

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 20, 2018

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: HILLARY ORR, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, T&ES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #7 – Central Alexandria Traffic Study

ISSUE: Staff update to Transportation Commission on final recommendations of Central Alexandria Traffic Study.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive the items for consent.

BACKGROUND: In 2015, in response to concerns about increased traffic volumes and diversion through neighborhoods in Central Alexandria, T&ES staff performed a small-scale traffic analysis, held several community meetings, and conducted a community survey to gather feedback about potential mitigation measures. This process found that there was little consensus for staff proposed mitigation measures in the Seminary Hill, Clover College Park and Taylor Run neighborhoods. However, remaining community concerns from this process led to the initiation of the Central Alexandria Traffic Study and the creation of a Task Force.

In June 2016, the City Manager updated City Council on staff efforts to initiate a comprehensive traffic and origin-destination study in the neighborhoods of Seminary Hill, Seminary Ridge, Clover College Park, and Taylor Run. To facilitate direct cooperation and input from the study area neighborhoods, an eight-member task force was created, with two representatives from each of the four neighborhoods. The intent of this group was to identify solutions that did not negatively impact the adjacent neighborhoods or simply shift traffic to a new street.

The Task Force held the first of six meetings in July 2016 and began working with staff to determine the scope of the study and the intersections and locations within the study area where data would be collected. Data was collected and analyzed during the spring and summer of 2017. Traffic counts were performed at 29 study area intersections, and vehicle volumes, speeds, and Bluetooth origin-destination data was collected at 23 checkpoints throughout the study area.

DISCUSSION: Final recommendations from the Central Alexandria Traffic Study were shared with members of City Council in a memo from the City Manager on May 17, 2018. The recommendations are summarized below.

Short Term Improvements

1. PM peak period right turn restriction pilot from southbound East Taylor Run Parkway and Moncure Drive
2. Reconfiguration of the East Taylor Run Parkway at South View Terrace intersection
3. New and upgraded crosswalks throughout the neighborhoods
4. A midblock crossing on West Taylor Run Parkway to Angel Park
5. Additional speed cushions on East Taylor Run, Yale Drive and North Jordon Street and upgraded cushions on West Taylor Run Parkway
6. Begin to redesign the Duke Street at West Taylor Run Parkway intersection

The PM peak period turn restrictions (item 1), was approved by the Traffic & Parking Board in May of 2018. The turn restrictions will be implemented as a pilot in the coming weeks, and resulting traffic impacts will be evaluated in the Fall of 2018. Staff will work to implement the other short term recommendations over the Summer in the coming months.

In addition to the proposed improvements, the City is working to implement recommendations in the study area from the Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan, Safe Routes to School Walk Audits and Vision Zero Action Items. Seminary Road and Cambridge Road are being resurfaced in the next year and are under consideration for traffic calming, safety and accessibility improvements as part of the Complete Streets Program. Staff also secured grant funding to design and implement pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements at Seminary Road and Howard Street and is advancing the design of this project. Through all of these programs and proposed improvements, each neighborhood will see safety improvements.

In addition, the presidents of the impacted Civic Associations with longer term policy recommendations to City Council. The staff supported recommendations are below:

1. Proactively engage regional leaders to provide cross-jurisdiction transportation choices.
2. Redesign the West Taylor Run Parkway at Duke Street Intersection, with the primary objectives of reducing cut-through traffic and improving safety.
3. Accelerate Corridor “B” design with the goal of reducing cut-through traffic on Central Alexandria neighborhood streets, improving safety, and providing more efficient mobility.
4. Prioritize Duke Street for Traffic Adaptive Signal Control implementation.
5. Promote and encourage greater use of transportation alternatives in Alexandria and in neighboring jurisdictions.