

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 5, 2006

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION REQUESTING A PROJECT TO STUDY THE FEASIBILITY OF DESIGNATING THREE DEDICATED TRANSIT CORRIDORS IN ALEXANDRIA

ISSUE: Consideration of a project programming resolution requesting that the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) program Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funds to a new project to assess the feasibility of designating three dedicated transit corridors proposed for the City of Alexandria.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Approve the proposed new project to assess the feasibility of three proposed dedicated transit corridors in Alexandria;
- (2) Adopt the attached project programming resolution requesting programming of RSTP funds to support this project; and
- (3) Authorize the City Manager to enter into any necessary agreements with the Commonwealth to administer these funds.

DISCUSSION: For over a year, the Ad Hoc Transportation Policy and Program Task Force has been considering strategies to make transit a more viable option for travel by Alexandria residents, workers and visitors. As one outcome of this consideration, the Task Force has identified three highly-traveled corridors as the preferred locations of dedicated transitways. These corridors are: (1) Route 1 between Arlington and Fairfax counties; (2) Duke Street between Old Town and the west city limits; and (3) Van Dorn and Beauregard Streets between the Van Dorn Metro Rail Station and Shirlington on the north City limits. The proposed transitways in these corridors would be located on exclusive right-of-way, accommodate the operational needs of either bus rapid transit or light rail transit, and incorporate enhanced stations and stops with significant passenger amenities and state-of-the-art information systems. These transit corridors will be a key

element of the revised transportation master plan that will be submitted for adoption this fall.

Planning and implementation of dedicated transit facilities is a process that typically requires six to ten years to complete. The Task Force will take the first step of this process, concept development, up to its final stage, which is a corridor feasibility study. This feasibility study will evaluate how the proposed transit corridors could be developed, identifying: (1) preferred and alternative alignments, cross sections, and station and stop locations; (2) significant physical, institutional and financial barriers; (3) potential environmental issues; (4) alternative technologies and operating strategies; and (5) fatal flaws that could preclude implementation. Findings of the feasibility study form the basis for subsequent steps of detailed project planning and development, final engineering design and project delivery.

The proposed dedicated transit corridors concept is a high priority item for the Task Force and to date has been well received by the community. There is strong desire to move forward with this concept as quickly as possible. To do so, staff proposes that \$500,000 in current RSTP grant funding be reallocated to fund feasibility studies for the three dedicated transit corridors envisioned by the Task Force. These grant funds were originally allocated to development of the Bradlee Transit Center in the FY 2006 RSTP work program (UPC#79794). Alternative funding for the Bradlee Transit Center project is available from Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) grants the City is programmed to receive in FY 2007 and FY 2008 for City-Wide Transit Improvements. With Council adoption of the attached resolution, the dedicated transit corridors feasibility study can commence this calendar year.

FISCAL IMPACT: The proposed project will be funded with available RSTP funds. The Commonwealth of Virginia has provided the required local match; thus, no City funds will be necessary.

ATTACHMENT: Resolution

STAFF:

Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager

Richard J. Baier, P.E., Director, T&ES

Bernard Caton, Legislative Director, City Manager's Office

Thomas H. Culpepper, P.E., Deputy Director, T&ES

James Maslanka, Division Chief, Transit, T&ES

Jean Wilson, Division Chief, Administration, T&ES

Laura Pettus, Grants Coordinator, City Manager's Office

RESOLUTION

WHEREAS, in accordance with Virginia Department of Transportation procedures, it is necessary that a request be made by Council Resolution for the Department to establish and program funding for a transit project in the City of Alexandria; and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria desires to undertake a study to determine the feasibility of creating certain dedicated transit corridors in the City and fund such study with Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funding previously allocated to the City; now

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, hereby requests that the Virginia Department of Transportation establish a transit project to evaluate the feasibility of creating dedicated transit corridors in the City of Alexandria.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Alexandria hereby requests that RSTP project funds previously allocated to the City for project UPC #79794 be programmed fund this project, understanding that this will not cause local funds to be required since the Commonwealth provides the local match for these funds, and that if the City of Alexandria should elect to cancel this project, the funds will revert to the City of Alexandria's RSTP account for FY 2006.

Adopted _____ day of _____, 2006

William D. Euille, Mayor

ATTEST:

Jackie M. Henderson, CMC City Clerk

30

9-12-06



<missz@aol.com>

09/09/2006 10:05 AM

Please respond to
<missz@aol.com>

To <alexvamayor@aol.com>, <macdonaldcouncil@msn.com>, <timothylovain@aol.com>, <councilmangaines@aol.com>, <council@krupicka.com>, <delpepper@aol.com>,

cc

bcc

Subject COA Contact Us: Proposed Transit Corridor Resolution (9/12)

COA Contact Us: Proposed Transit Corridor Resolution (9/12)

Time: [Sat Sep 09, 2006 10:05:53] IP Address: [152.163.100.8]

Response requested:

First Name: Leslie
Last Name: Zupan
Street Address: 1309 Queen Street
City: Alexandria
State: VA
Zip: 22314
Phone: (703) 548-9489
Email Address: missz@aol.com

Subject: Proposed Transit Corridor Resolution (9/12)

Dear Mayor Euille and Council Members:

I was surprised to learn that you will be voting on Tuesday to reprogram VDOT funds to study dedicated transit corridors, including Route 1 from Arlington to Fairfax County.

Any plan for Route 1 is of vital importance to the Parker-Gray neighborhood. Yet there has been no public meeting to inform us that a study is contemplated or that major changes to Route 1 may be on the horizon.

Parker-Gray residents fought hard in the past to control bus and heavy truck traffic on Route 1. These vehicles shook homes badly, spewed fumes and particles into people's living rooms and bedrooms, created noise pollution, and impeded parking.

Comments: Trucks are now restricted to inner lanes and are forbidden to "jake" their brakes, while transit buses have been banned entirely. On-street parking was established on both sides of Patrick and Henry to provide a safety buffer between traffic and pedestrians.

But it appears that this will all be open for "discussion" again, with a fairly obvious agenda to make dedicated transit corridors happen regardless of impact. I am also surprised that there appears to be no coordination with the forthcoming Braddock Road Metro Small Area Plan.

Please postpone voting on this resolution and put off the adoption of the master transportation plan this fall until the appropriate public meetings have been held and notification has been given to all citizens in Parker-Gray.

Thank you.

30

9-12-06



<landiscf@comcast.net>

09/09/2006 06:37 PM

Please respond to
<landiscf@comcast.net>

To <alexvamayor@aol.com>, <macdonaldcouncil@msn.com>, <timothylovain@aol.com>, <councilmangaines@aol.com>, <council@krupicka.com>, <delpepper@aol.com>,

cc

bcc

Subject COA Contact Us: Workshop 12 September

COA Contact Us: Workshop 12 September

Time: [Sat Sep 09, 2006 18:37:31] IP Address: [68.83.220.235]

Response requested:

First Name: Charlotte
Last Name: Landis
Street Address: 433 N Patrick St
City: Alexandria
State: VA
Zip: 2314
Phone: 703 549 2950
Email Address: landiscf@comcast.net
Subject: Workshop 12 September

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor, & City Council Members,

I attended the Planning Commission's work session on Thursday, 7 September and was surprised to hear that changes to Route 1 traffic patterns were being considered. I have read the Docket for your work session on Tuesday, 12 September and see that this issue appears again. These discussions presumably are under the rubric of the city's newly proposed rapid transit system.

As a Patrick Street resident of 16 years, I was active in working with my US Route 1 neighbors to improve the environmental quality of the neighborhood. Cars, trucks and tour buses regularly caused damage to our homes. Damage related to vibrations included:
Foundation cracks
Window panes
Interior plaster cracks
Wall hangings askew

We corrected other problems especially those

related to carbon monoxide emissions, speeding and traffic accidents, and on-street parking. Specifically we initiated emissions testing, encouraged speeding enforcement, and returned on street parking to Patrick and Henry Streets.

Comments:

Council's cooperation did not come easily. Parker-Gray was then, and still is, referred to as "that neighborhood." Would it surprise you to know that the then Civic Association leadership went to Oregon to secure the text of the city's Jake brake ordinance (noise pollution)? We confined truck travel to the center to reduce the hazardous effects of smokestack emissions. And we now park on the streets, except where unsolved rush hour murders occur.

My house is set back 9 feet from Patrick Street. All Alexandria residents deserve to live in an environmentally safe neighborhood especially those of us who live within the US Route 1 corridor. Hopefully City Council agrees. Please do not go forward with any plan that compromises our earlier successes. The proposed rapid transit, or express bus service, is an inappropriate solution. To include Patrick and Henry Streets in these proposals is literally ill-advised.

Why is city staff even visiting the idea of bus routes on Patrick and Henry Streets when there already is an existing north-south bus route on Washington Street? Who is this bus for? Will you be using the US Route 1 bus route?

I can live with buses circulating between the Pentagon, Crystal City, Potomac Yard and the Braddock Road Metro Station. Our earlier transportation accomplishments shall not be ignored.

Sincerely,

Charlotte Landis
433 N Patrick St
Alexandria, VA 22314
703-549-2950

RESOLUTION NO. 2201

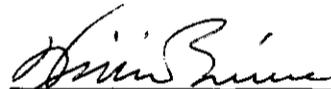
WHEREAS, in accordance with Virginia Department of Transportation procedures, it is necessary that a request be made by Council Resolution for the Department to establish and program funding for a transit project in the City of Alexandria; and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria desires to undertake a study to determine the feasibility of creating certain dedicated transit corridors in the City and fund such study with Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) funding previously allocated to the City;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, hereby requests that the Virginia Department of Transportation establish a transit project to evaluate the feasibility of creating dedicated transit corridors in the City of Alexandria.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Council of the City of Alexandria hereby requests that RSTP project funds previously allocated to the City for project UPC #79794 be programmed to fund this project, understanding that this will not cause local funds to be required since the Commonwealth provides the local match for these funds, and that if the City of Alexandria should elect to cancel this project, the funds will revert to the City of Alexandria's RSTP account for FY 2006.

ADOPTED: September 12, 2006



WILLIAM D. EULLE

MAYOR

ATTEST:



Jacqueline M. Henderson, CMC City Clerk