

Arlington Transit Advisory Committee
Meeting Notes
September 11, 2018
7:00 p.m.
Ellen M. Bozman Government Center
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
“Cherry” and “Dogwood” Conference Room

TAC Members Present:

John Carten
Alexa Mavroidis
Laura MacNeil
Deidre Grant
Andrew McAllister
Conor Courtney
Richard Price
Takis Karantonis
Harvey Berlin
Erika Chiang
Carlota Cobo
James Davenport

Attendees Present:

Pierre Holloman (staff)
William Jones (staff)
Tim Roseboom (staff)
Ritch Viola (staff)
Andre Stafford (WMATA)

Call to Order

- John Carten opened the meeting at 7:03 pm.

Introductions

- John Carten noted that Linda Massaro has resigned from the TAC.

Public Comment

- No public comments submitted, no speakers from the public.

Approval of Meeting Notes from May 8, 2018

- May 8, 2018 meeting notes were approved unanimously.

Recap of July Transit Capital Projects Bus Tour – Pierre Holloman

- Pierre Holloman provided an overview of the tour which included a look at the new bus tunnel and transit facilities along N Moore Street in Rosslyn, an update from Virginia Railway Express (VRE) on the Crystal City Station Improvements Project, a briefing and ride along the alignment for the Crystal City Potomac Yard Transitway Extension, view of bus stop improvements in South Arlington, and briefing on proposed transit improvements and amenities along Columbia Pike. The tour also

featured the public's first use of one of ART's new (New Flyer) buses. Several TAC members noted that the tour was informative and provided a good context of projects which are being planned and which have been completed. TAC Members, Richard Price and Alexa Mavroidis, noted concerns with the removal of shelters and seating as part of the new transit facilities along N Moore Street in Rosslyn.

MTP Bicycle Element – Ritch Viola

- Ritch Viola provided a presentation on the update of the Master Transportation Plan's (MTP) Bicycle Element. It was noted that the bike element was one of eight elements in the MPT that identified policies and projects for development of Arlington's transportation system. The MTP was adopted in July 2008 and since that time there has been a significant change in local culture and demand for more bicycle facilities. Many of the planned bike facilities in the MTP have been implemented or are no longer considered feasible. This update includes four phases. Over the last year, work has been completed on Phase 1, Developing the Goals and Policy Framework. Significant policy themes included within the framework of this update ranged from providing for the best possible infrastructure to embracing management of trails as transportation facilities for year-round, and 24-hour use to addressing changing technology and identifying new projects and establish prioritization methods. Phase 1 work featured community outreach and collected more than 1,200 responses via an online survey and in-person. The goal was to find out where people want to go and County Board work session was held in December 2017. Destinations included but not limited to: Metrorail stations, Rosslyn, Downtown D.C., Pentagon City, Virginia Hospital Center, Columbia Pike, Lee Highway, and the Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor.
- Currently, work is being done on Phase 2, Develop Bikeways Network Map and Priorities. Phase 2 has included an on-line comment form in the spring as well as pop-up events (6 events across Arlington), and two public workshops. Thousands of comments and suggestions were received staff have reviewed and categorized these items. Maps have been produced to show bikeways that are existing, under development and in current plans.
- This fall, work will begin on Phase 3 which includes presenting a draft bicycle element for public comment. Once feedback is obtained from the public, the final Phase (Phase 4) will include a final review and staff will seek adoption by the County Board in winter 2018-2019.
- Several TAC members asked what are plans for dockless bikes and scooters. It was noted such is being planned for and that Arlington just kicked off a 9-month pilot to see how dockless may work in Arlington. At the end of the 9-month pilot, results will be evaluated and a determination will be made on how to proceed in terms of a policy on dockless bikes and scooters. Ultimately, it will be up to the County Board to make a decision regarding how to move forward after the 9-month pilot concludes and data is reviewed. Several TAC members also expressed concerns regarding dockless scooters on sidewalks. It was noted that individuals are not legally allowed to ride dockless scooters on sidewalks based on the current code for motorized vehicles. The TAC also inquired about room for experimentation regarding the design of bike facilities. It was noted that yes, staff is looking into experimentation and looking at other places and NATCO guidelines.
- The TAC had several questions regarding bike parking and storage at Metrorail stations and private buildings. It was noted that staff is working with WMATA to address bike storage needs and working with private developers to ensure new buildings incorporate bike storage.

ART Service Update – William Jones

- William Jones noted two items as part of this update: 1) ART's and STAR's fourth quarter fiscal year 2018 report and 2) ART's service. Regarding ART's and STAR's fourth quarter fiscal year 2018 report, ART's ridership decreased 14% in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2018 as compared to the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2017 and STAR ridership saw a 4% decrease over the same period. The TAC noted several possible reasons for ridership declines including but not limited to a shift in employment locations for Federal government workers and contractors from places such as the Pentagon to places outside of Arlington such the District and Fairfax County, shifts to Uber and Lyft, and increase in teleworking. For the fourth quarter, ART's on-time performance stood at 83% as compared to 92% during the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2017. Increased traffic was expressed as a concern regarding on-time performance. Regarding STAR, the number of trip cancellations decreased 22% during the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2018 as compared to the same period in fiscal year 2017; however, no shows increased 15% in the fourth quarter of fiscal year 2018 as compared to the same period in fiscal year 2017.
- Regarding ART's service, ART has been dealing with service reliability issues since the start of fiscal year 2018. Large percent of the reliability issues have been the result of maintenance issues which have caused missed trips and impacted the perception of ART. Staff is holding ART's contractor accountable through financial liquidated damages for missed trips. Staff continues to stress the need for ART's contractor to better maintain ART's fleet. In recent months, ART's contractor has made wholesale management changes in terms of maintenance, increased financial resources towards maintenance and have brought in staff from around the country to help fix maintenance issues. ART's contract has also developed a state of good repair action plan to ensure better service reliability. It was noted that the existing contract with ART's contract provider is over ten years old. In the future as part of any new contract for ART services, key performance indicators will be established, holding all future contractors of ART to a higher standard. It was also noted by several TAC members that reliable and on-time service will help draw people back to ART.
- William Jones noted that the TAC will review ART's service evaluation metrics and report at the November 2018 TAC meeting. The evaluation metrics and report will help ART understand which bus routes are not performing to standards and will help staff look at which areas where people are still riding ART and where routes could be either improved, made more efficient, or cut.

ART Proposed Fall 2018 Service Changes – William Jones

- William Jones stated that on September 30, 2018 there will be some schedule changes for ART 41 (additional service on Sundays and a new schedule for weekday, Saturday, and Sunday), ART 42 (reduce peak frequency from 16 minutes to 15 minutes and off peak frequency from 34 minutes to 30 minutes), ART 43 (new schedule to improve connections based on Metroway, VRE, and Metrorail schedules), ART 75 (making the current unscheduled weekday school trip as a 7:15 am northbound trip from Shirlington to Arlington Blvd and a new weekday schedule to improve schedule adherence).
- As part of proposed December 2018 service changes, on October 9, 2018 at Arlington Mill Community Center and on October 11, 2018 at a location TBD in north Arlington, ART will hold public meetings to go over proposed service changes. Proposed changes include a new proposed route connecting Shirlington to Marymount University via Ballston Metrorail Station as well as proposed additional Sunday service on ART 45 and schedule changes to the ART 51, 52, 55, 74, 77, 84, and 87.

A survey to obtain feedback will be posted on the ART website as part of public engagement.

- TAC Member, Carlota Cobo, requested additional service for the ART 77 and noted a missed trip on the ART 77 on Thursday, September 6, 2018. William Jones noted that the service evaluation for ART 77 will be used as the tool to justify additional services for the ART 77.

STAR Service Update – William Jones

- In lieu of the Report from the Accessibility Subcommittee, TAC Member, Alexa Mavroidis, provided a recap of several issues noted at the August Accessibility Subcommittee meeting including: complaints regarding Red Top outsourcing its call center, STAR clients missing trips carried by Red Top and no response from Red Top on where vehicles are and what time a vehicle may show. It was noted that most of the problems occur when the STAR Call Center is closed. It was also noted that Red Top was to develop a corrective action plan and such plan was to be shared with the Accessibility Subcommittee; however, the Subcommittee only received an abbreviated version from staff.
- William Jones noted that the Red Top Corrective Action plan was not elaborate and that staff did provide the full plan to the Accessibility Subcommittee in August. Mr. Jones clarified all the items on the corrective action plan were addressed at the August Subcommittee meeting, and Red Top has been working to ensure that items within the plan were being followed. Mr. Jones noted that staff has reviewed the STAR contract and met with Red Top's management to address issues which were noted by the public and Accessibility Subcommittee members at the August meeting. Regarding the STAR contract, Red Top is not required to have dedicated vehicles for STAR. As a result, return trips on the weekends and after hours outside of Arlington poses some challenges as Red Top must send a driver from Arlington to pick up an individual outside the County or utilize other taxi vendors outside the County which have agreements with Red Top. It was noted that the County will consider modifying the STAR contract to include dedicated vehicles from Red Top.

WMATA Update – Tim Roseboom

- Tim Roseboom reported that there will be a public hearing at WMATA on Monday, September 17, 2018 at the Metro Headquarters building on a proposal to eliminate the use of cash on limited-stop Metrobus routes. The public hearing will begin at 7:00 pm and there will be an open house at 6:30 pm. In June 2018, WMATA started a pilot on the Metrobus 79 line which eliminated the use of cash. Several TAC members inquired about if this would lead to off-board fare payment. Other TAC Members noted issues with loading SmarTrip cards at CVS (particularly the ones on Columbia Pike) as either the staff do not know how to work the SmarTrip loading machine or the machine is out of order. Mr. Roseboom noted that staff will reach out to WMATA staff regarding the CVS issue. Several TAC members commented that it is critical to get individuals on and off buses as fast as possible as this will help speed up the bus and also improve the riding experience. It was noted by some TAC members that there would be even more support for eliminating cash if there were other payment options such as Google Pay, Apple Pay, contactless credit and debit cards, and more places to add value to a SmarTrip card. Pierre Holloman noted that individuals can make comments on WMATA's proposal and take a short survey online at www.wmata.com.
- Mr. Roseboom noted upcoming track work which will impact Metrorail stations in Arlington. WMATA plans to shut down the Crystal City Metrorail station and the Reagan National Airport station for four days in November. Tentatively, the shutdown

will take place between Friday, November 2 to Monday, November 5. Free shuttle buses will replace trains between Braddock Road and Pentagon City Metrorail stations. Starting Monday, November 26 to Sunday, December 9, WMATA will perform structural repairs and rail infrastructure improvements along the Yellow Line. There will not be any Yellow Line service between NoVA and D.C.; however, the Blue Line will continue to operate. The Yellow Line will only run between Huntington and Reagan National Airport Metrorail stations only.

Report from the Accessibility Subcommittee

- Alexa Mavroidis noted that the Accessibility Subcommittee will hold a public comment forum on October 18, 2018. This meeting will begin at 7:00 pm and not 5:00 pm.

Additional Items from Committee Members and Staff

- Pierre Holloman polled TAC Members to see if the TAC would be interested in receiving an update on Arlington's Shared Mobility Device pilot at the November 13, 2018 TAC Members. The TAC unanimously requested that this presentation be provided.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:58 pm.

Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, November 13, 2018 at 7:00 pm.