June 5, 2021

From: Seminary Ridge Civic Association (SRCA)

To: Mark Schnaufer, City of Alexandria

Subject: Official SRCA Duke Street Corridor Input for Public Engagement Period

The SRCA established a Duke Street Corridor Transportation Committee composed of a disparate number of residents. Its purpose was to review all the historical city material available over the past decade-plus regarding the city’s planning for Duke Street. After several months, including briefings to the SRCA Board with summaries and updates provided to SRCA residents, the Board solicited comments and suggestions from the residents. These were reviewed and approved by the Board for submission to the City as the SRCA and community’s official input for the upcoming public engagement period the city will be conducting to solicit input regarding Duke Street.

The recommendations are as follows:

**Seminary Ridge Civic Association (SRCA) Overall Statement/Recommendation**: SRCA supports plans for improved City transit and a well-planned Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) along Duke Street as long as they lead to more efficient travel on the corridor as well as safer streets for all users by means other than a road diet.

**SRCA’s Specific Recommendations are that**:

1. The Duke Street project’s BRT will not increase traffic congestion nor travel times for automobile traffic in the affected corridor, including increasing delays at intersections.
2. The City conduct a detailed analysis and study of those living within a corridor of approximately 2000 linear feet on either side of Duke Street to learn about their intentions to utilize bus service along Duke Street once the BRT is in place.  City to survey and identify where riders live in proximity to Duke Street, whether a BRT will induce them to start riding the bus, where they expect to embark and disembark, and at what times of the day they will travel by bus.  Goal should be to have at least 50% of those living along the Duke Street corridor respond.
3. The City provide substantive, quantifiable data for how a BRT would reduce bus transit time – and how much – given all the intersections and traffic lights along Duke Street. This information should provide the basis for a cost-benefit analysis (the amount of money that will need to be spent compared to the bus transit time saved). Additionally, using the ridership data, an estimate of total reduction in automobile traffic and total carbon reduction anticipated.
4. No plans are to be executed that negatively affect property values or quality of life issues along Duke Street, such as removing or extending service roads for BRT or traffic use.
5. No plans are to be made in Phase II which would remove access roads or private property. This includes for the addition of a third dedicated bus lane each way in the center portion of Duke Street, that connects to Phase I’s dedicated bus lanes at either end of the corridor. Therefore, all transit and safety analyses aligned with Phase II shall consider the dedicated bus lanes completed in Phase I to be “stand-alone” features and will have no future connection.
6. There will be no dedicated bicycle facility (lane), nor a shared bicycle lane with automobile traffic. Bicycles could share Phase I dedicated bus lanes.
7. Reversible transit lane(s) that decrease the number of traffic lanes to less than two traffic lanes each way at all times shall not be considered.
8. It appears that neither an Eastbound nor a Westbound dedicated bus lane on the other side can be done east of the Telegraph Road exit.
   1. **Traveling east on Duke Street from North Quaker Lane to Diagonal Road**

It would be nearly impossible to have three lanes of east-bound traffic on Duke Street between Nor Quaker Lane and Diagonal Road without replacing the Telegraph Road overpass or removing the sidewalks on each side of the overpass to create three lanes. Also, there could be no center turn lanes into shopping centers, so the traffic would back up. In addition, if using the outer lane for a dedicated bus lane, busses would have to move into one of the other vehicle traffic lanes when the right lane becomes dedicated for the entrance ramp onto Telegraph Road. This cross-over traffic would not only be dangerous, but it would create massive congestion and traffic backups for through traffic.

* 1. **Traveling West on Duke Street from Diagonal Road to Quaker Lane:**

It would be nearly impossible to have three lanes (one for a dedicated bus lane) going west on Duke Street from Diagonal Road without replacing the Telegraph Road overpass or removing the sidewalk below the overpass to create the required three traffic lanes. Plus, bus traffic could not be non-stop as it would have to stop at West Taylor Run to allow traffic coming from the north to cross Duke Street to access the ramp to Telegraph Road. Also, another stop would have to accommodate access to/from Alexandria Commons. There could be no center turn lanes, so traffic would back up when drivers wanted to cross east-bound lanes to access shopping areas, restaurants, or side streets on the south. In addition, adding a third lane would impinge upon the access to the Firehouse, eliminate many of the sidewalks and parking areas paralleling Duke Street, and would be dangerous for pedestrians, cyclists, and automobile drivers.

1. The city is to conduct a study of government and private businesses with high pre-COVID ridership to determine telecommuting intentions post-COVID. Make the study results public as soon as city protocol allows.
2. Acknowledge that the current design and limited throughput of the Telegraph Road interchange is a major factor in the significant traffic backups along Duke St and West Taylor Run. Understanding that correcting this interchange is currently cost prohibitive, the City should pursue every avenue to obtain federal and state funding for future accomplishment to interface efficiently with the Duke Street BRT and automobile traffic.
3. Duke Street is a major location and corridor for first responders (fire station, police station, and future Inova campus at Landmark), The city is to request input from each first responder department on all proposed changes to Duke Street at the beginning and throughout the public engagement period.  In the interest of transparency and fairness, the city will request written first responder public statements regarding Duke Street modifications well in advance of formal council deliberations and votes.