



**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

**P.O. Box 178 - City Hall
Alexandria, Virginia 22313**

alexandriava.gov

703-746-4025

Transportation Planning Division

**MEETING MINUTES FROM AUGUST 18, 2011 HIGH CAPACITY TRANSIT CORRIDOR WORK
GROUP MEETING**

To: High Capacity Transit Corridor Work Group
From: Jim Maslanka, City of Alexandria, T&ES; Steve Sindiong, City of Alexandria, T&ES
Meeting Date: August 18, 2011
Time: 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Meeting Location: Charles Houston Recreation Center, Multi-Purpose Room
Subject: Transitway Corridor Feasibility Study High Capacity Transit Corridor Work Group Meeting 8
Attendees: **Corridor Work Group:** Councilman Paul Smedberg (Co-Chair), Bill Denton, Donna Fossum, Poul Hertel, Nancy Jennings, John Komoroske, Anna Bentley
City of Alexandria staff: Rich Baier (Director T&ES), Abi Lerner (Deputy Director, T&ES), Jim Maslanka (T&ES), Steve Sindiong (T&ES), Karen Callahan (T&ES), Susan Gygi (T&ES), Mark Jinks (Deputy City Manager), Faroll Hamer (Director, P&Z), Jeff Farner (Deputy Director, P&Z)
Consultants: David Whyte (Kimley-Horn), Erin Murphy (Kimley-Horn), Paul Elman (Kimley-Horn), Amy Archer (RK&K)
City Council: Del Pepper
Members of the Public: 15 citizens signed in

Agenda

Corridor B (Duke Street/Eisenhower) Discussion

1. Introduction (10 minutes)
 - a. Opening Remarks – Councilman Krupicka and Councilman Smedberg, CWG Co-Chairs
 - b. Meeting Objectives and Goals – Rich Baier, T&ES
2. July 21 Meeting Minutes – Abi Lerner, T&ES (5 minutes)
3. Background – Abi Lerner, T&ES (5 minutes)
4. Corridor B Discussion – Kimley-Horn (90 minutes)
 - a. Existing Conditions and Land Use
 - b. CWG Input on Existing Conditions / Land Use
 - c. Public Input on Existing Conditions and Land Use
 - d. Review proposed Evaluation Criteria

- e. Alignments
- f. CWG Input on Criteria and Alignments
- g. Public Input on Alignments

5. Logistics and Next Steps – Abi Lerner, T&ES (10 minutes)

- a. Next Meeting Date
- b. Next Meeting Topics
- c. Upcoming Meetings Related to Corridor C Implementation

Summary of Discussion

Introduction

- Goal of the meeting:
 - Review existing conditions for Corridor B, review evaluation criteria, and discuss alignment options.

July 21 Minutes

- Minutes were unanimously approved. Poul Hertel abstained.

Corridor B Discussion on Existing Conditions

- Presentation by David Whyte
- CWG Comment
 - ***Councilman Paul Smedberg***
 - Important to remember that the Landmark Mall will be redeveloped, and will need to be served by good transit service.
 - ***Anna Bentley***
 - On Eisenhower, need to recognize that denser development and employment already has shuttle service to the Van Dorn metro station. Congestion management is already in place
 - Regarding zoning, we haven't touched on where areas of future growth are expected. Duke Street has a lot of old established areas that are unlikely to change. There are more opportunities for redevelopment along Eisenhower.
 - ***Bill Denton***
 - Pedestrian access needs to be considered in designing the system.
 - ***Donna Fossum***
 - On Duke Street between Jordan Street and Quaker Lane, the 4-lane section, stopped buses and turning vehicles impact traffic.
 - Eisenhower was originally going to be industrial. Most of the housing along Eisenhower is relatively new and there won't be much more.
 - There is a history of not connecting Duke Street to the Beltway and providing a through connection for Fairfax. There is a need for connectivity from Duke Street to Metro rail.
 - Duke will redevelop. Right now Duke is a through way and a whole different world than what we are planning.
 - There is a lot of transit utilization during the peak period, but there is a need for all day service, especially for retirees.
 - Put the transit on Duke Street, need to serve Alexandria not invite the world to use Duke as a freeway.
 - There is poor visibility and amenities for pedestrians and transit users along Duke Street today.

- ***Poul Hertel***
 - On Duke Street, there is not a continuous sidewalk and you often have to cross the street to get to the transit stop. Duke is one of the worst pedestrian environments in the City.
 - Would like to know how much of the delay on Duke Street is caused by the traffic lights
 - Eisenhower Avenue has potential for redevelopment only near the metro stations and is already well served by transit.
 - On Eisenhower there are large volumes of traffic between the ramps.
 - On Duke Street, there are different types of land uses in the sections. The residential streetscape will be important to consider and many residents are served by frontage streets. There is a lot of suburban strip development that also will likely redevelop.
 - Residential areas will also be impacted by transit via the nuisance effect. Need to figure out how to mitigate properties within one-tenth mile of the alignment. Market studies have shown that private residential properties within one-tenth of a mile tend to lose value, while residential uses further out increase in value. Commercial and residential rentals within one-tenth of a mile gain value.
 - On Eisenhower there will be less of a nuisance effect because the transit would affect less people, but that is also a downside of transit on Eisenhower.
 - Streetscape is essential as are pedestrians.
 - Eisenhower at Van Dorn is a choke point. Transportation Commission had asked the City to restripe the intersection to add capacity for buses.
 - During the non-peak and on the weekend, there is no good transit service along the Duke corridor.

- ***Nancy Jennings***
 - There are choke points on Duke Street. The volumes on Eisenhower may not warrant much improvement on that street.

- ***John Komoroske***
 - Sidewalks and connectivity are important. Pedestrian oriented development is needed.
 - There are areas along Duke Street that cannot imagine being the same in 20 years.
 - On Eisenhower, a special use permit was put in place because it was filling up with townhouse apartments, then development slowed down.
 - Metro already serves developed areas of Eisenhower. Need to work with Planning & Zoning to see how Eisenhower West will develop.
 - Transit should be on Duke Street, where the needs are greater and it will be used; however, worried about the right of way costs and intruding too much on residents.

- ***Alexandria Staff Comments (Farroll Hamer, Director, P&Z)***
 - The 2009 Eisenhower West Land Use Study determined that Eisenhower West had poor connectivity, that the general area would be difficult to redevelop until the industrial uses redevelop first, and that approvals are not currently in place.
 - The study also determined that there are a lot of other redevelopment areas in the City and region that are likely to redevelop earlier and have approvals in place.
 - Eisenhower West area is unlikely to be redeveloped for 20 to 30 years.
 - There are still opportunities along Duke Street for redevelopment that do not include the single family houses, especially the strip malls, garden apartments, and Landmark Mall. There is a lot of development pressure.

- **Public Comment** on Corridor B Existing Conditions
 - The streetscape on Duke Street can be mitigated by including on-street parking and bike lanes to help buffer the adjacent land uses.
 - East-west bike connectivity along Duke Street is horrible.
 - Include a full sidewalk along Duke Street.
 - There are two metro stations along Eisenhower, but not much density. Housing is a half mile from the stations. Consider improving the headways of existing transit on Eisenhower and better tie the transit to the Carlyle area.
 - Want clarification on the traffic speeds – is this just for the through lanes? Yes.
 - Preserve single family housing along Duke Street. Already losing residential on Duke Street, especially west of Quaker Lane.
 - There is a need for better pedestrian connections between Duke and Eisenhower. The tunnel was recently closed.
 - Response: VDOT has the tunnel shut down for a construction project that is several months behind schedule. It will be reopened.
 - A lot of things from the Ad Hoc Transportation Group have been forgotten. The purpose of the Transitway should be to get people out of cars and on to transit. Public transit must be easier to use than taking a car. Don't widen Duke Street because it won't provide an additional advantage to transit.
 - As a rider of transit along Duke, there needs to be better connectivity to the Eisenhower metro station from Duke. Connect transit, bikes, and pedestrians between Duke and Eisenhower.
 - Some neighborhoods that fought the Duke Street connector may get the wrong impression that the Transitway means the City is planning to increase density along Duke Street. Need to protect the neighborhoods.
 - Eisenhower has more opportunities for redevelopment. The storage areas could be redeveloped and the revenues could go toward paying for transit.

Corridor B Discussion on Preliminary Evaluation Criteria

- David Whyte, Kimley-Horn Associates, provided an overview of the potential preliminary screening criteria and asked for input toward the criteria. The CWG recommended that the following preliminary screening criteria be used (Shown in table on page 5). Those that were deemed most important that should be considered for a higher weight are noted. In addition, some of the criteria, as noted, should be considered for lower level of analysis.
- CWG Discussion on Preliminary Screening Criteria
 - **Councilman Paul Smedberg**
 - Duke is the major east-west connection in the City; it may not be practical to take away a lane.
 - **Poul Hertel**
 - Debt service is important and a consideration of Council.
 - Why would we be looking at transit if we are still trying to serve cars?
 - Taking the bus needs to be a rational choice; there must be a reason to do so.
 - **Nancy Jennings**
 - Look at what a street was designed for. Duke Street was designed as a state highway for trucks and buses. Vehicles that are diverted from Duke Street will go through neighborhoods and they are not wanted there.

Recommended Preliminary Screening Criteria for Corridor B

General Evaluation Criteria Grouping	Criteria Sub-Group	Evaluation Criteria	For Use in Screening (Concepts & Alignments)	For Use in Comparative Evaluation of Concepts	Measurement Method	
Effectiveness - Addresses stated transportation issues in the corridor	Coverage	Service to Regional Destinations		✓	Notation of regional destinations directly served	
		Service to Population, Employment, and Other Destinations		✓	Tabulate population, employment, key destinations, and similar, served by option	
		Transit Connectivity	✓	✓	Access to other transit services (existing and planned)	
	Operations	Running-way Configuration(s)			✓	Quantify amount of runningway that is dedicated and amount that is mixed flow
		Corridor Length			✓	Measured length of the corridor (mi or feet)
		Capacity			✓	Potential corridor capacity (hourly) based on mode technology, headways, and other conditions
		Interoperability			✓	Identification of whether the chosen runningway configuration and transit mode technology are compatible with regionally planned systems
		Avoidance of Congestion	H		✓	Number and locations of LOS E/F intersections avoided
		Transit Travel Time	H		✓	Transit travel time
		Intersection Priority	✓		✓	Percent of intersections where TSP is needed and can be implemented successfully - notation of where it cannot be implemented successfully
	Alignment	Ridership			✓	Forecast number of riders
		Geometrics			✓	Geometric quality of alignment
		Runningway Status	L		✓	Percent of corridor to be located on new or realigned roadway
	Phasing	Phasing	✓		✓	Identification of ability to phase operations and implementation
Impacts - Extent to which economics, environment, community, transportation are affected	Economic	Development Incentive			✓	Perceived value of transit mode technologies with regard to development potential
	Natural Environmental	Natural Environment	L		✓	Summary of key environmental conditions affected (wetlands, floodplains, T&E, streams, and similar)
		Parks and Open Space			✓	Summary of parks and/or open spaces affected
	Neighborhood and Community	Property	✓		✓	Number, use type, and quantity of properties impacted with anticipated level of impact (ROW only, partial take, total take)
		Streetscapes	H		✓	Impact to existing streetscapes
		Community Resources			✓	Identify number and location of historical, cultural, community, archaeological resources affected
		Demographics			✓	Identification of impacts to special populations
	Transportation	Noise and Vibration	L		✓	Summarize relative noise and vibration impacts of different mode types and corridor configurations
		Traffic Flow Impact	H		✓	Effect of transit implementation on vehicular capacity of corridor
		Traffic Signals			✓	Number of existing signalized intersections affected by transit, identification of need for new signal phases, and number/location of new traffic signals needed to accommodate transit
		Multimodal Accommodation	✓		✓	Impacts to, and ability to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians
Parking		✓		✓	Impacts to parking	
Cost Effectiveness - Extent to which the costs are commensurate with their benefits	Cost	Capital cost	✓		✓	Order of magnitude capital cost for corridor (stations, runningway, etc.)
		Operating cost	✓		✓	Order of magnitude operating cost
		Cost Per Rider	✓		✓	Order of magnitude operating cost per rider
Financial Feasibility - Cost of system/concept is in alignment with available funding	Funding	Funding	✓		✓	Availability to specific funding sources
		Private Capital Incentive			✓	Judgment as to whether the concept has the potential to attract private capital investment and innovative procurement

- **H** indicates higher weight, ✓ indicates normal weight, **L** indicates lower level of analysis

Corridor B Discussion on Alignments

- David Whyte, Kimley-Horn Associates, asked for input on potential alignments for high capacity transit along Corridor B.
- CWG Discussion on Corridor B Alignments
 - ***Anna Bentley***
 - There is a utilitarian need along Duke Street.
 - Transit on Eisenhower works relatively well today – possibly extend routes further into other areas to enhance connections to Metrorail that for those that don't live on the corridor.
 - On Duke Street, there will be significant constraints to consider, but they can be overcome.
 - Spend the bulk of money on Duke Street.
 - ***Donna Fossum***
 - Mostly Duke Street with connectivity to Eisenhower
 - Duke Street has the need for high capacity transit – it is where the population is that needs it most; all day service is needed.
 - Need emergency connectivity and any transit facility that connects Duke and Eisenhower may have a dual use.
 - ***Poul Hertel***
 - On Eisenhower, increase the service through Transportation Management Plans of large development. High Capacity Transit service is needed on Duke Street.
 - Need to reduce the auto demand. High Capacity Transit travel speed must be significant.
 - Concerned that transit loops would increase travel time.
 - Need to have improved streetscape. Bike lanes are not a streetscape, a buffer is needed.
 - ***Nancy Jennings***
 - The Landmark / Van Dorn plan includes a multimodal bridge to Van Dorn. Needs to be part of the equation to allow buses to get to Metro station without Van Dorn congestion.
 - Prefer transit on Duke Street
 - ***John Komoroske***
 - Prefer Duke Street with a connection to Eisenhower East/Carlyle.
 - A way of getting from Duke to Eisenhower, near Holmes Run, especially pedestrian/bicycle connection, would be great.
 - ***Recap***
 - Focus on Duke Street corridor with some connectivity to Eisenhower Ave.
 - Look for more conventional means of improving service on Eisenhower Ave.
- Public Comment on Corridor B Alignments
 - Need user surveys.
 - How do you use the frontage roads as part of the transit improvements?
 - Duke Street does not need more inadequate bus services.
 - Duke Street does not need more widening. It is already the most pedestrian unfriendly street. It needs narrowing, with a complete street treatment.
 - Criteria is misleading – it should be based on ensuring there is usable, convenient, frequent transit service along the corridor – that being the goal. Include high frequency, long service hours, convenient boarding, and decent stations. Don't disrupt the corridor if you can't meet that goal.
 - The criteria related to population / employment served should consider how far east you can take the transit, such as to Carlyle or King Street metro.

Logistics and Next Steps

- The next meeting for Corridor A will be on Thursday, September 15, 2011.
- The next meeting for Corridor B (date to be determined) will focus on a review of concepts and preliminary screening.
- At the last meeting, it was recommended that separate meetings be held for each corridor.
- Updates on Corridor C:
 - September 7 – Transportation Commission Public Hearing
 - September 8 – Planning Commission Public Hearing
 - September 13 – Council Presentation on CWG recommendation
 - September 17 – Council Public Hearing / Recommendation