

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 18, 2014

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: SANDRA MARKS, ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR, T&ES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #7 – PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE MASTER PLAN
UPDATE / COMPLETE STREETS DESIGN GUIDELINES

ISSUE: Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Update and Complete Streets Design Guidelines

RECOMMENDATION: That the Transportation Commission receive the report.

DISCUSSION: In 2008, the City completed both the Transportation Master Plan, and a Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Plan. The Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Plan serves as an implementation tool for the Transportation Master Plan. Since that time, staff has completed many important projects to improve walking and bicycling in the City, and many more are currently underway. In 2011, the City adopted a Complete Streets Policy which expanded staff to include a full time Complete Streets Coordinator. In 2012, Capital Bikeshare launched in Alexandria, with planned expansion in 2014. Given the many pedestrian and bicycle projects and initiatives completed over the past five years, the City will undertake an effort to incorporate these additions into an updated Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan.

In summary, the purpose of the update to the City's Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and development of a Complete Streets Design Guidelines is to:

- Develop a non-motorized system that addresses the needs of all users (pedestrians, bicyclists, vehicles, and transit riders) and is consistent with the Transportation Master Plan that encourages transportation options, reducing dependence on the private automobile;
- Develop both a bicycle and pedestrian network and hierarchy, based on identification of major activity centers or destinations (including existing and projected development and Metrorail and fixed transit stations); and
- Develop a framework for implementing non-motorized policies and projects citywide

In developing the bicycle and pedestrian networks hierarchy and framework, the following principles and objectives should be considered:

- Respect the character of existing neighborhoods
- Balance needs of all users

- Develop criteria to prioritize public pedestrian and bicycle improvements
- Identify and resolve key gaps in the walking and bicycling network; and
- Plan for Capital Bikeshare expansion
- Raise the City’s “Walk Friendly Community” and “Bicycle Friendly Community” award levels to Platinum. Currently Alexandria is designated as silver level “Walk Friendly Community” by the UNC Highway Safety Research Center and Alexandria was also designated as a silver level “Bicycle Friendly Community” by the League of American Bicyclists.

Three key end products will be prepared as part of the project, including:

- Updated Bicycle and Pedestrian chapters of the City’s Transportation Master Plan
 - Policies and networks;
- Transportation Master Plan appendices that includes supporting documentation;
- Complete Streets Design Guidelines

Civic Engagement

An extensive civic engagement plan will be prepared as part of the project, that is consistent with the principles of the City’s civic engagement process known as *What’s Next Alexandria*. A number of outreach tools will be used including public meetings, social media, online surveys, crowdsourcing map(s), pop-up events, and temporary street modifications showing potential pedestrian and bicycle improvements using the sub consultant “Team Better Block.” A project webpage, www.alexandriava.gov/pedbikeplan, has been developed to keep the public informed of the schedule, issues, materials and project process.

On April 8, 2014, the Council approved a resolution to establish an Ad Hoc Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Advisory Committee (Advisory Committee) that will consist of 12 members. The Advisory Committee, appointed by the City Manager, includes various members of city commissions including a designee of the Transportation Commission, a representative of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC), three at large citizen representatives, one design professional representative, and one business representative. The Advisory Committee will provide recommendations during the Update of the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and Complete Streets Design Guidelines planning process. The Committee’s main role will be to provide guidance on issues including:

- Identifying pedestrian and bicycle issues and needs
- Providing input on policy recommendations
- Providing input on the development of the pedestrian and bicycle networks
- Providing input on project recommendations and design standards
- Providing input on development of criteria for prioritizing project recommendations.

The Advisory Group will hold its first meeting on June 25, 2014 from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at City Hall, Room 1101 (Sister Cities). Advisory Committee meetings will be open to the public.