

**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA  
TRAFFIC AND PARKING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING  
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 2020, 7:30 P.M.  
301 KING STREET, 2nd FLOOR  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**D O C K E T**

1. Announcement of deferrals and withdrawals.
2. Approval of the January 27, 2020 Traffic and Parking Board meeting minutes.
3. Written Staff Updates - None
4. **PUBLIC DISCUSSION PERIOD**  
[This period is restricted to items not listed on the docket]

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

*An item on the consent calendar will be heard only if a Board member, City staff or a member of the public requests it be removed from the consent calendar. Items not removed will be approved or recommended for approval as a group at the beginning of the meeting.*

**PUBLIC HEARING**

5. **ISSUE:** Consideration of a pilot program allowing businesses to apply for a "parklet" permit which converts curb-space into public space.

**UPDATES:**

- Don't Block the Box Campaign
- Transportation Commission Updates – Casey Kane

**CITY OF ALEXANDRIA  
TRAFFIC AND PARKING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING  
MONDAY, JANUARY 27, 2020, 7:30 P.M.  
301 KING STREET, 2nd FLOOR  
COUNCIL CHAMBERS**

**MINUTES**

**BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman, William Schuyler, Vice Chair, James Lewis, Jason Osborne, Kevin Beekman and Casey Kane

**BOARD MEMBERS ABSENT:** None

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Hillary Orr, Deputy Director of TES, Bob Garbacz, Division Chief of Traffic Engineering, Ryan Knight, Civil Engineering IV, Alex Block, Principal Planner.

6. Announcement of deferrals and withdrawals: None

7. Approval of the November 18, 2019 Traffic and Parking Board meeting minutes:

**DISCUSSION:** The Board noted that the person making the motion and seconding to motion for item 7 was reversed. Staff agreed to update the minutes to reflect Mr. Osborne made the motion and Mr. Kane seconded the motion.

**BOARD ACTION:** Mr. Kane made a motion, seconded by Mr. Osborne to approve the minutes of the November 18, 2019 Traffic and Parking Board meeting. The motion carried unanimously.

8. Written Staff Updates:

A. RPP Refresh

B. Dockless Mobility (Scooter) Pilot Program Evaluation

9. **PUBLIC DISCUSSION PERIOD**

No one from the public spoke in this period.

**CONSENT CALENDAR**

**BOARD ACTION:** Mr. Lewis made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tucker to move Item 5 from consent calendar to public hearing. The motion carried unanimously.

Mr. Lewis made a motion, seconded by Ms. Tucker to approve Item 6 on consent calendar. The motion carried unanimously.

6. **ISSUE:** Consideration of a request to implement the residential pay by phone program on the 200 block of Duke Street.

**DISCUSSION:** The Board expressed concern about the lack of equitable payment options because not everyone may have access to a cell phone and other current options. The Board also expressed to staff the importance of ensuring parking technologies/multispace meters are within easy walking distance as the Pay-By-Phone program is expanded

## **PUBLIC HEARING**

5. **ISSUE:** Consideration of a request to move a disability parking space and designate one loading space on the south side of West Mason Avenue.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Block presented this item to the Board. The Board had concerns about the outreach process because based on the public testimony it appeared that not everyone's concerns were considered.

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY:** Ms. Vaughn and Mr. Akseizer spoke about the narrowness of the street and the safety concerns created by the parking on the south side of West Mason Avenue.

**BOARD ACTION:** Mr. Kane made a motion, seconded by Mr. Osborne to defer this item and have staff work with the residents and church to develop an equitable solution that focuses on safety. The motion carried unanimously.

7. **ISSUE:** Consideration of a request to add Residential Permit Parking Restrictions to the 800 block of Marshall Lane.

**DISCUSSION:** Mr. Block presented this item to the Board and explained the reason for the request was to address concerns about T.C. Williams High School students parking on Marshall Lane. The Board expressed concern that impacts of the spill over parking were not well documented and may not be impacting the entire street. Mr. Block noted that although the parking occupancy is not enough to meet the old requirements, it does meet the new Residential Permit Parking requirements.

**PUBLIC TESTIMONY:** Ms. Noren spoke in favor of the request.

**BOARD ACTION:** Mr. Lewis made a motion seconded by Mr. Osborne to approve the request to add Residential Permit Parking Restrictions to the 800 block of Marshall Lane. The motion carried unanimously.

## **STAFF UPDATES:**

- King Street Place oral update (Ms. Orr)
- Taxi Update (Mr. Block)
- City of Alexandria Boards and Commission members handbook (Mr. Garbacz)

- Mr. Kane provided an update on the Transportation Commission and Alexandria Mobility Plan (AMP)

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

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## Traffic and Parking Board

**DATE:** February 24, 2020  
**DOCKET ITEM:** #3  
**ISSUE:** Written Staff Updates

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**ISSUE:** Staff update to the Traffic and Parking Board on various ongoing projects.

**RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board receive the following staff updates:

### **A. Capital Bikeshare Update**

Staff is working with VDOT to develop a process allowing the City to move forward with purchasing the bikeshare stations the Board reviewed in 2017. In the meantime, staff identified six additional sites for bikeshare stations that can be purchased using funds from developer contributions. Staff is confirming the locations can be supported by the bikeshare contractor and will be bringing them to the Board for review at the March meeting.

Capital Bikeshare is planning to relaunch e-bikes this spring. One key difference is that these e-bikes will have a dockless option, meaning they can end trips at a station or outside a station within a defined service area. There will be an additional fee to end a trip outside of a station and a penalty if a bike is left out the service area.

More details about the expansion and the launch of e-bikes is provided in the February 20, 2020 memo to council.

### **B. City Garage Management Changes**

Staff is working on two management transitions for the City's parking garages and lots. First, the City is transitioning responsibility for managing parking garage and lot operations from the Department of General Services (DGS) to the Transportation & Environmental Services (T&ES).

Staff is finalizing a memorandum of understanding to document the new division of roles and responsibilities. Generally, DGS will continue to manage the physical structures and the City's real estate, while T&ES will take over parking operations, including oversight of the City's parking operations contractor. The Mobility Services Division within T&ES will be leading parking garage management going forward. T&ES is excited about this transition and the

opportunities for better coordination between on-street and off-street pricing policy as well as opportunities to improve the user experience.

Additionally, the City is transitioning to a new contractor to operate the City's garages and lots. On March 1, 2020, U Street Parking, Inc. will take over as the operating contractor for the garages and lots listed above. Parking patrons will only see minor changes as part of the transition (new logos, updated signs, etc.) and the City expect many of the current employees will continue with the new contractor.

This contract includes the following facilities, covering approximately 872 parking spaces across seven different locations:

- Courthouse Square Garage – 289 spaces
- Market Square Garage – 219 spaces
- Thompson's Alley Garage – 68 spaces
- Union Street Garage – 175 spaces
- Cameron-St. Asaph Surface Lot – 53 spaces
- Henry Street Surface Lot – 48 spaces
- Patrick Street Surface Lot – 20 spaces

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

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## Traffic and Parking Board

**DATE:** February 24, 2020

**DOCKET ITEM:** #5

**ISSUE:** Consideration of a pilot program allowing businesses to apply for a "parklet" permit which converts curb-space into public space.

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**REQUESTED BY:** Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities Staff

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:** That the Board provide input on the Parklet Pilot Program and make a recommendation to the Director of T&ES to temporarily remove parking for parklets meeting the requirements of the program.

**BACKGROUND:** Parklets convert on-street parking spaces into attractive public space, extending the sidewalk to allow for public amenities like seating, landscaping, bike parking, and art. Many cities across the country have parklet programs including Arlington, Washington, DC, San Francisco, CA, and Philadelphia, PA (see Attachment 1 for examples of parklets in other cities). The City has participated in Park(ing) Day for several years. Park(ing) Day is an annual event where parking spaces are temporarily turned into open space for the day. A citywide parklet program would allow a process for interested parties to host more permanent parklets on a seasonal basis (likely from April – November). Parklets were also identified in the City's Complete Streets Guidelines as a potential use that could be appropriate for curb-space.

In Fall 2019, City staff began developing this potential parklet program. This began with internal discussion to ensure the program aligns with the City's long-term visions such as Complete Streets initiatives, small-area plans, and the proposed 100 block of King Street Pedestrian Project. In addition, Staff worked with other City departments and external groups, including Park(ing) Day participants, businesses, and design firms to set the parameters for design, maintenance, safety, outreach, permitting, and other important considerations.

**DISCUSSION:** Based on the feedback from internal and external groups, Staff has developed guidelines for a pilot program. Since this involves temporarily changing restrictions at parking spaces where parklets would be installed, the Traffic and Parking Board is required to review and provide a recommendation. If endorsed by the Traffic and Parking Board, City staff will begin accepting applications in April. Approved parklets would be installed on a rolling basis, likely in the spring or early summer of 2020. Parklets would need to be removed by Thanksgiving Day,

November 26, 2020. Staff would use the proceeding months to evaluate the pilot and make recommendations for any changes for the second year of the pilot program.

The full list of requirements is provided in Attachment #2. The guidelines most relevant for the Traffic and Parking Board include the following:

- Description: A parklet is typically 1-2 parking spaces. More than 2 parking spaces will be considered on a case-by-case basis. This decision will be made based on the traffic and parking conditions of the proposed area, as well as the amount of support from the surrounding area. For example, if 2 or 3 businesses wanted to partner to host a parklet extended over multiple spaces, an exception would be considered.
- Parking space definition: In cases where spaces are not clearly delineated, a parking space is defined to be a 20' by 7-8' metered or unmetered curb-space.
- Location:
  - no dedicated bus lanes (against the curb) or bus stop areas (minimum 50' of curb space before nearest bus stop, unless signed with greater restrictions)
  - cannot be placed where rush hour regulations exist (e.g. Washington Street)
  - cannot be placed on corners unless there is a bulb-out (min. 20' from corner)
  - cannot block a fire hydrant (15' clearance on either side required by City Code)
  - must not obstruct public utilities such as manholes and storm drain inlets
  - cannot be on a street with street sweeping restrictions
  - cannot be on streets with a speed limit of more than 25 mph or with high vehicle traffic volumes (e.g. Patrick and Henry Streets)
  - cannot replace a loading zone, handicap parking, or other curb-space with special restrictions
  - cannot obstruct existing or planned Capital Bikeshare stations
  - cannot be placed on streets scheduled for paving according to the City paving plan within 1 year of proposed installation
- Location/Outreach: A parklet should be installed in parking spaces in front of property the applicant/host owns or leases. In cases where there is no parking that meets the requirements from staff in front of the space an applicant owns or leases, an applicant may work with other businesses to find an alternative location – provided they get a signed agreement from the building owner or tenant in front of the proposed location. This differs from the typical outreach process that will be required by applicants who intend to host a parklet directly in front of their own building. In these more typical cases, the applicant is only required to notify everyone on the block about their parklet application (and later approval) and allow for a two-week public comment period.

The guidelines and application process are meant to ensure the safety and high quality of parklets, while keeping the pilot program easy to participate in for potential parklet hosts. Parklets can provide public space for enjoying the city, especially where narrow sidewalks and dense commercial areas prohibit or limit such activity. Parklets may also promote local businesses, allow the public to get further involved in creating the streetscape they wish to see, and attract visitors with unique public spaces. Staff recommends supporting this pilot program to



test support for this new use and potentially refine it into a more permanent program in the future.

Evaluation of the pilot program will look at the number of parklets and reasons for participation, impacts to business revenue as reported by businesses, pedestrian volumes in and around parklets, and behavior within parklets themselves. Evaluation should also focus on the administration of the program, and if any changes should be made to improve the process. These criteria, along with public feedback, will determine whether the pilot should be continued as a permanent program. RP&CA staff will provide the Traffic and Parking Board with an evaluation on the first year of the pilot in early 2021 and note any changes that will be made to the second season of the pilot. Since the Board will provide a recommendation on the overall pilot program parameters including requirements for locations, individual parklet applications will not be reviewed by the Board. However, a full list of approved parklets will be made available on a public-facing City website.

**OUTREACH:** Staff met and coordinated with internal City teams such as T&ES Mobility Services, Planning & Zoning, T&ES Public Works, Board of Architectural Review, City Attorney's Office, T&ES Development and Right of Way Services (Permitting). Staff also met with several external groups such as Visit Alexandria, the Chamber of Commerce, Small Business Development Center, and Alexandria Economic Development Partnership. Staff held a focus group and multiple individual conversations with business association leaders, small business owners, design firms, and Virginia Tech's Washington-Alexandria Architecture Center. Additionally, around the City's annual participation in Park(ing) Day, staff used an intercept survey to gather feedback on interest in a more permanent parklet program (see attachment #3).

## ATTACHMENT 1: PARKLET EXAMPLES



(Philadelphia; Photo Credit: NACTO)



(Philadelphia; Photo Credit: NACTO)



(Rosslyn; Photo Credit: Rosslyn)



(Los Angeles; Photo Credit: Los Angeles)

## ATTACHMENT 2: Requirements

### Draft Requirements

**Number of parking spaces allowed for a parklet:** 1-2 typical. More than 2 spaces considered on a case-by-case basis.

**Parking space definition:** 20' x 7-8' metered or unmetered curbspace.

**Application period:** On-going basis.

**Timeline:** Parklets would aim to be installed in early Spring and must be removed by Thanksgiving (November 26, 2020). Potential to renew permit the following year from Spring – Thanksgiving.

#### **Limitations to where you can put a parklet:**

- No dedicated bus lanes (against the curb) or bus stop areas (minimum 50' of curb space before nearest bus stop)
- cannot be placed where rush hour regulations exist (e.g. Washington Street)
- cannot be placed on corners unless there is a bulb-out (min. 20' from corner)
- cannot block a fire hydrant (15' clearance on either side required by City code)
- must not obstruct public utility such as a manhole
- cannot be on a street with street sweeping restrictions
- cannot be on streets with a speed limit of more than 25 mph or with high vehicle traffic volumes (e.g. Patrick and Henry)
- cannot replace a loading zone, handicap parking, or otherwise designated curbspace
- not to obstruct existing or planned Capital Bikeshare stations

#### **Time-specific limitations:**

- Not on roads on the City pavement improvement plan within the upcoming year (information to be provided on the parklet website).
- Applicants *may* host a parklet that is on the City's sidewalk improvement plan within the upcoming year, with the understanding that the parklet may be required to close for a short period during sidewalk improvements. In some cases, the parklet may need to be removed completely, and then can be reinstalled. City staff can provide more information on a case-by-case basis.

**Insurance:** General Liability insurance must cover the period of the permit. Minimum \$1,000,000 coverage and must list the City of Alexandria as “primary and non-contributory” additionally insured. The City of Alexandria should be given at least 30 days advance notice of cancellation of the policy. The permit application will not move forward without the required insurance.

**Outreach:** Applicants are required to notify all businesses, neighborhood organizations and residents on the block where they are applying to host a parklet. The property owner from whom they lease their space should be notified as well. If the applicant owns their property, indicate so in the application. Notification should include (at minimum) a basic design concept, the number of parking spaces the parklet will occupy, and the applicant's contact information. Applicants must provide the City with a list of the addresses notified and an example notice (City to provide notice template).

If the proposed parklet would occupy parking spaces other than those fronting the applicant's space, letters of support from the fronting businesses, residents, and property owners are required.

If the parklet proposal is accepted, the City will provide a 14-day public comment period. Notice of the application and comment period will be posted in a visible location near the site and on the City Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities webpage. At the close of the public comment period, City staff will review the comments and decide whether to approve, modify, or deny the parklet application.

The City will provide another on-site sign 10 days before a parklet is to be installed.

### Design

**Buffer:** Maintain a 3' buffer from other parking spaces and a 1' buffer between the parklet and the travel lane. Two wheel stops and two flexible posts at minimum (City to provide and install).

**Drainage:** The parklet should not inhibit the drainage of stormwater runoff. Small channels between the base and the platform facilitate drainage.

**Accessibility:** Conform to ADA standards; Flush with the curb and seamless connection with no more than a 1/2" gap.

**Visibility:** Parklet should have vertical elements that make them visible to traffic. Reflective features are strongly encouraged. The structure of the parklet should not greatly obstruct visibility between the sidewalk and the roadway.

**Landscaping:** Landscaping and greenery is strongly encouraged as part of any parklet design. Applicants should consider how plants will do under the site shading conditions, and weather conditions. Watering and maintenance are the responsibilities of the host.

**Lighting:** Low impact lighting may be a part of the parklet design. Lighting should be self-sustaining (battery or solar-operated).

**Activation:** Staff is recommending allowing recreational elements as part of a parklet design (cornhole, chess, etc.). Programming and events in a parklet (such as, “Yoga in the Parklet”) would require a special event permit.

### ATTACHMENT 3: Parklet Interest Survey Results

*Intercept survey in Old Town and Del Ray around timing of Park(ing) Day on September 20<sup>th</sup>. There were 33 responses.*

#### Demographics

- Age
  - o 21% [over 64 years old]
  - o 15% [45-64]
  - o 21% [35-44]
  - o 39% [25-35]
  - o 3% [24 and younger]
- 52% male, 45% female, 3% transgender
- 58% live or work in the City
- 50% of visitors come to Alexandria often

I am interested in seeing more permanent parklets in the City of Alexandria. "Permanent" parklets are still able to be easily removed when necessary (for events, street sweeping, snow removal, etc).

