

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 6, 2013
TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
FROM: SANDRA MARKS, ACTING DEPUTY DIRECTOR, T&ES
SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM # 6 – COMPLETE STREETS UPDATE

ISSUE: Staff update to Transportation Commission on Complete Streets Program

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission:

1. Receives the staff update and;
2. Directs staff to apply for an FTA New Freedom grant to fund pedestrian enhancements that will improve access to transit for seniors and persons with disabilities.

BACKGROUND: In October 2012, T&ES provided an update to the Transportation Commission on the Complete Streets Program. Since that time, a Complete Streets Coordinator has been hired and work has commenced to develop the Complete Street Work Program (Work Program). Incorporating feedback from the Transportation Commission in October, staff is developing its Work Program with four elements:

1. Paving Management Program
2. High Priority Street Improvements
3. Comprehensive Neighborhood Enhancements
4. Safety Upgrades

In addition to the streets on the paving list, staff is refining its approach to implementation of Complete Streets by providing a program that addresses large-scale projects as well as smaller safety upgrades. These projects will be prioritized according to objective criteria in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Plan and as outlined in section B below.

A. PAVING MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

The City of Alexandria maintains and manages more than 521 lane miles of paved streets to ensure the safe and efficient movement of people, goods and services. The City's current street maintenance program has a total operating budget of \$4.45 million in FY 2013, of which \$1.375 million is designated for major resurfacing projects (multi-block) on major routes, typically arterials and collector roads. Approximately 20% of City streets are arterials and 11% are primary collectors, while 69% are local and residential streets. Because arterial and collector routes are generally wider with greater traffic volumes and heavier truck traffic, maintenance of arterials and collectors comprises a significant share of the City's overall street maintenance

operating budget.

As part of the \$4.45 million total budget, \$1.0 million is designated for local/residential street patching and pothole repair. The \$1.0 million is utilized for smaller spot repairs (typically one block or less) and thus the scope of work cannot be programmed as easily so it represents an operating and not a capital expenditure. In other words, the major resurfacing projects represent a significant long-term capital investment, while the smaller maintenance projects are part of the everyday cost of maintaining the City’s streets.

T&ES focuses its limited resurfacing funds on streets that are in most need. When selecting streets to be paved, staff begins with an objective pavement rating index calculated by a computer model. The City in 2008-09 for the first time used a specialized contractor to objectively prioritize all 521 lane miles of roads according to accepted industry standards. The City’s contractor assesses all streets in the City in order to generate a numerical measure called a Pavement Condition Index (or PCI) for every block evaluated. Using a scale from 100 for brand new pavement down to 1, the worst possible condition, the City then develops a priority based system for resurfacing. The PCI is based on a streets’ ride quality, cracking, presence of potholes or utility cuts, raveling, streaking, wash-boarding, shoving, etc. The streets are then placed into “bands” that generally characterize their overall condition. The chart below explains the relationship between the road conditions, PCI and definitions:

Condition	PCI	Definition
Good	86-100	Stable, no cracking, no patching and no deformation. Very good riding qualities.
Satisfactory	71-85	Stable, minor cracking, generally hairline and hard to detect. Minor patching and possibly some minor deformation evident. Dry or light colored appearance. Good riding qualities. Rutting less than 1/2”.
Fair	56-70	Generally stable, minor areas of structural weakness evident. Cracking is easier to detect, patches evident. Cracking is easier to detect, patched but not excessively. Deformation more pronounced and easily noticed. Ride qualities are good to acceptable.
Poor	41-55	Areas of instability, marked evidence of structural deficiency, large crack patterns (alligating) heavy and numerous patches, deformation very noticeable. Riding qualities range from acceptable to poor.
Very Poor/Serious	11-40	Pavement in extremely deteriorated condition. Numerous areas of instability. Majority of section showing structural deficiency. Ride quality is poor.
Failed	0-10	Pavement structure failed. All of section showing severe structural deficiency.

In the 2008-09 assessment, the City’s average PCI was 68.6 with nearly 34 percent of street sections at or below 60. In FY 2012, City Council approved funds for an update to the pavement management program which is expected to be complete by the end of the current fiscal year (June 2013). Completion of this initiative in FY2013 will allow the City to develop a multi-year paving plan which will allow for improved coordination with Complete Streets initiatives.

The chart below is the list of streets that have been presented to City Council in the City Manager’s proposed FY14 Capital Improvement Program budget for major street/multi-block resurfacing in FY14. It is important to note that the PCI and condition shown in the chart reflect conditions as inventoried in 2008; based on recent assessments using industry-approved methods, conditions on each of these roads are now generally in the Very Poor/Serious category.

Streets Currently Proposed for Multi-block paving	2008 PCI*	2008 Condition*
4000 to 4500 West Braddock Road	51	Poor
900 to 1400 Janneys Lane	60	Fair
Unit block North Quaker Lane	57	Fair
600 to 900 block South Van Dorn Street	66	Fair
600 to 900 North Pitt Street	58	Fair
5900 to 6300 Stevenson Avenue	59	Fair
5900 & 6000 Quantrell Avenue	50	Poor
1300 to 1900 North Quaker Lane	68	Fair
500 to 1500 Commonwealth Avenue	36	Poor
3200 to 3500 Old Dominion Blvd.	59	Fair

** It is important to note that the PCI and condition shown in the chart reflect conditions as inventoried in 2008; based on recent assessments using industry-approved methods, conditions on each of these roads are now generally in the Very Poor/Serious category.*

B. COMPLETE STREETS WORK PROGRAM

T&ES Staff is updating its approach to implementation of Complete Streets by highlighting the criteria to be used to prioritize projects, which is based on the guidelines in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Plan. In addition to the Paving Management Program, the Complete Streets Work Program will be broken into three components: High Priority Locations, Neighborhood Streets, and Safety Upgrades.

High Priority Street Improvements

These locations will be based on an evaluation of criteria including crash data and distance from pedestrian and bicycle generators like schools and major transit stops. Consideration will also be given based on the “Potential Pedestrian and Bicycle Activity” map (Attachment 1) and the conditions for “Walking Along the Roadway” map (Attachment 2) in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Plan. Speed and volume will be considered when assessing complaints about speeding or cut-through traffic. Locations will be ranked based on these factors, and the locations with the highest ranking will be prioritized.

Comprehensive Neighborhood Enhancements

The Neighborhood Streets program will use a comprehensive approach to investigate neighborhoods for Complete Streets improvements. One to two neighborhoods will be identified for the program’s pilot year based on projects already in progress or previously identified. In future years, neighborhoods will be identified based on the same criteria used to determine High Priority Locations.

Safety Upgrades

The City currently has a work plan to stripe crosswalks, install curb ramps, install pedestrian signage and other small scale safety improvements. Staff also receives requests for smaller scale

safety upgrades that fit into the annual Complete Streets annual work plan. The installation of these safety upgrades will be included in the Work Program when feasible and will be tracked as part of the Work Program.

C. FTA NEW FREEDOM GRANT:

To support the Complete Streets program, an FTA New Freedom grant has been identified that would provide additional funding for access to transit enhancements that would improve mobility for seniors and person with disabilities. The grant would pay for the design and implementation of items such as new or upgraded curb ramps, medians and sidewalks, new audible pedestrian count-down signals, signage, and striping. Staff is applying for up to \$500,000 in funding, with a 20 percent city match. Staff is requesting a recommendation from the Transportation Commission in support of this grant application.