



ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

County Board Agenda Item Meeting of June 12, 2010

DATE: June 10, 2010

SUBJECT: Request to Advertise an Amendment to the Bicycle Element of the Master Transportation Plan (MTP), to add an Appendix F which lists the general locations of planned bike-sharing stations and to Advertise an Amendment to the MTP Map to add notes showing the general locations of the planned bike-sharing station locations.

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

1. Authorize the advertisement of an Amendment to the County Comprehensive Plan by adding an Appendix F to the Master Transportation Plan Bicycle Element, which was adopted on July 22, 2008. Appendix F lists the general locations of the bike-sharing stations that are planned to be installed in Arlington's transit corridors and other densely-developed areas.
2. Authorize the advertisement of an Amendment to the County Comprehensive Plan by modifying the Master Transportation Plan Map, adopted December 18, 2007, to show general locations of planned bike-sharing stations.

ISSUE: The County's Comprehensive Plan needs to show the general or approximate location, character and extent of each feature shown on the plan, including public utility facilities and public service corporations, before they can be authorized, established or constructed.

SUMMARY: The MTP Bicycle Element, which was adopted in July 2008, includes a policy that calls for the implementation of a bike-sharing program in "the transit corridors and other densely developed areas." At the time of the Bicycle Element's adoption, bike-sharing was conceptual and no details had been developed as to the manner in which bike-sharing would be implemented in Arlington, or the location or extent of the facilities. Virginia Code requires that the approximate location, character and extent of publicly or privately-owned public service facilities, such as bike-sharing stations, must be provided in a jurisdiction's comprehensive plan, before the facilities are established, authorized or constructed.

Over the past two-years, County staff has developed the bike-sharing concept and anticipates implementing the first phase of the program in September 2010. The initial phase of Arlington's bike-sharing program calls for the installation of 13 "stations" at various locations in the Crystal City-Pentagon City-Potomac Yard area. The transit corridors in which the planned stations will

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be located are provided in the attached MTP Bicycle Element “Appendix F” and will be identified on the MTP Map.

BACKGROUND:

The Bicycle Element of the Arlington MTP included a policy statement that Arlington County should work with regional partners to set up a bicycle-sharing program. In recent years, bicycle-sharing programs have been established in many European cities and have resulted in substantially greater use of bicycles for transportation purposes. The bike-share programs have also succeeded in reducing automobile traffic and enhancing the perceived livability and sustainability of the cities.

The programs have been most successful when bicycles have been grouped in “stations” that are located in the public right-of-way, in close proximity to transit stops and in higher-density districts. The District of Columbia, Denver and Montreal, Canada are the only cities in North America that currently have public bike-sharing programs in operation. Arlington is working with the District of Columbia to launch this new regional bike-share program. The Washington DC/Arlington program will be using some of the same system as the Montreal “Bixi” program.

Arlington is planning to implement the bike-sharing program in stages as funding allows. The initial phase of the program calls for installation of 13 stations in the Jefferson Davis (Crystal City-Pentagon City- Potomac Yard) corridor. The transit corridors in which the planned stations will be located are provided in the attached MTP Bicycle Element “Appendix F” and will be generally identified on the MTP Map. All of the planned locations are within the public street right-of-way or on private property where public easements have previously been granted to the County. As funding becomes available, the County will expand the program to other transit corridors and areas of higher density within Arlington. Appendix F and the MTP Map will be revised in the future to incorporate the new station areas as they are identified.

The MTP Bicycle Element currently includes an appendix that lists all the planned bikeway projects that are anticipated to be implemented by the year 2030. A graphic showing the planned bikeways network is also included as part of the MTP Map document. Both documents are in keeping with Virginia law that requires that a jurisdiction’s Comprehensive Plan include the approximate location, and character and extent of planned transportation facilities. As the location, character and extent of the County’s bike-sharing program had not previously been identified in the Arlington Comprehensive Plan, it is important the Bicycle Element and MTP Map are amended to include the proposed modifications.

A public hearing on the proposed amendments to the Bicycle Element and MTP Map is anticipated to take place at the County Board meeting of July 10. Hearings on the amendment will also be scheduled for the Transportation Commission and Planning Commission meetings of June 24 and June 28 respectively.

The advertisement of the proposed changes to the MTP is the first step in the process of amending the Arlington Comprehensive Plan. A decision on what, if any, changes are actually made to the plan will be made by the Arlington County Board at the public hearing scheduled for their July 10, meeting.

FISCAL IMPACT:

The inclusion of the locations of the planned bike-sharing stations in the Comprehensive Plan does not have a financial impact upon the County. Funding arrangements for purchase of the station equipment and bicycles, as well as the operation of the system, are being arranged through separate actions.

Attachment:

Appendix F: Planned Locations for Bike Sharing Stations

The Arlington bicycle-sharing system will be comprised of many stations at which bicycles will be stored and vended for use by the public. The stations will be comprised of modules and can be as large as 6' wide by 70' long. Generally the stations will be located in the public right-of-way along the following areas and in the estimated numbers:

1. Jefferson Davis Corridor (approximately 25 stations)
2. Rosslyn – Ballston Corridor (approximately 45 stations)
3. Buckingham (approximately 8 stations)
4. Columbia Pike (approximately 22 stations)
5. Shirlington (approximately 12 stations)