



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 1, 2022

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES F. PARAJON, CITY MANAGER /s/

DOCKET TITLE:

Consideration of a Resolution to Establish an Ad Hoc Duke Street Transitway Advisory Group. [ROLL-CALL VOTE]

ISSUE: Consideration of a resolution to establish the Ad Hoc Duke Street Transitway Advisory Group to provide guidance to City Council regarding the design of the Duke Street Transitway corridor.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Receive and approve the attached resolution establishing an Ad Hoc Duke Street Transitway Advisory Group ("Advisory Group"); and
- (2) Authorize the City Manager to appoint the three (3) at-large representatives and one (1) development community representative.

BACKGROUND: In the 2008 Transportation Master Plan, the City identified three high-capacity transit corridors that were then reaffirmed in the 2012 Transit Corridors Feasibility Study. The Duke Street corridor was one of the corridors identified (along with Metroway on Route 1 and West End Transitway) and for which a preferred alternative was selected. The Northern Virginia Transportation Authority funded the project with \$87 million in regional revenue.

Since the adoption of the 2012 Study, transportation priorities, land use plans, and (more recently) a major change in home-to-work travel patterns have created the need to re-evaluate the transit plans for the Duke Street corridor. Staff led extensive public outreach effort in the summer of 2021, called Duke Street In Motion. Over 1,800 responses to the kick-off feedback form were received through the project website and at 23 pop-up events along the corridor.

While transit improvements are the primary focus of this effort, other community priorities such as safety, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and vehicle travel were identified as concerns on the corridor. The alternative identified in the 2012 Study will be reviewed, along with other alternatives developed by the project team (City staff and consultants) and the community, based on input from the Duke Street in Motion outreach effort last summer and upcoming outreach.

DISCUSSION: It is typical of large-scale planning projects such as the Duke Street Transitway to utilize an ad hoc advisory committee to advise staff in the development of the alternatives for public consideration and the endorsement of a preferred alternative for the project improvements. Advisory groups such as this have been extremely helpful in planning projects such as the West End Transitway and the Alexandria Mobility Plan.

Composition:

The Advisory Group would be comprised of nine (9) members who represent a diversity of interests along the Duke Street corridor:

- Transportation Commission member (1)
- Planning Commission member (1)
- Alexandria Commission on Persons with Disabilities member or designee (1)
- DASH Bus Riders Group member or designee (1)
- Federation of Civic Association member or designee (1)
- At-large community representatives (3)
- Representative of the development community (1)

The City Manager will appoint the at-large and development community representatives with members that represent interests unique to this project, such as students, renters, businesses, minority communities, adjacent neighborhoods, and non-driving households. There will be a public call for applications following Council approval of the final group composition. The City Manager will designate the Chair of the advisory group.

Advisory Group Role:

Multiple City Councils and City planning documents have supported the expansion of transit on Duke Street and a future high-capacity transit connection between the West End and King Street Metro. The main purpose of the Advisory Group is to provide guidance to the project team and City Council on the Duke Street Transitway design and ultimately make a recommendation on the preferred design plan for the corridor. The Advisory Group will:

- Consider and adopt the project vision and guiding principles;
- Provide comments and recommendations for corridor design alternatives;
- Recommend to Council to either adopt or amend the recommendation from the 2012 Transit Corridors Feasibility Plan; and
- Provide an endorsement of a preferred alternative for City Council consideration.

Responsibility of Members:

The members of the Advisory Group are expected to:

1. Support the City's community engagement and outreach efforts by speaking on behalf of their representative groups and communicating their interests in this process.
2. Attend and participate fully in all Advisory Group meetings, in addition to attending work sessions and public hearings of the City Council as needed. If unable to attend, members are encouraged to notify staff in advance and provide comments on meeting materials in a timely manner.

Responsibilities of Chair:

1. Serve as a spokesperson for the Advisory Group;
2. Serve as a meeting facilitator; and
3. Work with City staff to set Advisory Group meeting agendas

Staff Support: A representative assigned by the Director of the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services will staff the Advisory Group.

Sunset: Pursuant to City Code Section 2-4-8, the Advisory Group shall meet on an ad hoc basis as needed for one year, with up to an additional 12 months if needed for completion of their stated tasks as defined herein, unless otherwise extended by City Council.

FISCAL IMPACT: There are no fiscal impacts. The Department of Transportation and Environmental Services will staff the Advisory Group.

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment 1: Draft Resolution

Attachment 2: Presentation

STAFF:

Emily A. Baker, Deputy City Manager

Yon Lambert, Director, T&ES

Hillary Orr, Deputy Director, T&ES

Christopher Ziemann, Transportation Planning Division Chief, T&ES

Mark Schnauffer, Bus Rapid Transit Program Manager, T&ES