

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 17, 2019

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: CHRISTOPHER ZIEMANN, DIVISION CHIEF, TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #7 – TRANSPORTATION CHAPTER OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN

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**ISSUE:** Consideration of the Transportation Chapter of the draft Environmental Action Plan 2050 (EAP), which is open for public comment through April 27, 2019.

**RECOMMENDATION:** Transportation Commission endorses the Transportation Chapter of the EAP.

**BACKGROUND:**

The City is collaborating with the Environmental Policy Commission (EPC) and the public to develop an update to the Environmental Action Plan 2040, which is the City's comprehensive blueprint for creating a thriving, sustainable community. In June 2009, the City adopted the EAP 2030, which aimed at achieving the vision and principles outlined in the City's Eco-City Charter and ensuring the City continues to move toward environmental sustainability.

The EAP update process worked in two phases. Phase One was adopted by City Council on Saturday, October 13, 2018, for short-term (FY2019 - FY2023) actions in five focus areas: (1) Energy, (2) Climate Change, (3) Green Building, (4) Land Use and Open Space, and (5) Solid Waste.

Phase Two will incorporate Phase One and expand to include short-term action items for the remaining five focus areas - (6) Transportation, (7) Air Quality, (8) Water Resources, (9) Environment & Health, and (10) Implementation, Outreach, & Education - as well as propose mid-term (FY2024 - FY2028) and long-term (FY2029 on) action for all ten topic areas.

City Council will consider adoption of the Environmental Action Plan 2040 (EAP 2040) on June 15, 2019. A draft of EAP 2040 is available for public comment through April 27, 2019 on the [Eco-City web page](#).

EAP 2040 reflects progress made since the 2009 EAP 2030 and changes in the City, safety, technology, and climate change issues. The Transportation section of the plan is consistent with the vision of the 2008 Transportation Master Plan and recent initiatives including the Complete Streets Program, Vision Zero, and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

The Transportation Chapter includes the following elements (Note that some cost estimates were not available at the time of release of the draft):

## 7.1 Prioritizing Low-carbon Mobility Options

**Goal** Aggressively promote vibrant, human-scale city streets that prioritize people’s access and mobility so that all Alexandria residents and visitors have access to the commercial and cultural resources of the city using low-carbon modes of transportation, consistent with the following level of precedence: pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation, shared motor vehicles, freight vehicles and private motor vehicles.

**Target** By FY2023, reduce total average vehicle miles traveled (VMT) per capita by at least 1 percent per year

### Short Term Actions

7.1.1 By FY2023, complete all engineering and education actions outlined in the 2017 Vision Zero Action Plan. These actions contribute to increase in safety and thus have an important potential to increase the number of pedestrian bicyclist and user of public transit using Alexandria’s streets.

*Cost Estimate:* \$1,000,000-\$5,000,000

7.1.2 By FY2023, add 2 miles of bicycle facilities per year. These facilities, which can include shared, separated, protected lanes, and trails, will prioritize connectivity with existing bike infrastructure and development of a city-wide network of bike-safe routes.

*Cost Estimate:* \$500,000 - \$1,000,000

7.1.3 By FY2023, develop a checklist for transportation staff working with development review to be used in both the residential and commercial review process to incentivize less carbon intensive modes of transportation and mobility options.

*Cost Estimate:* \$100,000 - \$200,000

7.1.4 By FY2023, adopt permanent regulations for shared mobility devices such as dockless bikes & electric scooters and other personal mobility devices.

*Cost Estimate:* \$100,000

7.1.5 By FY2023 determine the feasibility of a low-stress multi-modal, connective bicycle network to increase bicycle mode share.

*Cost Estimate:* \$200,000 - \$400,000

#### Mid- Term Actions

7.1.6 By FY2024, develop a plan to acquire zero emissions buses on rapid transit routes and conversion of DASH fleet to zero emissions.

*Cost Estimate:* \$100,000-\$300,000

7.1.7 By FY2028, complete the bicycle and pedestrian projects prioritized in the pedestrian & bicycle Chapters of the Alexandria Mobility Plan (formerly known as Transportation Master Plan)

*Cost Estimate:* \$5,000,000 - \$10,000,000

7.1.8 By FY2025, implement the 2017 walk audit recommendations for all schools

*Cost Estimate:* \$2,000,000 – \$5,000,000

#### Legislative Priorities

Encourage statewide legislative efforts to implement stricter traffic safety laws as mandated by the 2017 Vision Zero Action Plan. Alexandria should continue to lobby the state to allocate road funding to local jurisdictions based not on car driving lanes but inclusively to adequately fund infrastructure for bicycles, pedestrians, and other low-carbon mobility options.

#### Justification

By incentivizing and regulating mobility options, short automobile trips can be replaced with other less carbon-intensive modes of transportation while maintaining safety and providing mobility and access. Furthermore, by increasing safety, on City streets, the share of walking and bicycling trips can increase moderately. As vehicle miles traveled is a major component of greenhouse gas, a reduction in automobile use will help achieve the City's overarching greenhouse gas reduction target.

#### Accountable Parties

Transportation and Environmental Services

## 7.2 Reduce Automobile Dependency

**Goal** Reduce automobile dependency and inform individuals and employers on mobility options other than single-occupancy driving.

**Target** By FY2023, increase the share of all trips taken by public transit, walking and biking by at least 15 percent based taking the 2018 Mobility Survey as a baseline.

#### Short Term Actions

7.2.1 By FY2023, develop a stand-alone Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Chapter in the Alexandria Mobility Plan (formerly the Transportation Master Plan) to promote low-carbon modes.

*Cost Estimate:* \$50,000-\$100,000

#### Medium Term Actions

7.2.2 By FY2028, encourage people who work in Alexandria to use sustainable mobility options by developing policies that discourage employee parking (e.g., eliminating monthly parking subsidies, prohibiting retail employees to park long term at parking meters and provide cash incentives in lieu of providing employees free parking).

*Cost Estimate:* \$1 – 5 million

#### Legislative Priorities

Lobby the state to both raise the gasoline tax and to allow local jurisdictions more flexibility in raising gasoline taxes and car property taxes to be assessed with an efficiency bonus/penalty and not just on the value of the vehicle.

#### Justification

At the National level, approximately 25 percent of combustion-related GHG comes from the transportation sector. In the region this share can reach 40 percent. It is important to reduce automobile dependency in order to reduce GHGs that contribute to global warming and criteria pollutants that have been linked to negative health outcomes.

#### Accountable Parties

Transportation and Environmental Services

## 7.3 Improve, Expand and Integrate Public Transit Systems

**Goal** Improve and expand Alexandria's public transit system so that passenger rail and bus systems are safe, reliable, accessible, convenient, attractive, efficient, and equitable.

**Target** By FY2030, double the miles of dedicated bus infrastructure to at least 1.5 miles.

#### Short Term Actions

7.3.1 By FY2023, Continue the development and deployment of transit information technologies in coordination with other regional service providers.

*Cost Estimate:* \$1,000,000 - \$5,000,000

7.3.2 By FY2023, finalize construction of the Potomac Yard Metrorail station.

*Cost Estimate:* \$370 million (2018)

### Mid Term Actions

7.3.3 By FY2028, expand Bus Rapid Transit by starting Phase 1 construction on the West End Transitway, finish environmental work and secure funding for the Duke Street Transitway.

*Cost Estimate:* \$75,000,000 - \$150,000,000

### Long Term Actions

7.3.4 By 2040, put into operation the three (3) rapid transit routes as expressed by the 2008 Transportation Master Plan. Work with regional providers to ensure these routes are physically integrated and fare integrated with all modes of transportation.

*Cost Estimate:* More than \$100,000,000 - \$300,000,000