Eisenhower Avenue Widening and Roadway Improvements Project
Design Public Hearing Comments
April 4, 2013

The following comments were received at the City's Design Public Hearing, held on April 4, 2013 at the Lee Center, or during the Public Comment Period held between April 4, 2013 and April 18, 2013. The comments have been sorted by category, with staff responses to each category of questions provided.

A full transcript of the April 4, 2013 public meeting is available on the City's website at http://www.alexandriava.gov/tes/info/default.aspx?id=11248. In addition, extensive comments were received from an entity identified as the Carlyle Architecture Society and from Mr. Jim Savage. The full comments are also posted on the website. A summary of these comments with responses has been incorporated into the comments listed below

Bicycle and Multi-Modal Facilities

1. I am writing about the Eisenhower widening project. I am a resident of Alexandria who often rides along Eisenhower by bicycle and who sometimes uses the Eisenhower Metro Station. I am concerned that Alexandria is trying to have it both ways with cars and transit by trying to add both pavement and transit lines. This is a wasteful strategy in terms of money and public safety. From where I sit, it seems that this have-it-both-ways approach is the reason that city staff is resistant to bike lanes or even bike parking. My points:

    a. If we are going to widen Eisenhower Ave, we need bike lanes and sidewalks that will deliver people to high-capacity transit.

    b. Even if VDOT provides part of the money for this project, we do not need to spend tax dollars adding traffic lanes that will fill with cars right away and are expensive to maintain.

    c. Expanding Eisenhower Ave from four to six lanes right next to the Eisenhower Ave Metro Station makes walking to the station less safe and less attractive.

    d. We need better quality of life and more fiscal responsibility, not more of our valuable land allocated gridlocked cars.

    e. We cannot have it both ways. Either we provide transit options that work more effectively for more people, or we focus on moving cars. Trying to do both is a waste of taxpayers' money.

2. I am writing to express my opposition to the widening of Eisenhower Avenue. I believe expanding from four to six car traffic lanes in close proximity to the Eisenhower Avenue Metro Station will discourage transit use. This road should have bike lanes in both directions and sidewalks that will facilitate travel to transit and other destinations and improve the quality of life in our community without increasing air and noise pollution or

safety hazards. I live, work, and go to school in Alexandria and encourage the City of Alexandria to make smart transportation investments that will facilitate multimodal travel.

3. I am a resident and homeowner in Alexandria, and I am very dismay at the proposed addition of two additional traffic lanes to Eisenhower Avenue at the expense of alternate transportation modes.

4. Alexandria needs to do more to encourage residents and visitors to take additional trips as pedestrians and cyclists, and making it as safe as possible to reach transit such as the Eisenhower Avenue Metro Station. Converting Eisenhower Avenue into a 6-lane thoroughfare will be counterproductive to all three of these alternate modes of transportation. Instead, a 6-lane Eisenhower Avenue will encourage the expansion of "single occupancy vehicle" trips, which is not the way forward for the city. And unfortunately, an increase in lanes usually also results in increased vehicle speeds, regardless of the posted speed limit. Motorists behave as if the multi-lane street is a motorway / freeway. More vehicle lanes on Eisenhower Avenue is NOT the answer! Let me explain where I am coming from. After some years of reducing usage of my car, three years ago I took the final step to dispose of my car and rely completely on transit, walking, and cycling for transportation. Although I realize this option may not be practical for all people, most certainly our city government should not enact policies and / or construction that is detrimental to encourage additional residents and visitors to reduce their car usage, particular "single occupancy vehicle" trips, and use these alternate transportation modes instead. Instead, the city should be enacting policies / construction that encourages less use of vehicles and more use of transit, walking and cycling. A 6-lane Eisenhower Avenue will NOT do that.

5. I ask that if there is to be an expansion of Eisenhower Avenue, that you consider the addition of bike lanes on both the north and south side of Eisenhower Avenue. Those bike lanes would not only encourage more bicycle usage, but studies have shown that bike lanes also have the fringe benefit of calming traffic.

6. Bike lines should be installed on both the eastbound and westbound sides of Eisenhower Avenue.

7. I am writing to request that the Eisenhower Widening project deliver exemplary bicycle facilities. A few years ago, the City and many residents invested considerable efforts to develop the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan with Bicycling facilities as an essential and integral element of a multi-modal transportation network. Please ensure that this project delivers the planned facilities or improves upon them. Specifically:

    a. Reserve space for an 8-foot wide cycle track on the South side of Eisenhower Avenue from Hoofs Run Drive to Holland Lane.

    b. Coordinate with the development on the North side of Eisenhower Avenue (from John Carlyle Street to Holland Lane), so that Bicycle facilities can be installed in this area as soon as possible.

c. These are important first steps. Request that you design and deliver a forward-looking multi-modal transportation project that can be emulated in follow-on developments, not only in Eisenhower East, but elsewhere in Alexandria and the region.

8. I am writing to express my opinion of the plans for the Eisenhower Widening Project. Based on the plans on the Alexandria City Website, I see that there is a bike lane being put in between Hooff's Run Drive and Holland Lane. Being that this is an extremely short distance, I can't help feel that this is nothing but a token offering which will not resolve the greater issue at hand. There is no good pedestrian or cyclist connection between the West End and Carlyle/Old Town at the moment and if the Eisenhower Widening Project is going through, I feel that a full bike lane with ample sidewalks is absolutely necessary to conform to our Complete Streets initiatives and the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan. I feel that the following initiatives ought to form part of this project:

   a. Reserve space for an 8-foot wide cycle track on the South side of Eisenhower Avenue from Hoofs Run Drive to Holland Lane and frankly, all the way to the bridge over Telegraph Road.

   b. Coordinate with the development on the North side of Eisenhower Avenue (from John Carlyle Street to Holland Lane), so that Bicycle facilities can be installed in this area as soon as possible.

   c. Achieve the City Council-approved Small Area Plan objectives: design and deliver a forward-looking multi-modal transportation project that can be emulated in follow-on developments, not only in Eisenhower East, but elsewhere in Alexandria and the region.

Response: Future phases of the Eisenhower Avenue project are planned to construct bike facilities on both sides of the roadway and improve pedestrian and bicycle safety. The Phase I plan will construct bicycle facilities from Holland Lane to John Carlyle Drive on westbound Eisenhower Avenue and on eastbound Eisenhower Avenue from Hooff's Run Drive to Holland Lane. This plan is the first phase in the planned Eisenhower Avenue improvements. The goal of the full build out plan is to accommodate all modes of transportation with six travel lanes, three in each direction, bike facilities, and wide sidewalks. The project will be constructed in phases, as the complete right of way necessary to construct the full build out will not be available until future development projects come forward. When the parcels along the south side of Eisenhower Avenue re-develop, they will be required to construct the roadway improvements along their frontage.

Staff is working to ensure that bicycle facilities are incorporated into the project and that bike facilities are continuous throughout the corridor. The bike facilities plans are part of the Complete Streets Initiative and will provide for construction of bike improvements in the Eisenhower corridor. These improvements will include a combination of shared and dedicated lanes, bike sharrow markings, and off-street facilities.

Replacing the traffic circle at Holland Lane with a "T" intersection will significantly enhance bicycle and pedestrian safety in this corridor.

Brick Sidewalks

I like the wider sidewalks but would prefer that the sidewalks not be brick. The City's Commission on Aging and Commission on Persons with Disabilities have expressed concern about maintenance issues as well as the difficulty mobility-limited individuals and those pushing baby strollers or grocery carts experience walking along brick sidewalks.

I am writing to you on behalf of the Alexandria Commission on Aging. We understand that the Eisenhower Avenue Small Area Plan calls for brick sidewalks, but view them as a hazard to older adults, those with disabilities, parents with strollers, those carrying packages, and many others. We have personal experience with those who have fallen and been injured on brick sidewalks. We also understand that maintenance of brick sidewalks is expensive and the City falls behind as the bricks buckle. This expense is unnecessary given the fact that budgets are constrained and other attractive sidewalks are available.

Response: T&ES is recommending at this time to continue with the installation of brick sidewalks on this project in order to comply with the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan (EESAP), which calls for brick sidewalks. The Eisenhower East Small Area Plan (EESAP) denotes areas designated for installation of brick sidewalks that include Eisenhower Avenue. Several developments in this area, including Carlyle Place, the Patent Trade Office (PTO) and Post Carlyle II have already installed brick sidewalks along Eisenhower Avenue, within the project limits, in accordance with the EESAP.

The T&ES staff, together with Planning & Zoning, is currently evaluating the City's practice of requiring brick sidewalks and appropriate locations. Staff is investigating the use of various alternative types of sidewalk paving materials. Staff will bring a summary of this evaluation, including alternative sidewalk materials to Council for future consideration. If Council makes a decision to change the sidewalk material before construction of this project begins, the sidewalk material can changed at that time.

Transportation

1. The proposed project is flawed in that it facilitates more Single-Occupancy Vehicle (SOV) traffic to/from Alexandria, at the expense of and to the detriment of other transportation modes. The Design Public Hearing handout indicated that the Mill Road intersection currently operates at an unacceptable level with average daily traffic (ADT) volume exceeding 17,450 vehicles per day vpd). It is expected to have an ADT volume over 37, 890 vpd in less than 10 years (in 2022.) This trend is unacceptable and needs to be reversed, not facilitated.

2. I am writing because I am concerned that Alexandria is wasting money on the Eisenhower Ave road-widening project. Does it make sense to spend a $7 million to make the operation of the intersection of Eisenhower Avenue and Mill Road "acceptable" for seven years? And

what happens when the average daily traffic volumes again exceed acceptable levels, as the city projects they will?

3. For how long will the proposed changes at Eisenhower and Mill Road keep operation of this intersection at an acceptable level? Best case seems to be for about seven years from completion of construction in 2015 to 2022.

4. What happens after seven years (or earlier), when the operation of the intersection becomes unacceptable again?

5. When will action be taken that will reduce the average daily traffic volume, for example, by identifying the principal SOV traffic origins and destinations.

6. Do not allow the planned $7 Million to be spent on this project as designed. Allocate available funding to transportation solutions that reduce the ADT such as the following:

    a. Fund incentives to more effectively use encourage current Carlyle area (and other) SOV drivers to shift their mode share where possible, e.g. to the Metro, bus, van pooling, car-sharing, etc.

    b. Conduct a survey and/or destination study to determine primary sources (originations and destinations points) of the SOV traffic and the impediments to using non-SOV alternatives.

    c. Develop thoughtful and cost-effective options for changing the region's transportation plans to provide more non-SOV options to/from the Eisenhower/Mill Road area and eliminating the impediments to their use.

    d. Plan and fund the non-SOV multi-modal transit options needed to reduce traffic to within acceptable levels rather that facilitating more traffic by widening Eisenhower Avenue.

    Rationale: A recent non-scientific observation of rush hour traffic on Seminary Road, near N. Quaker Lane, identified 40% to 70% of rush hour traffic with Maryland license plates. Reducing the amount of this vehicular traffic will require ensuring we put regional, cross-jurisdictional transit options in place and then incentivize their use. Only through providing targeted non-SOV multi-modal options and incentivizing their use will we solve problems like excessive ADT at the intersection of Mill Road with Eisenhower Avenue.

7. After attending the public hearing on the Eisenhower Widening Project I am convinced the project is basically flawed. By designing for 6 lanes versus 4 the city is encouraging more cars and in opposition of the city's future design of transitioning to multi-modal transportation.

8. As a representative of the cycling and pedestrian community I attended many meetings on the design of Eisenhower Avenue which took place about 10 years ago. Around the time

the project stalled the design included 4 traffic lanes and included bike lanes. Although many things have changed since that time I certainly do not agree with the current design of 6 lanes with only a bike lane on the south side. The only logic I can see for this change is the developers wanted easier access for cars without regard to other transportation modes. If the city is serious about reducing traffic and transitioning to a multi-modal transportation system then it should follow its own recommendations. Had the experts who developed this plan had followed the city's policy guidance they would have recommended the following:

a. Conduct a survey of SOV destinations and originations to determine traffic flow and offer alternative transportation modes.

b. Make recommendations for the alternative transportation modes (new or revised bus routes, easier access to Metro, efficient bike and pedestrian route systems).

c. Cost out those new systems and determine changing transportation modes. Offer incentives for alternate transportation modes and deterrents to SOV modes.

I would suggest the $7 Million spent on this project could have been more effectively utilized than just adding more lanes which only encourages more car traffic.

9. Providing more viable transit options, such as new or revised bus routes, easier access to Metro, and efficient bike and pedestrian route systems, and incentivizing multi-modal transit options.

10. When will we truly adopt and meet transportation metrics that support our desire to move people instead of cars? Reducing the number of daily Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMTs) and counting person throughput for the road are better aligned with the city's goals than focusing on "level of service" for automobiles.

Response: Staff acknowledges that the traffic is projected to increase each year and by 2022 the traffic capacity will meet or exceed the current project's capacity improvements. By constructing these improvements, the impacts of the future increases in traffic volumes will be lessened and will allow the corridor to operate efficiently during non-peak periods. The traffic studies have considered a 55% multi modal split (multimodal transportation system including: private vehicles, public transportation, bicycle facilities, pedestrian facilities, parking and curb space management, and Transportation Demand Management (TDM); model split refers to the percentage of the traveling public using private vehicles, the remainder are utilizing other means of transportation.) and the future roadway improvements are designed with this in consideration. In order to expand the life of the roadway improvements, the City continues to promote and encourage the use of other modes of transportation. With each new development project the City places various restrictions on developments, such as parking maximums, which discourages residents and employees from owning or using automobiles within the City. The City continues to study commuter travel patterns in order to develop more efficient bus routes to promote higher ridership. The City also has an ongoing bicycle and pedestrian program that continuously surveys the city for areas that are deficient in bicycle and pedestrian facilities. Once these

areas are identified, projects are developed to resolve these deficiencies and to create more comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian routes around the City. The City also works with WMATA to ensure metro stations are accessible and inviting to encourage higher ridership. The City's TMP (Transportation Management Plan) requirements have been highly successful in the East Eisenhower Valley area in promoting the use of non-SOV (Single Occupant Vehicles) modes of transportation in the East Eisenhower Valley. The EESAP was designed to be a self-sustaining community, a mixed use area where people can live and work and where access to transit is readily available. Due to these aggressive traffic management practices, the Eisenhower East area is currently experiencing a modal split of 55%/45%, with 45% of the trips occurring by non-single occupancy vehicle modes.

In addition, the City continues to implement projects and programs to foster transit use and discourage SOV travel. Such projects include improvements to the Eisenhower Avenue and King Street metro stations, enhanced pedestrian signals, access ramps, and crosswalks improvement projects both along Eisenhower Avenue and throughout the City. In addition to these projects, the City is currently constructing its first BRT (Bus Rapid Transit) route and has plans for additional routes/corridors throughout the City.

Miscellaneous

1. I hope the city will negotiate the purchase or donation of the General Eisenhower statue that is currently in the traffic circle at Eisenhower and Holland. I'd suggest installing it in front of the Eisenhower Avenue Metro Station, an area that would benefit from some public art.

   Response: The statue of General Eisenhower will be relocated to the Eisenhower Avenue Metro Station when the Metro Station improvements are constructed.

2. The public open space being created in the area by Holland Lane should receive at least some minimal programming and improvements as part of this project. I know there are long term plans for improving this space, but those improvements could be several years in the future. I'd like to see some project funds directed towards interim improvements to the space like the installation of benches.

   Response: The Carlyle Block P development (Carlyle Plaza) will design and construct both open space areas (north and south of the proposed "T" intersection). Park improvements are not in the scope of the project; therefore, State Urban funding cannot be used. The Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (RP&CA) department will evaluate placing benches or other amenities in the park if they have funding available in the interim.

3. All crosswalks in the project area should be high visibility.

   Response: The crosswalks will be high visibility crosswalks.

4. Can any funding for this project be allocated towards the installation of a Capital Bikeshare station as is being done with the streetscape project along S. Washington Street? The

wider sidewalks being created along Eisenhower create an opportunity for adding a CABI station. A station in this area would be a great amenity and provide some reduction in automobile trips within the surrounding neighborhood.

Response: A bikeshare station is not included in the scope of this project; however, Capital Bikeshare stations are planned at Eisenhower and Holland, on the south side of Eisenhower, with a developer contribution, and the Eisenhower Metro Station with federal grant funds.

5. What is the current construction schedule should the project be approved?

   Response: The project is scheduled to go to construction in the spring of 2014.

6. The left turn lane and streetscape improvements make sense and should be done.

   Response: Thank you for your support of the improvements.

7. The existing road provides access to our Carlyle project for emergency vehicles. The new design does not appear to provide any similar means of access.

   Response: Emergency vehicle access will still be maintained when the improvements are constructed.

8. While the developer has provided conceptual plans for the newly created park to the south, we have seen no plans for the newly created park adjacent of our property. We want to know what is planned there and to what standards it will be maintained. We do not want it to become simply a grassy area where residents take their dogs to use the facilities.

   Response: The concept plans for the open space areas north and south side of Eisenhower Avenue are being designed by the developer of Carlyle Plaza and are being coordinated with the City. If you would like to see the design, please contact the Planning & Zoning Department.

   Has T&ES considered adding a HAWK signal at the midblock crosswalk being added in the block where PTO is located? This would improve pedestrian safety on a roadway that is being widened to six travel lanes with vehicles that already travel at high speeds

   Response: The City is looking at different options to improve the midblock crossing in front of the Patent Trade Office (PTO).

9. Concerns were raised about the Categorical Exclusion environmental document, including that low income and minority populations will be affected by the project and a public recreation/park area and wildlife will be impacted by the project.

   Response: The most recent available census data was used to perform the environmental impact analysis. While populations may have shifted since the data was collected, it is not

anticipated that any long-term impacts (beyond the construction period) will occur to affect low income and/or minority populations. Access to all areas will be provided during construction, including access to the African American Heritage Park.

The Eisenhower Circle (open space within the existing roundabout, parcel (073.04-01-05)) is currently considered to be privately owned open space. There are no pedestrian or ADA compliant accommodations (crosswalks, signals, ramps, etc.) allowing for safe pedestrian access to the circle. The circle was not specifically designed or constructed to support passive or active park type activities for the public.

While there is occasional visitation by wildlife and or waterfowl to the circle area, it is not designated as a wildlife refuge and therefore was not identified as such in the environmental document. Transient animal visitation from animals such as foxes, squirrels, geese, and rabbits face a far greater risk to the health of the animals from vehicle conflicts than a similarly sized open space area that is not fully encircled by vehicular travel and turn lanes.

10. The monument to President Eisenhower was commissioned and erected in the Circle.

    Response: The monument will be moved prior to road construction and removal of the roundabout. The statue will be relocated to the proposed plaza at the Eisenhower Avenue Metro Station.

11. Questions were raised regarding the accuracy of the traffic analysis performed for the project, particularly with respect to replacing the circle with a "T" intersection.

    Response: The traffic studies performed for the project were completed in 2009 by A. Morton Thomas and Associates Inc. and were reviewed and accepted by the City and VDOT. Replacing the traffic circle at Holland Lane with a "T" intersection is a "complete streets" project, providing multi-modal improvements that will improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and create two new public parks.

Removal of the Traffic Circle at Holland Lane

1. It is likely that we would be significantly disturbed by the removal of the circle here, eliminating our green space and where we walk/bike and take our dog. This would definitely make us consider moving as well. There is hardly any traffic around the circle, even at rush hours. We know because we look right at it 24/7. Putting a light there is unnecessary and would only cause traffic, noise, and pollution in our front yard.

2. Converting the traffic circle to a "T" shape intersection should not be done because the current pattern is aesthetically appealing and distinguishes the Carlyle area in a positive way.

3. Thanks for forwarding the traffic information and pedestrian accident information. According to that data one can extrapolate that since the traffic circle was erected (perhaps

around 1997) there has been only one vehicle/pedestrian accident at the traffic circle; and this one accident occurred in spite of adding the millions of square feet of office space for the PTO office, a half a dozen high rise residences and two major hotels.

4. The decision to remove the traffic circle was based on faulty and obsolete design information.

5. I am also not supportive of removing the traffic circle at the end of Eisenhower since it allows traffic to flow well and doesn't contain stop signs at the moment which most people tend to ignore even when they are in place.

6. The Eisenhower Avenue/Holland Circle is part of the original design of Carlyle, included in the Design Guidelines and the surrounding architecture and should not be removed.

7. A traffic circle is more efficient, reduces noise, pollution, accidents and is more pedestrian friendly than a "T" intersection.

8. With the circle converting to a T intersection, most typically, our business delivery trucks for supplies will be on Eisenhower Avenue heading east. What they do is they loop around the circle and then they come back and then they make right-hand turns into our east loading dock and our west loading dock. We were concerned that they would not be able to make that loop anymore. What, alternatively, would your project recommend as a route for those delivery trucks to make their deliveries?

   Response: The removal of the circle was discussed and approved in the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan (EESAP). Replacing the traffic circle at Holland Lane with a signalized "T" intersection will improve pedestrian, bicycle safety, and create two areas of useable open space on the north and south side of Eisenhower Avenue at the intersection with Holland Lane. The Planning Commission and City Council have approved adjacent developments based on the "T" intersection including the conversion of the existing roadway into parkland. If the traffic circle were retained, amendments would be required to the approved Carlyle Plaza development site plan that has incorporated the circle area in its plaza area.

   Traffic circles operate best when traffic from all directions is relatively equal. There are charts and computations that show that when the major route through the intersection has a high percentage of traffic over the opposite route, then the traditional signalized intersection works best. The advantage to the signalized intersection is that the traffic entering the Eisenhower corridor can be adjusted to control traffic volumes and can be timed to work well with the other signals on Eisenhower Avenue.

   The existing traffic circle has a larger than recommended radius and therefore does not slow traffic as much as would be preferred, making it difficult for pedestrians to judge the vehicle speed at cross walks and difficult for pedestrians to find openings in traffic to cross (during peak traffic).

Concerning pedestrian traffic, crossing a four legged signalized intersection can be more difficult as vehicles are approaching in all directions. However, at the Holland Lane and Eisenhower Avenue intersection, there are only three legs of the intersection and pedestrian signals and traffic control signals will make this a safe crossing location, especially for visually impaired pedestrians where a roundabout may have a more complex auditory environment.

The existing traffic circle has two lanes (vs. a single lane traffic circle), making driver decisions more complex and difficult for pedestrians to judge the direction vehicles will travel around the circle.

In response to the delivery truck routes, the trucks would be joining other delivery vehicles on City streets after exiting the Capital Beltway. Most deliveries would be made during the business day during non- rush hour times. The trucks coming from the Capital Beltway could alternatively exit from the Route 1 North exit and access Eisenhower Avenue via Duke Street and Holland Lane or make a left turn on Holland Lane and left onto Emerson and left onto John Carlyle and right onto Eisenhower.

CARLYLE
COMMUNITY
COUNCIL

April 18, 2013

Lisa Jaatinen, P.E., Civil Engineer IV
City of Alexandria
City Hall, Room 3200
Alexandria, VA 22314

Eisenhower Design Public Hearing Comments

Dear Ms. Jaatinen:

Carlyle Community Council (CCC) is submitting comments on the proposed widening of Eisenhower Avenue. The project would change a major corridor for Carlyle and will impact traffic circulation in and around Carlyle. Furthermore, CCC owns property the City must acquire in order to proceed with the project as planned.

Carlyle Community Council is a nonstock corporation comprised of the owners of the 30 properties contained within Carlyle totaling 4.3 million square feet of commercial space and over 1,700 residential units. Carlyle's boundaries run from Elizabeth Lane on the west along Eisenhower Avenue to Holland Lane on the south, in the heart of this road project. Carlyle includes the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) campus and Post Property apartments that are both adjacent to Eisenhower Avenue. In addition, a parcel on the south side of Eisenhower, bordering the street widening, is also part of the CCC.

With our mix of business and residential properties, CCC has a keen interest in road construction near Carlyle. In addition to owning Eisenhower Circle, that would be demolished for this road widening, CCC also owns the statue of President Eisenhower, which is public art and the focal point of this public space. The City is seeking to acquire this parcel from CCC in order to proceed and we are engaged in discussions with City officials about terms for acquisition.

Carlyle Design Guidelines

Eisenhower Circle (aka the Rotary) was highlighted as a key design feature in the Carlyle Design Review Guidelines published in 1994 that provide standards and specifications to ensure high quality, integrated and compatible development within Carlyle. It was described as follows:

> *"The Rotary at the Intersection of Holland Lane and Eisenhower Avenue will be a place many people will associate with their image of Carlyle because they will drive around it. The rotary is a strong geometric form and this form is reinforced by the buildings surrounding the west side of it. The Rotary is like many of the circles in Washington which are a focus for a neighborhood."*

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While the Eisenhower Circle has design aesthetics, it also offers a beneficial function. The Circle allows delivery trucks heading east on Eisenhower Avenue to go around the circle and head back west to enter the two PTO loading docks that open onto Eisenhower Avenue. Elimination of the Eisenhower Circle will mean that those trucks will no longer be able to loop around. In addition, cars will have difficulty entering the PTO garage on Eisenhower Avenue during their morning commute.

It has been suggested that instead, trucks can turn left on Holland, turn left on Emerson and John Carlyle Streets, and get back to Eisenhower Avenue, effectively funneling large tractor trailers down side streets through our most concentrated residential area. Or, they could travel north on Mill Road, turn onto Jamieson Avenue and drive through the heart of Carlyle. Alternative routes outside of Carlyle include exiting the beltway at Route 1 or Telegraph Road and taking Duke Street into Carlyle. Our concerns relate to the uncertainty of the impact of new traffic patterns on Carlyle and each of these potential scenarios compromises existing traffic flows.

A partial solution to the loss of circular flow would be U-turns; however, as the plan is currently drafted, U-turns are to be prohibited at the new T-intersection. Additionally, to permit easier truck access into the loading docks, left turn lanes should be added from Eisenhower.

Bike and Pedestrian Safety

At the April 4th hearing, City staff stated that bike and pedestrian safety was a significant reason for eliminating the Circle, although no one present could cite any such accidents occurring at the Circle. If the City has information on the number of bike and pedestrian incidents at Eisenhower Circle, please forward that information to us. The CCC's information points to the contrary. In fact, traffic circles are considered a traffic *calming* measure while maintaining traffic flow and, nationwide, there has been a resurgence of the construction of traffic circles. For example, Seattle, Washington has installed over 1,000 new traffic circles in the last 30 years.

Categorical Exclusion Documentation Report

A Categorical Exclusion report was prepared (revised 5/2/2011) for this road project so that a full environment assessment or environmental impact statement would not be required. The report concluded that the project meets the criteria for a Categorical Exclusion.

Of note, the Eisenhower Avenue Categorical Exclusion report contains a section detailing Rights of Way and Relocations needed for the project. There is no mention of the Eisenhower Circle as a parcel to be acquired. In addition, on page 5 of the report it states that "There are no right of way or easement acquisitions from publically owned parks or refuges, or **public areas open**

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
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May 16, 2013

Carlyle Community Council
Philip D. Weber, President
1940 Duke Street, Suite 200
Alexandria, VA 22314

Re: Eisenhower Avenue Widening and Roadway Improvements Project

Dear Mr. Weber:

Thank you for your interest in this project. I am writing this in response to your letter dated April 18, 2013. I look forward to continuing to work with you and the Carlyle Community Council to make this a successful project.

Carlyle Design Guidelines

The Carlyle Design Review Guidelines for Carlyle Development Corporation (CDC) were prepared by LandDesign for CDC and adopted in 1994. In April 2003, the City adopted the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan (EESAP) by Ordinance #4293. While many elements of the Design Review Guidelines remain in effect, some elements were modified and superseded by the EESAP. The roadway improvements proposed in this project were included in the approved EESAP, which include replacing the circle with a "T" intersection. In addition, the Planning Commission and City Council have approved developments based on the "T" intersection, including Carlyle Plaza. In order to retain the traffic circle, City Council will need to amend the EESAP and the approved Development Site Plan for Carlyle Plaza.

Regarding delivery truck access to the Patent Trade Office (PTO), we have met with you and discussed alternate routes for delivery trucks as you have indicated in your letter. The delivery trucks would be joining other delivery vehicles on City streets after exiting the Capital Beltway. Most deliveries are made during the business day during non- peak periods. The trucks would be traveling on Route 1, Duke Street and Holland Lane, which have been designed for that use.

Bike and Pedestrian Safety

Future phases of the Eisenhower Avenue project will construct bike facilities and wide sidewalks on both sides of the roadway and improve pedestrian and bicycle safety. The Phase I plan will construct bicycle facilities and wide sidewalks from Holland Lane to John Carlyle Drive on westbound Eisenhower Avenue and on eastbound Eisenhower Avenue from Hooff's Run Drive to Holland Lane. This plan is the first phase in the planned Eisenhower Avenue improvements. Replacing the traffic circle at Holland Lane with a signalized "T" intersection will improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and will create public parks on the north and south side of Eisenhower Avenue at the intersection with Holland Lane. Each corner of the signalized intersection will have accessible ramps, highly visible crosswalks, and pedestrian signals. The new parks will be accessible from the sidewalks. The traffic circle, as it currently exists, does not have any signalized pedestrian crossing areas.

While you indicate in your letter that you are not aware of any pedestrian or bicycle accidents at the circle, future development and the bike and pedestrian improvements will lead to a considerable increase in pedestrians and bicycles utilizing this area. In addition, the traffic volume is anticipated to double between now and 2022. These projected changes make it critical for the City to provide safe facilities for all modes of travel in this corridor.

Categorical Exclusion Documentation Report

A Categorical Exclusion document has been approved by the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) for this project. The open space within the existing traffic circle is owned by your organization. The open space within the traffic circle, therefore, cannot be considered to be a "Public Park or refuge, or public area open to the public". To date, there has been no formal dedication made or agreement ratified between CCC and the City of Alexandria. The open space within the traffic circle may be available for members of the CCC to use, but there is no language that indicates that this area is available for use by the general public at large.

The area in the circle is difficult to access by the public. When the project is completed, the open space area will be moved to the side of the roadways and owned by the City. The open space will then be considered to be usable public open space.

Corridor-Wide Traffic Impact Study Report

The initial traffic studies for the Eisenhower corridor were initiated in January 2003 by Wilbur Smith Associates. A summary of the study can be found in the EESAP – Land Use and Circulation Chapter. The removal of the circle was discussed and approved in the Eisenhower East Small Area Plan (EESAP). Replacing the traffic circle at Holland Lane with a "T" intersection is a "complete streets" project, providing multi-modal improvements that will improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and create two new public parks.

Post Properties

The City is coordinating with the Fire Department to ensure fire access to the Post Properties building is maintained. As the project is developed, the appropriate measures for emergency

vehicle access will be incorporated into the plan. The open space areas on both sides of the roadway will be designed by the Carlyle Block P developer and once completed the City will maintain the North Crescent Park and the developer will maintain the South Crescent Park.

Thank you for your active participation in the development of this project. I look forward to working through the above issues with you while we develop the Eisenhower Avenue plans. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact me at: lisa.jaatinen@alexandriava.gov or 703-746-4053.

Sincerely yours,

Lisa T. Jaatinen, P.E.
Civil Engineer IV

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