



# City of Alexandria

## Transportation Commission

### Regular Meeting

September 20, 2017

7:00 p.m.

Sister Cities Conference Room

### MINUTES

**Commissioners Present:** Chair Jerry King, Commissioner David Brown, Commissioner Ryan Jones, Commissioner James Lewis, Commissioner Melissa McMahon, Commissioner Carolyn Schroeder, Vice-Chair Stephen Klejst, Commissioner Christine Michaelis.

**Staff Present:** Matt Melkerson – T&ES, Christopher Ziemann – T&ES, Ramiro Alberto Rios – T&ES, Katy North– T&ES, Quance Lawson – T&ES

Chair Jerry King called the Transportation Commission meeting to order at 7:00 pm.

#### 1. June Meeting Minutes

Chair King asked the Commission if they had edits to submit for the minutes. The Commission had no edits. A motion to accept the changes was made by Chair King and seconded by Commissioner McMahon. The minutes were unanimously approved.

#### 2. Updates to Receive (Consent Items)

The Commission received updates on the two-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Christopher Ziemann provided a summary and background information on the two-year cycle. Ziemann reminded the Commission that new projects can only be added at the start of a new two-year cycle, and that this year's effort should focus on minor changes to the CIP.

The Commission received updates about the Capital Bikeshare Expansion. Chair King noted that the District of Columbia is implementing a new bikeshare program that allows riders to pick up bikes in one location and leave it at another location without the use of docking stations.

The Commission received an update on the Saint Francis Safe Routes to School audit. The Commission had no comments.

#### 3. Commission Updates

Commissioner Klejst provided updates regarding the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Work Plan Group meeting. The group met at the DASH Headquarters in early September and discussed upgrading the IT infrastructure to include camera systems, signal timing and other enhancement

capabilities. There will be more updates during future meetings.

Commissioner Klejst provided updates regarding the new Pilot Program between Alexandria City Public Schools and the Alexandria Transportation Company. The Pilot Program began its trial implementation on September 25, 2017 with T.C. Williams students wherein students can board DASH buses at no charge throughout the academic school year. Metro access program will also be initiated in October 2017, this program will enable people with mobility impairments to use the DASH bus system. There will also be a realignment to two DASH bus routes; AT5 will be extended to make better use of the Old town area during rush hour. AT9 route will be extended to service the Nova Community College Campus as well as the Mark Center and Bradlee Shopping Center areas.

#### **4. Commercial Parking Standards**

Katye North, Principal Parking Planner provided a presentation on the proposal for the second phase of zoning code updates related to parking. The first update, related to multi-family housing unit parking was completed in 2014. This second phase relates to the updating of the commercial parking requirements, which covers off-street parking requirements for office, hotel, retail and restaurant uses. North provided background information to highlight the current parking requirements and draft recommendations developed by the Task Force. Under current parking requirements, data collected for this study shows that on average 41% of existing parking remain empty at peak demand times. In addition, retail trends such as online purchasing and the utilization of alternative transportation methods will further change the need for off-street parking. The objective of the parking requirements update is to reduce the burden on residents and small businesses as well as responding to changing trends and the recognition of impacts of requiring parking that will likely remain empty. Staff goals are to ensure consistency with transportation strategic plan and city policies, support transit investments and small businesses, as well as attract quality investment, promote quality of life for residents and create flexible ratios that respond to market trends.

Staff conducted a survey at sixty sites across the city to determine parking needs during peak times. Fifty-nine sites had a lower demand of parking than the city required. On average, parking space occupancy rate was fifty-nine percent.

Commissioner Brown suggested a more detailed analysis of the table to show per 1000 square feet as well as a slide that lists the buildings that were surveyed for the data set and a map of the sites surveyed. Commissioner Brown also asked if we should provide a slide that illustrates community member feedback.

Commissioner McMahon (who participates on the Task Force) provided an overview of the draft recommendations for new parking requirements. The Task Force recommended simplifying the parking zone map from six to two zones: within an enhanced transit area, and beyond an enhanced transit area. Other recommendations include incorporating different ratios for areas with good transit access, regulating minimum and maximum ratios and utilizing exemptions for small uses and incentivizing shared parking.

Commissioner McMahon asked for feedback regarding the proposed recommendations, parking standard exemptions and shared parking approaches. Chair King suggested the Task Force provide recommendations to make the ratio process easier. Commissioner Brown suggested that City Staff initiate a more detailed approach to make shared parking for residential and retail spaces easier. Commissioner McMahon responded that in her experience, she has faced challenges with shared parking in that residents typically do not want to share their parking spaces. Commissioner Brown asked what the regulatory safety valves are if the ratios are not correct. Commissioner Schroeder

asked if the maximums help reduce the incentive to over park. Commissioner Jones stated that if ten percent of the city is parking then approximately five percent of that parking could be reused. Furthermore, Commissioner Jones also proposed that City Staff should consider the possibility of converting on street parking spaces into valet or pick up/drop off spaces given the increased utilization of ride hailing services. Commissioner Brown suggested that City Staff consider incorporating a process to make it easier for businesses to convert on-street parking spaces to different uses.

Commissioner Michaelis asked if the Task Force considered specific parking alternatives for federal buildings to help reduce over parking and single occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips as well as the possibility for reducing the parking retroactively. Commissioner Schroeder suggested that the City consider offering incentives for residents and businesses who may want to use fewer parking spaces to promote alternative forms of transportation. Commissioners Schroeder and Jones both suggested that the City consider making it easier to convert unneeded parking spaces over time (as buildings experience lower demands for parking in their properties).

## **5. Vision Zero Action Plan Framework**

Transportation Planning Division Chief, Christopher Ziemann provided updates for the Vision Zero Action Plan Framework. Ziemann provided background and a summary of the plan's objective to decrease the amount of traffic-related deaths and serious injuries to zero by 2028.

In February 2017, the first inter-departmental action plan meeting took place to review existing programs and policies. They also identified data driven best practices and completed a comprehensive crash analysis. In efforts to increase awareness and gain feedback from the public, transportation staff surveyed 467 people at pop-up locations throughout the City and an additional 500 residents responded to an online survey. The respondents identified distracted driving, speeding and running red lights and stops signs as the top challenges to moving around safely in Alexandria. Over sixteen percent of participants know someone or have experienced injuries due to traffic-related accidents. Ziemann reported that Killed or Seriously Injured (KSI) crashes have been dropping since 2011 but experienced a small increase in total number of crashes in the beginning of 2017.

The Vision Zero Action Plan recommendations will be organized into four themes: engineering, education and enforcement, administration, and evaluation. Staff plans to submit the final draft to the public for comments in October 2017. The public hearing before the Transportation Commission is currently planned for December 2017. With endorsements and comments, the plan will go to City Council in late December or early January 2018.

Chair King suggested we incorporate budgetary factors. Commissioner Jones interjected that the cost of life is essential in determining the cost benefit. Commissioner McMahan suggested that T&ES consider many quantifiable and unquantifiable impacts of traffic accidents within the community, such as medical fees, court costs and reconstruction costs. Commissioner Klejst suggested that the City calculate the cost of KSI crashes through valuing years of productive life lost. Commissioner Jones suggested staff compare the wiki map of reported incidents with KSI police data. Chair King suggested that T&ES make the data analysis available to the public. Commissioner Lewis suggested that T&ES incorporate safe driving reminders to motorists on a regulatory basis and consider influencing DMV educational materials to better prepare motorists on safe driving practices.

Commissioner McMahan asked if there have been any challenges working alongside multi-departmental staff members to come up with solutions to the transportation's engineering safety

initiatives. Ziemann responded that all departments have been helpful. Commissioner McMahon suggested clarification on the differences between how we want to achieve Vision Zero and what it will take to achieve Vision Zero. Ziemann responded that he will get more information and report back to the Commission.

**Other business**

Chair King discussed the request of a Transportation Commission member representative on the Dash Board. Chair King suggested that the commission identify top priority projects for next year's budget and provide input to the City Manager and City Council for review. Chair King made a motion to include a public discussion period at the beginning of the public hearing, limited to 15 minutes. Commissioner McMahon seconded. All Commission members in favor.

Chair King announced his resignation as the Transportation Commission Chairman leader effective immediately.

At 9:35 pm, Chair King made a motion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Stephen Klejst and unanimously approved by the Commission.