

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

15
3-13-01

DATE: MARCH 12, 2001

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGERS

SUBJECT: RE-STUDY OF THE ALTERNATIVES FOR AN EISENHOWER AVENUE-TO-DUKE STREET CONNECTOR

ISSUE: Re-study of the alternatives for an Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street connector as part of Phase II of the Clermont Interchange Project.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That City Council:

- (1) Approve the City proceeding with its own re-study of the Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street Connector (Phase II of the Clermont Interchange Project) using City Urban Transportation funds;
- (2) Adopt the attached resolution (Attachment 1) creating an *ad hoc* Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street Connector Task Force to review the proposed alignment (Alternative 5) for the Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street connector that was endorsed by City Council in 1993 and to explore other feasible alternative connections between Telegraph Road and Van Dorn Street, as well as a no-build alternative, and to recommend to City Council the most desirable alternative; and
- (3) Adopt the attached resolution (Attachment 2) in which the City: (a) requests the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) to establish an urban system highway project for the Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street connector; (b) states that the City agrees to pay the City's share of the costs associated with the Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street project, if built; and (c) agrees that, should the City decide to cancel the project, it would reimburse VDOT for the total costs expended by VDOT for Phase II of the Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street connector project up to the date that it is notified of the project's cancellation by the City.

BACKGROUND: Improving access to and from, and along, Eisenhower Valley has been one of the City's transportation priorities since the early 1970s, when there were only two major access points to the valley, South Van Dorn Street and Telegraph Road. In the late 1970s and early 1980s the City addressed the serious flooding problems in Eisenhower Valley by constructing tunnels to channel Cameron Run and prevent the flooding which had made much of the land in the valley infeasible to

develop. By 1985 the construction of Eisenhower Avenue was completed and the roadway was opened, making it possible to travel directly from Van Dorn Street to Holland Lane. Opening complete access to the Eisenhower Valley also involved construction of an interchange at the beltway.

In 1973, City Council passed a resolution requesting VDOT to construct an interchange at I-95 and Clermont Avenue to provide an adequate transportation system for the growing development in the area. In 1980, with the adoption of the Cameron Run Valley Study, City Council again passed a resolution requesting an interchange at I-95 and Clermont Avenue, and an extension of Clermont Avenue from Eisenhower Avenue to Duke Street.

In 1984, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) approved an additional access point on I-95 for the construction of the Clermont Interchange, as well as improvements to extend and connect Clermont Avenue to Duke Street. Council had requested that the Clermont to Duke connector be removed from this FHWA approved project, but the National Environmental Policy Act required that the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) address all aspects of the approved project.

In 1987, the City asked VDOT to identify transportation objectives for the project area, to design the public participation process, to identify major issues to be addressed in the EIS, and to develop a timetable. In May 1987, City Council approved Resolution No. 1237 creating the Clermont Interchange Task Force to: a) serve as the evaluating and coordinating mechanism among the residents, business community, Cameron Station and the City; b) facilitate citizen participation in the EIS process; c) formulate and recommend positions the City may take in the EIS process, including participating in the design and scope of the draft EIS and formulating recommendations the City might make in commenting on the draft EIS, including comments on the proposed alignments and the “no build” option. The Task Force consisted of two members of City Council as co-chairs (initially Councilwoman Pepper and Councilman Calhoun, who was replaced by then Councilman Donley), 10 citizen members, a representative from Cameron Station, and City staff.

In 1988, VDOT began preparation of the EIS for the construction of the Clermont Interchange and a possible connector from Eisenhower Avenue to Duke Street. The first public information meeting was held in December 1988. A list of initial build alternatives was developed and refined, and a public information meeting and public hearing were held in 1989. The original plan was to have the Draft and Final Environmental Impact Statements completed in the summer and fall of 1989, respectively. However, it was not until August 1992 that VDOT released the Draft Environmental Assessment--Clermont Interchange with Interstate 95, and the Final Environmental Assessment was released in November 1993. Environmental assessments, rather than environmental impact statements, were prepared because the FWHA had determined that assessments were appropriate because of the limited impacts of the project.

The Draft Environmental Assessment included a review of 15 preliminary Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street connector alternatives (Attachment 3), and a no-build option. Each alternative was evaluated using three screening criteria: 1) improve access to Eisenhower Valley from I-95 and Duke

Street; 2) have the potential to relieve congestion on the Telegraph Road and Van Dorn Interchanges; and 3) have the potential to relieve congestion on existing roadways. A number of these alternatives were eventually removed from consideration since they did not meet the screening criteria, leaving five connector alternatives (Attachment 4) which were included in the Final Environmental Assessment, with VDOT choosing Alternative 5 as its "Selected Alternative" for the connector between Eisenhower Avenue and Duke Street. Alternative 5 is a .61 mile four-lane connector road between Eisenhower Avenue and South Pickett Street at the South Pickett Street/Edsall Road intersection (see Attachment 4).

The final environmental assessment included reference to constructing the project in two phases: Phase I would include the construction of the Clermont Interchange and the extension of Clermont Avenue to Eisenhower Avenue, and Phase II would include the construction of a connector roadway from Eisenhower Avenue to Duke Street.

On May 25, 1993, City Council adopted Resolution No. 1644 (Attachment 5) which was supported by the Clermont Interchange Task Force, VDOT and FHWA and which: (1) endorsed the location of the Clermont Interchange Phase I; (2) endorsed a connector from Eisenhower Avenue to Duke Street Phase II via South Pickett Street (Alternate 5) at a future date after additional study of the transportation infrastructure; and (3) included a bike trail between Eisenhower Avenue and Clermont Avenue in Fairfax County. The City supported the Clermont Interchange because it provided traffic relief for the overburdened Van Dorn and Telegraph Road interchanges, served large volumes of traffic in the Duke Street corridor by providing direct access to I-95, and supported the commercial and industrial growth occurring along Eisenhower Avenue.

Construction of the Clermont Interchange began in 1996. The interchange was completed in 1997, opening to traffic on August 1. Since then the City has approved a Coordinated Development District (CDD) for Cameron Station (the site of the former Cameron Station military base) where approximately one-third of the more than 2,100 dwelling units have been constructed and where approximately 15,000 square feet of neighborhood retail will be located. In June 2000, the City broke ground for the new Ben Brenman Park. The new Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School opened in the Fall of 2000.

The plans for Cameron Station show a portion of the land on the western side of Armistead L. Boothe Park reserved for Alternative 5. The reservation of this right-of-way easement was done as part of the process to transfer 62 acres of land from the U.S. Department of the Interior-National Park Service to the City to be used for Ben Brenman Park and Armistead L. Boothe Park. It should be noted that if Alternative 3, located on the eastern side of Ben Brenman Park (see Attachment 4), were to be the preferred route for an Eisenhower-to-Duke connector, it would require U.S. Department of Interior-National Park Service approval to use land from Ben Brenman Park for the connector right-of-way in exchange for releasing the right-of-way now reserved through Armistead L. Boothe Park.

DISCUSSION: Last summer, VDOT contacted the City to determine when the City would be going forward with Phase II of the Clermont Interchange Project, the connection between Eisenhower Avenue and Duke Street. VDOT had programmed \$8.4 million for the design and construction of Phase II.

At Council's 2000 fall retreat, staff reviewed the background of the Clermont Interchange Project and recommended that the City engage in a re-study of Phase II before proceeding any further with this project. The study would review current land uses, including the redeveloped Cameron Station, the new school and the newly developed Ben Brenman and Armistead L. Boothe Parks. It would also examine the proposed connection (Alternative 5) endorsed by City Council in 1993, the traffic benefits produced by an Eisenhower-to-Duke connection, alternative road connections to Duke Street that may be feasible between Telegraph Road and South Van Dorn Street, as well as a no-build option, and would make a recommendation to City Council on the best alternative for the City.

At the retreat, staff also informed City Council that, according to VDOT, if Council ultimately decided not to build a connector, the City would be required to repay VDOT the monies it has already spent in Phase I for engineering, design and construction of the Clermont Interchange. This is based on the commitment Council made in Resolution No.1644 (Attachment 5) to the two phase construction project, the interchange and the connector. According to VDOT, the amount of the repayment for Phase I could be anywhere from \$2 million to \$11.5 million, depending upon a negotiated settlement between the City and VDOT. The final amount would be taken from City Urban Transportation funds. Obviously, this has a significant financial impact that will require serious study and discussion before we determine the final outcome.

Our study will need to take into consideration a number of factors including how to improve access to and from the Eisenhower Valley. The valley has been and continues to be viewed by the City and the business community as a prime location for economic development. The degree to which vehicles can move in and out of the Valley has a direct bearing on the success of our economic development efforts.

While we have improved access with the opening of the Clermont Interchange, and will have additional improvements with the Mill Road connection to the Beltway as part of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Replacement Project, we still need to address access to and from the middle of the Valley to its western edge, where the only ingress and egress is by Telegraph Road on the east and South Van Dorn Street 3.2 miles to the west. Generally, in an urban area, connector roads between two parallel thoroughfares, like Duke Street and Eisenhower Avenue, occur at points closer than 3.2 miles.

In addition, the number of connectors between two thoroughfares plays a significant role in the efficient movement of traffic along the thoroughfares themselves and through their intersections. In this case, Eisenhower Avenue and Duke Street are not able to function efficiently, as traffic is forced to use either Van Dorn Street or Telegraph Road, which are heavily traveled in the a.m. and p.m. rush hours and are impacted by conditions on the Beltway and the Wilson Bridge. This results

in a substandard Level of Service (E or F) at the intersections with Van Dorn Street and Telegraph Road during peak hours.

Without another connector roadway to relieve the pressure, substantial improvements would be required at the Van Dorn Street and Telegraph Road intersections to move traffic through these intersections at an acceptable level of service. Examples could include right-of way acquisition at Van Dorn Street and Eisenhower Avenue, as well as at Van Dorn Street and Duke Street, to facilitate dual right and left turn lanes, additional through lanes or separated grade interchanges along Van Dorn Street.

Traffic on our arterial roadways is increasing at the rate of 3 to 4 % a year, and will continue to do so regardless of whether the City chooses the build or no build option for the connector road. In addition, projects such as the proposed Franconia/Van Dorn separated grade interchange in Fairfax County will put additional pressure on Alexandria's overburdened arterial network along Van Dorn Street and at its intersecting streets.

To accomplish the proposed study, I am recommending that City Council adopt the attached Resolution (Attachment 1) that establishes an *ad hoc* Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street Connector Task Force composed of the following nine members:

- Two Council Members appointed by the Mayor
- One representative from each of the following organizations:
 - Eisenhower Partnership
 - Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
- ~~Two~~ Three citizens representing citizen groups as follows:
 - One citizen representing Cameron Station
 - ~~One citizen representing one of~~ Two citizens from among the following citizen groups:
 - Holmes Run Committee
 - Wakefield Tarleton Civic Association
 - Strawberry Hill Civic Association
 - Summer's Grove
 - Townes of Cameron Park
- Two citizens at large

The Task Force, with the assistance of a consultant hired by the City, would review Alternative 5 for the Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street connector roadway, as endorsed in Resolution No. 1644; explore other feasible alternatives between Telegraph Road and Van Dorn Street and a no-build option; and recommend to City Council the best course of action for the City. The final report of the Task Force would be due approximately one year from the date of the first task force meeting.

Due to the importance of this issue, I am proposing that the City, rather than VDOT, undertake the study, which means that we would be responsible for its cost, currently estimated at \$100,000. The \$100,000 would come from the City's Urban Transportation funds. If VDOT undertakes the study, it could not begin the process until August with an expected completion date of one year. In addition, the City could engage the services of one of its own engineer of record consultants. The consultant would then be directly responsible to the City. The consultant would be tasked to analyze alternative alignments and evaluate their quality of life impacts on neighborhoods and the environment, as well as their economic development, traffic and financial impacts. VDOT would still participate in the study, providing information and data which are relevant to the work of the task force.

Because of state policy changes related to construction allocation procedures, the City must adopt the attached resolution (Attachment 2) requesting VDOT to program the Eisenhower-to-Duke connector as a new "urban system highway project." This policy change reduces the City's required match for project costs from a 5% to a 2% share. This means that the state would commit to pay 98% of the project cost if the City decided to construct a connector, and the City would commit to paying 2%. However, the City would have to reimburse VDOT for any funds VDOT expends for an Eisenhower-to-Duke connector if work began and the City decided to cancel the project. This arrangement relates only to the construction of the Eisenhower-to-Duke connector. The reimbursement issue VDOT has raised regarding the repayment of funds for the Phase I construction of the Clermont Interchange, should the City decide not to build the Eisenhower-to-Duke connector, is a separate matter.

FISCAL IMPACT: The cost to do the re-study is estimated to be \$100,000 and the source of funding would be City Urban Transportation funds.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution creating the Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street Connector Task Force
2. VDOT Resolution
3. Preliminary alignments for the Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street connector alternatives
4. Five candidate build alternatives for the Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street connector
5. Resolution No. 1644 dated May 25, 1993

STAFF: Richard J. Baier, P.E., Director, Transportation and Environmental Services

REVISED VERSION AS OF 3-12-01
See Changes Identified in Redline

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, City Council wishes to establish a task force to reexamine the alternatives for an Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street connector as part of Phase II of the Clermont Interchange Project.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA:

1. That there is hereby established an *ad hoc* task force known as the Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street Connector Task Force.

2. That the task force shall consist of nine members as follows:

2 Members of City Council

~~2~~ *Alexandria business owners or representatives of businesses, at least one of whom shall represent a business interest located in the Eisenhower Valley.*
Citizen representative from each of the following organizations:
Eisenhower Partnership
Alexandria Chamber of Commerce

~~2~~ *3* Citizens ~~representing citizen groups as follows:~~ *residing generally in the area encompassing the following citizen groups:*

- ~~1~~ citizen representing Cameron Station
- ~~1~~ *2* citizens from among the following citizen groups:
 - Holmes Run Committee
 - Wakefield Tarleton Civic Association
 - Strawberry Hill Civic Association
 - Summer's Grove
 - Townes of Cameron Park
 - Cameron Station*

2 Citizens at large

3. That the Mayor shall appoint the two members of City Council, and select a convenor, and the City Council shall appoint the citizen members of the task force.

4. That staff assistance shall be provided to the task force by the City's Department of Transportation and Environmental Services.

5. That the Virginia Department of Transportation be invited to provide technical assistance to the task force.

6. That the functions of the task force shall be:
- a. Review Alternate 5 endorsed by City Council in Resolution No.1644 adopted by City Council on May 25, 1993.
 - b. Review additional alternative alignments to Duke Street that may be feasible between Telegraph Road and South Van Dorn Street.
 - c. Review a no-build alternative.
 - d. Analyze each of the above alternatives from an economic development, environmental, traffic, neighborhood impact and financial standpoint and recommend to the City Council the best alternative to pursue.
 - e. Prepare for City Council a final report approximately one year from the date of the first meeting of the task force.

ADOPTED:

KERRY J. DONLEY MAYOR

ATTEST:

Beverly I. Jett, CMC City Clerk

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, in accordance with Virginia Department of Transportation construction allocation procedures, it is necessary that a request by council resolution be made in order that the Virginia Department of Transportation program an urban highway project in the City of Alexandria;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of Alexandria, Virginia requests the Virginia Department of Transportation to establish an urban system highway project for the construction of a connector from Eisenhower Avenue to Duke Street, ~~a distance of approximately .61 miles;~~ *or other primary arterial.*

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council of Alexandria hereby agrees to pay its share of the total cost for preliminary engineering, right of way and construction of the project described in the foregoing paragraph in accordance with Section 33.1-44 of the Code of Virginia, and that, if the City of Alexandria subsequently elects to cancel this project, the City of Alexandria hereby agrees to reimburse the Virginia Department of Transportation for the total amount of the costs expended by the Department through the date the Department is notified of such cancellation.

ADOPTED:

on the project as referenced in paragraph two of this resolution

as referenced in paragraph two of this resolution

KERRY J. DONLEY

MAYOR

ATTEST:

Beverly I. Jett, CMC

City Clerk

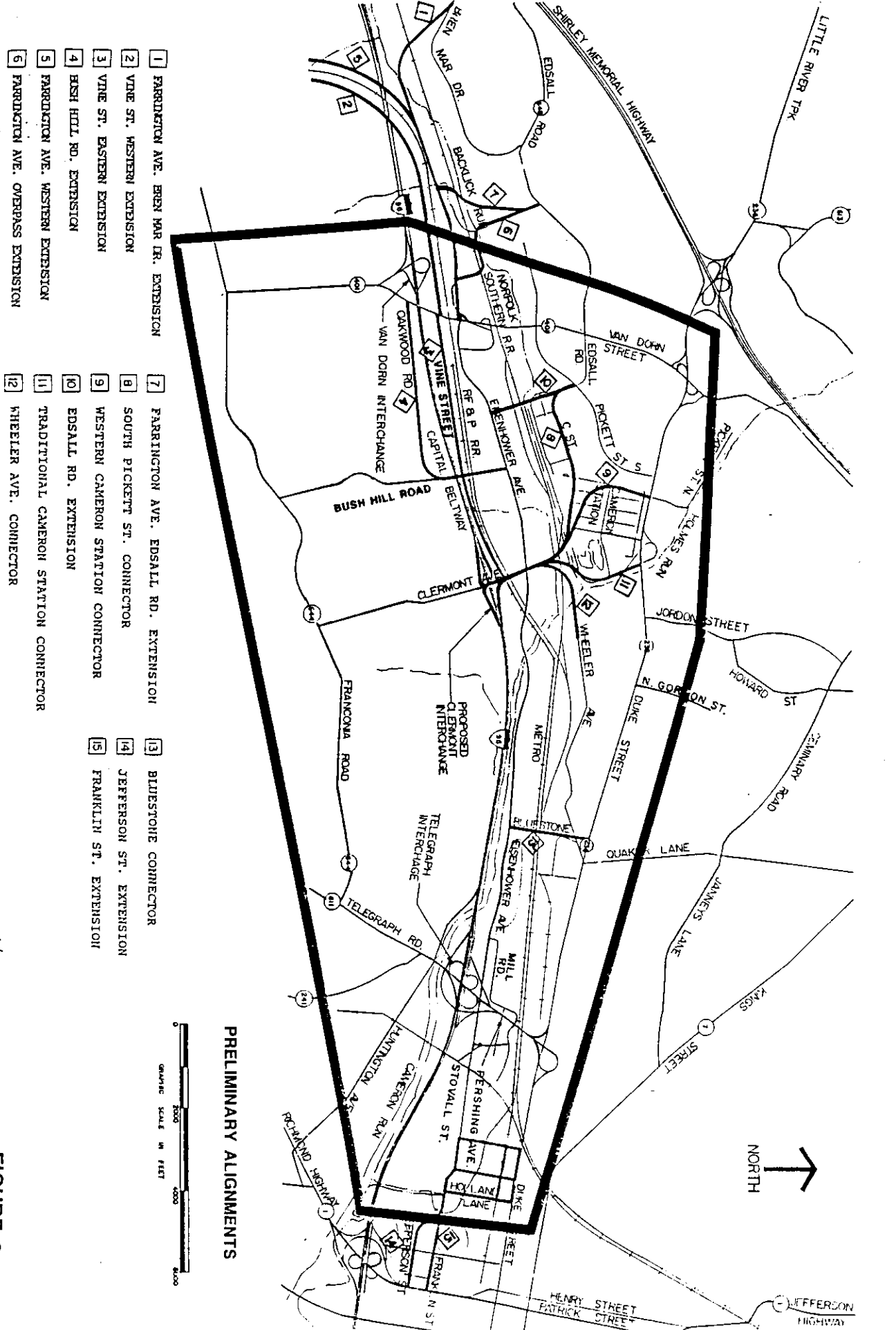


FIGURE 6

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

I-95 / CLERMONT AVENUE INTERCHANGE

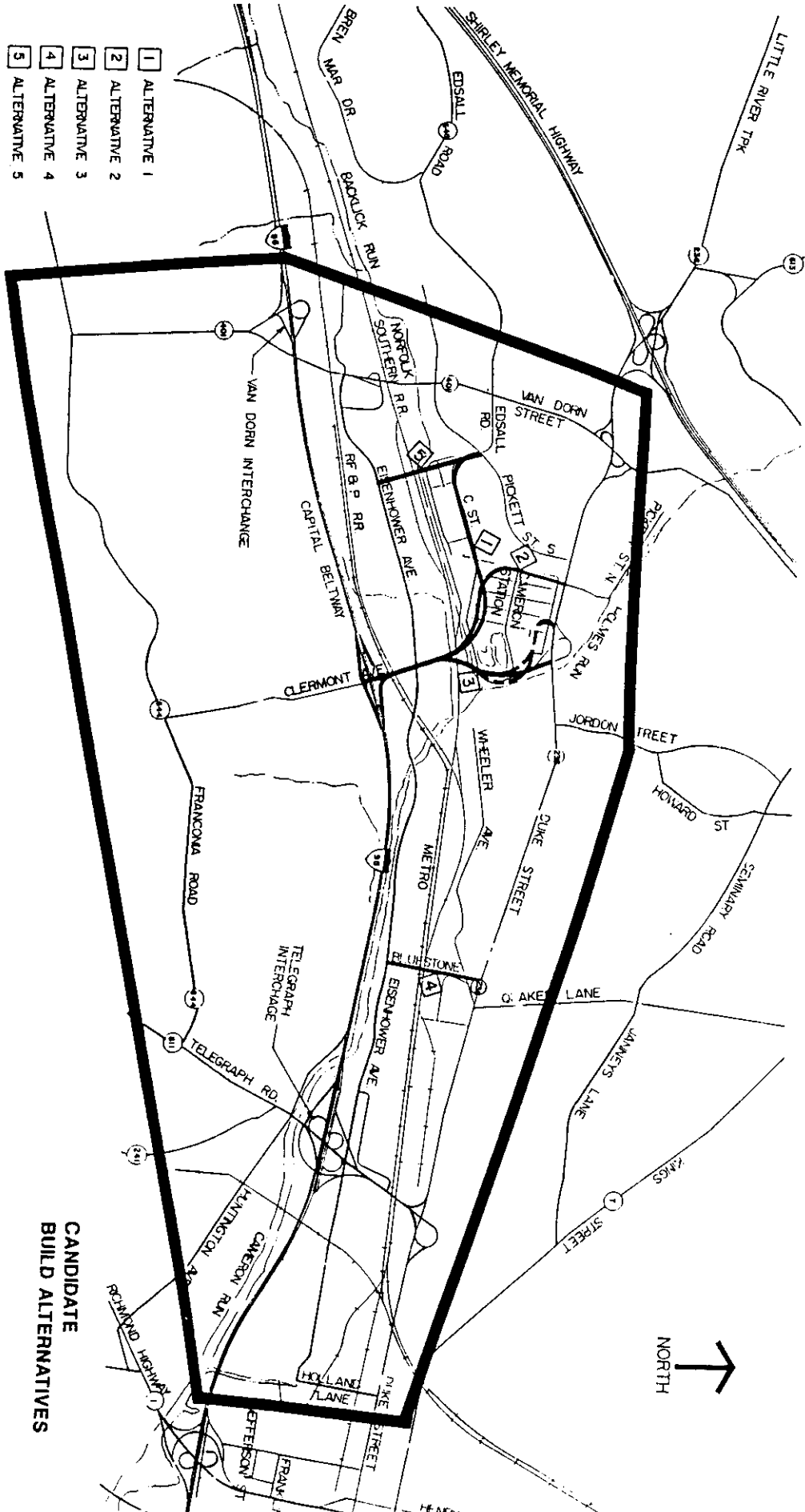


FIGURE 4

CANDIDATE
BUILD ALTERNATIVES

CLERMONT AVENUE INTERCHANGE AND CONNECTION
BETWEEN INTERSTATE 95 AND DUKE STREET
PROJECT U000-100-109

RESOLUTION NO. 1644

WHEREAS, a Location Public Hearing was conducted on May 6, 1993, in the City of Alexandria by representatives of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Transportation, after due and proper notice, for the purpose of considering the proposed location of the Clermont Avenue Interchange and connection between Interstate 95 and Duke Street, Project U000-100-109, PE103 in the City of Alexandria and Fairfax County, at which hearing aerial photographs, drawings and other pertinent information were made available for public inspection in accordance with State and Federal requirements; and

WHEREAS, all persons and parties in attendance were afforded full opportunity to participate in said public hearing; and

WHEREAS, representatives of the City of Alexandria were present and participated in said hearing; and

WHEREAS, the Council had previously requested the Virginia Department of Transportation to program this project; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is required by Federal law to establish logical project termini for environmental evaluation purposes; and

WHEREAS, the study established as logical termini Interstate 95 and Duke Street and can be considered as a two-phase project: Phase I consisting of the interchange with I-95, a connection to Eisenhower Avenue, and a bikeway connection between Eisenhower Avenue and Clermont Avenue in Fairfax County, and Phase II consisting of a connector from Eisenhower Avenue to Duke Street; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria City Council recognizes FHWA's legal obligation to evaluate project environmental impacts between logical termini; and

WHEREAS, Section 33.1-44 of the Code of Virginia requires a local commitment of matching funds for construction urban street projects before a project is allowed to proceed; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia 2010 Statewide Highway Plan identifies a project corridor for improvements from I-95 to Duke Street in the City of Alexandria; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria City Council understands that additional study of the transportation infrastructure for Phase II may be required before it is constructed; and

WHEREAS, the Council has considered all such matters;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that City Council hereby approves the location of the proposed project as presented at the public hearing and endorses Line 5 as a part of Phase II but recognizes that additional study of Phase II may be needed based on the operational experience of Phase I, and

That the Council hereby commits the City funds that are necessary to match the State and Federal shares for constructing Phase I of the project.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, to be affixed this 25th day of May, 1993.

ADOPTED: May 25, 1993


PATRICIA S. TICER MAYOR

ATTEST:


Beverly I. Jett, CMC City Clerk

RESOLUTION NO. 1995

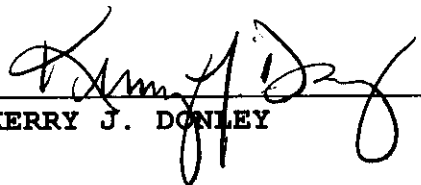
WHEREAS, City Council wishes to establish a task force to reexamine the alternatives for an Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street connector as part of Phase II of the Clermont Interchange Project.

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2. That the task force shall consist of nine members as follows:
 - 2 Members of City Council
 - 2 Alexandria business owners, or representatives of businesses, at least one of whom shall represent a business interest located in the Eisenhower Valley.
 - 3 citizens residing generally in the area encompassing the following citizen groups:
 - Cameron Station
 - Holmes Run Committee
 - Wakefield Tarleton Civic Association
 - Strawberry Hill Civic Association
 - Summer's Grove
 - Townes of Cameron Park
 - 2 citizens at-large
3. That the Mayor shall appoint the two members of City Council, and select a convenor, and the City Council shall appoint the citizen members of the task force.
4. That staff assistance shall be provided to the task force by the City's Department of Transportation and Environmental Services.
5. That the Virginia Department of Transportation be invited to provide technical assistance to the task force.
6. That the functions of the task force shall be:
 - a. Review Alternate 5 endorsed by City Council in Resolution No. 1644 adopted by City Council on May 25, 1993.
 - b. Review additional, alternative alignments to Duke Street that may be feasible between Telegraph Road and South Van Dorn Street.
 - c. Review a no-build alternative.
 - d. Analyze each of the above alternatives from an economic development, environmental, traffic, neighborhood impact and financial standpoint and recommend to the City Council the best alternative to pursue.

- e. Prepare for City Council a final report approximately one year from the date of the first meeting of the task force.

ADOPTED: March 13, 2001



KERRY J. DONLEY MAYOR

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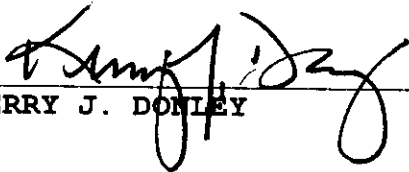
RESOLUTION NO. 1996

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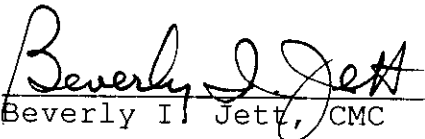
NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of Alexandria, Virginia, requests the Virginia Department of Transportation to establish an urban system highway project for the construction of a connector from Eisenhower Avenue to Duke Street or other primary arterial.

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ADOPTED: March 13, 2001


KERRY J. DONLEY MAYOR

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

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DATE: MARCH 8, 2001
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL
FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*
SUBJECT: RE-STUDY OF THE ALTERNATIVES FOR AN EISENHOWER AVENUE-TO-DUKE STREET CONNECTOR

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On May 25, 1993, City Council adopted Resolution No. 1644 (Attachment 5) which was supported by the Clermont Interchange Task Force, VDOT and FHWA and which: (1) endorsed the location of the Clermont Interchange Phase I; (2) endorsed a connector from Eisenhower Avenue to Duke Street Phase II via South Pickett Street (Alternate 5) at a future date after additional study of the transportation infrastructure; and (3) included a bike trail between Eisenhower Avenue and Clermont Avenue in Fairfax County. The City supported the Clermont Interchange because it provided traffic relief for the overburdened Van Dorn and Telegraph Road interchanges, served large volumes of traffic in the Duke Street corridor by providing direct access to I-95, and supported the commercial and industrial growth occurring along Eisenhower Avenue.

Construction of the Clermont Interchange began in 1996. The interchange was completed in 1997, opening to traffic on August 1. Since then the City has approved a Coordinated Development District (CDD) for Cameron Station (the site of the former Cameron Station military base) where approximately one-third of the more than 2,100 dwelling units have been constructed and where approximately 15,000 square feet of neighborhood retail will be located. In June 2000, the City broke ground for the new Ben Brenman Park. The new Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School opened in the Fall of 2000.

The plans for Cameron Station show a portion of the land on the western side of Armistead L. Boothe Park reserved for Alternative 5. The reservation of this right-of-way easement was done as part of the process to transfer 62 acres of land from the U.S. Department of the Interior-National Park Service to the City to be used for Ben Brenman Park and Armistead L. Boothe Park. It should be noted that if Alternative 3, located on the eastern side of Ben Brenman Park (see Attachment 4), were to be the preferred route for an Eisenhower-to-Duke connector, it would require U.S. Department of Interior-National Park Service approval to use land from Ben Brenman Park for the connector right-of-way in exchange for releasing the right-of-way now reserved through Armistead L. Boothe Park.

DISCUSSION: Last summer, VDOT contacted the City to determine when the City would be going forward with Phase II of the Clermont Interchange Project, the connection between Eisenhower Avenue and Duke Street. VDOT had programmed \$8.4 million for the design and construction of Phase II.

At Council's 2000 fall retreat, staff reviewed the background of the Clermont Interchange Project and recommended that the City engage in a re-study of Phase II before proceeding any further with this project. The study would review current land uses, including the redeveloped Cameron Station, the new school and the newly developed Ben Brenman and Armistead L. Boothe Parks. It would also examine the proposed connection (Alternative 5) endorsed by City Council in 1993, the traffic benefits produced by an Eisenhower-to-Duke connection, alternative road connections to Duke Street that may be feasible between Telegraph Road and South Van Dorn Street, as well as a no-build option, and would make a recommendation to City Council on the best alternative for the City.

At the retreat, staff also informed City Council that, according to VDOT, if Council ultimately decided not to build a connector, the City would be required to repay VDOT the monies it has already spent in Phase I for engineering, design and construction of the Clermont Interchange. This is based on the commitment Council made in Resolution No.1644 (Attachment 5) to the two phase construction project, the interchange and the connector. According to VDOT, the amount of the repayment for Phase I could be anywhere from \$2 million to \$11.5 million, depending upon a negotiated settlement between the City and VDOT. The final amount would be taken from City Urban Transportation funds. Obviously, this has a significant financial impact that will require serious study and discussion before we determine the final outcome.

Our study will need to take into consideration a number of factors including how to improve access to and from the Eisenhower Valley. The valley has been and continues to be viewed by the City and the business community as a prime location for economic development. The degree to which vehicles can move in and out of the Valley has a direct bearing on the success of our economic development efforts.

While we have improved access with the opening of the Clermont Interchange, and will have additional improvements with the Mill Road connection to the Beltway as part of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge Replacement Project, we still need to address access to and from the middle of the Valley to its western edge, where the only ingress and egress is by Telegraph Road on the east and South Van Dorn Street 3.2 miles to the west. Generally, in an urban area, connector roads between two parallel thoroughfares, like Duke Street and Eisenhower Avenue, occur at points closer than 3.2 miles.

In addition, the number of connectors between two thoroughfares plays a significant role in the efficient movement of traffic along the thoroughfares themselves and through their intersections. In this case, Eisenhower Avenue and Duke Street are not able to function efficiently, as traffic is forced to use either Van Dorn Street or Telegraph Road, which are heavily traveled in the a.m. and p.m. rush hours and are impacted by conditions on the Beltway and the Wilson Bridge. This results

in a substandard Level of Service (E or F) at the intersections with Van Dorn Street and Telegraph Road during peak hours.

Without another connector roadway to relieve the pressure, substantial improvements would be required at the Van Dorn Street and Telegraph Road intersections to move traffic through these intersections at an acceptable level of service. Examples could include right-of way acquisition at Van Dorn Street and Eisenhower Avenue, as well as at Van Dorn Street and Duke Street, to facilitate dual right and left turn lanes, additional through lanes or separated grade interchanges along Van Dorn Street.

Traffic on our arterial roadways is increasing at the rate of 3 to 4 % a year, and will continue to do so regardless of whether the City chooses the build or no build option for the connector road. In addition, projects such as the proposed Franconia/Van Dorn separated grade interchange in Fairfax County will put additional pressure on Alexandria's overburdened arterial network along Van Dorn Street and at its intersecting streets.

To accomplish the proposed study, I am recommending that City Council adopt the attached Resolution (Attachment 1) that establishes an *ad hoc* Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street Connector Task Force composed of the following nine members:

Two Council Members appointed by the Mayor

One representative from each of the following organizations:

Eisenhower Partnership
Alexandria Chamber of Commerce

Two citizens representing citizen groups as follows:

One citizen representing Cameron Station
One citizen representing one of the following citizen groups:
Holmes Run Committee
Wakefield Tarleton Civic Association
Strawberry Hill Civic Association
Summer's Grove
Townes of Cameron Park

Two citizens at large

The Task Force, with the assistance of a consultant hired by the City, would review Alternative 5 for the Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street connector roadway, as endorsed in Resolution No. 1644; explore other feasible alternatives between Telegraph Road and Van Dorn Street and a no-build option; and recommend to City Council the best course of action for the City. The final report of the Task Force would be due approximately one year from the date of the first task force meeting.

Due to the importance of this issue, I am proposing that the City, rather than VDOT, undertake the study, which means that we would be responsible for its cost, currently estimated at \$100,000. The \$100,000 would come from the City's Urban Transportation funds. If VDOT undertakes the study, it could not begin the process until August with an expected completion date of one year. In addition, the City could engage the services of one of its own engineer of record consultants. The consultant would then be directly responsible to the City. The consultant would be tasked to analyze alternative alignments and evaluate their quality of life impacts on neighborhoods and the environment, as well as their economic development, traffic and financial impacts. VDOT would still participate in the study, providing information and data which are relevant to the work of the task force.

Because of state policy changes related to construction allocation procedures, the City must adopt the attached resolution (Attachment 2) requesting VDOT to program the Eisenhower-to-Duke connector as a new "urban system highway project." This policy change reduces the City's required match for project costs from a 5% to a 2% share. This means that the state would commit to pay 98% of the project cost if the City decided to construct a connector, and the City would commit to paying 2%. However, the City would have to reimburse VDOT for any funds VDOT expends for an Eisenhower-to-Duke connector if work began and the City decided to cancel the project. This arrangement relates only to the construction of the Eisenhower-to-Duke connector. The reimbursement issue VDOT has raised regarding the repayment of funds for the Phase I construction of the Clermont Interchange, should the City decide not to build the Eisenhower-to-Duke connector, is a separate matter.

FISCAL IMPACT: The cost to do the re-study is estimated to be \$100,000 and the source of funding would be City Urban Transportation funds.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Resolution creating the Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street Connector Task Force
2. VDOT Resolution
3. Preliminary alignments for the Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street connector alternatives
4. Five candidate build alternatives for the Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street connector
5. Resolution No. 1644 dated May 25, 1993

STAFF: Richard J. Baier, P.E., Director, Transportation and Environmental Services

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, City Council wishes to establish a task force to reexamine the alternatives for an Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street connector as part of Phase II of the Clermont Interchange Project.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE
CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA:**

1. That there is hereby established an *ad hoc* task force known as the Eisenhower Avenue-to-Duke Street Connector Task Force.
2. That the task force shall consist of nine members as follows:
 - 2 Members of City Council
 - 1 Citizen representative from each of the following organizations:
 - Eisenhower Partnership
 - Alexandria Chamber of Commerce
 - 2 Citizens representing citizen groups as follows:
 - 1 citizen representing Cameron Station
 - 1 citizen representing one of the following citizen groups:
 - Holmes Run Committee
 - Wakefield Tarleton Civic Association
 - Strawberry Hill Civic Association
 - Summer's Grove
 - Townes of Cameron Park
 - 2 Citizens at large
3. That the Mayor shall appoint the two members of City Council, and select a convenor, and the City Council shall appoint the citizen members of the task force.
4. That staff assistance shall be provided to the task force by the City's Department of Transportation and Environmental Services.
5. That the Virginia Department of Transportation be invited to provide technical assistance to the task force.

6. That the functions of the task force shall be:
- a. Review Alternate 5 endorsed by City Council in Resolution No. 1644 adopted by City Council on May 25, 1993.
 - b. Review additional alternative alignments to Duke Street that may be feasible between Telegraph Road and South Van Dorn Street.
 - c. Review a no-build alternative.
 - d. Analyze each of the above alternatives from an economic development, environmental, traffic, neighborhood impact and financial standpoint and recommend to the City Council the best alternative to pursue.
 - e. Prepare for City Council a final report approximately one year from the date of the first meeting of the task force.

ADOPTED:

KERRY J. DONLEY MAYOR

ATTEST:

Beverly I. Jett, CMC City Clerk

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, in accordance with Virginia Department of Transportation construction allocation procedures, it is necessary that a request by council resolution be made in order that the Virginia Department of Transportation program an urban highway project in the City of Alexandria;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the City Council of Alexandria, Virginia requests the Virginia Department of Transportation to establish an urban system highway project for the construction of a connector from Eisenhower Avenue to Duke Street, a distance of approximately .61 miles;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the City Council of Alexandria hereby agrees to pay its share of the total cost for preliminary engineering, right of way and construction of the project described in the foregoing paragraph in accordance with Section 33.1-44 of the Code of Virginia, and that, if the City of Alexandria subsequently elects to cancel this project, the City of Alexandria hereby agrees to reimburse the Virginia Department of Transportation for the total amount of the costs expended by the Department through the date the Department is notified of such cancellation.

ADOPTED:

KERRY J. DONLEY

MAYOR

ATTEST:

Beverly I. Jett, CMC

City Clerk

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

I-95 / CLERMONT AVENUE INTERCHANGE

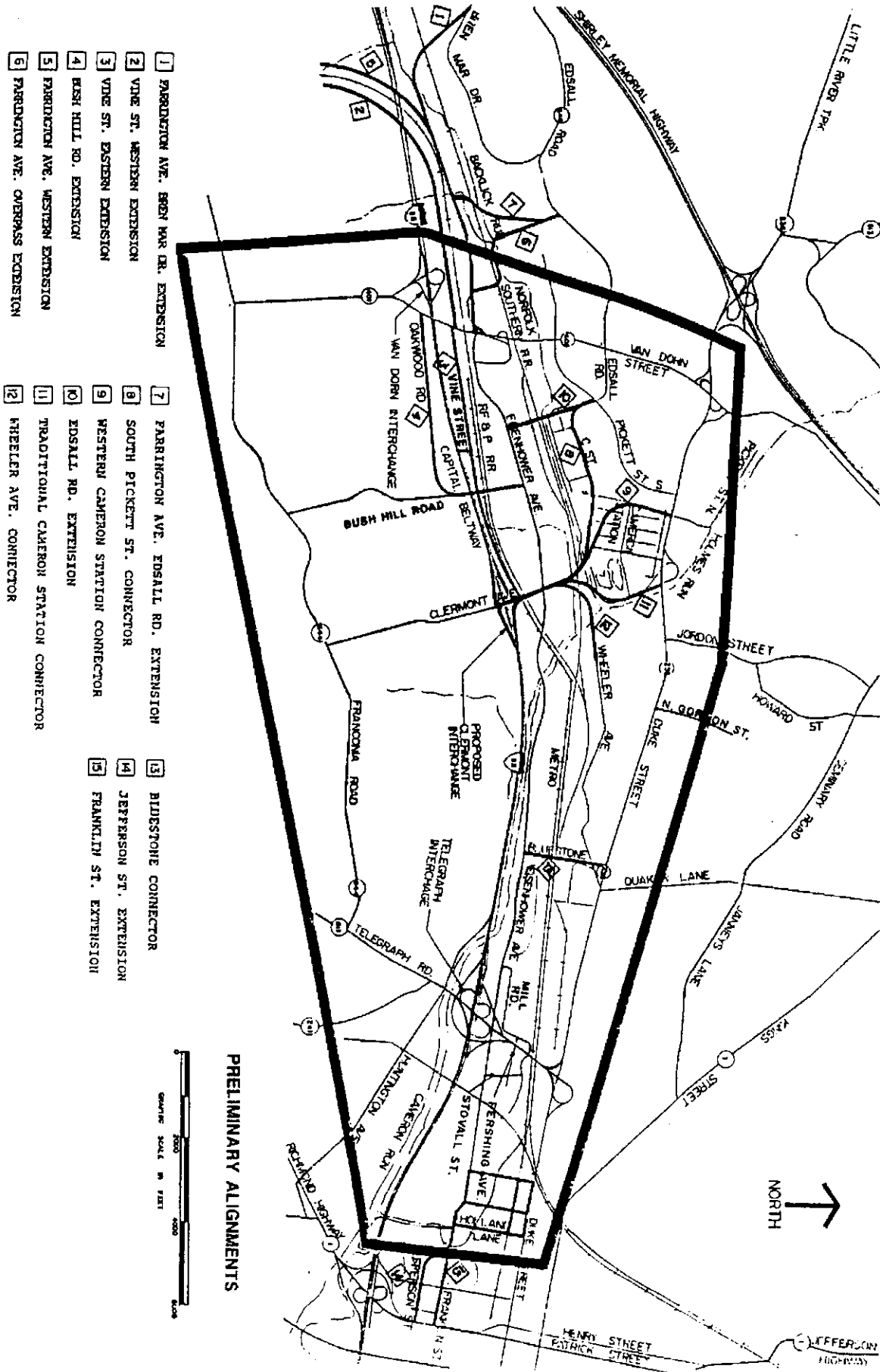


FIGURE 6

ATTACHMENT 4

VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

I-95 / CLERMONT AVENUE INTERCHANGE

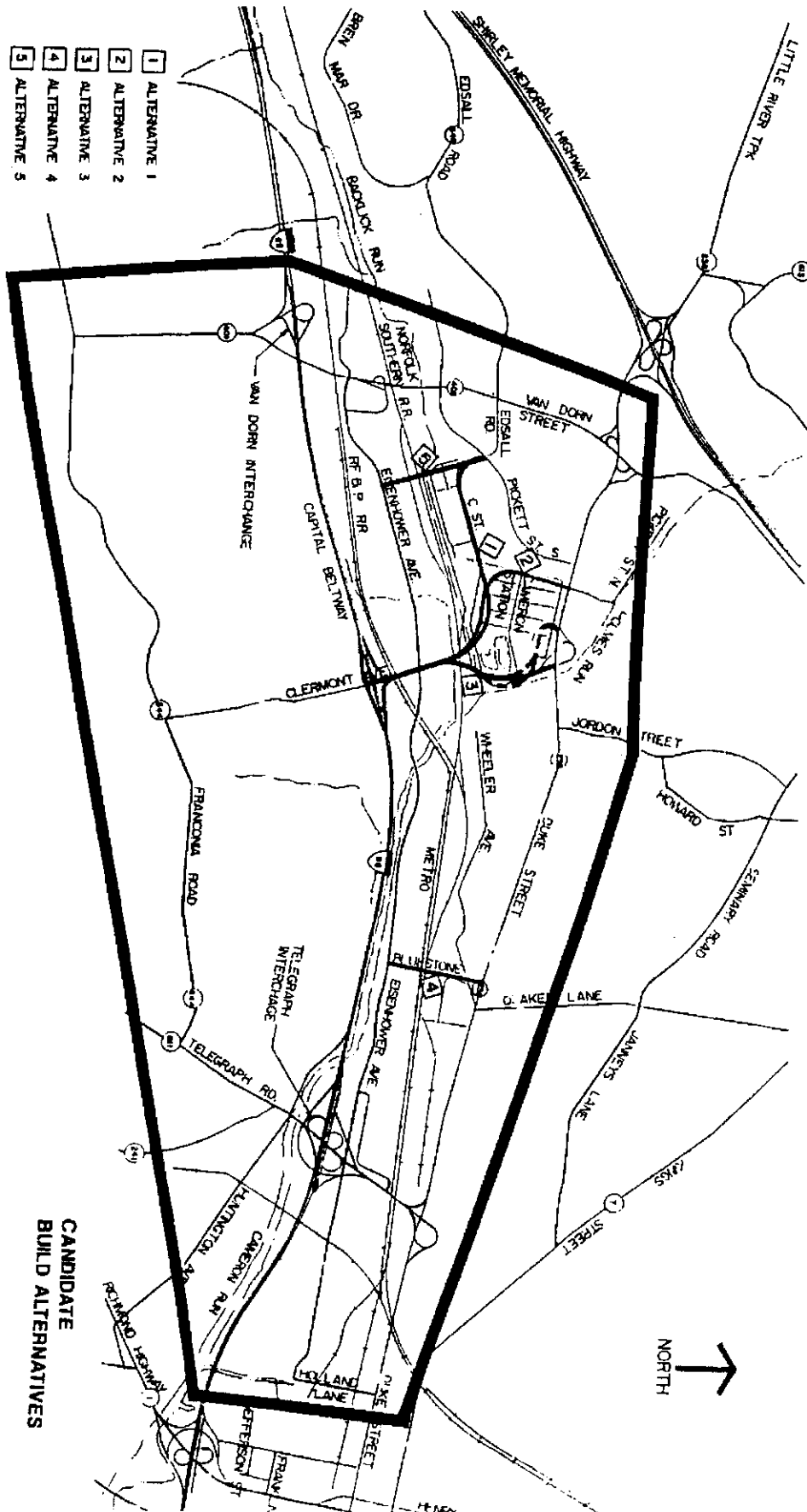


FIGURE 4

CLERMONT AVENUE INTERCHANGE AND CONNECTION
BETWEEN INTERSTATE 95 AND DUKE STREET
PROJECT U000-100-109

RESOLUTION NO. 1644

WHEREAS, a Location Public Hearing was conducted on May 6, 1993, in the City of Alexandria by representatives of the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Transportation, after due and proper notice, for the purpose of considering the proposed location of the Clermont Avenue Interchange and connection between Interstate 95 and Duke Street, Project U000-100-109, PE103 in the City of Alexandria and Fairfax County, at which hearing aerial photographs, drawings and other pertinent information were made available for public inspection in accordance with State and Federal requirements; and

WHEREAS, all persons and parties in attendance were afforded full opportunity to participate in said public hearing; and

WHEREAS, representatives of the City of Alexandria were present and participated in said hearing; and

WHEREAS, the Council had previously requested the Virginia Department of Transportation to program this project; and

WHEREAS, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) is required by Federal law to establish logical project termini for environmental evaluation purposes; and

WHEREAS, the study established as logical termini Interstate 95 and Duke Street and can be considered as a two-phase project; Phase I consisting of the interchange with I-95, a connection to Eisenhower Avenue, and a bikeway connection between Eisenhower Avenue and Clermont Avenue in Fairfax County, and Phase II consisting of a connector from Eisenhower Avenue to Duke Street; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria City Council recognizes FHWA's legal obligation to evaluate project environmental impacts between logical termini; and

WHEREAS, Section 33.1-44 of the Code of Virginia requires a local commitment of matching funds for construction urban street projects before a project is allowed to proceed; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia 2010 Statewide Highway Plan identifies a project corridor for improvements from I-95 to Duke Street in the City of Alexandria; and

WHEREAS, the Alexandria City Council understands that additional study of the transportation infrastructure for Phase II may be required before it is constructed; and

WHEREAS, the Council has considered all such matters;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that City Council hereby approves the location of the proposed project as presented at the public hearing and endorses Line 5 as a part of Phase II but recognizes that additional study of Phase II may be needed based on the operational experience of Phase I, and

That the Council hereby commits the City funds that are necessary to match the State and Federal shares for constructing Phase I of the project.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Seal of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, to be affixed this 25th day of May, 1993.

ADOPTED: May 25, 1993


PATRICIA S. TICER MAYOR

ATTEST:


Beverly I. Jett, CMC City Clerk