



**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES**

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Transportation Planning Division

**MEETING MINUTES FROM FEBRUARY 16, 2012 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: February 16, 2012
Time: 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m.
Meeting Location: City Hall, Sister Cities Room 1101
Subject: Transitway Corridor Feasibility Study High Capacity Transit Corridor Work Group Meeting #13
Attendees: **Corridor Work Group:** Councilman Rob Krupicka (Co-Chair), Councilman Paul Smedberg (Co-Chair), Donna Fossum, Poul Hertel, John Komoroske, **City of Alexandria staff:** Abi Lerner (T&ES), Rich Baier (T&ES), Jim Maslanka (T&ES), Steve Sindiong (T&ES), Karen Callahan (T&ES) **Consultants:** David Whyte (Kimley-Horn), Erin Murphy (Kimley-Horn) **Members of the Public:** 19 citizens signed in

Agenda

1. Introduction
 - a. Opening Remarks
 - b. Distribution of January 19 meeting minutes
 - c. Meeting Objectives and Goals
 - i. Review Alternatives considered for further investigation of impacts
 - ii. Preferred Recommendation for Corridor B
2. Corridor B Final Screening
 - a. Recap of Corridor B Secondary Screening
 - b. Alternatives Considered for Further Investigation of Impacts
 - c. Summary of Further Investigation of Impacts
3. General CWG & Public Comment
4. Selection of Preferred Alternative
5. Logistics and Next Steps

Summary of Discussion

Introduction

- Goal of the meeting:
 - Abi Lerner, T&ES, noted that the goal of the meeting will be to review the refined analysis for Alternatives 1 and 3, and to receive a recommendation for a preferred alternative for Corridor B from the Corridor Work Group.

January 19, 2012 Minutes (Corridor B)

- Minutes were unanimously approved.

Corridor B Final Screening

- Presentation by David Whyte, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc.
- High Capacity Transit Corridor Work Group (CWG) Comments
 - **Councilman Paul Smedberg**
 - Question the practicality of bike lanes within the middle section of Duke Street. At the western section (west of Jordan Street), look at bike lanes, especially as part of the Landmark Mall redevelopment.
 - Need to make sure we provide good pedestrian facilities. The consistency and feel of Duke Street should be improved.
 - There is a fire station at a critical location, and another being built on Eisenhower Avenue. In terms of the station spacing, be sensitive to the fire station locations.
 - Prefer Alternative 3c (which is a combination of Alt 3b where space is available for bike lanes and Alt 3a where bike facilities are provided along a route parallel to Duke Street where right-of-way is limited)
 - Station locations shown are for illustration only and should be further considered.
 - **Councilman Rob Krupicka**
 - Consider looking at a HOV/transit lane along Duke Street.
 - Were service roads in front of the residential areas treated the same as commercial areas? **Answer:** No, within residential areas, the parking was retained as much as possible.
 - Consider taking away the service roads adjacent to commercial areas.
 - What is assumed for streetscape dimensions? **Answer:** A total of 12' was assumed, including 7' for landscape area, and 5' for sidewalk.
 - A phased approach could be used, that requires the provision of right-of-way for transit and non-motorized facilities as properties are redeveloped.
 - How were transit station locations determined? **Answer:** They were based on a combination of understanding the destinations, but also at signal locations, and where there were minimal impacts to adjacent uses.
 - Since a major cost for the alternatives is providing bike facilities along Duke Street in the middle section, those costs could be applied toward developing a solution off of Duke Street that has less impacts to property and parking.
 - Agree with the "Alternative 3c" approach to use an off-Duke bike facility in the middle section, but want to understand the route better; consider a connection to Eisenhower Avenue.
 - Need to understand where landscaping makes sense, parcel by parcel.
 - Still think having improved transit on Eisenhower Avenue needs to be a part of the overall recommendation.

- **Donna Fossum**
 - Look at a potential connection from the east end of Taney Avenue to other existing bike facilities. Bike facilities could be moved to Wheeler Avenue, rather than using Duke Street.
 - Consider queue jump lanes in the narrowest section of the corridor.
 - Explore in more detail putting the bike facility off of Duke Street. We already have a lot of the pieces. They should be where people live.
 - Need more specifics on where sidewalks are improved, and how, such as near the Land Rover site. Consider sidewalk connections to developments.
 - Want to provide dedicated transit lanes wherever we can. We should take what right-of-way we can now, and reserve what we can later.
 - Need to be prepared for the redevelopment of Landmark Mall, and utilize it correctly designing it as a transit hub.
 - On Eisenhower Avenue, there is a multi-modal bridge being planned. We should ask the Police Department if there are other ways to provide a non-motorized connection to Eisenhower Avenue, between Telegraph Road and Van Dorn Street, that can also be used for emergency access.

- **Poul Hertel**
 - How far apart are the proposed transit stations, and are they the same for Alternatives 1 and 3? **Answer:** The stations are approximately 1/3 mile apart, and are consistent between alternatives 1 and 3.
 - What is the streetscape impact to Cameron Station? **Answer:** There will still be a good urban streetscape adjacent to Cameron Station.
 - Important to make sure that parcels that may be redeveloped maintain a good streetscape.
 - Personal preference is to take away lanes from cars, but the policy of the CWG has been to make sure you don't degrade existing conditions, but at the same time, don't make car travel too efficient so as to deter people from using transit.
 - For Alternative 3b, between Gordon Street and Early Street in the eastbound direction, what would be the streetscape impact? **Answer:** The streetscape at this location could be reduced to lessen property impact.
 - Don't want to affect adjacent neighborhoods. The bike facility should be considered off of Duke Street, especially in the middle section of the corridor.
 - Start with Alternative 1a, but interested in having fully dedicated transit lanes for the corridor where redevelopment of existing "suburban-type" development left the City in position to ask for right-of-way.

- **John Komoroske**
 - A stream runs under the railroad at Wheeler Avenue, which could be used for a non-motorized connection to Eisenhower Avenue.
 - Consider using the City property near Business Center Drive for a bike facility.
 - Is there a potential to use Witter Drive, and an off-street connection as a bike route? **Answer:** There is a major grade issue in that vicinity.
 - Like "Alternative 3c", a modification of Alternative 3b that moves the bike facilities in the middle section of the corridor to an off-Duke facility such as Gordon Street, Wheeler Avenue, and the City property. Need to make sure it is feasible and would be well-marked.

- **Public Comment on Corridor B Final Screening**

- Consider a scaled down alternative that just uses queue jumps, to reduce impacts to the general purpose traffic.
- Question that dedicated lanes will really attract a lot of riders. Don't think people will walk from King Street station to Old Town.
- A dedicated lane at Telegraph Road/Duke Street may make traffic worse.

- Think about the pedestrian experience. As you evaluate alternatives, do a pedestrian experience diagram that shows how people get across the street to the stations, such as pedestrian refuges, improved crossing times, etc.
- The only people to benefit are the local residents, but the transitway won't attract enough riders. People will not park at the mall, and take transit to Old Town.
- Will the system pay for itself?
- If we take away business parking, will the businesses remain?
- Support improved transit along Duke Street, but also need to use my car. Have a concern about the reversible lane, especially the safety issues for residents trying to get in and out of their neighborhoods.
- When Duke Street was widened near Carlyle, it had a big impact at the time, but now it is beautiful. Understand the need to phase, and what is needed at the time of redevelopment.
- Need to understand the long term land use plan, including mixed use and transit connectivity.
- Would like to figure out how cars get from Taylor Run Parkway to Telegraph Road, and getting cars to the neighborhood. There is a lot of cut-through traffic using Taylor Run Parkway to get to BRAC.
- The streetscape is important to consider. It is how users will get to the stations. Cannot entirely eliminate a sidewalk in any locations along Duke Street.
- Like the idea of connectivity for bikes, especially a connection between Duke Street and Eisenhower Avenue.
- Along Duke Street, there are two problems with using Taney Avenue/Wheeler Avenue – They don't cross Holmes Run. Using Gordon Street / Wheeler Avenue requires a lot of backtracking. Need to tie Wheeler Avenue to Holmes Run. East of Wheeler Avenue, there are no good alternatives to Duke Street – you need to connect to the Telegraph Road bike improvements, and you probably need to put a bike lane along Duke Street. Consider allowing bikes to use the transit lanes, using a painting scheme to delineate the bike area within the lane.
- Not a fan of dedicated bike lanes. Want bike facilities, but not on Duke Street.
- Feeder streets to the stations should have pedestrian facilities.
- Favor shared lanes on Duke Street between Jordan Street and Wheeler Avenue. Also like the idea of using Eisenhower Avenue. Think the City missed an opportunity when it turned down the Eisenhower Connector.
- There are three public safety issues – trees in the medians grow and will block signs and lights; At transit stations, need to improve pedestrian crossings and differentiate locations for pedestrian street crossings and waiting for transit; the light at Witter Drive was recently changed to favor Duke Street traffic going eastbound. Residents are now queuing on Witter Drive; Maintenance vehicles often block sight distances for drivers trying to cross the street.
- Prefer Alternative 1a because it has the least impact to resident parking spaces. Like the idea of a bike facility off of Duke Street.
- Need to provide a better connection between Quaker Avenue and Telegraph Road. Need to understand the impact of the transitway to vehicles trying to make this connection.

Logistics and Next Steps

- The project team will use the input received, and come back with a staff recommendation, along with more detailed plans showing bicycle improvements within the middle section of the corridor.
- The next meeting will be on March 15, 2012. A recommendation for Corridor B is anticipated at that time, so that staff can bring a recommendation for Corridors A and B together to the Council in May 2012, after receiving input from the Planning and Transportation Commissions.