

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May 15, 2019

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: YON LAMBERT, DIRECTOR, T&ES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM # 3 – ITEMS FOR CONSENT

ISSUE: Staff update to Transportation Commission on various ongoing projects.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Commission receive the items for consent.

A. Bike to Work Day

Friday, May 17 is Bike to Work Day, which promotes bicycling as an eco-friendly, fun and healthy way to get to work. The City will host four pit stops (Market Square at City Hall, Carlyle, Del Ray, and Mark Center). Participants are encouraged to [register](#) and check in at a pit stop to get a free t-shirt, food and drink, and the opportunity to win great prizes.

Bike to Work Day is organized at the regional level by Commuter Connections and the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA). Event planning occurs through the Bike to Work Day Steering Committee, which meets at the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) in Washington, D.C. from September to May. GoAlex is a Gold Sponsor of Bike to Work Day.

May is also Bike Month. A full calendar of events is available on the [GoAlex website](#).

B. Dockless Mobility Update

The City is approximately halfway through the 9-month dockless mobility pilot to evaluate the safety and popularity of shared mobility devices and overall performance of operators. Data presented in this memo is preliminary, as operators have been permitted and launched on a rolling basis.

There are six operators that are active (Lime, Lyft, Bird, Bolt, Skip, Spin), one (Jump) is permitted, but has not launched. Lime launched in January, Lyft launched in February, Bolt launched in March, Skip and Bird launched in April.

Two hundred devices are allowed per operator, which means that a total of 1400 devices are permitted on City ROW. On average days with good weather, there are between 700-800

scooters on City streets.

City Staff provided an oral update to Council last month on data reported through March, which is summarized below:

- **Usage**
 - Over 9,000 users in Alexandria between all of the vendor apps.
 - 22,726 trips covering 18,304 miles
 - 79% of those trips were taken in March (almost 18,000)
 - Average trip length is 11-16 minutes
 - Average trip distance is 0.6-1.1 miles
- **Safety**
 - One crash reported and two minor injuries, one related to the crash, the other due to a brake malfunction.
- **Outreach**
 - Staff has sent out messaging through social media and is planning additional outreach along with vendors.
 - Skip and Lime attended Earth Day and engaged with residents and visitors on the devices and their usage along with giving out free safety items like helmets.
- **Comments**
 - Support- We have heard general support for the project in that people like the additional transportation option and see it as an enhancement to their mobility around town. Tourists use it to avoid driving and parking, as well as for recreation in getting to and from destinations around town.
 - Complaints- Residents have reached out to express concerns about the program, parking, user behavior, the number of scooters on the streets, and the need for more regulation and enforcement.

Staff are working through all of these issues and are exploring ways to better manage the program and enforce parking rules and other aspects of the program. These include working with Police and internal communications personnel to come up with education and enforcement plans, developing action plans to address improper parking, and making updates to the MOU that will help with enforcement and program evaluation.

C. Seminary Road

The [Seminary Road Complete Streets Project](#) is in the process of finalizing the conceptual design phase. On May 30, 2019 from 7:00 – 9:00 pm, the City will hold a third and final public meeting at Beth El Hebrew Congregation on Seminary Road. Staff will present the recommended design alternative during an open house style meeting and a presentation with questions and answers after the presentation.

Staff has met with stakeholders to discuss the options and answer questions until the next public meeting occurs. To date, Staff has met with the Seminary Hill Civic Association, Seminary Ridge Civic Association, Clover College Park Civic Association, a group of neighbors, the

Virginia Theological Seminary, INOVA Alexandria Hospital leadership, and will meet with Beth El. Staff will post a comment summary to the website before the May 20th public meeting. There will be another two-week comment period to follow the May meeting. Comments on the design recommendation will be summarized and posted on the webpage.

If the recommended alternative involves substantial changes to traffic operations on Seminary Road, staff will present the alternative to the Traffic and Parking Board at its June meeting. The recommended alternative will be implemented as part of the Seminary Road repaving scheduled for September 2019. If the Traffic and Parking Board decision is appealed, the recommendation will be implemented after the repaving of the roadway.

D. Planning and Zoning Initiatives

Virginia Tech Innovation Campus

As part of the Amazon HQ2 “National Landing,” project, Virginia Tech and the Commonwealth of Virginia intend to provide funding for a Virginia Tech Innovation Campus in Alexandria specifically targeted at tech talent that will benefit all companies in the Commonwealth. Virginia Tech’s Innovation Campus will include a graduate campus focused on masters and doctoral level programs in computer sciences, software engineering, data sciences, and analytics, among many others. At this time, Virginia Tech is continuing to conduct due diligence on the real estate for the campus. A City-led planning process for this project will begin in 2019 as soon as Virginia Tech’s due diligence work is complete.

Landmark Mall

The Landmark Mall Master Plan Amendment to add a Landmark Neighborhood Chapter to the Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan was approved by City Council on April 13. The [approved Chapter](#) can be found at alexandriava.gov/Landmark. Next steps include working with the property owner toward rezoning the property to a Coordinated Development District (CDD). The hearing date for this has not yet been set.

E. Residential Parking Permit Refresh

The City is currently in the process of reviewing and updating the residential permit parking (RPP) program under the [RPP Refresh project](#). This program was established in the City Code in the late 1970s but has not been comprehensively reviewed since it was created. The objectives of the RPP *Refresh* project are to update the program to (1) better address current residential parking issues, (2) improve the city’s ability to proactively manage parking, and (3) be easy to understand, enforce, and administer.

A questionnaire was issued in April to gather feedback on specific options related to the top issues identified earlier in the process. The results of this questionnaire were discussed at the April 22nd subcommittee meeting. Staff is scheduled to present preliminary recommendations at the Market Square Farmers Market on May 11, and at the Traffic and Parking Board subcommittee meeting on May 20. The subcommittee will be making a recommendation to the full Traffic and Parking Board this spring/early summer, which will forward a recommendation

for consideration by the City Council in early fall. More details about the project and results of the survey can be found at www.alexandriava.gov/ParkingStudies.

F. Bus Transformation Project

The Bus Transformation Project is a WMATA-led effort designed to develop a strategy to reimagine bus service in the Washington region. The scope of the project includes all regional bus providers. DASH and City Staff and leadership participated on multiple Bus Transformation Project committees.

The draft Bus Transformation Strategy was released to the public on May 6. A survey is available online and three open houses will be held the week of May 20. One will be in Arlington on May 20, one will be in Washington D.C. on May 21, and the last one will be in Silver Spring on May 22. More information can be found on their [website](#).

The project has three goals, developed in collaboration with the committees: 1) to provide better service and a better customer experience for all riders, 2) identify the best role for bus service amidst rapidly changing technology and travel preferences, and 3) to increase efficiency to provide better results for customers.

Draft strategies range from rethinking rail to bus transfer fares to reallocating existing WMATA bus service to local transit providers.

Strategies fall under 6 categories:

- The bus system should be customer focused and an easy to use option that people want to ride.
- Prioritizing buses on major roads is the most fiscally responsible way to move the most people quickly and reliably.
- Frequent and convenient bus service is fundamental to accessing opportunity, building an equitable region, and ensuring high quality of life.
- Balance local and regional operator responsibilities by positioning local bus systems to meet their jurisdictional needs and the regional bus system to meet regional needs and deliver regional benefits.
- Optimize back-office functions through sharing, streamlining and shared innovation by consolidating regional resources and devoting more resources to operating bus service.
- Customers in a regional with multiple bus providers need a regional steward to transform the bus system.

The City is working with DASH to develop official feedback on the strategy document and will be looking to the Transportation Commission and the DASH Board to endorse a comment letter during the public comment period.

G. WMATA Platform Work Extension

On April 18, WMATA announced that the platform work requiring the closure of all WMATA stations south of Crystal City has been extended from September 2 until September 8. The extension is to address the "Braddock Hump", where the center of the Braddock Rd Metro is up to four inches higher than the ends of the platform. This creates a tripping hazard and causes the platform to be higher or lower than the train floor in some places, which is not compliant with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA).

WMATA will continue to provide shuttle service, and is looking at expanded capacity, given the elevated travel activity in early September. City Staff is also working with WMATA on extending the City's mitigation plan. More information can be found on the [Platform Improvement Project website](#).

H. Potomac Yard Metrorail Station

The City and WMATA are currently working on design changes to accommodate the Southwest Entry to the station, based on additional funding from Virginia as part of the Amazon package. The City is working with the State to secure the funding through various grant sources. In the meantime, WMATA is moving forward with the current approved design, but will seek a Development Special Use Permit (DSUP) amendment in summer 2019 to refine the design to add the southwest entry. The station is anticipated to begin operation in 2022.

At the April 22nd Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Work Group (PYMIG) meeting, members received an update on the Joint Permit Application (JPA), which was available on the Army Corps [website](#) for comment through May 6, 2019. Staff also showed updated drawings on the three design ideas for the Southwest Entry and provided an overview of refinements to the evaluation criteria for developing a preferred design, based on previous input by the Committee. WMATA is continuing to advance the engineering for the three design ideas to allow for independent cost estimates and an understanding of potential impacts to the schedule. Tentative dates for the upcoming PYMIG meetings are May 21 and June 13. Agendas will be posted prior to the meetings. More information is available on the [Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Work Group website](#).