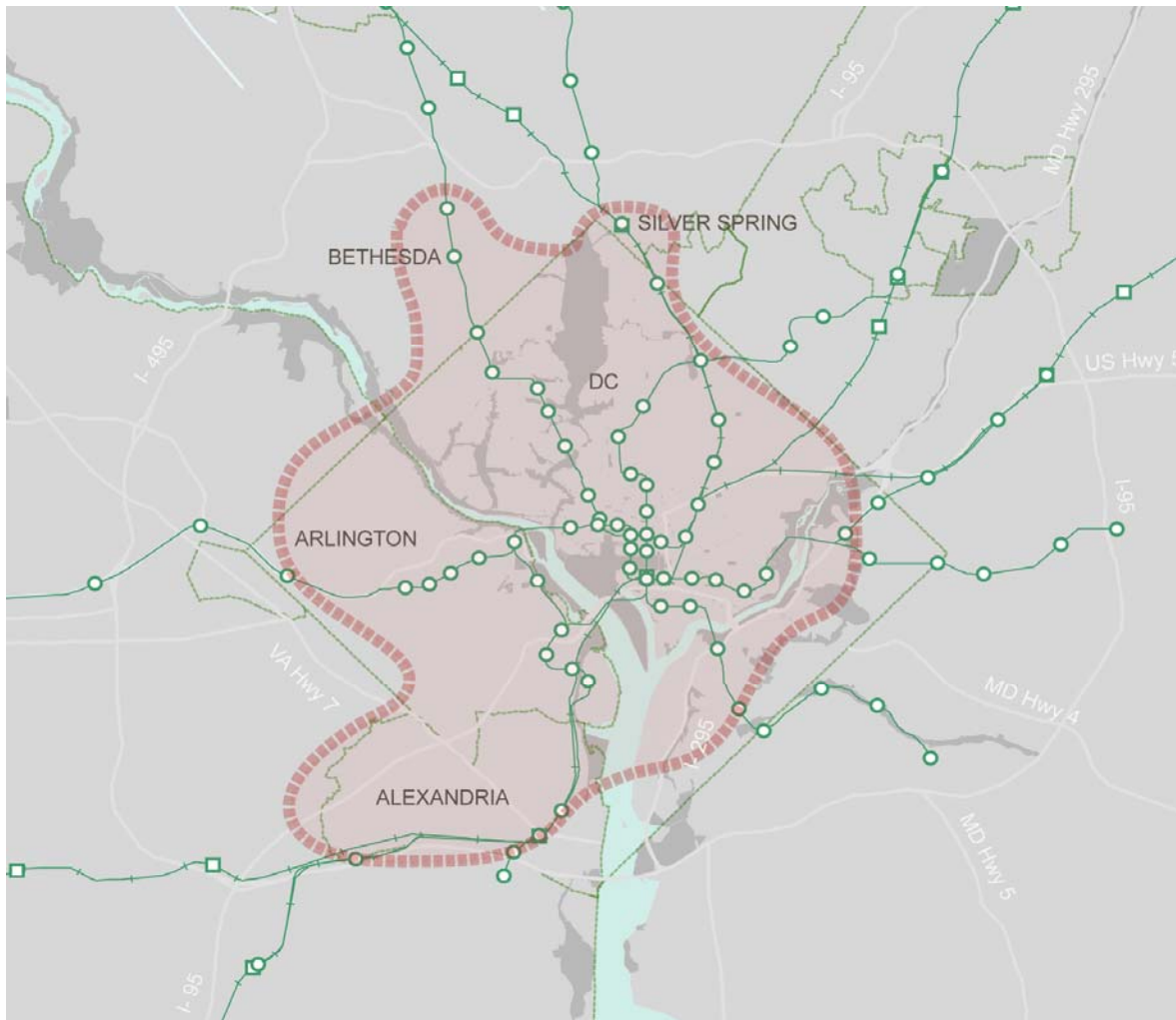
This component includes 9 corridors from the WMATA Priority Corridor Network (PCN) plan, and is complemented by additional arterial corridors in the City of Alexandria and Arlington County. The cost includes expanded maintenance facilities. The 9 WMATA corridors alone currently serve 80,000 riders per day, and would provide an additional 20,000 daily trips once these priority corridors are in place.



Regional Bike Sharing

- 1,600 bicycles at 160 bike stations in core urban areas of DC, Alexandria, Arlington, Silver Spring and Bethesda.
- \$10 million (76% of \$13.2 million total cost)

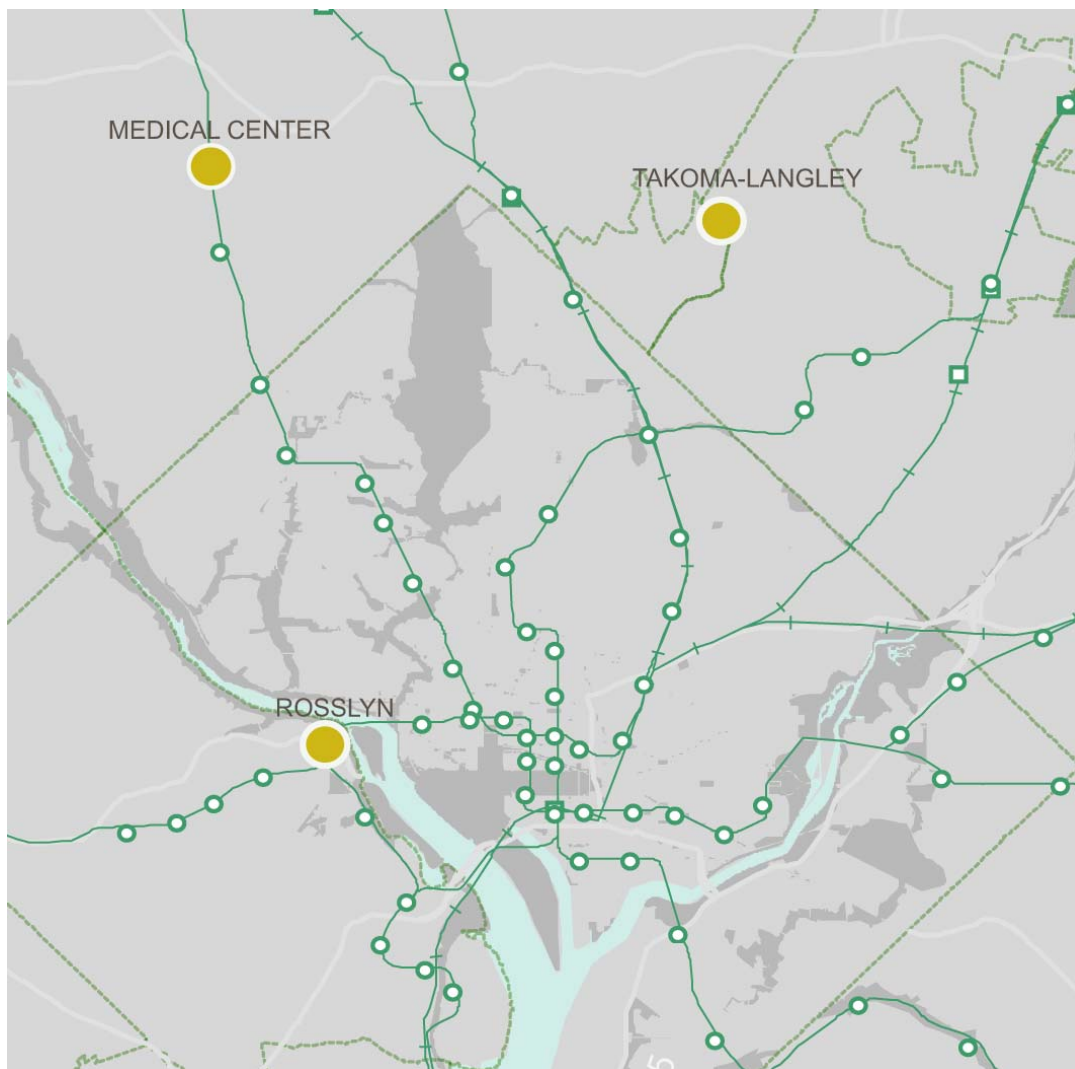
With the success of the District's pilot bike-sharing and other urban core jurisdictions interested in providing a similar service, the time is right for a regional bike-sharing service. This component would provide a single bike sharing system for the region's urban core. Bike-sharing can effectively extend the reach of public transit, and is a low-cost and healthy manner of improving mobility and accessibility.



Metrorail Station Enhancements and Transit Centers

- Creation of a pedestrian tunnel under MD-355 at Medical Center Metrorail station
- Expansion of Rosslyn Metrorail station
- Creation of Takoma/Langley Transit Center
- \$37 million (40% of total \$94 million cost)

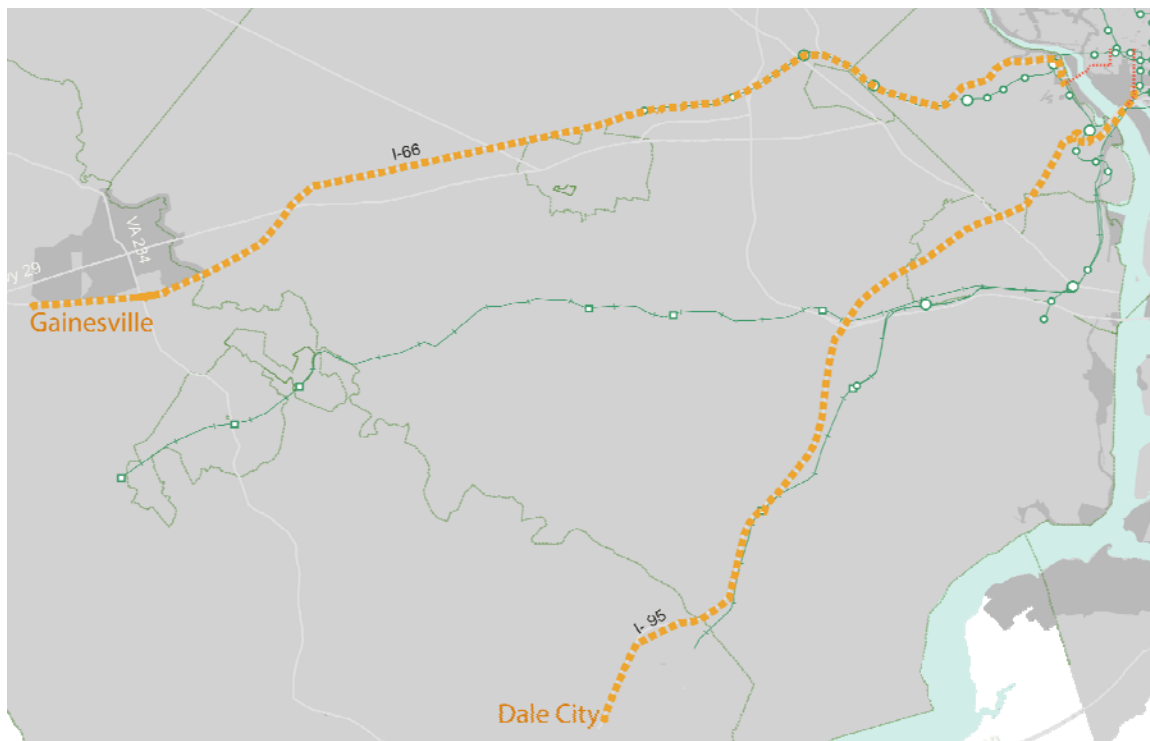
These three components will greatly improve transit access to the nearby priority bus corridors. The Rosslyn improvement will create a new entrance consisting of three (3) new high speed, high capacity elevators, a mezzanine at train platform level, emergency stairs from the train platform to street level, and related systems and infrastructure. The Medical Center pedestrian tunnel will greatly increase safety for pedestrians and transit riders between the Metrorail station and transit center and the new BRAC-related National Navy Medical Center complex. Finally, the Takoma/Langley Transit Center will consolidate various stops serving 11 bus lines into one weather-protected facility, making transfers safe and easy.



Express Bus Service on Managed Freeway Lanes

- A variety of facilities to help enable priority bus transit along I-95/395 and I-66 managed lanes.
- \$170 million (36% of \$460 million project total)

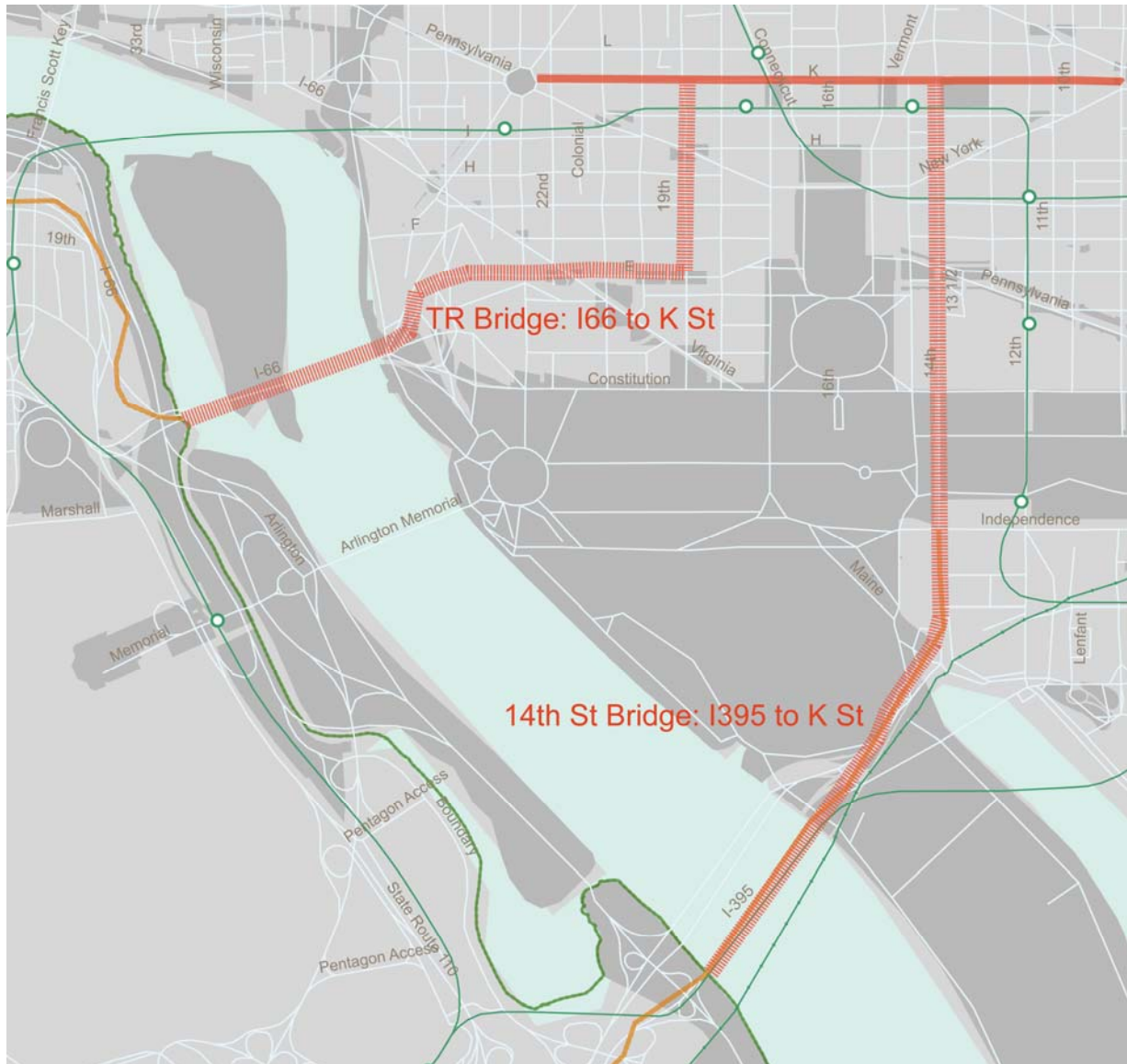
While managed lanes (HOT/HOV) can provide virtual right-of-way for transit vehicles, access to and from stops and station areas is required to provide high-quality service along managed lanes corridors. This component includes trunk line facilities, including new inline stations, and direct or indirect access to major destinations, including the Pentagon, Tysons Corner, and Franconia Springfield. Note: This component is currently under development and many of the facilities included may not meet the “shovel-ready” criteria of the TIGER program. More details about these projects will become available by August 1, most likely resulting in the removal of some or all of these components.



Connections between Virginia Managed Lanes and the K Street Transitway

- Dedicated bus-only lanes connecting Virginia managed lanes (I-95/395 & I-66) to the K Street Busway.
- \$7 million (100% of total \$7 million project total)

The managed lanes components described above both terminate in Northern Virginia. This component would extend transit priority from these managed lanes facilities into the District to the K Street Transitway, establishing seamless transit connections between suburban and downtown employment centers.



The Proposed Regional Priority Bus System to be completed by February 2012 Draft: July 9, 2009

