

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

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## MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 1, 2011

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: JIM MASLANKA, CHIEF OF TRANSIT SERVICES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #5 – UPDATE OF COMMENTS RECEIVED ON A PROPOSED DESIGN FOR THE KING STREET METRO STATION ACCESS IMPROVEMENTS

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**ISSUE:** Update of comments received on the proposed design to rebuild areas adjacent to the King Street Metrorail station to improve access to all users of the facility.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Receive additional information about comments received from several sources concerning a proposed redesign of areas adjacent to the King Street Metrorail station that will improve pedestrian, bicycle, and vehicular access to the facility.

**DISCUSSION:** The City, in conjunction with WMATA, and WMATA's consultant Gannett-Fleming are developing a design to improve access at the King Street Metro station.

We have received comments from the Transportation Commission, the general public, WMATA staff, DASH staff, and City staff. The consultants are in the process of refining the design to address these comments. A new design has not been developed yet. Following is a summary of all of the comments received by this project:

### **Transportation Commission Questions and Comments (May 4, 2011)**

- 1) What direction will the Kiss & Ride traffic flow?
- 2) Will the taxis be close to the street? Will the taxis be mixed in with the shuttles?  
Have the taxi companies been consulted in regards to the plan?
- 3) Is there a left turn out of the Kiss & Ride?
- 4) How many more taxi spots are in the plan?
- 5) What are the changes to pedestrian flow compared to the original plan?
- 6) What kinds of wayfinding will be in the plan?
- 7) Wayfinding should be located at each triangular corner of the Metro Station property as well as at the entrance/exit of the Station.
- 8) Can there be a cab queue at another location?

- 9) There must be high visibility from the Metro Station to the Kiss & Ride so that people can see if their ride is there.
- 10) When will the Transportation Commission be updated on the plan?

### **Public Questions and Comments (May 4, 2011)**

- 1) There needs to be additional wayfinding.
- 2) Pleased with the various bicycle parking choices.
- 3) Some concern that there could be better bicycle crossings to the Metro Station.
- 4) Brick walks are not good for bicycles.
- 5) Any possibility of getting bike lanes around the Metro Station?
- 6) Need additional cab spots. Drivers are being ticketed now when there are more than 6 cabs in queue.
- 7) The Alexandria Commission for People with Disabilities (ACPD) is opposed to brick sidewalks in the plan. They would prefer to have cement.
- 8) ACPD is concerned that the crosswalk designs will not be friendly to the disabled community.
- 9) ACPD also states that bricks ice over more than cement during the winter months.
- 10) During the past 15 years, the number of cab spots has remained the same while the number of cabs in the City has substantially increased.
- 11) The King St. Trolley should be in a safer place away from the taxis.
- 12) How will the City keep people from parking their cars at the Kiss & Ride and going across the street for shopping and dining?
- 13) Is brick imprinted cement as bad as brick?

### **WMATA Internal Staff Meeting Comments (May 5, 2011)**

- 1) Worried that bricks are not good for people with disabilities.
- 2) Conducting a pedestrian Level of Service (LOS) at the site would be a good idea.
- 3) Concerned that the proposed design with double left turns off of Daingerfield to King does not allow buses to safely let a bus make a left from Diagonal to Dangerfield, then a left turn into the station entrance.
- 4) The current plan leaves little room for the expansion of transit services
- 5) Another stop might be possible on King Street adjacent to the plaza.
- 6) With only 10 or 11 stops, WMATA will need at least 2 spaces for bus layovers.
- 7) Need to establish the amenities which will be provided at the lot.
- 8) A shelter or shelters should be supplied in the kiss-and-ride area.
- 9) Parking for scooters or motorcycle should be considered.
- 10) Is there a way to soften the grades in the design, to make the retaining walls shorter?
- 11) Will canopies be supplied by this project?
- 12) An additional crosswalk should be supplied between King Street and the set of new set of three bus bays east of the station.

- 13) The level of service of the five legged intersection at the entrance of the lot should be examined.
- 14) The location of bike parking might be shifted to provide more eyes on the parking spaces, since bicycle theft has been a problem at King Street.
- 15) Consider retail kiosk opportunities adjacent to the proposed transit store.
- 16) Recommend utilizing the existing four bus bays south of the current location. This is in order to accommodate the two bus layover locations requested by WMATA Bus Planning staff.

### **Comments Received at and after a Meeting with City and DASH Staff (May 10, 2011)**

#### **Meeting Topics:**

- 1) The site needs layover space for as large a number of buses as possible
  - a. There are currently 5-6 bus layover locations
  - b. Two potential layover locations were identified:
    - i. Shift retaining wall toward kiss and ride, add layover area north of pedestrian stairs/ramp
    - ii. Shift retaining wall toward kiss and ride, add layover area south of pedestrian stairs/ramp
- 2) The use of permeable pavement is considered to have a runoff coefficient of 0.7 not 0.3, for stormwater in Alexandria
- 3) The bike area as shown on the concept needs additional focus.
  - a. The area under the platform is identified as future bike expansion area.
  - b. The proposed bike area is to consist of the entire green space shown on the concept plan. The bike area should be inclusive and expand from the main station entrance to King Street along the station structure.
  - c. The entire bike area should be paved.
- 4) Revise the kiss-and-ride and shuttle area
  - a. One additional space should be provided for school buses/shuttles
  - b. The car share location identified on the concept plan should be identified as additional shuttle/school bus base to address the previous statement.
  - c. New car share location should be identified in the kiss-and-ride area, opposite the taxi queue, closer to King Street.
  - d. The number of car share spaces should be confirmed; 4-6 spaces required

- e. Need to determine if entire kiss-and-ride area will be accessible for people with disabilities.
- 5) The City agreed to utilize brick sidewalks for the perimeter sidewalk.
    - a. Brick sidewalk is to be set in concrete (i.e. has a concrete base)
    - b. The City's Department of Transportation and Environmental Services has brick sidewalk specifications, which will be supplied to Gannett Fleming
  - 6) Pedestrian crossings need additional consideration.
    - a. Add crosswalk from King Street side of the site to three bus bays in the center of the lot.
    - b. Internal crosswalks are to be striped "ladder" style.
    - c. Review necessity for crosswalk at kiss-and-ride to be pedestrian actuated with flashing lights.
    - d. Design should provide a pathway from VRE through the bike share area
  - 7) An in-depth intersection analysis of King Street/Daingerfield Rd./Diagonal Rd. intersection and the Daingerfield Rd./Duke Street intersection is required. The City will look at traffic counts and analysis to review operations for vehicular and pedestrian movements. Results will be provided to the design team.
  - 8) The City will also research existing traffic signal plans, to be provided to Gannett Fleming for future modification.
  - 9) With the next submission, show location of all existing vegetation on the plan per the City's Landscape Guidelines, including the following:
    - a. Existing vegetation quantity, species, caliper size and accurate drip-line;
    - b. Clearly notate all existing vegetation as either 'To-be-saved' or 'To-be-removed'.
  - 10) Demonstrate that the submission meets the City's crown coverage requirements.
  - 11) Clearly show the limits of disturbance.
  - 12) Tree protection measures will be required per the City's Landscape Guidelines for all trees to be saved.
  - 13) Provide plantings throughout the site (in addition to street trees) that include a simple mixture of seasonally variable, evergreen and deciduous shrubs,

- ornamental and shade trees, groundcovers and perennials that are horticulturally acclimatized to the Mid-Atlantic and Washington, DC National Capital Region.
- 14) Consider plant species that are drought tolerant and able to withstand pollution from buses and other vehicles
  - 15) Provide tree species with upright branching habit where buses will have an impact
  - 16) Provide continuous soil panels and maximize soil volume for trees in hardscape areas.
  - 17) Consider a site irrigation/water management plan for all planting beds.
  - 18) Provide information on height and material/details for all retaining walls, seat walls, decorative walls, and screen walls and paving materials. Consider using new City standard paving materials. In the design of paved areas.
  - 19) Provide information on the design and location of bus canopies, shelters and other site furnishings.