



# City of Alexandria

## Transportation Commission

### Regular Meeting

March 13, 2013  
7:00 p.m.  
City Council Workroom

### MINUTES

**Commissioners Present:** John Komoroske, Tim Lovain, Jennifer Mitchell, Kevin Posey, Josh Sawislak, Louisa Ward, Geralyn McNally (interim DASH representative)

**Staff Present:** Carrie Beach, P&Z, Karen Callaham – T&ES, Jeff Duval – T&ES, Lisa Jaatinen – T&ES, Daphne Kott – T&ES, Jim Maslanka – T&ES, Sandra Marks – T&ES, Raymond Mui – DASH, Hillary Poole – T&ES, Marti Reinfeld - T&ES, Carrie Sanders – T&ES, Steve Sindiong - T&ES, Andre Stafford – DASH

The Chair called the Transportation Commission meeting to order at 7:05 pm.

#### 1. February 6, 2013 Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Mitchell asked if there were any comments or edits regarding the February 6, 2013 meeting minutes. There being no comments or edits to the minutes, a motion to approve the minutes was made, seconded and unanimously approved.

#### 2. Funding Update

T&ES staff, Jim Maslanka reported:

**City Council:** Adopted resolution on February 14, 2013 giving the City's Purchasing Agent authority to amend the design/build contract for the Route 1 Transitway.

**Commonwealth Transportation Board:** The General Assembly approved a bill modifying Virginia's transportation funding system.

**DRPT:** The Legislature passed legislation stating that any funds generated by the new state transportation legislation must be governed by performance metrics established by a committee composed of state and industry representatives.

**NVTC:** No meeting held in February.

**TPB:** Discussed new projects within Northern Virginia that have been added to the FY2013 Constrained Long Range Plan and FY2013-18 TIP

**WMATA:** Approved creation of a reimbursable project to buy 6 buses (funded by Alexandria) to be used on the Crystal City-Potomac Yard Transitway.

NVTA: The new Virginia transportation funding package will provide funding for NVTA programs. Meeting held on March 8, 2013 to discuss amendments to Transportation Bill.

### **3. Eisenhower Avenue Widening**

T&ES staff Lisa Jaatinen gave an update on the project and also invited all to attend the Design Public Hearing on April 4, 2013 at the Lee Center, 1108 Jefferson Street from 7-9pm. The project involves roadway improvements on Eisenhower Avenue between Mill Road and Holland Lane. Major features include dual left turns at the Eisenhower Avenue / Mill Road intersection on westbound Eisenhower Avenue; upgrade the receiving lanes on Mill Road to accept the dual left turns from Eisenhower Avenue; convert the traffic circle at Eisenhower Avenue / Holland Lane to a "T" intersection; streetscape improvements at Holland Lane and Mill Road; and full width resurfacing of Eisenhower Avenue between Holland Lane and Mill Road. The project cost is \$7.0 million and funded by a combination of Federal, State and City funds. The Design Public Hearing is planned for April 2013. The Right-of-Way Acquisition should be completed by Summer 2013. The 100% design plan should be completed by Fall 2013. Advertisement of the project will begin in late 2013. Road construction is expected to begin Spring 2014. The Commission expressed concern regarding the lack of bicycle improvements as part of the project design. Ms. Jaatinen invited comments before the scheduled public hearing from the Commission to be included as part of the public record.

### **4. DASH Efficiency Study**

T&ES staff Sandra Marks gave an overview of the DASH Efficiency Study. The Alexandria Transit Company (ATC) is a nonprofit public service corporation wholly owned by the City. The consultant's study revealed DASH's strengths are its productivity, the maintenance of its vehicles and facilities, its flexibility as a separate entity from the City government, its high fare box recovery ratio is higher than majority of peer bus systems, its dedicated and committed staff; and it offers the City distance from potential liability issues. DASH's challenges are a need for additional transparency for both the public and City officials; ATC and the City use different financial systems, requiring a time-consuming reconciliation process; new capital procurement policies and procedures remain complex and inefficient and require the involvement of many players both at ATC and the City; grant administration roles and responsibilities are shared between the City and DASH resulting in additional administrative steps, decreased efficiency, and room for error; the Board of Directors would benefit having additional transit and finance expertise. Council recommended expanding DASH's Board to include additional transit and finance expertise, combined with more City representation and increase the Board's role to include broader transit policy, including the high capacity transit corridors and DOT Paratransit. Council also recommended the General Manager and Assistant General Manager should be hired by and report directly to ATC and not through a 3rd party management contract. A professional services contract with outside vendors could be pursued separately by the ATC Board to provide staff augmentation or other services as needed. A subsidiary corporation which employs drivers and support staff should be kept intact. The next steps involve ATC and the City developing a MOU that outlines a detailed implementation plan and action items.

### **5. DASH Comprehensive Operations Analysis (COA)**

T&ES staff Steve Sindiong reported that the last complete COA of the DASH bus system was conducted in 2005 with additional onboard data collected in 2008. Transportation Management and Design, Inc. (TMD, Inc.) was hired to conduct the update to the COA and

initiated the project in October, 2012. The study will include an evaluation of all existing data and studies that have been completed, collect a complete set of new data based on current service, and develop short and long range recommendations to improve and expand service in the future. The long range recommendations shall take into consideration the future implementation of each of the City's Transitways. The goal of this project is to develop and prioritize short and long range solutions to improve the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of the ATC fixed route transit system. The consultant team is conducting interviews with key stakeholders to give an overview of the project, and get feedback on DASH's role within the community and region, the service and network priorities, and determine what has improved recently, and what needs improvement. In addition to the stakeholder input, TMD, Inc. will be conducting on-board rider surveys and a telephone survey in April 2013. The consultant team will collect and review existing data (such as ridership, fleet size etc.), conduct a system-wide ridership count, and conduct a service evaluation based on the data. The project is anticipated to be complete by early 2014. Staff will come back to the Commission after the analysis has been completed.

## **6. Complete Streets Update**

T&ES staff Jeff Duvall reported that the Paving Management Program has a total operating budget of \$4.45 million and VDOT revenue sharing designated for major resurfacing projects (multi-block) on major routes, typically arterials and collector roads. When selecting streets to be paved, staff begins with an objective pavement rating index calculated by a computer model to ensure geographic equity. 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 initiative will allow the City to develop a multi-year paving plan which will allow for improved coordination with Complete Streets initiatives.

T&ES staff Hillary Poole reported that 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. The High Priority locations will be based on an evaluation of criteria including crash data, distance from pedestrian and bicycle generators like schools and major transit stops, the "Potential Pedestrian and Bicycle Activity" map and the conditions for "Walking Along the Roadway" map in the Pedestrian and Bicycle Mobility Plan. Speed and volume will be considered when assessing complaints about speeding or cut-through traffic. The locations will be prioritized by the highest ranking. The Comprehensive Neighborhood Enhancements component looks at an entire area wholly instead of spot improvements. Del Ray will be the pilot because of an existing funded project. In the future, the criteria for ranking will be the same as the high priority locations. The City currently has a work plan to stripe crosswalks, install curb ramps, install pedestrian signage and other small scale low budget safety improvements that will make up the Safety Upgrades.

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 \$400,000 in funding, with a 20 percent city match. Staff requested a recommendation from the Transportation Commission in support of the grant application. After Commissioner

comments and questions, a motion was made, seconded and voted in favor 4-0 with Commissioner Sawislak recusing himself as a Federal Government employee to direct staff to apply for a FTA New Freedom Grant to fund pedestrian enhancements that would improve access to transit for seniors and persons with disabilities.

**7. Staff Updates**

The Commission received a written staff update on the Crystal City/Potomac Yard (Route 1) Transitway, Potomac Yard Metrorail Station, and the Fiscal Year 2014-23 Proposed Budget.

**8. Commission Updates**

One of the April meeting agenda items will be a public hearing on the 2014-23 CIP. A draft letter from the Transportation Commission to WMATA regarding WMATA's strategic plan was distributed to Commissioners. Commissioner Louisa Ward will step down in her capacity as Vice Chair because of a perceived conflict with her position at the Federal Highway Agency. A new Vice Chair vote will be held at the April meeting.

**9. Other Business**

None.

There being no further business, a motion to adjourn was made at 9:05 pm, seconded, and unanimously approved.