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## **UPDATE PROCESS for the MASTER TRANSPORTATION PLAN - BICYCLE ELEMENT**

**May 8, 2017**

### **About:**

The current Master Transportation Plan (MTP) Bicycle Element was adopted in July 2008. While many of the goals and policies of the plan remain relevant, in recent years there have been significant changes in technologies, facilities and best practices that warrant a comprehensive update of the plan. The plan update will incorporate input from bicycle users with a wide range of abilities and backgrounds, civic and business organizations and other stakeholders, and will utilize the wealth of expertise held by County staff and advisory groups to determine how to improve mobility for bicycling and other means of local transport.

### **Anticipated Key Objectives:**

- Set goals and strategies for improving bicycle transportation options that will result in increased bicycle usage and improved safety for all travelers
- Full integration of bicycling into the County's overall transportation system
- Continue efforts to build a complete, connected, high-quality bicycle network with an emphasis on facilities that will attract and accommodate persons of all ages and abilities.
- Incorporate bicycle best practices and state-of-the-art bicycle facilities
- Enhance community livability and sustainability in Arlington

### **Process Overview:**

The plan update is proposed to be conducted in seven phases and is anticipated to take about 15 months to complete. A 12-member citizen Working Group, comprised of a broad section of local bicyclists, civic, education and business organizations and representatives from relevant advisory commissions will be established by the County Manager to assist staff with the plan development. A baseline report that provides data and other information which describe bicycling in Arlington today will be assembled, as well as a survey made of best practices in bicycle facility and program planning, design and development. Materials will be shared with the citizen Working Group and general public. The Arlington Transportation Commission will convene public hearings on the plan drafts. Adoption of the plan update will occur in two parts; first a vision, goals and policies framework and secondly an implementation section including the planned bicycle network.

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### **Community Engagement:**

Input from the Arlington public will be sought throughout the plan development at various times and with the measures identified in the Community Engagement Plan. Attention will be given to reaching traditionally under-represented populations including students, lower income residents, businesses and casual bicyclists.

### **Plan Development Phases:**

#### *Phase 1 – Establishment of the Citizen Working Group (April 2017)*

Formation of a 12-member citizen-led working group (see attached Working Group Charge) appointed by the County Manager to assist staff in the community outreach, draft plan review and other aspects of the plan's development. The Working Group will meet regularly with County staff until County Board adoption of the updated plan. Membership on the working group will include representatives from appropriate citizen advisory groups and individuals selected to represent the wide spectrum of persons that use bicycles in Arlington.

#### *Phase 2 – Finalization of plan process (May – June 2017)*

This draft plan process document will be presented for review by the County Manager and board members in May. Refinements to the process will be made based upon the comments received. Finalization of the process will be made after consideration by the working group at their April and May meetings.

#### *Phase 3 - Data collection and analysis (October 2016 – May 2017)*

County staff began to undertake a collection and review of pertinent data in October 2016. Amongst the data being considered are recent bicycle counts, surveys and estimates of current bicycle use, bicycle crash records, summaries of law enforcement actions and safety education campaigns in Arlington. Consideration will also be made as to how bicycling fits into Arlington's overall transportation system. A summary of findings will be presented as the Arlington Bicycling Baseline Report and posted on the project's webpages.

Included in the overall "Best Practices" analysis will be a review of recent bicycle transportation plans for 12 peer communities in the USA. Materials including bicycle facility and street design

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guides by organizations such as NACTO and FHWA will also be reviewed and noted as to their potential for application in Arlington.

*Phase 4 – Drafting of the plan’s Vision, Goals and Policies Framework (May - July 2017)*

County staff will collaborate with the Working Group to review the existing MTP Bicycle Element, gather community input and draft a plan framework to include a Vision Statement, overall goals and policies. A draft document will be posted on the project’s webpages as well as presented at community events. It is anticipated that a work session with the County Board will be held in July.

*Phase 5 – Revision and approval of the Vision, Goals and Policies Framework (August – November 2017)*

County staff will collaborate with the Working Group to incorporate community and County Board recommendations into a revised framework document. The revised framework document will be advertised for consideration by the appropriate commissions with adoption anticipated at the County Board’s November meeting.

*Phase 6 - Development of the draft Implementation Section (November 2017 – March 2018)*

County staff will consult with the Working Group in the production of the first draft of the implementation strategies section (to include an updated Bicycle Facilities Network) for the Bicycle Element Update. The draft document will be released for public discussion and presented at a special forum to be hosted by the Transportation Commission and shared through other community engagement methods. The draft document will also be circulated to regional stakeholders such as VDOT and neighboring jurisdictions for their review and posted on the project’s webpages. Particular attention will be given to local community review of all proposed new bicycle facilities.

*Phase 7 – Production of the Implementation Section second draft (March - May 2018)*

Comments on the first draft of the Implementation section will be catalogued and considered by County staff and the Working Group. Revisions to the first draft will be made to address concerns raised by commenters. Additional public presentations will be made to the Transportation Commission and Planning Commission. The revised document will be posted on the project’s webpages for comment and shared with civic organizations and significant regional stakeholders.

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#### *Phase 8 - Approval of the Final Draft (May – June 2018)*

Staff will consult with the Citizen Working Group on revise the document to address comments and any outstanding issues. Briefings for senior County management and Board members will be provided as requested. A final draft of the plan will be presented at public hearings held by the Transportation and Planning commissions and County Board. The revised draft will also be posted on the County's webpages for community review. County Board approval of the final plan is anticipated in June 2018.

#### **Schedule:**

Staff's preliminary work on Phases 1, 2 & 3 began in October 2016. Official kick-off of the planning effort will be with the first meeting of the Citizen Working Group in May 2017. The broader community engagement process is expected to begin soon afterward. Approval of the plan by the County Board is anticipated to occur in two increments. The first section, addressing vision, goals and policies is expected in November 2017 and approval of the implementation section is anticipated to be delivered in June 2018. The public portion of the planning effort is anticipated to take approximately 14 months to complete.

#### **Resources Required:**

Although County staff will undertake the plan's development and presentation, there will be expenses for graphic design, printing and miscellaneous materials required for community engagement and plan production. Specialized professional services for meeting facilitation, and public outreach support will likely also be required. Such services may be available through existing contracts.