



AD HOC PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE MASTER PLAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING #6

City of Alexandria | Department of Transportation & Environmental Services
Thursday, May 14th, 2015 | 7:00-9:00 pm
Cora Kelly Center, Multipurpose Room | 25 West Reed Avenue

NOTES

7:00 p.m. Welcome, Introductions

Committee members in attendance:

- Jennifer Hovis, Chair
- Scott Anderson, Vice-Chair
- Carol Abrams
- Skip Maginniss
- John Fennell
- Pablo Torres
- Mollie Danforth
- Linda Couture
- Timothy Hanson
- Alan Dinsmore

Project staff:

- Steve Sindiong, City of Alexandria
- Carrie Sanders, City of Alexandria
- Hillary Poole, City of Alexandria
- Yon Lambert, City of Alexandria
- Carrie Beach, City of Alexandria
- Karen Callaham, City of Alexandria
- Jennifer Toole, Toole Design Group
- Alia Anderson, Toole Design Group
- Iain Banks, Nelson/Nygaard

Public:

- 7 persons signed the sign-in sheet

Meeting Introduction and Agenda Review (Carrie Sanders)

- Review Project Milestones and Provide an Update
- Project Prioritization Process follow-up from meeting #5
- Present and Discuss the Draft Bicycle Network in Eastern Half of Alexandria
- Present Pedestrian Case Study Areas
- Public Comments and Ad Hoc Committee Member Updates

Project Milestones (Steve Sindiong)

- Project began in Spring 2014
- Public outreach meetings have been conducted
- Goals, objectives and vision have been finalized
- Project Prioritization Criteria Process has been refined
- Next meeting June 8th
- Next Public Meeting has been moved to the Fall (no date set)
- Will attend summer events in the City to show work to date

Project Prioritization Follow-Up (Carrie Sanders and Alia Anderson)

- Carrie Sanders introduced the topic:
 - o Prioritization is important as a way to sort through a long list of potential improvement recommendations and determine which will be the highest priority and most cost effective investments.
 - o City learned from Transit Plan that prioritization really aids in implementation phase.
 - o Other reasons include:

- As a way to accurately express the community's values in the implementation of the bicycle network.
 - To meet the requirements of certain potential funding sources.
- Alia Anderson of Toole Design Group provided a summary of the committee input on the proposed prioritization process.
 - The committee requested that the prioritization process not overemphasize the crash data. The project team added more safety variables, effectively lessening the impact of the crash data in the prioritization process.
 - The project team removed the overlap between the demand and connectivity variables.
 - The committee indicated that geography is a key element and the plan must have balance between east and west. For this reason, the factor for west-side projects has been increased in scoring weight.
 - The demand analysis was revised to incorporate future growth areas (will include 2040 population and employment projections).
 - Factors have had their weights revised based on committee input:
 - Safety = 5
 - Demand = 3
 - Geography = 3
 - Connectivity = 2
 - Ms. Anderson presented an example of how prioritization was used in the Phoenix Bicycle Master Plan.
 - A committee member asked if these factors use the same weights throughout the City. Ms. Anderson responded yes; one set of factors, variables and weights would be applied to all projects citywide.

Presentation of and Discussion of the Draft Bicycle Network in Eastern Half of Alexandria (Carrie Sanders and Alia Anderson)

- Ms. Sanders explained the bicycle network public outreach and planning process
 - Network shows connectivity but not specific design detail.
- Ms. Sanders presented a series of slides that explained what types of bikeway facilities are grouped into each of the three categories shown on the map: Enhanced Bicycle Corridor, Shared Roadway, and Trails.
- Ms. Sanders presented a slide highlighting the key destinations within the City.
- Ms. Sanders called attention to a handout map that showed the draft bicycle network for East Alexandria. This network included existing facilities, a select set of already planned facilities from small area plans, the 2008 Bike Plan, approved capital improvement projects, as well as new recommendations from the consulting team. The new recommendations that are different from recommendations identified in previous planning efforts are highlighted in blue; Eisenhower Ave and Duke Street are two examples in East Alexandria.
- The Committee was asked to comment on the map, and particularly to address:
 - Are there important destinations that are not served by this draft network?
 - Are there important connections/routes that are missing?

General Discussion and Questions Raised (Committee):

1. Are bikes to be discouraged from riding on the sidewalk of King Street and Washington Street? Better signage is needed to inform people where they shouldn't ride on sidewalks. (Ms. Sanders responded that bikes are currently prohibited from King Street but people are not aware that there is the prohibition. Bikes are allowed to ride on the sidewalk on Washington Street.)
2. Tourists will not automatically know where to ride and will follow the most obvious route – they are likely to keep riding on King Street. We need to provide signage or somehow make these parallel routes visible.
3. There is a big range between “enhanced bicycle corridor” and “shared roadway.” The plan should be more specific with high priority projects.
4. Bicycle facilities that change along the same corridor (i.e. from bike lanes to sharrows) will give the rider an inconsistent experience.
5. Riders need to have predictability. Transition/decision points need to be predictable and well marked. Disconnections throughout corridors will deter people from riding as it breaks up the network.
6. There are issues with transitions to the Mt. Vernon Trail at Bashford. Also, there are issues at Union and Pendleton – the angle of the streets and placement of a pylon leads to accidents.
7. Does the safety factor unfairly disadvantage facilities in locations that don't currently exist, such as new trails or streets? (Ms. Anderson responded that the prioritization analysis uses a buffer for crashes, for example scoring projects within 1/8 mile of a bike/pedestrian crash. This means that a trail that provides an alternative to a high-crash location could receive a high safety score. Also, we could potentially add a variable that increases the prioritization score of all trail projects, in order to off-set this issue.)
8. There must be an easier way to provide connectivity between Eisenhower to the Mt.Vernon trail – the proposed route is somewhat circuitous.
9. Can speed cushions/tables be removed from bike corridors, particularly Commonwealth? (Ms. Sanders noted that the city can include cut outs for bikes in new speed tables.)
10. There is an awkward transition involving railroad tracks between Braddock Road and Four Mile Run.
11. How was the facility type on each roadway decided upon? (Ms. Anderson explained that the three biggest factors used to make these determination were vehicle volumes, vehicle speeds, and existing curb-to-curb right of way.)
12. What is a Climbing Lane and what are the criteria for recommending one? (Ms. Anderson responded that a climbing lane is a bike lane on the uphill side of a street, typically paired with shared lane markings on the downhill side. They were recommended in locations with steep grades, modest traffic volumes, and limited right of way - too narrow to provide bike lanes on both sides.)
13. There is concern about swift moving bicyclists posing a safety concern for others in the street.
14. Union Street may provide a good north-south route in the near term, but Royal Street is more direct.
15. Is it possible to add a bicycle facility along the waterfront in Old Town? This is an area with high levels of pedestrian traffic and it would be important to design a trail that created separated space for bikes and pedestrians. (City staff mentioned that the waterfront planning process was well underway and didn't include a bike trail at this time.)
16. There are two categories of shared roadways – those that are quiet streets where anyone could ride, and those where a bike lane wouldn't fit, and where shared lane markings are recommended. There is a big difference and, if you take out the shared roadway

recommendations the map will show a fractured network of enhanced facilities. We need to do a better job of providing a continuous network.

Public Comments on East Alexandria Bicycle Network:

1. It looks like most of the low-hanging fruit has been implemented and that it will be necessary to do more – to remove parking, travel lanes or roadway width - for further enhanced facilities.
2. Trails are busy during nice weather that they are often more dangerous than the roadway. The Mount Vernon Trail is an example of an over-crowded area.
3. Major bicycle thoroughfares between primary destinations should be considered.
4. Shared roadways don't help to increase bicycle traffic or safety. Most people will only be interested in using the enhanced facilities. There are exceptions in low-traffic areas.
5. Consider reversible lanes on West Glebe, which could potentially enable space for a protected bike lane (so the four lanes of travel would change to 3 lanes with 2 lanes in the heavy volume direction).

Pedestrian Case Study Areas

- Ms. Anderson presented a series of slides regarding the Pedestrian Case Studies Areas:
 - o The Pedestrian element of the project will include a close look at five areas within the city that have common issues experienced citywide. These areas will serve as case studies and the final plan will include: A) specific facility recommendations about these locations, B) general facility recommendations that apply to other locations in the city with similar issues.
 - o Sample maps of pedestrian Case Study Area challenges and recommendations were shown.
 - o Pedestrian strategies will be presented at the next meeting.

General Discussion and Questions Raised (Committee):

1. There is a critical need to review crosswalk ramps to ensure that they align with crosswalks. Diagonal ramps are dangerous for people, especially those with disabilities.
2. Why was the King Street Metrorail station area selected as a case study area? Areas further east on King Street have more issues for pedestrians. The Old Town Civic Association did not have input into this decision.
3. Weather is always an issue with the crosswalk ramps relating to snow removal and storage of snow. (Ms. Anderson noted that the plan will include an "Implementation" section that will address maintenance issues like snow removal.)
4. ADA accessibility at bus stops needs consideration – parking and grass often prohibit access.
5. Why is Van Dorn Metrorail Station not one of the focus areas? (Mr. Sindiong responded that these five areas were chosen so not to overlap other on-going studies or pending studies, such as the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan.)

Public Comments:

1. To confirm, the process for the projects to be implemented after this planning process includes prioritization and Council approval, and then projects have to be included in the CIP or apply for other sources of funding to actually be implemented. Projects in the plan may also be implemented through street repaving or redevelopment.

2. What is the process for the Plan itself? (Mr. Sindiong responded that the committee will review draft strategies, then the public will provide input, then the committee will review a draft plan and then the plan will go to Council for approval.)
3. Are there thresholds for removing lanes, narrowing roads or removing parking? (Ms. Sanders explained that the team used national standards to develop these recommendations but that any of these changes would require further study and public input.)
4. King Street at Union Street is an important intersection where safety needs to be improved. There are often conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians.
5. City should consider a different street surface on Union Street.

Committee Member Updates:

- Scott Anderson shared an example of a car parking in a bike lane, to exemplify the benefits of protected bike lanes (people can't park in them).

Next Steps (Steve Sindiong)

- Pedestrian Case Study Recommendations and Strategies
- The next Committee meeting will be on June 8th, with an additional meeting in July (date TBD)
- City staff will conduct outreach at summer events in the City.

UPCOMING MEETING

- Advisory Committee Meeting #7
Monday, June 8, 2015, 7:00-9:00 pm
City Hall, Room 3008

*To be kept informed of future Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan / Complete Streets Design Guidelines meetings, please sign up for eNews (**Complete Streets** group under Transportation & Environmental Services) at <http://www.alexandriava.gov/enews> and visit the project website at <http://www.alexandriava.gov/pedbikeplan>. For additional information, please contact Steve Sindiong, City of Alexandria, at 703-746-4047 or email steve.sindiong@alexandriava.gov.*

The City of Alexandria is committed to compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, as amended. To request a reasonable accommodation, e-mail Geraldyn.Taylor@alexandriava.gov or call 703.746.4084, Virginia Relay 711.