

Public Meeting #1 – Breakout Group Notes

September 30, 2014; 7:00pm – 9:00pm, Minnie Howard Campus Cafeteria, Alexandria, VA

Table 1 Notes (Facilitators: Mauricio Hernandez/Dana Wedeles):

- Education/Enforcement
 - Bicyclists don't follow rules of the road
 - Some bicyclists don't stop at stop signs
 - You don't have to take drivers' ed. to be a cyclist
 - In other countries, you still have to take a class
 - Drivers' ed. doesn't provide much information on sharing roads with bikes
 - Solutions for "rules of the road" issues:
 - Make changes to drivers' ed.
 - Free classes for confident cycling
 - Websites & brochures
 - Classes in school
 - Problem that drivers and cyclists don't see each other's eyes.
 - Need licensing for bikes
 - Teachers should be certified in cycling to encourage kids to bike to school
 - Education needed on where it's okay to ride on sidewalks
 - Need more localized input
 - Police need to enforce; train commuters
 - Bikeshare doesn't come with helmets
 - Safer strategies for biking
 - Jaywalking – tourists don't know where to walk
 - Texting while walking, driving, cycling a problem; earbuds while walking, cycling
 - Sidewalk riding sometimes feels safer than riding on the street
 - Few cycling-only areas
 - Cyclists shouldn't wear dark colors at night and should wear reflective gear and/or lights
 - Pedestrians and cyclists don't announce themselves
 - A change in culture is needed to make walking/biking safely cool
 - Powered wheelchairs often don't have lights
- Engineering/Infrastructure
 - Uneven sidewalks throughout City
 - Lack of curb cuts – or they're not ADA compliant
 - Construction areas are an issue
 - Lighting – or lack thereof is a safety issue
 - Maintenance of landscaped areas is needed
 - Mile markers needed/way-finding
 - Address obstructions in sidewalks
 - Provide unique bike lanes
 - Need easier access to transit
 - Buses need to run more often
 - Snow removal in sidewalks and bike lanes
 - Homeowners need education on cleaning snow properly
 - Consider raised crosswalks. Something is needed to calm traffic
 - Pedestrian signals needed where there are a lot of pedestrians and crosswalks
 - Also need better alignment & more time to cross

- More signaled crossings are needed
- Pedestrian only crossings are needed
- Bike-only lanes are needed
- Bikeshare's current location is visually unappealing – should be moved
- Some sidewalks need to be wider
- Brick sidewalks can be difficult for pedestrians – fill gaps
- Better signage for way-finding for parking so drivers aren't circling looking for spaces
- Visual pollution – lighting in neighborhoods
 - We don't need attention brought into neighborhoods
 - Don't want cyclists in neighborhoods
- Trail widening
- Key choke points at Abingdon & Slaters Lane
- More links are needed between trails
- Better links to transit are needed to get people out of cars
- BIG Idea
 - Get bikes off sidewalks
 - Create separate bikeways
 - Enforce intersections for all modes
 - Cultural change – start early with bike safety education
 - More mixed-use development to encourage walking and biking
 - “become 20 again”
 - Better budgeting of public facilities (e.g. swimming pool)

Table 2 Notes (Facilitators: Dena Kennett /Nathan Imm):

- Education/Enforcement
 - Respect is needed for other modes How to educated non-Alexandrians
 - Problems with thru-traffic
 - Use of mobile devices can be distracting for drivers and pedestrians/cyclists
 - Lack of information/regulatory signage for cyclists
 - George Washington Memorial Parkway, bikes on sidewalks in Old Town
 - Educate cyclists on appropriate behavior
 - Increase speed relative to pedestrians
 - Visibility
 - Designated bike coordinator/educator at schools
 - Why aren't police doing this as part of their role in schools?
 - How do we educate tourists?
 - Education on treatment of bikes as vehicles
 - Bikes pushed alternatively by both drivers and pedestrians
 - Pedestrians need to understand shared-use paths; bikers need to understand that pedestrians are allowed on shared-use paths
 - Walk Leaders for school kids
 - Alternate allowing bikes on George Washington Memorial Parkway
 - Observe a 3-foot rule
 - Enforcement is the most important thing needed
 - Talk to churches and civic associations for outreach
 - Stop signs on pavement
 - Running stop signs symptom of not having “rapid transit” routes

- No enforcement resources especially at rush hour
 - Use cameras to assist?
 - Focus away from ticketing – focus/promote safety
- Engineering/Infrastructure
 - Policy should be to always have crosswalks on all 4 corners of intersections
 - No button-pushing needed
 - Maintenance absent on sidewalks
 - How to report maintenance issues to City?
 - Sidewalks needed on all sides of main streets
 - Trails are scattered, not a connected system
 - Paths stop at:
 - Janney’s Lane/Quaker Lane
 - No good paths to T.C. Williams
 - Alexandria has no protected bike paths (cycle tracks)
 - Bike lane conflicts with car doors
 - Pedestrian gaps
 - Seminary Road westbound (north side) toward Quaker Lane
 - Commonwealth
 - Signals needed:
 - For bikes
 - Left turn for cars to solve conflicts
 - Bike system is currently focused for pleasure riders
 - Base connections on the population density
 - Bikes prevented to crossing into other neighborhoods
 - New developments need bike/pedestrian connections
- BIG Idea
 - More Capital Bikeshare
 - More connectivity on Duke Street corridor (East/West)
 - More improved alignment and markings for bike trails
 - Bikeways on Seminary and Duke Street (Pennsylvania Ave. cycle track style)
 - Cycle tracks
 - Sidewalk connectivity
 - Bike/Pedestrian connections to transit/Metro

Table 3 Notes (Facilitators: Steve Sindiong/Galen Omerso):

- Education
 - Practices taught in schools should be safe for bike/pedestrians
 - State ordinances/code related to bike/pedestrian laws need to be added to city code
 - Need link on City of Alexandria’s website to the state code
 - Outreach to immigrant/non-English speaking populations – a lot of cyclists and pedestrians in these communities
 - Expand adult basic safety course to have it conducted in Spanish
 - Expand outreach – through Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA)
 - Conduct Adult bike safety classes (but have more effective outreach)
 - Bikeshare - in order to take a bike from station, riders need to show that they’ve taken a safety course.

- Advocate for better bike/pedestrian education in the motorist manual and for current drivers
- Enforcement
 - Require license plates for bikes to make them accountable
 - Be able to turn in violators of road laws (cyclists and drivers) more easily
 - Keep speed limit for cars to 25 mph on all streets
 - Use Speed cameras & red light cameras
 - Have a Web portal to report incidents, or report problem areas to be addressed
- Engineering
 - Improve connections to/from Old Town and less-dense sections of town
 - Duke Street – high density roadway = more incidents
 - Van Dorn Metro is inaccessible for pedestrians
 - Beauregard Street – a lot of cyclists; provide better connection to King Street & Little River Turnpike
 - Major corridor – bike-related improvement needed
 - Service roads (such as on Duke, Van Dorn) are difficult to navigate on a bike; odd traffic movements
 - East-west connections in Old Town – very important to have dedicated bike lane
 - Commuters tend to use the less-dense smaller streets
 - Consider turning residential streets in Old Town into One-Way because people drive too fast
 - Need more places to park bikes
 - Reduce speed limits in parts of Old Town to 20 mph
 - Is there a hierarchy of bicyclists over pedestrians? Pedestrians should have priority over bicyclists.
 - Take out traffic lights and put in 4-Way stop signs – benefits pedestrians.
 - When street lights go out – need more info on how to report traffic violations – safety issues.
 - Street lighting – Have a network of streets that you know are well lit
 - Need more information for citizens on how to get street lights repaired
 - Request to have residents keep exterior lights on
 - Intersection at King and Union needs a signal
 - It's difficult to get to the transit stops on Duke Street
 - Improve access to Four Mile Run Trail from Valley Drive
 - Connect Wheeler and Calvin in order to avoid Duke Street
- BIG Idea
 - Separate facilities
 - Reduction in motor traffic; enforce slower traffic speed
 - High densities around mixed-use area = narrower roads
 - Widen sidewalks (i.e. Seminary Road)
 - Convenient bike racks are in shopping areas
 - Wider planting strips – improves aesthetics and safety
 - Expand capital Bikeshare to South Old Town

Table 4 Notes (Facilitators: Alia Anderson/Tony Gammon)

- Education/Enforcement
 - Increase universal education in schools

Alexandria Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan and Complete Streets Design Guidelines

- Trail rules – standard information sign
 - Stay to the right
 - Signal
 - (CABI example)
- Myths – educate drivers (yielding, right-of-way)
- Campaigns are good for residents, but Alexandria has a lot of transients/tourists/visitors
- Add information to bike map
- How do people know the “3 rule”
- Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) Facebook is successful
- Engineering/Infrastructure
 - Connection from West Street
 - One-way on Cameron is difficult
 - Madison/West Street – high speed, long blocks
 - Dangerous for pedestrians
 - East/West connector – off street along Beltway (bike to Port City Beer)
 - No good way to bike to Port City from Wheeler
 - Monroe Street to Braddock Road – gap, sight distance issues
 - Holmes Run Crossing – flooding, disrepair
 - Some new construction has made streets narrower (should be wider for bike lanes)
 - Destinations tough to get to: Potomac Yard Shopping, Port City
 - Potomac Avenue–trail switches side of street (disconnected)
 - Bike lanes crossing border to Arlington
 - Duke Street is bad – no alternatives
 - Bike Share – Del Ray is a good addition; add to West End and Van Dorn
 - GW Parkway/Mount Vernon Trail
 - How often/who is responsible for maintenance?
 - City does some maintenance, and will coordinate with National Parks Service through Plan
- BIG Idea
 - More bike lanes
 - Bike lane on Duke Street
 - Connecting bike gaps
 - Getting over Interstate 395 on Duke Street
 - Decrease speed and aggressive driving
 - Add cameras for enforcement
 - Children and pets on trails