



Alexandria
LIVING MAGAZINE
ALEXANDRIALIVINGMAGAZINE.COM

Traffic and Transit in Alexandria

City Council Candidates Talk About Getting Around Town

Depending on the study, the D.C. metro area has the worst or second-worst traffic congestion in the United States — something Alexandria residents know all too well.

An accident on the Woodrow Wilson Bridge or elsewhere on the Beltway can back up major thoroughfares for hours, and residents have voiced strong concerns about speeding, crosswalks, bike lanes and Metro. We've heard many residents say they try to avoid driving during the morning or evening rush hour.

Since getting around town is something that affects every resident on a near-daily basis, Alexandria Living Magazine sent questions about traffic and transit issues to all of the candidates for Alexandria City Council or mayor.

Each candidate received the same questions at the same time, and we asked everyone to keep their answers brief.

A few common threads emerged among candidates, even across party lines. Most candidates are hoping that in 10 years, transportation in Alexandria is safe, convenient and multi-modal for residents in all areas of the city — including bringing additional transportation options to areas of the city that are underserved.

Key Questions

Communication — Several candidates hope that technology can help increase engagement and communication between residents and city council members — especially as the city seeks feedback on transportation and transit issues.

Critical Challenges — Candidates had a variety of ways of describing the top two transportation challenges in Alexandria: reducing cut-through traffic without hurting the local economy, finding more funding for transportation improvements, planning and implementing developments as the city grows in population, improving infrastructure, and navigating the planned 2019 summer Metro rail station closures were all on the list.

Most candidates agreed, however, that transportation is a regional issue and not something that can be solved by the City of Alexandria alone.

TES and Its Constituents — At various public meetings regarding traffic and transit in the city, a few residents have expressed concerns that Transportation & Environmental Services is serving City Council or other entities, not the residents of Alexandria. Some candidates acknowledged hearing this themselves, and noted that while our city's staff is knowledgeable and helpful, City Council should not rely solely on staffers for recommendations and residents should have a larger role in TES.

*These are the answers candidates provided to Alexandria Living Magazine's questionnaire by our Oct. 16 deadline. Questions are italicized. The candidate's answers are presented in the order that the magazine received them. These answers have **not** been edited.*

Kevin Dunne

When you look at traffic and transportation from a resident's perspective, what do you hope will be the reality in Alexandria within 10 years?

In ten years, structural changes in people's travel habits will reduce vehicle ownership. With more Uber-like sharing services, it won't make financial sense to own as many vehicles as we do today. Cheaper sensors and larger data profiles will provide insight for when, how, and why people speed or engage in other dangerous vehicle-based activities. In short, gradual change will make congestion plateau, and better data used in innovative ways will improve pedestrian safety.

How would you propose changing or improving communications with residents (both providing and receiving information, public meetings) with regards to traffic issues in the City?

Improving communication must happen on the level of procedure, content, and platform.

Procedurally, the city should never throw out public comments just because they are not tied to a committee meeting window. This is what happened recently on the naming commission for Fitzgerald Park. The city rendered comments inadmissible before its official meeting in October because comments fell outside the timeframe.

On the level of content, the city needs to elect leadership that does not treat public comment as just a pro forma component to planning. Instead, we need a city that values government *by* residents not only just *for* residents.

Finally, our platforms can modernize. For example, we can leverage smartphones to engage the large millennial population in the city. By fast-tracking the transition of Call.Click.Connect to become an app, we can increase engagement and keep people notified of important events. This will enhance quality of life, safety, and convenience.

Some residents have expressed concern about who the "constituents" actually are at Transportation & Environmental Services and whether resident concerns are taken seriously. Please address how you would help manage and respond to their concerns and perceptions.

Our city staff is knowledgeable, but dependence on them makes us vulnerable to delegating judgement as well. The city must reserve judgement for its elected leadership only, or else it is government run by government.

One problem we have (a major one), is that city policy in general is staff-led rather than solely staff-implemented. This decreases engagement, transparency, and leadership quality. It also structurally limits council to surface-deep policy redress.

We need to audit city staff processes to ensure they are responsive to resident concerns and oversight by elected leadership. If staff change project parameters (like at Potomac Yard Metro), elected leadership need to know in a timely fashion and then confirm or invalidate the decision.

Is Alexandria's transportation management consistent with its development as the No. 1 most dense city in the state of Virginia? How can mass transit be made more accessible to ALL parts of the City in the future?

Probably not. But structural changes in preference from personal vehicle to alternative travel options will not come easily. In fact, aggressive attempts to change existing resident transportation habits may do more harm than good. Our priorities here are not validated by experience or reasonable expectation tempered by financial constraint. Instead, they are motivated by aspiration, and aspiration is expensive, often inaccurate, and demoralizing when not achieved.

A strong substitution effect from cars to mass transport can only really come with structural change in the market. This takes time. Us jumping ahead, narrowing vehicle lanes and decreasing parking is a poor return on our investments. It can injure our economy and slow first responder dispatches if not done intelligently.

I'd prefer a more pragmatic position on infrastructure development. Let's focus on innovative ways to incentivize, but not penalize, the creation of new travel habits. Here, a gradual decrease in rates of surplus car ownership, building river-based commuting networks, and encouraging a new generation of economic production (with a more remote workforce) can help provide many of the things which otherwise are too expensive by themselves to develop by city efforts alone.

What are our top two transportation challenges in Alexandria that need to be addressed (if any) from the last Alexandria transportation master plan?

We need to remain focused on reducing cut-through commutes. But we also need to carefully audit the vehicle traffic on which key parts of our economy depend from out-of-area visits. This helps power over \$800 million in tourism-generated economic activity.

As the 11th-most dense city in the USA, how can the City better manage and improve road capacity under the current transportation master plan to avoid increasing congestion and commuter travel times in the City?

The city should not narrow roads and should keep disparities in speed limits between arterial and residential roads. In both cases, it has done the exact opposite, increasing public safety risks.

Are Alexandria's transportation policies competitive and consistent with others in that DC metropolitan area? What other jurisdiction would you emulate?

I would not necessarily proceed off of an existing template because Alexandria is truly unique. Alexandria combines historic architecture, high-density development and suburbia in unprecedented ways, locally. We need to proceed with this in mind and guide transportation policy more organically. Let's prioritize solving for needs in an emergent way, rather than copy systems which do not reflect our layout and history.

Instead of running the Dash bus service, should Alexandria privatize or convert this service into a public-private partnership for better funding, cost control and risk management? And possibly add other public-private transit strategies for the City beyond buses?

Yes, where possible, we should be looking to decrease cost and risk to residents. I am also keen on exploring a similar relationship with ferry traffic services for commuters.

Michael Clinkscale

When you look at traffic and transportation from a resident's perspective, what do you hope will be the reality in Alexandria within 10 years?

Transportation will be a significant difficulty over the next ten years due to expected increases in city population size. This means that we have to consider options such as road expansion and substantial Metrorail usage. It is highly unrealistic to assume that there will be a mass uptake in bicycle usage, therefore we have to look at rideshare options as well as privatizing DASH bus service so that we can take advantage of any economies of scale that private firms might bring to the table.

How would you propose changing or improving communications with residents (both providing and receiving information, public meetings) with regards to traffic issues in the City?

I advise that we take advantage of the information technologies that are in current use and those that will be developed over time. We should have a direct access service that allows residents (and guests) to have up to the minute information about traffic and transportation issues in the city as well as the roadway leading to neighboring communities.

Some residents have expressed concern about who the "constituents" actually are at Transportation & Environmental Services and whether resident concerns are taken seriously. Please address how you would help manage and respond to their concerns and perceptions.

Full disclosure is a must. We need to appoint a citizen's committee with access to all T&ES meetings (those open to the public as well as closed-door meetings).

Is Alexandria's transportation management consistent with its development as the No. 1 most dense city in the state of Virginia? How can mass transit be made more accessible to ALL parts of the City in the future?

It is not. The only way to make transit more accessible to ALL parts of the city in the future is to privatize DASH service and allow the profit motive to determine effective routes.

What are our top two transportation challenges in Alexandria that need to be addressed (if any) from the last Alexandria transportation master plan?

The Transportation Master Plan is good for only two purposes: to enrich consultants and to line the rubbish bin. These documents are almost wholly ineffective and are primarily used as updates to updates. I do not believe that the city has met any of the challenges under this plan.

As the 11th-most dense city in the USA, how can the City better manage and improve road capacity under the current transportation master plan to avoid increasing congestion and commuter travel times in the City?

The only thing we can do is road expansion. Anything else would serve only to restrict the freedom of residents in the city.

Are Alexandria's transportation policies competitive and consistent with others in that DC metropolitan area? What other jurisdiction would you emulate?

No. We should pattern ourselves after Pittsburgh, Pa.

Instead of running the Dash bus service, should Alexandria privatize or convert this service into a public-private partnership for better funding, cost control and risk management? And possibly add other public-private transit strategies for the City beyond buses?

The city should privatize DASH. Government is completely inefficient in this area.

Mark Shiffer

When you look at traffic and transportation from a resident's perspective, what do you hope will be the reality in Alexandria within 10 years?

My vision for Alexandria's transportation future is connected, efficient, and safe... for all modes. The current reality is that for some residents, not all modes are an option. Some residents may not have cars, some may not have adequate access to buses, and some may not be able to walk or bike in our 95 degree, humidity filled summers. Because of this, we need to improve connectivity to allow all of our residents the choice of public transit, bikes, and walking while also making sure that those who choose their car can still navigate the city efficiently as well.

Ultimately, I would hope that in 10 years we have more connectivity with higher frequency, and a system that encourages alternative modes through increased convenience while acknowledging that cars will remain a necessary component for many Alexandrians for decades to come. A big part of quality of life is the ability to access work and play in a reasonable amount of time.

How would you propose changing or improving communications with residents (both providing and receiving information, public meetings) with regards to traffic issues in the City?

While the channels are established (open meetings, surveys for the communities, etc.), too often the appearance is that input is taken and ignored; an appearance that is fed by evolving rationales for decisions as well as decisions that often seem in conflict with local input.

I propose the simple solutions of incorporating resident input into decision making using a stated, repeatable process and giving honest and open answers to why and how decisions are being made. Our residents are adults; they recognize that decisions won't always fall their way, but rationale for that should be factual, clear, and compelling.

In terms of providing information, our website holds a treasure trove of barely-organized material with sub-par search capability. We need to better organize material and invest in search technology that makes the desired information easier to find.

Some residents have expressed concern about who the "constituents" actually are at Transportation & Environmental Services and whether resident concerns are taken seriously. Please address how you would help manage and respond to their concerns and perceptions.

I have experienced this first hand in both mine and surrounding neighborhoods and have received this complaint from residents throughout the city. My response to this problem has been a cornerstone of my campaign, namely I believe that city government is here to serve our residents' needs. Perceptions that concerns are not taken seriously seem too often to be not simply perceptions, but actual reality. This problem needs to be addressed on multiple levels: adequate funding, accurate and honest use of data, tracking of and responsiveness to residents concerns, and finally accountability to customer (resident) satisfaction.

Too often concerns such as those regarding traffic cut-through and safety are slow-walked, ignored, or used as rationale for unpopular decisions. This may be due to funding issues, in which case T&ES should have an open plan for when changes/upgrades will be made, and be held accountable to that schedule. Other times there seems to be reluctance to put in place common sense solutions to address, for example, dangerous rush hour cut-through traffic. This is a complaint I've heard from neighborhoods throughout the city.

Most damaging is T&ES reputation for giving residents' concerns lip service while ignoring those concerns and resident input. I don't believe this is a symptom of miscommunication; I believe there is a deep misunderstanding of who the customer is. In my mind the customers are clearly the residents of Alexandria. Those customers are too often not well served.

Is Alexandria's transportation management consistent with its development as the No. 1 most dense city in the state of Virginia? How can mass transit be made more accessible to ALL parts of the City in the future?

Although Alexandria is dense with respect to other cities in VA, it is not actually high in that rank nationally. It suffers from a relatively large area that is not well connected via roadways and our metro stations hug the southern and eastern boundaries of the city. Density also varies by neighborhood, with higher density areas often far from the metro.

Connecting these areas will be difficult given insufficient capacity of existing road networks from which to draw exclusive right of way for BRT projects, but still worth pursuing long term. That leaves bicycles,

autos, and bus as the only current, viable alternative for connecting some residents to those stations. If that is the case, we must develop policies and plans that will continue to strengthen all of those modes until a full network is in place. In addition, we need to strengthen transportation partnerships with our regional neighbors in order to benefit from economies of scale by implementing solutions that reach beyond our city's borders.

What are our top two transportation challenges in Alexandria that need to be addressed (if any) from the last Alexandria transportation master plan?

The biggest challenge the city faces is the pace of improvements around providing all Alexandrian's access to viable alternatives to using cars. Because of funding and cost constraints, these improvements are slow. It becomes imperative for a large portion of our citizens that a balance is struck between improving access for some modes while not degrading access for others.

A great example of where more balance could have been employed is the redesign of King St. metro station. Access has been improved for those nearby the station that might walk, but for those who drop off and pick up via car access has been greatly degraded with no place to wait while waiting for arrivals. Instead of encouraging this acceptable multimodal use, or encouraging alternatives through increased frequency and efficiency of buses, we have made this mode less attractive for some of its patrons. This challenge of balance is one that will become more and more important as funding to complete alternative projects becomes more and more scarce. While the direction and goal are good, we must maintain a system that is equitable to all modes until we have in place a system that through its merits changes behavior. Punishing users of one mode (cars) through degraded service, without a viable and efficient alternative does not fairly address the needs of a large portion of our residents.

As the 11th-most dense city in the USA, how can the City better manage and improve road capacity under the current transportation master plan to avoid increasing congestion and commuter travel times in the City?

This is important to me as I hope other answers have illustrated. Traffic is not only caused by usage, but also by what I call "impedance mismatch". This occurs when higher capacity roadways connect to lower capacity roadways causing a bottleneck that increases congestion. There are a number of places in Alexandria where this is the case.

In addition to improvements to sustainable modes, we need to look at improving connections and flow of the existing vehicle traffic in the city. Doing so can help reduce cut through as well as reduce commuter times. While not advocating an auto-centric focus, we do need to balance current needs and realities with steady movement toward our desired future state. We can't wholesale trade the quality of life of our residents today for a plan that may well take 50 years to implement.

Are Alexandria's transportation policies competitive and consistent with others in that DC metropolitan area? What other jurisdiction would you emulate?

It's always useful to take lessons from what's working or not in other places. I would hesitate to make wholesale comparisons as each locality has a number of unique constraints and features that may make a great solution for one unfeasible for another. Transportation solutions are a complex problem that must take into account existing and future density, existing right of way, and funding.

In Alexandria, we need to take in lessons from surrounding jurisdictions but apply them to our unique circumstances to come up with solutions that balance our current needs and realities with our desire to move the city in a more sustainable direction.

Instead of running the Dash bus service, should Alexandria privatize or convert this service into a public-private partnership for better funding, cost control and risk management? And possibly add other public-private transit strategies for the City beyond buses?

Yes, I do believe we need to look into converting Dash to a public-private partnership as well as looking at smaller, more frequent shuttle service. In order to be viable, public transportation needs to be affordable for riders, convenient and efficient.

The city is facing unprecedented capital costs and other budget pressures that are impacting all of our city's services. Public-private strategies are a great way to advance the city's goals while relieving the city of heavy funding and management burdens.

Elizabeth Bennett-Parker

When you look at traffic and transportation from a resident's perspective, what do you hope will be the reality in Alexandria within 10 years?

I hope that our transportation system will be safe and convenient for all users whether they are driving cars, riding buses or other forms of public transportation, bicycling, or walking. I hope that we have developed solutions to address cut-through traffic, given that 42% of the traffic in Alexandria neither originates nor ends in our city, and that this traffic increases congestion, decreases the quality of life, and risks the safety of our residents. I hope that we have enhanced public transportation options that help decrease congestion on our roads and improve the quality of life for those who rely on transit to commute. I hope that we are technologically-driven in managing traffic and adapting to new trends.

How would you propose changing or improving communications with residents (both providing and receiving information, public meetings) with regards to traffic issues in the City?

With every vote by the Council and every project City staff are directed to work on, we must ask if residents have been made aware of what the City is doing, if they have been given an opportunity to weigh-in, and if the City has taken resident feedback into account. We must ensure regular communications with civic associations and their leadership to help provide information and receive feedback.

We need to consider the timing and structure of public meetings; for example, 6:30pm meetings can be difficult for individuals who work outside the City. This week, there were two separate community meetings related to transportation scheduled for the same exact time (one on transit and one on Seminary Road), until the latter was postponed for unrelated reasons. We need to continually make sure that all voices are heard, not just those who can make these meetings. Similarly, we must make sure that information is provided through a variety of platforms - social media and email, as well as printed materials for older Alexandrians who may not engage digitally.

Finally, I would love to see panel discussions or events with industry experts and representatives from other jurisdictions to help demonstrate best practices and how similar communities are addressing traffic challenges.

Some residents have expressed concern about who the "constituents" actually are at Transportation & Environmental Services and whether resident concerns are taken seriously. Please address how you would help manage and respond to their concerns and perceptions.

Residents should feel as though they are properly informed and engaged and that their input is being taken into consideration, rather than that a decision has already been made. Council should ask staff to clarify what basic assumptions were made during any process and what outreach was done. I used to work at the National Governors Association helping to build consensus between Republican and Democratic governors; one of our common phrases was, "one size does not fit all." In this case, what works in one neighborhood may not necessarily work in another, and we need to take that into account. Along similar lines, we should consider reinstating the Central Alexandria Traffic Work Group and establish other related work groups as necessary.

Is Alexandria's transportation management consistent with its development as the No. 1 most dense city in the state of Virginia? How can mass transit be made more accessible to ALL parts of the City in the future?

As a dense city, we need to focus on transit and walkability. Improving transit will not only improve the quality of life for those who rely on transit to commute, but will help decrease congestion on our roads. The City is currently conducting a Transit Vision plan to come up with a fresh look at how DASH can better serve the city. WMATA is doing a similar study of Metrobus and is working closely with the City. Bus ridership is down across the country except in metro areas that have revamped their bus systems.

A key part of making sure mass transit is more accessible to all parts of the City is the West End Transitway. Earlier this year, the General Assembly removed \$100M in funding from the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority, which helps fund our transit projects, in order to provide a dedicated funding stream for WMATA. We must work with our state delegation and representatives from neighboring jurisdictions to restore this funding. Additionally, enhancing access and connectivity to the Van Dorn metro is incredibly important. Given recent cost estimates for a multimodal bridge, we need to also consider alternative options and determine which solution makes the most sense.

What are our top two transportation challenges in Alexandria that need to be addressed (if any) from the last Alexandria transportation master plan?

Funding and focusing future development around transit nodes, like our Metrorail stations.

As the 11th-most dense city in the USA, how can the City better manage and improve road capacity under the current transportation master plan to avoid increasing congestion and commuter travel times in the City?

We need to continue to implement intelligent transportation systems, such as adaptive traffic signal control systems that respond to demand rather than a fixed schedule. Improving public transportation will help reduce congestion and commuter travel times. Finally, we need to work with regional partners and industry experts to address a number of issues, from cut-through traffic to better incident

management. Half of all traffic congestion is from non-recurring incidents like crashes and disabled vehicles. Other regions are better at clearing incidents quickly.

Are Alexandria's transportation policies competitive and consistent with others in that DC metropolitan area? What other jurisdiction would you emulate?

I think a lot of regional jurisdictions understand smart growth and the importance of transit. Arlington has always been a leader on a wide range of transportation issues, from transit-oriented development to parking policies. Traffic counts along the Orange Line corridor are lower than they were before the Orange Line was built. We need to work with our neighbors and learn from them (along with other jurisdictions across the country) to address our transportation challenges.

Instead of running the Dash bus service, should Alexandria privatize or convert this service into a public-private partnership for better funding, cost control and risk management? And possibly add other public-private transit strategies for the City beyond buses?

We should definitely explore public-private partnerships wherever possible. That being said, while many municipal bus systems have been contracted out, it will not solve all of our challenges.

Justin Wilson

When you look at traffic and transportation from a resident's perspective, what do you hope will be the reality in Alexandria within 10 years?

My view of Alexandria a decade from now is one where our daily lives are minimally affected by congestion. Eliminating congestion in a dense urban area is impossible, but redirecting traffic from our neighborhoods and deploying multi-modal alternatives that serve our community will protect our quality of life.

How would you propose changing or improving communications with residents (both providing and receiving information, public meetings) with regards to traffic issues in the City?

We can constantly improve communication and collaboration in every policy area impacting our City, including transportation challenges.

I have worked to improve the accessibility of information online as well as make the decision-making process more transparent and accessible to our residents. Electronic "town hall" meetings, virtual forums, and more effective survey instruments can help policymakers reflect the input of our residents.

Some residents have expressed concern about who the "constituents" actually are at Transportation & Environmental Services and whether resident concerns are taken seriously. Please address how you would help manage and respond to their concerns and perceptions.

Our job in City government is to formulate good policy, informed by professional advice, research and collaborative public input to improve the quality of life of our residents.

Rarely is there an issue of any consequence with unanimity among our residents. Yet we have the responsibility to make sure that everyone is heard, their perspective is incorporated in the decisions we

make, and their time valued.

Is Alexandria's transportation management consistent with its development as the No. 1 most dense city in the state of Virginia? How can mass transit be made more accessible to ALL parts of the City in the future?

The recently commenced Alexandria Transit Vision (ATV) effort presents a unique opportunity to rethink bus services around Alexandria. Our DASH bus route structure is largely based on a network originally deployed over 30 years ago. Our development patterns, transit usage habits and employment centers have changed quite a bit.

Designing new route structures, coupled with improved transit infrastructure can increase the ease of mobility for many of our residents.

What are our top two transportation challenges in Alexandria that need to be addressed (if any) from the last Alexandria transportation master plan?

There are still numerous items in our existing Transportation Master Plan that require implementation. The largest remaining effort to accomplish is the construction of Transit Corridor C (North/South on the West End) and Transit Corridor B (East/West). Once implemented, these corridors will significantly improve mobility throughout our community and connect neighborhoods.

We also have work remaining on pedestrian infrastructure, addressing significant gaps in our sidewalk network, improving safety, and expanding access for non-vehicular transportation around our community.

As the 11th-most dense city in the USA, how can the City better manage and improve road capacity under the current transportation master plan to avoid increasing congestion and commuter travel times in the City?

In a growing region, congestion will continue to be our reality. Our focus must be on managing congestion to prioritize local traffic and discourage cut-through commuting.

Our most effective tools to ease the impact of congestion on our residents are transit infrastructure and smart land-use policy. When Alexandrians have alternatives to personal vehicles, and can benefit from employment locations in proximity to their homes, the impacts of congestion are minimized.

Are Alexandria's transportation policies competitive and consistent with others in that DC metropolitan area? What other jurisdiction would you emulate?

Every community in this region does some things well, and some things not so well. I believe we have an opportunity to learn from our neighbors. Our policies are not altogether different than our neighbors, and we must continue to coordinate on important transportation policy going forward.

Our neighbors in Arlington have better coordinated land-use and transit policy over the past several decades. We can learn from some of their land-use experience, particularly in their newer neighborhoods.

Instead of running the Dash bus service, should Alexandria privatize or convert this service into a public-private partnership for better funding, cost control and risk management? And possibly add other public-private transit strategies for the City beyond buses?

DASH has long been operated as a public/private partnership with a private operating company contracted to run the operating company of the system, utilizing fare revenue and public subsidy. I have not seen a privatized model for mass transit that I believe would work in Alexandria.

Mo Seifeldin

When you look at traffic and transportation from a resident's perspective, what do you hope will be the reality in Alexandria within 10 years?

The goal is to make Alexandria a more livable place for all residents. This means walkable streets where possible, bike routes where it doesn't endanger cyclists. I'm looking forward to making our transportation as efficient and environmentally friendly as possible by reducing greenhouse gas emission and improving traffic flow.

How would you propose changing or improving communications with residents (both providing and receiving information, public meetings) with regards to traffic issues in the City?

Communication is the most important factor. I will champion more transparency with residents and support improving online communication with residents. However, I think it will be more effective in having more town halls in impacted areas and reach through the media. I will push for modern day communication means such as text and voice messaging services with the option for residents to opt in.

Some residents have expressed concern about who the "constituents" actually are at Transportation & Environmental Services and whether resident concerns are taken seriously. Please address how you would help manage and respond to their concerns and perceptions.

All concerns must be taken seriously. If there are credible concerns, Council must investigate the matter. If it is a perception issue, the City must do better in communicating and educating the residents on the roles of T&ES. The most important factor is transparency and feedback from the residents. Alexandria is rich in human capital with plenty of subject matter experts that can point to uncommon practices to Council. Residents must also civically engage council on such issues — this will take a community effort.

Is Alexandria's transportation management consistent with its development as the No. 1 most dense city in the state of Virginia? How can mass transit be made more accessible to ALL parts of the City in the future?

There are plans to keep up with Alexandria's growing demands. The City is a strategically attractive, as such the plans may not always match reality. The management is fair, but we can always improve and set a higher standard. The City must take a leap into the future to make transit accessible to all parts of the City, including rapid transit bus lanes that connect us regionally, new metro stations, improved intercity services. I'm considering the pros and cons of a reliable green internal tram system or "light rail

transit” that will take into account density, costs, zoning, noise, and availability of roads. Of course, this will be taken up with subject matter experts and residents if it becomes feasible.

What are our top two transportation challenges in Alexandria that need to be addressed (if any) from the last Alexandria transportation master plan?

Funding and time. Innovative comprehensive plans require funding and time. Per the Master Plan, these plans will roughly take over five years to complete. This will present a challenge to leaders and the community. However, since the City will be undergoing major construction in the following years such as the sewer system and metro, it is worth considering if it is suitable to move forward around the same time while being mindful of the challenges. Funding wise, the Federal Transit Administration will finance roughly 50% of qualified projects, state funding, grants, and City support are available to complete approved projects. The City move forward beyond the minimum enhancements.

As the 11th-most dense city in the USA, how can the City better manage and improve road capacity under the current transportation master plan to avoid increasing congestion and commuter travel times in the City?

The projected solutions are available as discussed above, there needs to be a willingness from the leaders and community to move forward after thorough preparations. Consider the sewer system problem. The City knew of it, the solutions, and the rough cost. However, nothing meaningful was done until a decision from the State forced the City to act within a tough timeframe at a high cost. While the issues are not the same, there is a lesson in the sewer system matter. Prepare early, be transparent, get feedback, make the tough choice early on or make the tough choice later on at a higher cost.

Are Alexandria’s transportation policies competitive and consistent with others in that DC metropolitan area? What other jurisdiction would you emulate?

Each jurisdiction is different and what works in one may not work in the other. We do share regional transportation services with many jurisdictions and there is some consistency in policies. Other than Metro stations, we have water taxi’s, and the Crystal City-Potomac Yard Transitway project. Because of the proximity and nature of the regions, partnerships are important which leads to comparable policies in some areas. Our DASH system is akin to the D.C. Circulator in some ways.

Instead of running the Dash bus service, should Alexandria privatize or convert this service into a public-private partnership for better funding, cost control and risk management? And possibly add other public-private transit strategies for the City beyond buses?

Public Services are held in trust with the intention of serving the public at reasonable rates. There are examples of public-private partnership that are fruitful. For example, T.C. Williams just officially opened the Governor’s Health and Science Academy, which is a public-private partnership. However, fully privatizing public services presents challenges that may not serve the public’s best interest. I support improving cost control and risk management internally. Further, DASH has its own board and its decisions are not operation and policies are not controlled by council.

Canek Aguirre

When you look at traffic and transportation from a resident's perspective, what do you hope will be the reality in Alexandria within 10 years?

As a city and a region, I support increased investments in a multi-modal transportation system. I do not believe building more roads will help us resolve our traffic problems as it simply does not address the root cause of the issue. It is better to focus on solutions that simultaneously address core inequalities, such as the fact that most people are unable to afford to live where they work and transportation inequities exist for lower-income communities and communities of color. As a result, many people cannot take advantage of local investments in public transit. Until we begin to address our housing and transportation equity issues as a city and a region, we will continue to deal with the consequences of increased congestion and longer commutes. In the next decade, I would like to see a robust local economy resulting from a variety of housing opportunities and investments in an equitable, multi-modal transportation system.

How would you propose changing or improving communications with residents (both providing and receiving information, public meetings) with regards to traffic issues in the City?

I would like to examine the City's outreach models to increase resident engagement and participation across Alexandria with regards to traffic and other issues residents experience. Many Alexandrians experience work and childcare constraints, in addition to language and transportation barriers. They are still a part of this city and their voices must be at the table. As I have stated previously, I would be in favor of Council holding rotating town hall style meetings. These meetings would take place in different parts of the City, perhaps quarterly, in an informal setting to improve communication between residents and City Hall.

Some residents have expressed concern about who the "constituents" actually are at Transportation & Environmental Services and whether resident concerns are taken seriously. Please address how you would help manage and respond to their concerns and perceptions.

I believe the City must be able to show and clearly communicate what actions they have taken to address residents concerns regardless of the issue. There is always a sign-in sheet at public meetings which makes it so important that residents in attendance sign in to allow the City to maintain an accurate record of individual participation. I am aware of the Central Alexandria Traffic Study that took place and even participated in a neighborhood walk along Seminary Road from Jordan to Fort Williams Parkway. Input was taken from residents and I will be looking forward to seeing some changes made along the route. Follow through will be important when dealing with concerns and perception.

Is Alexandria's transportation management consistent with its development as the No. 1 most dense city in the state of Virginia? How can mass transit be made more accessible to ALL parts of the City in the future?

As a City, I believe we need to redouble our investments in sustainable transportation infrastructure that encourages safe bicycling and walking, and the use of mass transit in all parts of Alexandria. We need to lean toward practices and policies which reduce the number of single passenger vehicles on our roadways and support affordable, reliable alternatives. Coupling this with continued investments in data driven technology and innovation we as a community will help to address and support our needs.

What are our top two transportation challenges in Alexandria that need to be addressed (if any) from the last Alexandria transportation master plan?

Infrastructure and funding. There is still a lot of infrastructure that needs to be put in place to address five of the six sections of the Transportation Master Plan: Transit Concept, Pedestrian, Bicycle, Streets, and Parking. The last section, Funding and Implementation, is the second challenge. Continuing to find revenue streams to be able to pay for our infrastructure investments and having measurable implementation goals are important for being an accountable City government.

It is clear that Alexandria has made some headway in regards to bicycle and pedestrian safety when you look at our Complete Streets and Vision Zero Initiatives, and the bicycle safety program that has been implemented at several of our elementary schools. While Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) with a dedicated lane became a reality along corridor A (Route 1), we are still lacking implemented solutions for corridors B and C (Van Dorn/Beauregard and Duke Street). Additionally, I believe we need to not only look internally for solutions, but also externally to other jurisdictions for best practices to help address some of our transportation challenges.

As the 11th-most dense city in the USA, how can the City better manage and improve road capacity under the current transportation master plan to avoid increasing congestion and commuter travel times in the City?

I am in favor of the Complete Streets program; I support the Vision Zero Initiative; and I would push the City to invest in data driven technology and innovation to tackle these issues. We need a multi-modal transportation system that will help foster economic development in all parts of Alexandria. I would push for increased investments that ensure bus stops are located where they are needed most (along with safe pedestrian crossings), and that can identify problem areas to reduce pedestrian and bicycle fatalities. Every sidewalk, pedestrian crossing, and curb ramp should meet current ADA requirements for our seniors, people with disabilities, individuals using wheelchairs or crutches, and families using strollers. Earlier this year, I participated in the Seminary Road Walk Through and in that 1- mile stretch it was clear that improvements could and should be made to ensure bicyclists can safely ride on our roads, pedestrians can feel safe while walking on sidewalks, crosswalks are put near bus stops, traffic calming measures are implemented and additional signage be posted to improve safety.

Are Alexandria's transportation policies competitive and consistent with others in that DC metropolitan area? What other jurisdiction would you emulate?

Our transportation woes are no secret in Northern Virginia and this is where we need to not only be working collaboratively as a region, but also in the concept of a super-region from Richmond to Baltimore. For the last four years, my current job has required me to travel almost on a daily basis all across Northern Virginia. I know and experience firsthand the transportation issues we face regionally six days a week. From a lack of sidewalks and bike lanes in portions of Greater Prince William, to the lack of public transportation in Loudoun and parts of Fairfax

County, to the congestion that stifles the Town of Dumfries along Route 1, and to the cut-through traffic impacting Alexandria, transportation infrastructure is critical for getting all of us to work, school and conducting business daily. We cannot simply "build" our way out of this with more roads, we must be investing in the infrastructure necessary to support timely, efficient, and affordable multi-modal transportation options. In Alexandria specifically, I believe we need to look at improving usage of our

metro stations/ensuring completion of Potomac Yard (with a southern entrance or pathway) and restoring funds from NVTVA that were diverted to WMATA. Compared to neighboring jurisdictions we have great coverage to travel within the City, but there is room for improvement. I would be in favor of the City emulating Arlington's efforts to increase bicycle safety by expanding the installation of protected bike lanes where feasible.

Instead of running the Dash bus service, should Alexandria privatize or convert this service into a public – private partnership for better funding, cost control and risk management? And possibly add other public-private transit strategies for the City beyond buses?

I would need to see additional information as to how the fare and service changes that went into effect on July 1 have impacted the agency's long-term financial stability to be able to conclude whether privatization or a public-private partnership would be the ideal solution to improve DASH service. With fares at \$1.75, DASH provides a more affordable transit option for residents than Metrobus. To address traffic and congestion in the City, it is important that all residents have access to affordable, efficient transportation, particularly mass transit as it helps reduce our environmental impact. For example, during the school year, every T.C. Williams high school student is allowed to ride DASH for free which provides an additional transportation option for students and families without personal vehicles. As we look to remain competitive to attract businesses and talent, the City must ensure that the transportation investments that we make are using data and technology to improve our system and we are properly planning for future economic growth and development across the City.

Amy Jackson

When you look at traffic and transportation from a resident's perspective, what do you hope will be the reality in Alexandria within 10 years?

Addressing the traffic concerns of our city is critical to its safe and sustained development. A safe and lively city is one where new families and businesses can thrive, but this can easily be threatened by overburdened road systems. However, to address this growing problem, we must start now. In order to encourage a more sustainable Alexandria, we need to look at our unique communities within our City and promote adaptability within those lifestyles. We need to encourage walkable communities, other, more economical and environmentally friendly modes of transportation (bicycles, metro, bus service), clean air, water, and energy resources, and review how we can encourage growth without destroying our environment or our specialness that Alexandria is known for. We also need to keep in mind our infrastructure needs and the IT fiber backbone we need to keep our City progressive at the same time.

How would you propose changing or improving communications with residents (both providing and receiving information, public meetings) with regards to traffic issues in the City?

Transparency and accessibility by our City lawmakers is key. We need to improve our communication with our citizenry. The Council members are representatives of our citizenry. We are elected to serve them and their vision. We need to keep our open forums at City Hall, increase exposure of our issues, our docket items, and become more visible in the eyes of our constituents. Cameras on main thoroughfares might assist in real time traffic issues, but we need an app or website updated automatically for citizen awareness of traffic concerns at any given time. We have several languages spoken here, and we need to be able to improve our communication with all our residents. Many are not engaged in our process, and we need to educate and encourage participation for all.

Some residents have expressed concern about who the "constituents" actually are at Transportation & Environmental Services and whether resident concerns are taken seriously. Please address how you would help manage and respond to their concerns and perceptions.

Encourage citizens of our City to continue to voice their concerns at meetings and through email with city staff is the best way to engage in our process. Our city staff, officials, and community are all in this together. No one likes traffic and everyone is trying to find the right solution that is cost-effective and safe, as well as efficient.

Is Alexandria's transportation management consistent with its development as the No. 1 most dense city in the state of Virginia? How can mass transit be made more accessible to ALL parts of the City in the future?

In working with regional partners, Alexandria is trying to find solutions that are safe, efficient and cost-effective for all involved. Alexandria needs to continue to work with our partners on state and federal levels for support and assistance concerning funding and infrastructure concerns.

What are our top two transportation challenges in Alexandria that need to be addressed (if any) from the last Alexandria transportation master plan?

Alexandria's traffic and metro are still the biggest concerns, but we have implemented VisionZero for pedestrian/bike safety measures, as well. Alexandria is still advocating for a Potomac Yard Metro's completion that would hopefully alleviate traffic in the Rt. 1 corridor and generate our economy. We also have King Street and Braddock Road Metro closures coming in summer 2019.

As the 11th-most dense city in the USA, how can the City better manage and improve road capacity under the current transportation master plan to avoid increasing congestion and commuter travel times in the City?

I support expanding the areas required for traffic studies in development plans to address the regional impacts on traffic created by new housing and business expansion. Alexandria is also lacking the space to easily and efficiently build more roads, but we need to do what is best for Alexandria. If we need to look at overpasses where clusters of traffic are gathering, then we should have city engineers look into what can be done to alleviate traffic and look into cost projections. I understand the concerns. Safety is top priority. We need to look at creative ways to minimize the traffic issue.

Are Alexandria's transportation policies competitive and consistent with others in that DC metropolitan area? What other jurisdiction would you emulate?

Alexandria is competitive and consistent with other neighboring jurisdictions. Traffic is a regional issue, and as a region, we need to work together to find the solutions. Other jurisdictions won't have two metro station closures next summer, and that will hinder many that use metro to get to work and school. Our tourism may also drop in numbers, so we need to be creative, but safe and cost-effective in the short-term and long-term solutions. The best way to reduce the number of cars on our roads is to have all in our region working together to produce multi-modal initiatives that will alleviate the traffic in all of our region. Encouraging citizens of our City and those around ours to adopt practices that reduce

the number of cars on the road would make a significant impact in becoming a safer City concerning our traffic.

Instead of running the Dash bus service, should Alexandria privatize or convert this service into a public – private partnership for better funding, cost control and risk management? And possibly add other public-private transit strategies for the City beyond buses?

All suggestions are under consideration to make the best use of city funds and prioritizing safety and commuter-time.

John Taylor Chapman

When you look at traffic and transportation from a resident's perspective, what do you hope will be the reality in Alexandria within 10 years?

In 10 years, I hope that residents will feel that Alexandria city government is continuing to make advancements on improving traffic and congestions, opening up additional opportunities for alternative transit solutions, and working together with other localities for bring a more regional plan for commuters.

How would you propose changing or improving communications with residents (both providing and receiving information, public meetings) with regards to traffic issues in the City?

We need to better use our alert systems to relay information about accidents and traffic patterns. In regards to public meetings, make them available online so that there is an opportunity to see and participate in them, even if someone does not come to a meeting in person.

Some residents have expressed concern about who the "constituents" actually are at Transportation & Environmental Services and whether resident concerns are taken seriously. Please address how you would help manage and respond to their concerns and perceptions.

I would like T&ES to better engage the smaller neighborhoods in the overall transportation planning, so that neighborhoods know that their localized issues can be addressed in what T&ES does.

Is Alexandria's transportation management consistent with its development as the No. 1 most dense city in the state of Virginia? How can mass transit be made more accessible to ALL parts of the City in the future?

Yes, we pushed transit strongly, make a great deal of investments in local transit answers, work with regional partners to enhance regional and local services. In order to make transit more accessible, we need to continually monitor changes within our city, so that we can be flexible about moving or changing transit routes or options.

What are our top two transportation challenges in Alexandria that need to be addressed (if any) from the last Alexandria transportation master plan?

- Congestion at specific areas in the city during rush hour times
- How to better connect our neighborhoods with Metro stations.

As the 11th-most dense city in the USA, how can the City better manage and improve road capacity under the current transportation master plan to avoid increasing congestion and commuter travel times in the City?

We need to restrict the movement of rush hour traffic away from our neighborhoods, and work with our regional partners to expand transit options, including bus and rail

Are Alexandria's transportation policies competitive and consistent with others in that DC metropolitan area? What other jurisdiction would you emulate?

Yes. I would emulate Arlington, due to its size and its internal placement, next to us, in the region.

Instead of running the Dash bus service, should Alexandria privatize or convert this service into a public-private partnership for better funding, cost control and risk management? And possibly add other public-private transit strategies for the City beyond buses?

I am not sure I would totally move to privatization, but it might not hurt to look at bringing in additional options and looking at the cost and risk management factors, which might drive good competition, and hopefully benefit commuters.