City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 16, 2015

TO: MEMBERS OF THE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION

FROM: SANDRA MARKS, DEPUTY DIRECTOR, TRANSPORTATION & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

SUBJECT: AGENDA ITEM #9 – OAKVILLE TRIANGLE/ROUTE 1 CORRIDOR PLAN

ISSUE: Update on the Oakville Triangle/Route 1 Corridor Plan

RECOMMENDATION: That the Transportation Commission receive an update on the Oakville Triangle/Route 1 Corridor Plan (Plan), hold a public hearing, review the Plan for consistency with the Transportation Master Plan, and endorse the Plan.

BACKGROUND: City Council directed staff to begin a planning effort that includes Oakville Triangle and adjacent properties as well as the Route 1 corridor north and south of the site. A community Advisory Group was established to assist in developing Plan principles for the site regarding potential land uses, open space, sustainability, transportation and connectivity, and potential community benefits, among other topics.

The Plan establishes a long-term (20 year) vision and framework for the planning area. It addresses future infrastructure, land uses, open space and affordable housing, and is intended to guide public and private investment. The Plan enables connections between people and their jobs, the urban and natural environment, and the planned Potomac Yard Metrorail station. It builds on the strengths of the planning area, the industrial heritage, the character of the adjoining neighborhoods, the transitway and Metrorail station, and the planned and existing uses within Potomac Yard. In addition to setting a framework for the type, scale, and compatibility of anticipated development, the long-term vision for the area also establishes a plan for amenities and improvements.

The Plan will review features such as streetscaping, undergrounding of utilities, and potential redevelopment sites along the western portion of Route 1. The Plan will help to establish a unified streetscape for Route 1 and an integrated approach to potential redevelopment along Route 1.

DISCUSSION: In conjunction with the planning process, a transportation study was completed in March 2015 that examines the impacts of the proposed plan on the transportation network.

One of the key principles of the Plan is to ensure a multi-modal transportation system with multiple, attractive transportation options. To that end, staff conducted a transportation analysis that considered community concerns shared early in the planning process, such as bicycle and pedestrian connectivity, traffic issues at Route 1 and Glebe Road, and traffic calming.

The Plan is consistent with the goals included within the City's Transportation Management Plan (2008), as well as recommendations from the 1992 Potomac West Small Area Plan. It accommodates a multi-modal transportation system by establishing a transportation framework consistent with the Complete Streets Policy (adopted in 2011) that prioritizes pedestrians, bikes and transit. It incorporates the Route 1 Metroway to serve the neighborhoods, ensuring an easy walk to transit stations along Route 1 at Swann Avenue, East Custis Avenue and East Glebe Road. The improved transportation system also expands bicycle and pedestrian options by providing additional facilities (trails, sidewalks, bike lanes and bikeshare stations), and improves pedestrian and bicycle connectivity within the plan area to adjacent neighborhoods. The Plan improves overall vehicular mobility by creating a more connected and urban roadway network, designed in a grid layout to provide better circulation and connectivity for all modes of travel. It also improves a number of intersections to accommodate vehicular traffic. The Plan recommends a comprehensive transportation strategy that makes improvements to all of the transportation systems.

Transportation Analysis

The comprehensive transportation study undertaken in the development of this Plan examined the transportation impacts within the defined Plan area, and extended beyond the Plan boundaries to include 13 intersections in the study.

The transportation analysis is a planning-level study that evaluates the impacts associated with the Plan. The study assumed a full buildout by the year 2027, and assumes changes in regional traffic patterns over that period. All future redevelopment applications associated with the proposed development will require additional traffic studies to analyze specific impacts based on specific development plans for each site. Each will include additional transportation data available at that time and more refined development information. The future studies will also update the traffic impacts associated with specific development and refine the recommended improvements to the transportation plan.

The traffic analysis assumed a number of planned transportation improvements that would be completed at the time of opening of the first phase of development, including the Potomac Yard Metrorail station, and intersection improvements at Route 1 / East Reed Avenue, and at Route 1 / Swann Avenue.

The analysis assumes increases in traffic attributed to regional growth, including approved development in the Plan area by 2027, such as in North and South Potomac Yard. The Plan enhances roadway connectivity in and through the Plan area via pedestrian and bicycle improvements which provide travel choices in terms of route and mode.

The study showed that with the construction of all the recommended transportation improvements, the transportation network operates more efficiently in the 2027 Development Scenario than the 2027 Baseline (no development) Scenario. This is largely due to a number of factors that contribute to improved traffic operations under the 2027 development scenario, including:

- Improved east-west connectivity, including additional opportunities to access East Glebe Road;
- An interconnected roadway network and mix of land uses, resulting in a greater shift to other modes, such as walking and transit; and
- Comprehensive multi-modal transportation improvements, including an interconnected street grid, and a transitway, both of which improve mobility and traffic operations.

Some of the key transportation recommendations that are assumed as part of the full buildout of the development include the following:

- A transportation network that includes a new street grid, including a new north-south road between Fannon and East Glebe, to distribute vehicular traffic, improve traffic flow, and improve pedestrian, bicycle and transit connectivity;
- An improved bicycle network that includes enhanced bicycle facilities along Swann Avenue to connect to Potomac Yard, the Mt. Jefferson Trail, and the Del Ray neighborhood;
- Bicycle parking and bike share stations;
- An improved pedestrian network that includes improved sidewalks along all streets within the plan area that provide connectivity to parks, commercial uses, transit and regional trail facilities;
- An additional pedestrian crossing across Route 1 between East Custis Avenue and East Glebe Road to improve pedestrian access from the site to Potomac Yard and the future Potomac Yard Metrorail station;
- A new signal at the intersection of Route 1 and Montrose Avenue to improve east-west connectivity;
- Improvements, such as traffic calming, along Montrose Avenue, and improvements at the intersection of Montrose Avenue at East Glebe/Ashby, to be coordinated with the new signal at Route 1 and Montrose Avenue;
- Improvements to intersections along Route 1, such as modification of lane configurations;
- Recommendations related to parking management, including the establishment of performance parking, smart parking technology, and sharing of parking spaces;
- Transportation Management Plan (TMP) strategies such as a TMP District, transit incentives, vanpool and carpool sharing, car share, electric vehicle charging stations, and TMP monitoring