



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** 17-0345, **Version:** 1

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Resolution Endorsing the Two Recommended Alignments Resulting from the Peninsula Corridor Study for the Implementation of Bus Rapid Transit and Formally Requesting Hampton Roads Transit to Initiate an Environmental Review Study for those Options Identified in the Cities of Hampton and Newport News

**Background Statement:**

The Peninsula Corridor Study is a long range transportation planning effort currently underway on the Lower Peninsula. The project study is a collaboration between the City of Hampton, the City of Newport News, Hampton Roads Transit (HRT), and two private consulting firms that began in March of 2016; the first phase of this study is currently drawing to a close. The context of this project focuses on studying the potential of bringing high capacity transit (i.e. Bus Rapid Transit) to improve transportation service in Hampton and Newport News.

During the summer of 2017, the project team narrowed down the initial list of fifteen (15) potential routes or alternatives to two (2) that are recommended to be advanced to the next phase of study. Alternative 3 is a north-south route along Jefferson Ave that would connect downtown Newport News to the Oyster Point/Tech Center Area; Alternative 6 is an east-west route that would connect downtown Hampton and Newport News via Mercury Blvd (see enclosed graphic).

The 2nd phase of study will involve conducting additional analysis on the two preferred alternatives. This includes conducting more detailed traffic impact analysis, creating more refined costs estimates, and assembling a more comprehensive picture of the project's economic impact. HRT will also study the potential of combining Alternatives 3 and 6 into a single Bus Rapid Transit system, an idea that both members of staff and members of the public have expressed interest in. Finally, the project team will also conduct an environmental review of each Alternative, to comply with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

Approving this resolution would endorse the findings of the first phase of this study, and instruct HRT to move to the next phase of study.

Resolution Endorsing the Two Recommended Alignments Resulting from the Peninsula Corridor Study for the Implementation of Bus Rapid Transit and Formally Requesting Hampton Roads Transit to Initiate an Environmental Review Study for those Options Identified in the Cities of Hampton and Newport News

**WHEREAS**, significant traffic congestion and delays in the cities of Hampton and Newport News, Virginia impact both cities' long-term growth and development potential;

**WHEREAS**, citizens who live and work in the cities of Hampton and Newport News have stated a

desire for more choices in how, when, and where they travel;

**WHEREAS**, the cities of Hampton and Newport News have adopted comprehensive plans and other policies to guide growth within their cities that include and support high capacity transit;

**WHEREAS**, the Federal Transit Administration's Capital Investment Grants Program provides an average of \$2.3 billion dollars per year in capital assistance to help construct qualifying, competitive high capacity transit projects;

**WHEREAS**, high capacity transit can provide travel choices, support growth in accordance with city plans, mitigate the increase in traffic congestion, contribute to making the Virginia Peninsula a desirable place to live, attract new residents, and effectively compete for federal funding;

**WHEREAS**, the cities of Hampton and Newport News in conjunction with Hampton Roads Transit have recently completed a corridor study ("Peninsula Corridor Study") which examined eighteen (18) possible corridors and three (3) possible transit technologies to provide high capacity transit service in Hampton and Newport News;

**WHEREAS**, the extensive public outreach process during the Peninsula Corridor Study process and the detailed technical review of potential alignments identified the Jefferson Avenue (Alternative 3) and Mercury Boulevard (Alternative 6) Bus Rapid Transit ("BRT") options ("Options") as best to potentially meet the defined project purpose and need for providing high capacity transit service on the Virginia Peninsula;

**WHEREAS**, additional studies are now needed to further define the Options, including refinement of traffic analysis and runningway, detailed benefits and impacts, and the possibility of connecting the two Options into one alternative;

**WHEREAS**, State grant funds are already in place to support the next phase of environmental review and analysis for the Peninsula Corridor Study, which is required when there is a potential "federal action" under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 ("NEPA");

**WHEREAS**, accordingly, no local funding is required at this time; and

**WHEREAS**, completing the environmental review and analysis will position Hampton and Newport News to move more quickly to proceed with the project if sufficient funding is available in the future from federal, state and local sources to complete project construction and associated final environmental impact studies.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** by the City Council of the City of Hampton, Virginia:

1. Hampton Roads Transit is hereby requested to initiate and advance a formal environmental review study under NEPA to evaluate both the Mercury Boulevard and Jefferson Avenue corridors for the possible implementation of Bus Rapid Transit.
2. The City Manager is authorized to execute and deliver all documents necessary to effectuate this resolution, which shall be in effect from and after its adoption.

Adopted at the regular meeting of the City Council of the City of Hampton, Virginia, held on November 8, 2017.