

[EXTERNAL](corrected) Comments for Planning Commission concerning Transportation Management Plan amendments

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Tue 12/6/2022 11:18 AM

To: PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

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Correction – typo (PARAGRAPH 3)

TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION FOR MEETING ON DEC 6, 2022:

Re: Docket Item #4: TMP program amendments to City ordinance.

We are an existing TMP for a tiny development (76 units) built in 1994. We are on a bus line (which we use frequently), which ultimately feeds into the Pentagon or King Street metro stations. We were saddled with the TMP Ordinance requirements by the Developer, despite being a separate HOA with fewer than 100 units (which had been the base level for requiring a TMP in 1987).

Nevertheless, we have actively and dutifully maintained a TMP for our development with cash benefits to our owners to encourage use of mass transit, shared rides, and use of bicycles. Here we are, 28 years later, continuing this program, but now, very few of our owners use the TMP fund we have, because so many are either retired or work from home. The younger owners/residents, who work downtown, use public transportation paid for by their employers and the rest of us use public transportation when feasible, or use bicycles, supported by our TMP fund.

Our request here is to be able to be included in the 30 year termination policy without having to pay into the Alexandria City Fund, which would effectively require us to pay an unfair and unjustified tax to the City. We have complied with the TMP requirements, and as noted in your staff report, developments after 30 years have already established their commuting and traveling habits. We are grateful for the expansion of public transportation to N. Hampton Drive (far west end) that enables our residents to use the DASH bus to connect to WMATA Metro and to travel to shopping areas in the City, but we should NOT have to continue to pay into the TMP into eternity. Our TMP is now 28 years old.

For the current proposed amendments, we request that the policy regarding terminating a TMP fund which has operated over 30 years also apply to existing self-managed small TMP's, like ours. Those of us who have paid into our TMP, complied with the City Requirements, and helped to discourage the use of single occupancy vehicles should not be required to continue this program after our 30 year term ends. Failure of the City to provide us the same benefit as that provided to major developments is an unfair tax on individual homeowners that pay taxes to the City. Unlike older developments, our HOA has to pay for our own trash pickup, our own sewer lines, our own street maintenance, and our own street lighting. All of these services are otherwise paid by the City for other taxpayers. Your new policy permitting termination of a TMP after 30 years should also apply to existing TMPs that are self managed and have met our goals.

Please acknowledge that this letter will be seen by the Planning Commission prior to their Vote tonight and let me know if we need to do anything else to have our comments

included. I just learned about this item on the agenda today and cannot be present for the meeting tonight.

Thank you for considering this request for the Ordinance changes anticipated.

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**STATEMENT OF MORGAN BABCOCK
TMP COORDINATOR
CARLYLE COUNCIL**

Re: Planning Commission- Docket Item #4 Text Amendment #2022-00012

Thank you, Madame Chair, and members of the Planning Commission. I am testifying today on behalf of the Carlyle Council Transportation Management Plan (TMP) that was started in 1990. Our TMP is the oldest and largest in the City. The Carlyle Community includes 28 buildings with our last one breaking ground in 2023, 4.3 million square feet of commercial space, over 1,700 residential units and several beautiful parks. Our thousands of residents, workers, and visitors are served by transit including the King St. and Eisenhower metro stations, DASH and Fairfax County bus service. We consider ourselves a pedestrian friendly community that is walkable and bikeable. With this in mind, please know that the proposal before you tonight is not ready for prime time and you should postpone any action on it.

We have extensive experience successfully managing our TMP and even won an excellence award from MWCOG (Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments) (2017) for outstanding achievement. We have worked closely with the City over the years to make our TMP the best it can be. As such, we were very surprised that City staff did not reach out to discuss these significant TMP changes with us as they were being developed. Only in the last week did we become aware this proposal was being fast-tracked to enactment. The proposed document raises many questions that could have significant impacts. **Again, we request that the Planning Commission delay any action until these questions can be answered.**

The actual purpose, execution, and potential impact of this proposal for our TMP as well as the entire TMP network is unclear. In my effort to find out more, I have learned little. I hope that the Planning Commission will have better luck getting answers. Just in case, I have attached to this statement a list of my questions I would like answered.

In regard to the potential impact on Carlyle's TMP, the proposal says that TMPs that are more than 30 years old can simply end. What does this mean for Carlyle? We provide a workday shuttle service, offer bikeshare, transit and other incentives, a popular Bike to Work Day program, community events and conduct an annual satisfaction survey. With a new building coming on line in early 2024, who would be responsible for managing their SOV? Who would help get a bus stop on Hoofs Run Drive where there isn't one?

One unique part of our TMP duties is management of the pedestrian tunnel that connects Carlyle to the King St. Metro Station. The tunnel was built when the USPTO decided to move its headquarters to Carlyle. It was paid for by the developer but is owned by the City. Even so, our TMP provides state-of-the-art security monitoring services, guard patrol and maintenance services that cost about \$150,000 per year. Is the City prepared to take on this responsibility if the Carlyle TMP ends?

The City requires us to impose and collect a TMP assessment fee on our properties. For many years the rate was excessive and over time we reached an agreement to have our assessment fees be more in line with actual costs. This is a positive example of us working together in a cooperative and transparent way with the City. We would like the same consideration as this proposal is being vetted. For all TMPs, the City sets the assessment



rate each year based on CPI, but there is no financial analysis whether the amount imposed will meet or exceed the needs of each particular TMP. Whether the new changes will be more fiscally prudent or not, is still unclear.

TMPs are funded by residents, businesses, and property owners who live or work in a microcosm of Alexandria. Those TMP contributions have been made with the understanding they will be used locally to directly benefit those making the actual financial contributions. However, it appears with the new system the City can spend those dollars anywhere.

Overall, I understand the need to update the TMP language. For instance, Carlyle has advocated for TMP funds to be used for EV charging stations, but are still not allowed to use them for this because it is still a SOV. As we understand it is still a car, an electric car is just like the electric DASH buses, they are more climate friendly and better for the environment than a regular SOV. Being able to install electric car charging stations would evolve the TMP's into something that the City and residents can be proud of. This is something that was not around when the TMP ordinance was first written and should be discussed during a revision.

I appreciate having the opportunity to present the views of Carlyle to you tonight. We would like to work hand in hand with City staff to fully gain an understanding of what the full steps would be before moving forward. If you have any questions, I will try to answer them. Thank you.

Questions on Docket Item #4

1. Page 2: It would be helpful to show how many TMP's are over 30 years old on the chart. The chart should indicate size and annual TMP assessment amounts for each.
 - a. If you were to end the largest TMPs in the City, it would create service gaps and the City would have to directly manage efforts to reduce SOVs usage.
2. Page 3: Where can we find these Tier charts as you describe in paragraph one.
3. Page 4: How are outstanding TMP balances determined?
4. Page 4: Can Section 11-700 be provided?
5. Page 4:
 - a. Change in Program Administration: If you were to combine funds how would your checks and balance system work to determine where the funds are spent? If one TMP paid 50% more than a smaller TMP would everyone be treated equitably?
 - b. Payment and Credit Structure: This doesn't account for staff turnover, buildings being sold, new building management. If a policy has been in place for 30 years and there has been someone enforcing it, when someone leaves, buildings are sold, etc. the ending of a TMP doesn't reduce SOVs.
6. Page 5: 4. Upfront payments- I think staff should look at this number to evaluate if this discounted rate is really an appropriate discount. This year's CPI increase for the TMP was 8.5%. Granted this may have been an anomaly due to COVID and inflation but typically at least a more modest increase in the 2-4% range has been applied.
7. Page 6: There is no mention in this proposal of upkeep and the costs of replacements items. For example, it took over 2 years to get new Capital Bikeshare Signs in the Stations due to Capital Bikeshare having management issues. If this is to be enacted, the City should set aside funds for upkeep/ maintenance.
8. Page 7: The City's TMP survey should not be used to measure the success of a TMP. The survey questions need to be streamlined and targeted. Carlyle started adding in Carlyle specific questions years ago so we could learn firsthand from our workers and residents what the priorities should be for Carlyle's TMP. Overall, however, response rates are typically low and may not even be statistically valid.
9. Page 11: The City used to have TMP Coordinator/ Manager meetings to review what the expectations are of TMP Coordinators. These meetings have stopped and now the City claims its TMP coordinators are untrained. That seems like a self-fulfilling prophecy.
10. Page 12: The document stipulates that TMPs over 30 years are able to just end. What does this mean? Are there financial consequences, are all program requirements lifted, are there any ongoing duties? Are the residents and workers in a defunct TMP left to fend for themselves?
 - a. What about our SUP for the Duke Street Tunnel?
 - i. The Tunnel has a very intricate security system that requires maintenance checks, expenses for monitoring, maintenance expenses, etc. Would we still be required to fulfill the SUP or is this the responsibility of the City then?
11. Page 13: Self-Managed TMPs- "such as campuses with an interest in reducing parking demand"- Isn't this the goal of a TMP to reduce parking?