



**City of Alexandria**  
Transportation Commission

**Regular Meeting**

December 16, 2020  
7:00 p.m.  
Virtual Meeting

**MINUTES**

**Commissioners Present:** Councilman Canek Aguirre, Council John Chapman, Chair Melissa McMahon, Vice-Chair Oscar Gonzalez, Commissioner Casey Kane, Commissioner John Goebel, Commissioner Bill Pugh, Commissioner Jeff Bennett, Commissioner Larry Chambers, Commissioner Alyia Gaskins.

**Staff Present:** Christopher Ziemann – Transportation Planning Division Chief, Jennifer Slesinger - Transportation Planning Division, Sharese Thomas – Transportation Planning Division, Jose Ayala – Department of Planning & Zoning.

Audio/Visual presentation is available online:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/TransportationCommission>

Chair McMahon called the Transportation Commission meeting to order at 7:02 pm.

**1. Electronic Meeting Notice**

**2. Public Comment Period**

Joseph Sestak expressed concerns about the Commuter Choice Grant Program with the focus on the City Manager's guidance for budget to be viewed through a race and social equity lens. He raised equity concerns tied to the crash statistics on the western end of Seminary Road around I-395 and requested that the Commuter Choice Grant be used for this section of roadway. He said that City's plans do not include this section of roadway and that there are other areas around the City with high crash numbers that impact vulnerable populations that should be addressed.

Jeremy Grandstaff urged the Transportation Commission to help the City to continue to adopt and move forward with Vision Zero while looking at all modes of transportation when designing new transportation projects and new construction with a focus on equity. He expressed significant concern about the intersection of Duke Street and South Pickett.

**3. November Meeting Minutes**

**Motion to accept the minutes as presented:** Commissioner Kane

**Second:** Commissioner Bennett  
Motion carries unanimously.

**4. ACTION ITEM: Transportation Long Range Plan – Public Hearing**

**ISSUE:** The 2020 update to the Transportation Long Range Plan (LRP)

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Transportation Commission hold a public hearing and approve the 2020 LRP update.

**DISCUSSION:** Jennifer Slesinger, Principal Planner, presented the update of the 2020 Transportation Long Range Plan and noted that the full list of prioritized projects, developer projects, and studies is available on the Transportation Commission website. The meeting was opened for public feedback regarding the Transportation Long Range Plan.

**PUBLIC HEARING:**

Zachary Desjardins spoke in support of Interim Bicycle Facilities on Eisenhower. He mentioned that the proposed bicycle facility on Eisenhower Avenue does not meet the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) guidelines on right turns with bike lanes. He does not believe that a bicycle facility will impact travel speeds on Eisenhower. Due to the current repaving schedule, Mr. Desjardins is requesting that a painted buffer be installed immediately.

Rebecca Tiffany also requested a painted buffer be installed to indicate bikes are on Eisenhower Avenue during rush hour, to protect bicyclists.

**Motion to approve the 2020 long-range plan update:** Commissioner Kane

**Second:** Commissioner Pugh  
Motion carries unanimously.

**5. ACTION ITEM: Commuter Choice Grant**

**ISSUE:** Consideration of the recommended DASH/City of Alexandria projects for the FY 2022 – FY 2023 I-395/95 Commuter Choice Grant Program.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Transportation Commission provide an endorsement to City Council for approval of the two proposed I-395/95 Commuter Choice projects at their January 12, 2020 legislative session. The “DASH West End-Pentagon Bus Service Enhancements (Line 35)” at a two-year cost of up to \$6,810,000, and the “DASH West End-Potomac Yard” Bus Service Enhancements (Line 36)” with a two-year cost of up to \$4,180,000.

**DISCUSSION:** Martin Barna, DASH representative presented background information on the grant and the City’s proposals. Commissioner Pugh asked whether Mr. Sestak’s proposal during the public comment would be eligible for this grant. While the project may be eligible, it would likely not score well due to the criteria prioritizing increased throughput on the corridor. Chair McMahon expressed interest in seeing the full list of projects under consideration for I-395 Commuter Choice in the future.

**Motion to endorse a letter of support for the Commuter Choice Grant applications for City**

**Council approval:** Commissioner Kane

**Second:** Commissioner Bennett  
Motion carries unanimously.

**6. ACTION ITEM: FY2022 Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) State Aid Grant and Commuter Assistance Program Operating Assistance Grant**

**ISSUE:** Consideration of grant applications to the Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) for the FY 2022 State Aid Grant Programs; and consideration of FY 2022 Commuter Assistance Program (CAP) Operating Assistance Grant (formerly known as the Transportation Demand Management Operating Assistance Grant) and required local matching funds

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Transportation Commission provide an endorsement to City Council for the approval of DRPT FY 2022 State Aid Grant and CAP Operating Assistance Grant applications.

**DISCUSSION:** Christopher Ziemann, Division Chief, presented the City's request for DRPT grants for DASH Operating Assistance, DASH Bus Expansion, and the City's GO Alex program. Commissioners asked clarifying questions and expressed support for the City's Go Alex program.

**Motion to endorse a letter of support for the approval of DRPT FY 2022 State Aid Grant and CAP Operating Assistance Grant applications to City Council for approval:** Commissioner Pugh

**Second:** Vice-Chair Gonzalez

Motion carries unanimously.

**7. ACTION ITEM: City FY22 Budget Letter to City Manager**

**ISSUE:** Consideration of submission of a letter to the City Manager pertaining to the Commission's budget priorities for FY 2022.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Transportation Commission endorse the draft letter to the City Manager.

**DISCUSSION:** Jennifer Slesinger, Principal Planner, presented the email feedback received after the November 18, 2020 Transportation Commission meeting regarding Commissioner priorities for the next budget cycle. Commissioners expressed support for Vision Zero, Complete Streets, Alexandria Vision Transit Plan implementation, and trails. The highest priorities based on feedback were Vision Zero implementation with a focus on complete streets projects and implementation of the Alexandria Transit Vision plan.

**Motion to endorse a draft letter of support to City Manager as amended:** Vice-Chair Gonzalez

**Second:** Commissioner Kane

Motion carries unanimously.

**8. INFORMATIONAL ITEM: 2021 Draft Work Plan**

**ISSUE:** Presentation of the draft 2021 Transportation Commission Work Plan, a roadmap and tentative schedule of major Transportation Commission activities for the coming year.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Transportation Commission review and provide feedback on the 2021 Draft Work Plan.

**DISCUSSION:** Jennifer Slesinger, Principal Planner, discussed the Transportation Commissioners priority items for the 2021 Draft Work Plan. Commissioner Kane discussed the importance of trails and wants to ensure that a status update is included in the work plan. Commissioners discussed the relationship between the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Council (BPAC) and the Transportation Commission and expressed interest in having BPAC present updates to the Commission.

## **9. Updates to Receive (Consent Items)**

The Commission received the following items for consent.

- A. King/Callahan/Russell Complete Streets Project**
- B. WMATA FY22 Budget Outlook**
- C. Low Income Fare Study**

## **10. Commissioner Updates**

**Commissioner Gaskins:** The Alexandria Mobility Plan Advisory Committee will be on January 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 pm.

**Commissioner Bennett:** During the December DASH meeting it was discussed when DASH would resume charging fares again. Once buses are outfitted for protective barriers for drivers and riders, which is expected in the early Spring, the board will decide whether to charge fares.

**Vice-Chair Gonzalez:** At the Alexandria Families for Safe Streets meeting the Police Department discussed the pedestrian fatalities that have occurred at the intersection of South Washington and Wilkes Streets. Vice- Chair Gonzalez would like to see the Police Department work with Vision Zero program to develop a plan regarding the fatalities.

**Commissioner Kane:** The Traffic and Parking Board will meet on Monday, December 21 at 7:00 p.m.

**Chair McMahon:** The Potomac Yard Park project that is part of the North Potomac Yard Development was on the December Planning Commission docket. Chair McMahon noted the lack of connection between the Alexandria and Arlington portions of trail.

**Commissioner Pugh:** Jeff Duvall discussed with the Environmental Policy Commission (EPC) on Monday revisions to the Alternative Fleet Policy that will reduce fleet emissions by 25% over ten years. The recommendation for City Council approval will be held in January or February.

**Council Chapman:** On December 8, 2020, Council received an update on upcoming capital improvement projects, including King Street Station improvements.

### **Adjournment**

At 8:47 pm, the Transportation Commission adjourned.