

# TRAFFIC & PARKING BOARD PUBLIC HEARING

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November 15, 2021



# Agenda: November 15, 2021

1. Announcement of deferrals and withdrawals
2. Virtual Meeting Resolution
3. Approval of October 25, 2021 Meeting Minutes
4. Written Staff Updates
5. Public Discussion Period
6. Public Hearing Follow Up

## **Consent Items:**

7. All-way Stop at Helen and Leadbetter
8. Modification of Previously Approved Bikeshare Station Location at S. Reynolds and Edsall

## **Public Hearing Items:**

9. Seminary Road Speed Limits
10. Left turn restriction at Yale Drive and Duke Street
11. Parklet Requirements for a permanent parklet program

## **Updates:**

12. Staff Updates

# Virtual Meeting Resolution

# Approval of the Minutes

# Public Discussion Period

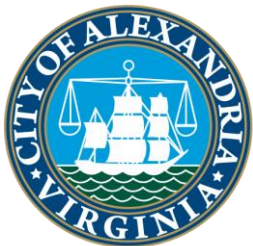
This period is restricted to items not listed on the docket

# Installing all-way stop at the intersection of Helen Street and Leadbeater Street

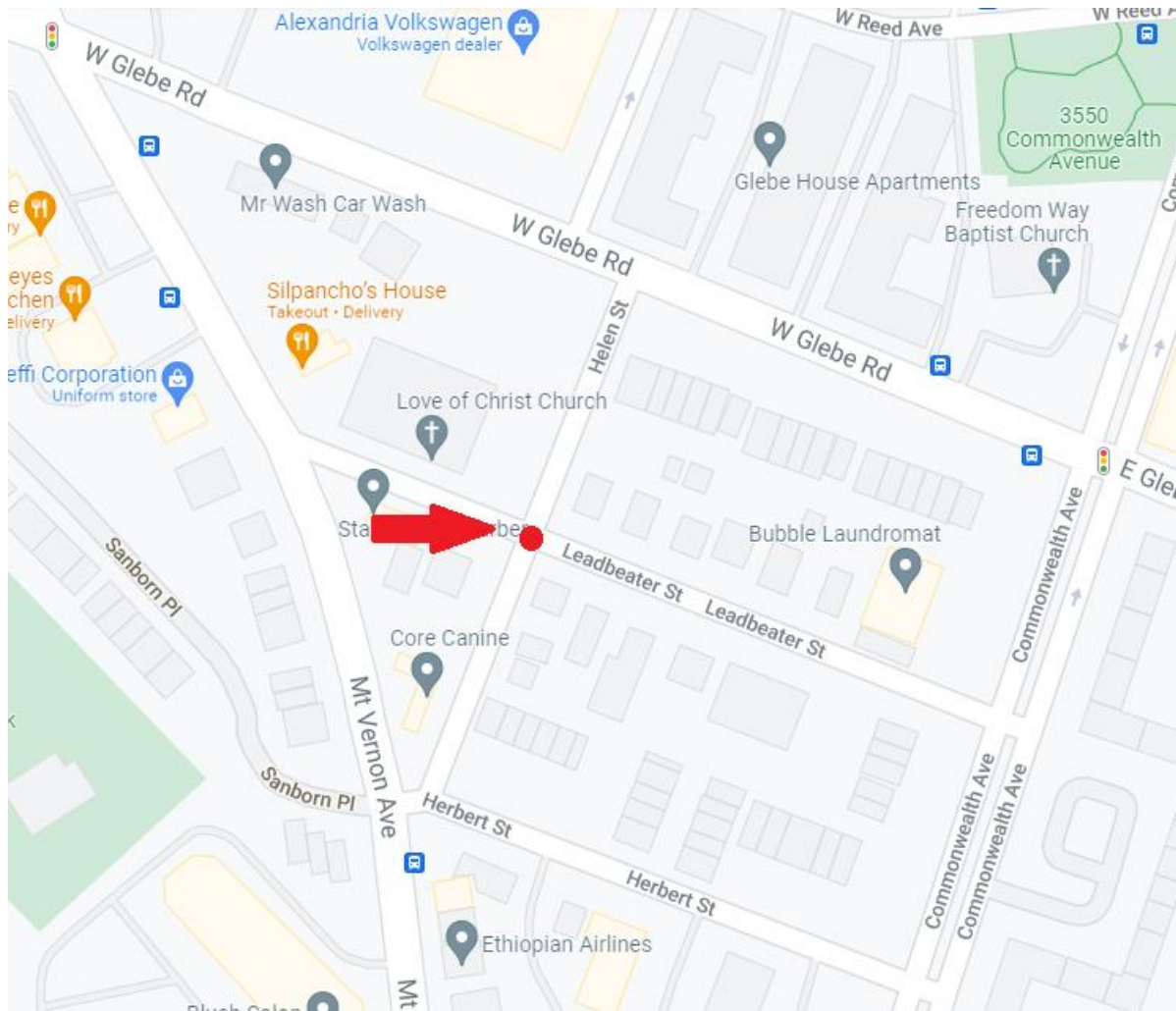
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Agenda Item 7

Presenter: Mr. Nguyen



# Location



# Street View



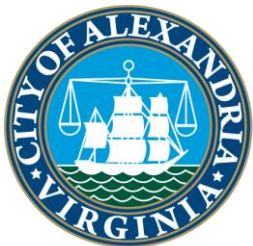


# Modifying of previously approved Capital Bikeshare Station location at S. Reynolds Street and Edsall Road

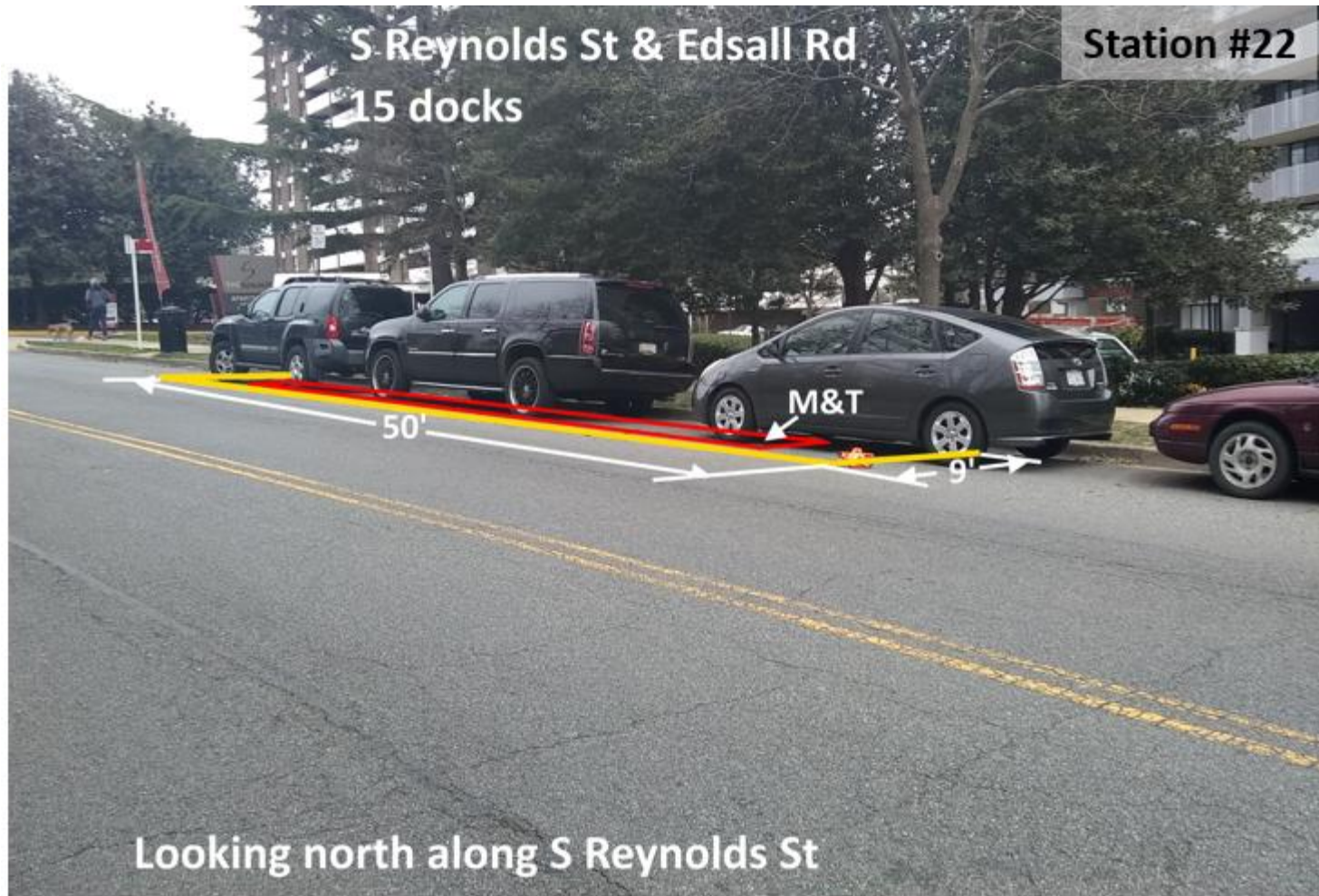
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Agenda Item 8

Presenter: Ms. Caudullo



# Previous approved location



# New proposed location

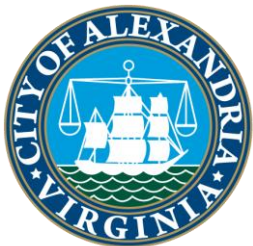


# Reducing the Posted Speed Limit on Seminary Road

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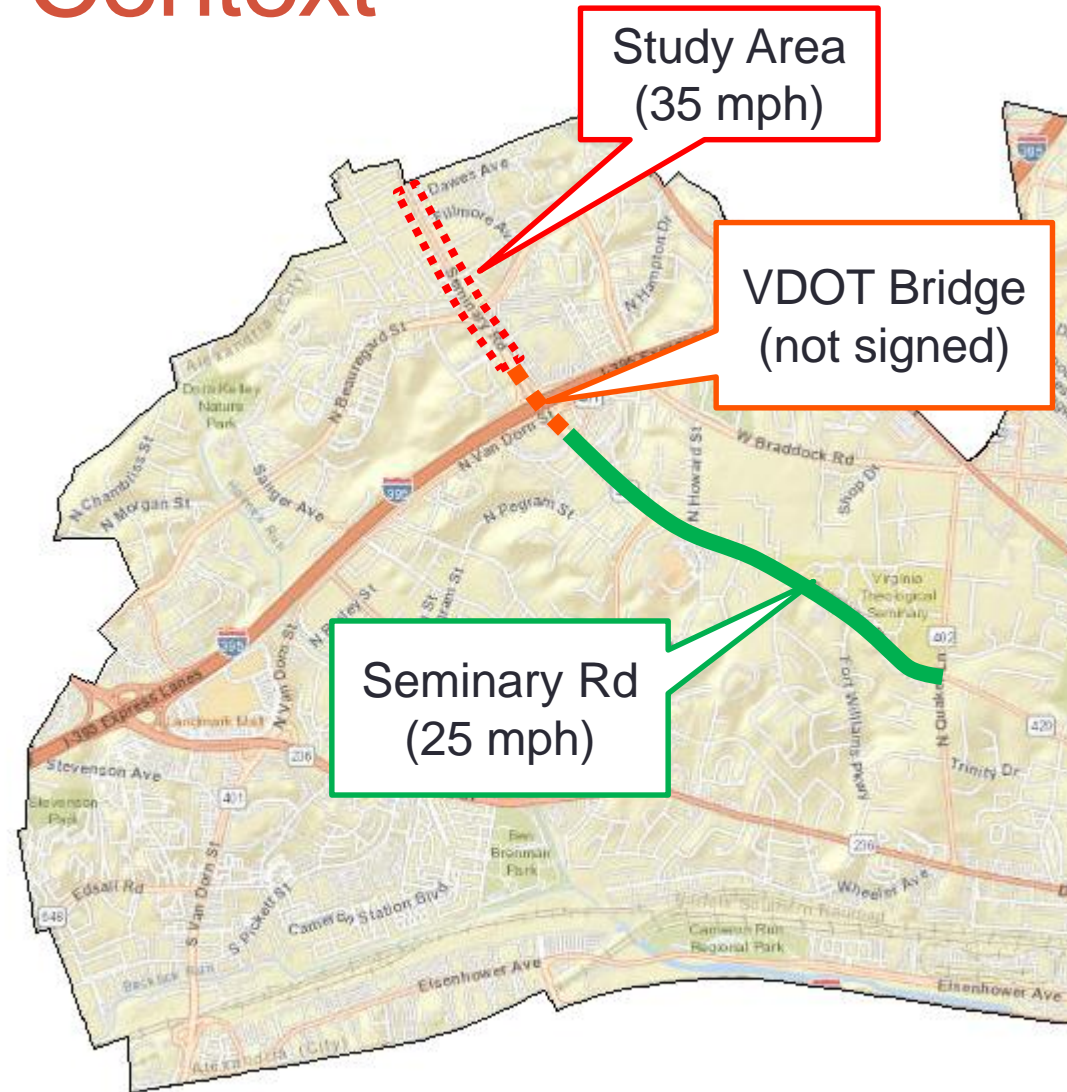
Agenda Item 9

Presenter: Ms. Carroll



# Seminary Road: Context

- Four through lanes
- Access to Fairfax County, I-395, NVCC, Mark Center, transit center, and local neighborhoods

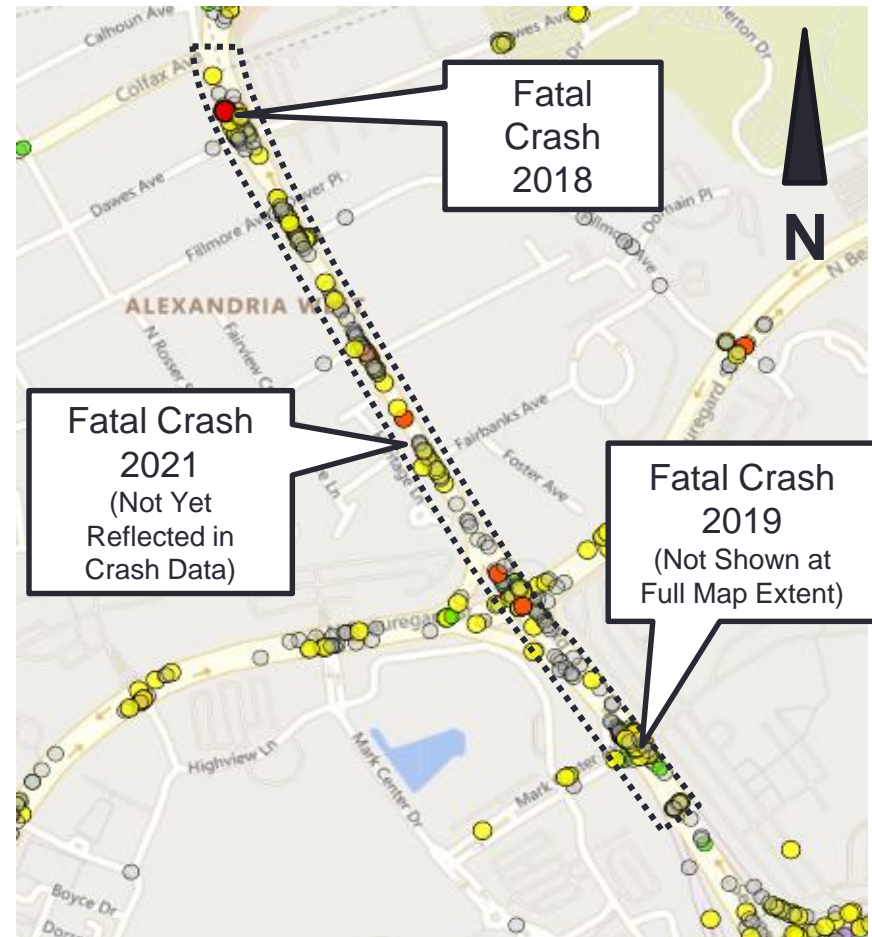


# Seminary Road: Crash History

Highest number of injury crashes per mile per year, compared to similar streets in Alexandria

January 2016-June 2021:

- 239 reportable crashes
- 2 fatal crashes
- Third fatal crash in September 2021
- 8 severe injury crashes
- 59 injury crashes
- 115 high-risk crash types (89 angle, 8 head on, 11 fixed object, 7 pedestrian)

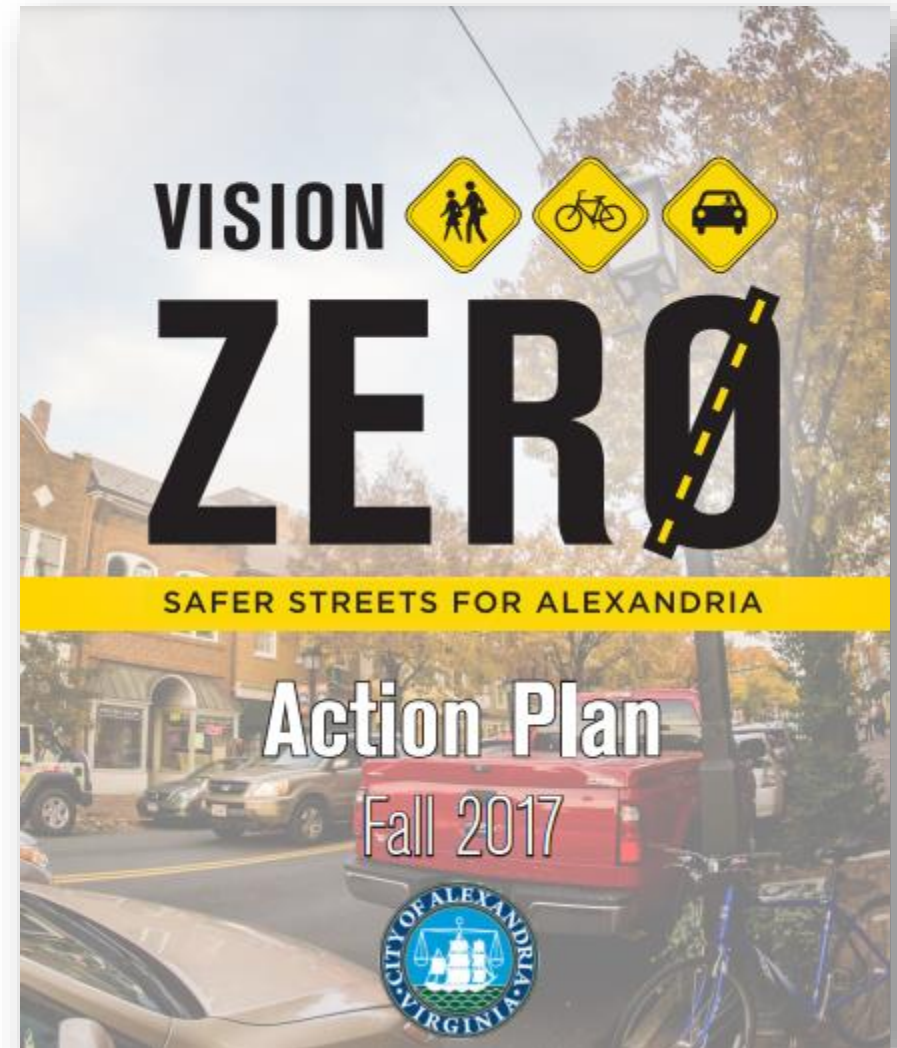


## Legend

- Fatal
- Severe Injury
- Visible Injury
- Nonvisible Injury
- Property Damage Only

# Background: Vision Zero

- Transportation systems affect human life, and no traffic-related loss of life is acceptable
- Data-driven approach to eliminate all traffic deaths and serious injuries
- Speed is recognized and prioritized as the fundamental factor in crash severity
- Action item to explore a citywide 25 mph speed limit
- Alexandria's goal is to achieve Vision Zero by 2028



# Speed & Crash Severity

Higher vehicle speeds correspond with a greater potential for loss of vehicle control, a higher stopping distance required after a driver perceives a danger, and an increased degree of crash severity.

- *National Highway Traffic Safety Association*

## Pedestrian Risk of Death by Vehicle Speed

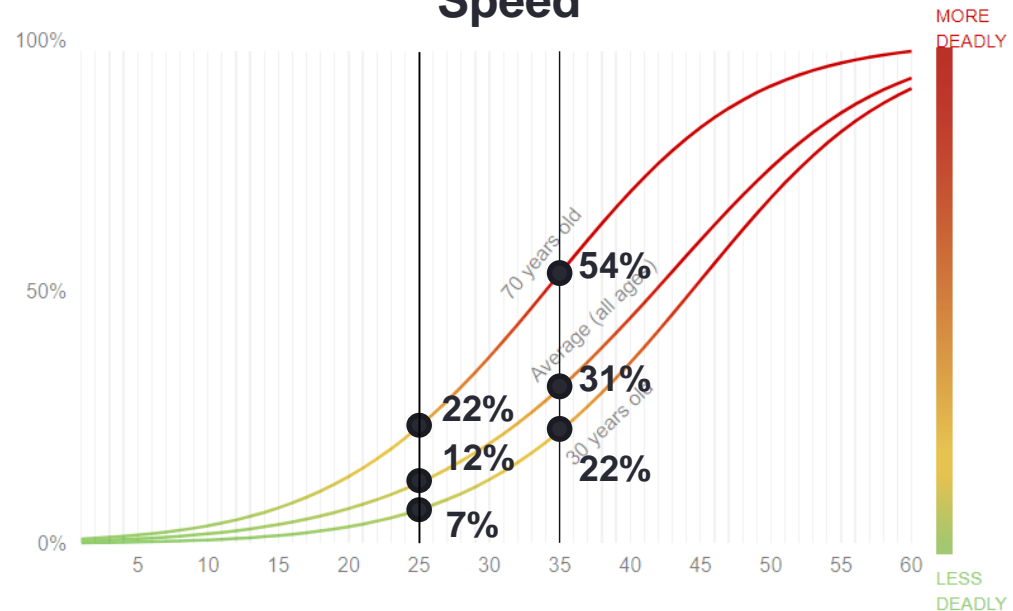


Image Source: ProPublica, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety

Pedestrian risk of severe injury (not pictured):

23 mph: 25%  
31 mph: 50%  
39 mph: 75%



# Speed & Crash Severity

According to the National Transportation Safety Board:

- Speed **increases the likelihood** of serious and fatal crash involvement
- Speed **increases the injury severity** of a crash
- The **safe system approach** to setting speed limits in urban areas is an improvement over conventional approaches because it considers the vulnerability of all road users
- The **current level of emphasis on speeding as a national traffic safety issue is lower than warranted** and insufficient to achieve the goal of zero traffic fatalities in the United States

# Posted Speed & Operating Speed

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Traditionally, posted speed limits are based on 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speeds

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Concerns with this approach due to overreliance on drivers to determine what is safe and reasonable

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Posted speed should drive the operating speed, not vice versa

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While many factors influence operating speed, the posted speed limit matters and has an impact



***“Lowering speed limits and increasing sign density alone - absent any marketing campaigns, additional enforcement, retimed signal progressions, or engineering changes to the street geometry – resulted in lower speeds and fewer crashes.”***

*- Seattle Department of Transportation*

# Speed Limit Guidance

## Federal Highway Administration:

- **Speed limit changes alone** can lead to measurable declines in speed and crashes
- States and local jurisdictions should **set appropriate speed limits** to reduce the significant risks drivers impose on others—especially vulnerable road users—and on themselves

## National Association of City Transportation Officials:

- “We cannot reduce traffic fatalities on US city streets without **reducing speeds.**”
- Posted speed limits should be based on the level of activity and conflict density

# Speed Limit Guidance

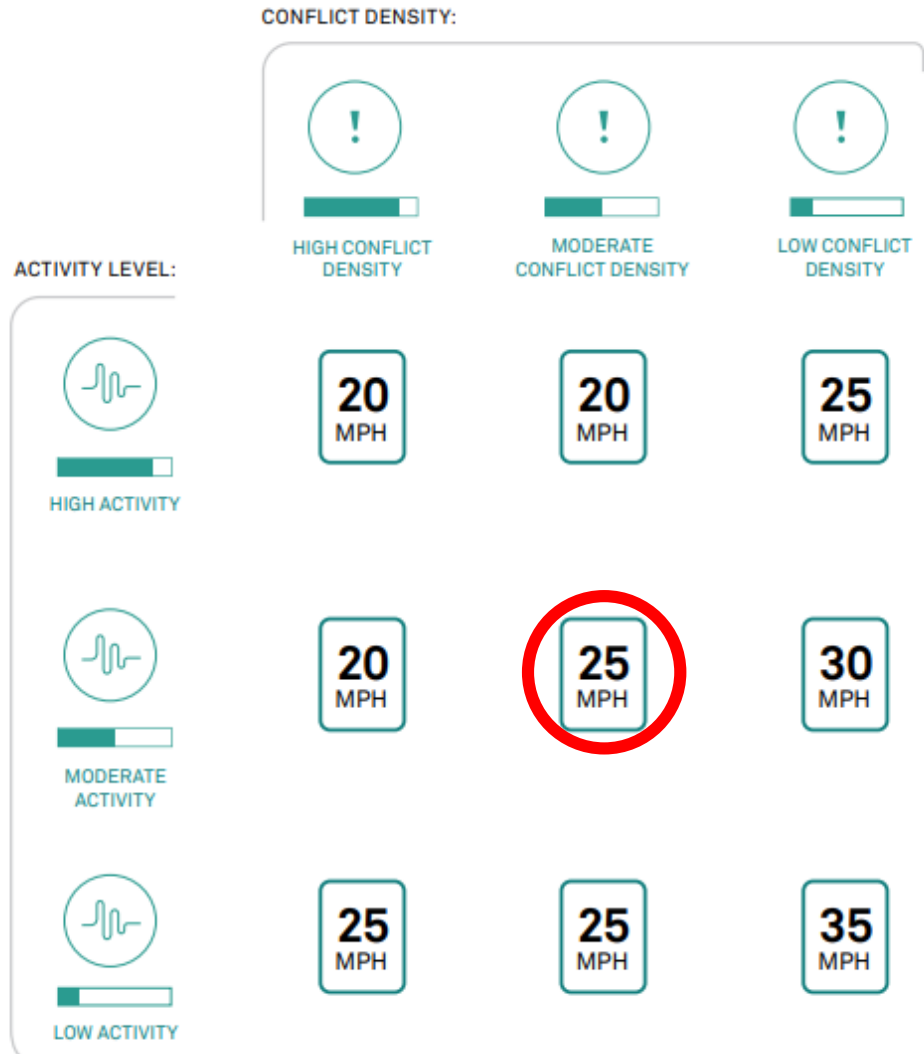
## Conflict Density: Moderate

- Limited physical separation between modes
- High density of driveways and crossing points, both signalized and unsignalized

## Activity Level: Moderate

- High-density residential and office combined with lower- and moderate-density residential

**Recommended Speed Limit: 25 mph**



# Alexandria Case Studies

## Quaker Lane (Duke Street to King Street)

## Seminary Road (Quaker Lane to I-395)

<b>↓ 11-23%</b>	50 <sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed	<b>↓ 6-12%*</b>
<b>↓ 11-19%</b>	85 <sup>th</sup> Percentile Speed	<b>↓ 1-11%</b>
<b>↓ 32%</b>	Average Annual Crashes	<b>↓ 34%</b>
<b>↓ 25%</b>	Average Annual Fatal or Severe Crashes	<b>↓ 25%</b>
<b>↓ 32%</b>	Average Annual Injury Crashes	<b>↓ 43%</b>

\*In one of three locations, average speed increased by 3%.

# Community Outreach

## Direct outreach to:

- ✓ Seminary West Civic Association
- ✓ Seminary Hill Association
- ✓ Alexandria Police Department
- ✓ Alexandria Fire Department
- ✓ Alexandria City Public Schools
- ✓ Fairfax County
- ✓ Northern Virginia Community College
- ✓ Alexandria Families for Safe Streets

## Takeaways:

### Concerns:

- There isn't a big enough problem on Seminary Road
- Drivers may not slow down even if the speed limit is reduced
- Impact of reducing speed limit on crashes
- Pending projects in the area
- Future road diets
- Improving safety should not mean restricting vehicle travel

### Support:

- Unacceptable number of fatal and severe crashes can be reduced
- Current speeds leave little room for error
- Safety for students traveling to local schools

## Staff Recommendation

That the Board recommend that the City Manager reduce the posted speed limit on Seminary Road between I-395 and the City Limit from 35 to 25 miles per hour.

# Restricting left turn out of Yale Drive at Duke Street intersection

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Agenda Item 10

Presenter: Mr. Knight

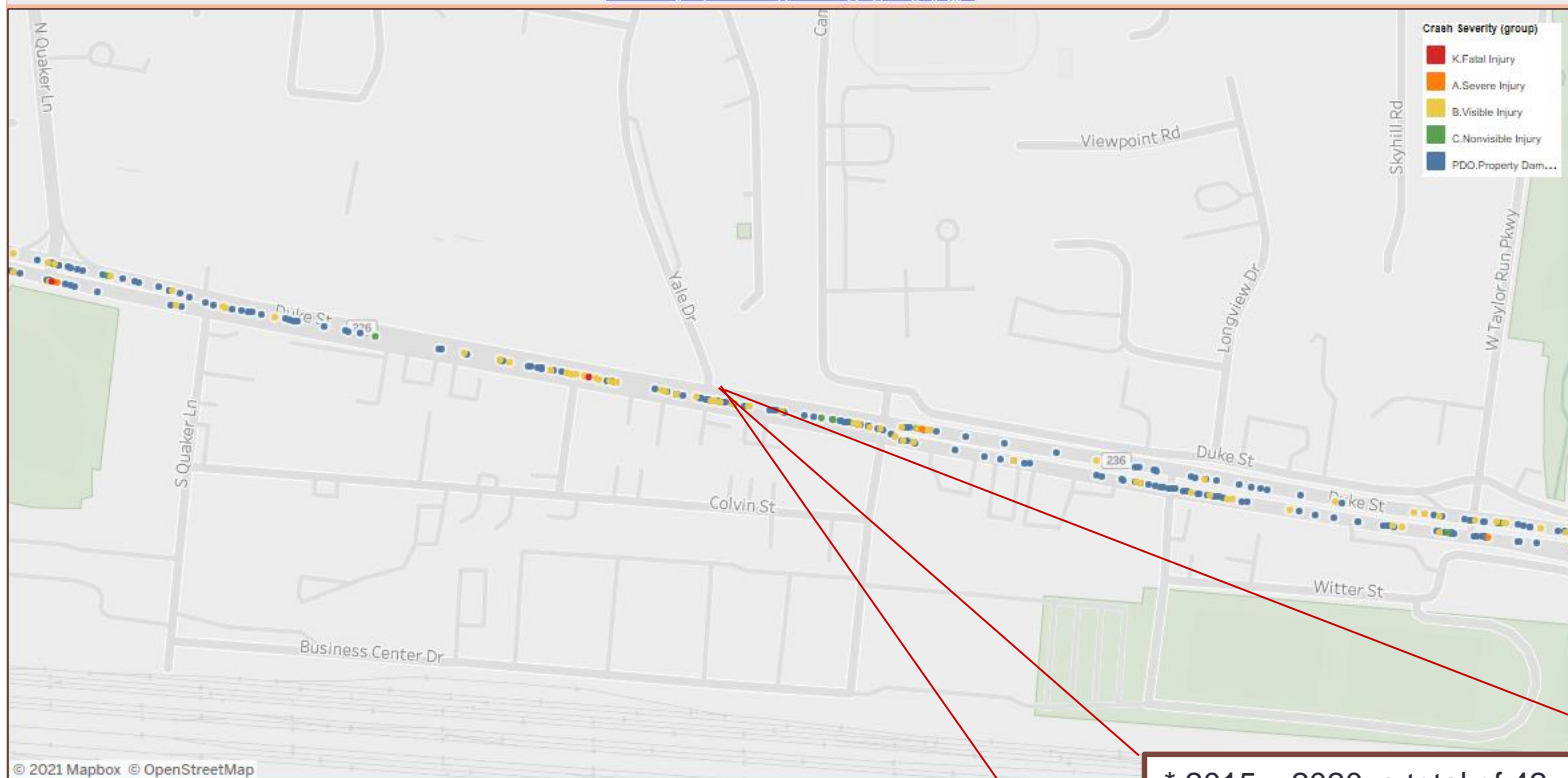




# Existing Condition





# Safety Concerns



\* 2015 – 2020, a total of 42 crashes occurred around Yale Drive.

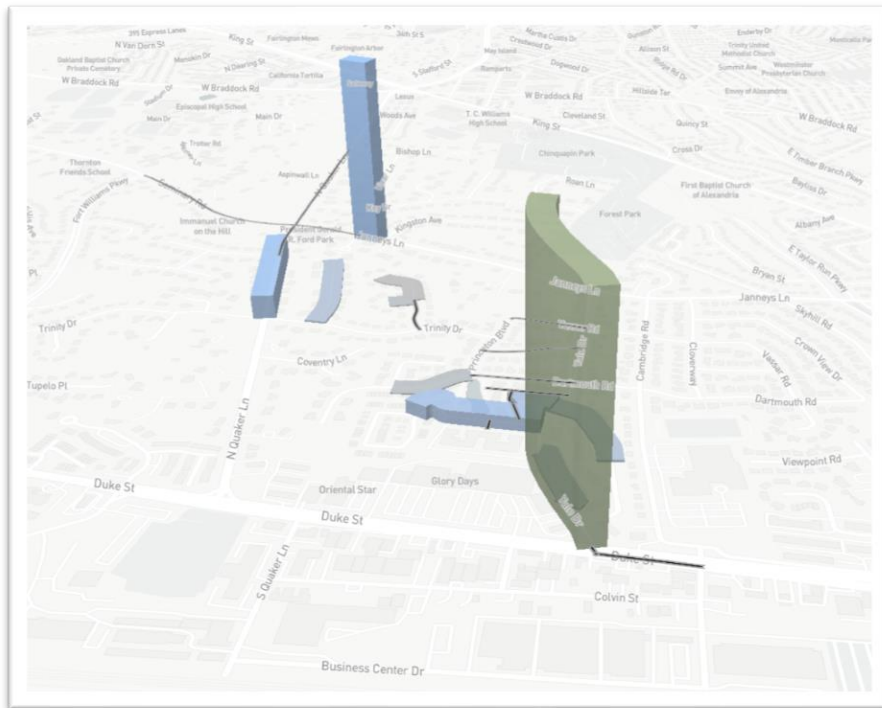
\* At least 3 Crashes involved driver coming from Yale Drive\*

Crash Type	# of Crashes at Yale Dr
	15 Angled Crashes
	2 Pedestrian Involved Crashes

# Proposed Condition



# Left turn Movement (Local vs Regional)



- Majority of daily drivers turning left at Yale Drive originated either on Quaker Lane or Janneys Lane
- Restricting left turns will lead to reduce cut-through traffic use and may encourage drivers to stay on primary routes.

# Community Engagement

- The City met with the Clover College Park Civic Association (CCPCA) on Thursday, October 21.
- No Significant Concerns were expressed.
- Some residents encouraged the City to include enhanced measures to improve pedestrian safety and visibility
  - Include a pedestrian panel sign as well as updated LED Street Lights

## Staff Recommendation

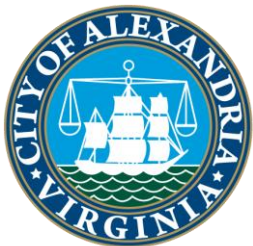
That the Board recommend restricting left turns from Yale Drive onto Duke Street

# Consideration of a recommendation to adopt Parklet Requirements for a Citywide permanent parklet program

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Agenda Item 11

Presenter: Mr. Block



# Background

## City Council Approval of Parklet Program

T&PB Recommends Permanent Program (Sep. 2021)



City Code changes approved (Oct. 2021)



Parklets allowed as a permitted encroachment



Encroachments must comply with **Parklet Requirements**



**Parklet Requirements** to be approved by the Traffic & Parking Board



# Parklet Requirements

## Location

- Identify areas where parklets are NOT allowed
- Street types (e.g. EVEs, rush hour parking, high-speed and high-volume streets)
- Clearance requirements (e.g. fire hydrants, utilities, etc.)

## Design

- Functional design
- Buffer space, accessibility, drainage, removal

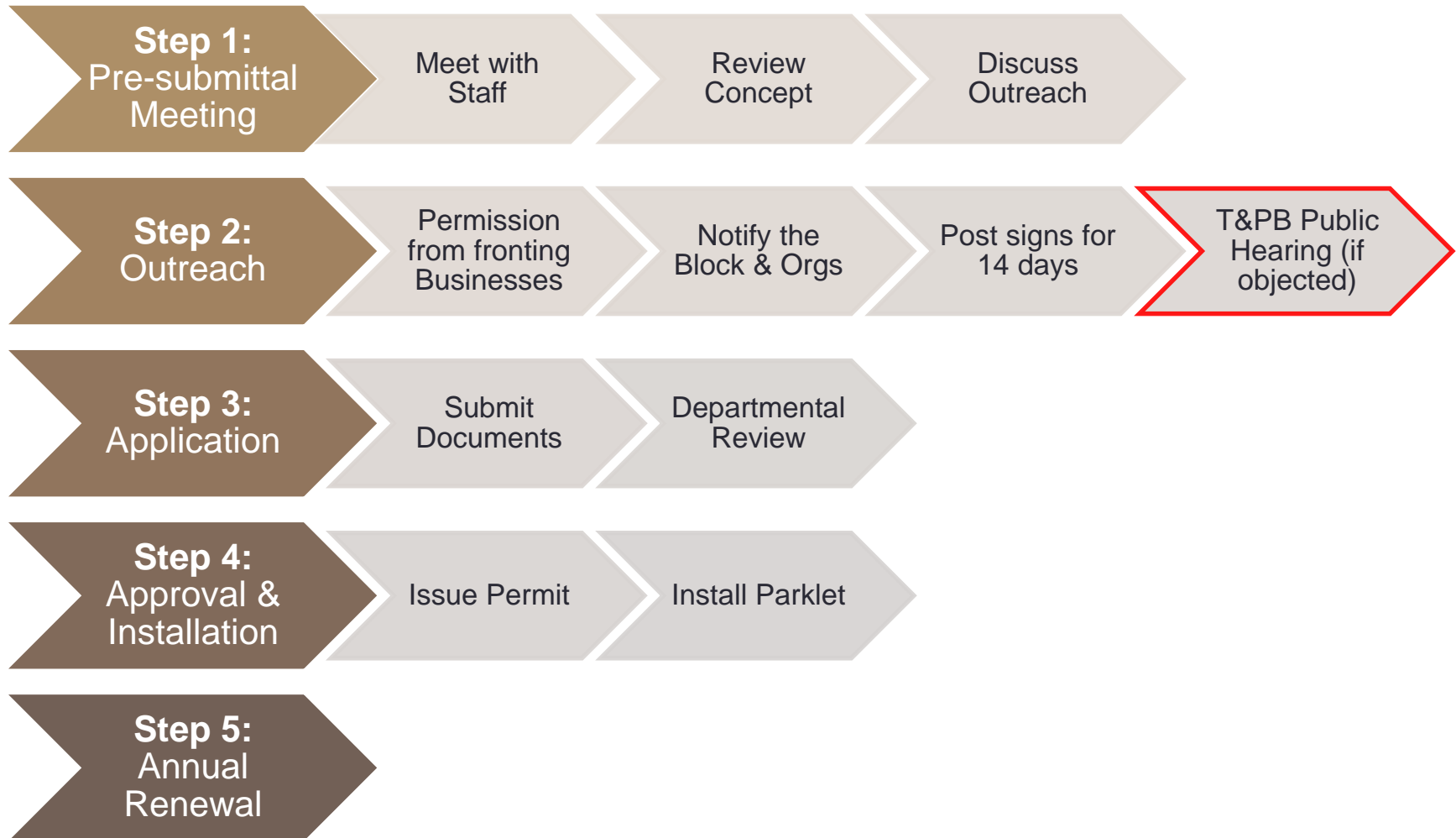
## Maintenance

- Signed agreement with City
- Maintain the parklet, clean and maintain public space

## Insurance

- Consistent with existing requirements for other City programs

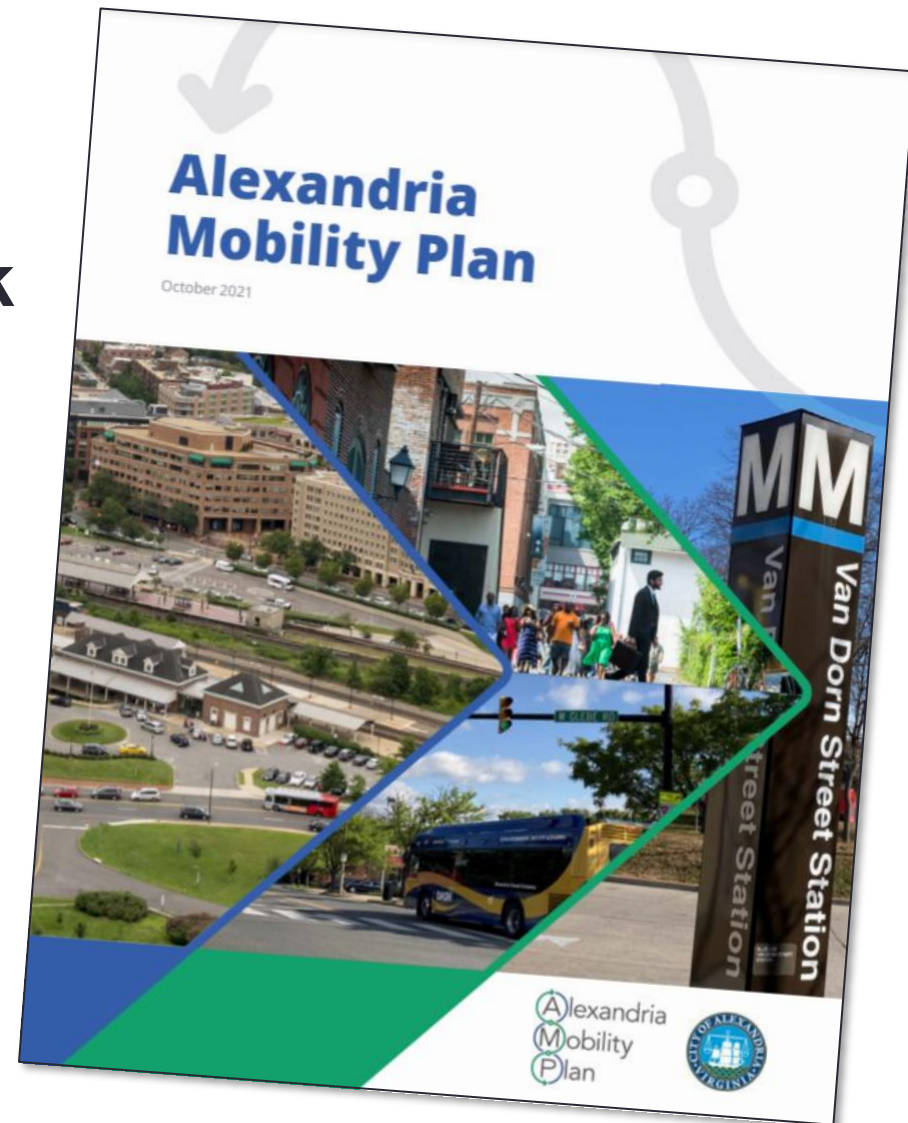
# Outreach/Application Process



# Policy Context

## Curb Space Prioritization Framework

- Alexandria Mobility Plan, approved by Council October 2021



# Curb Space Prioritization Framework

## Curb Use Categories

### Examples:

<b>City Plan Priorities</b>	Safety improvements, bus lanes, bike lanes, green infrastructure, electric vehicle charging, and other items specifically included in City plans
<b>Access for Goods</b>	Loading zones, deliveries, food pick-up/drop-off
<b>Access for People</b>	Bus stops, pick-up/drop-off, bikeshare stations, scooter corrals
<b>Parking</b>	Metered parking, residential parking, bike parking
<b>Activation</b>	Parklets, in-street dining, public art

# Curb Space Prioritization Framework

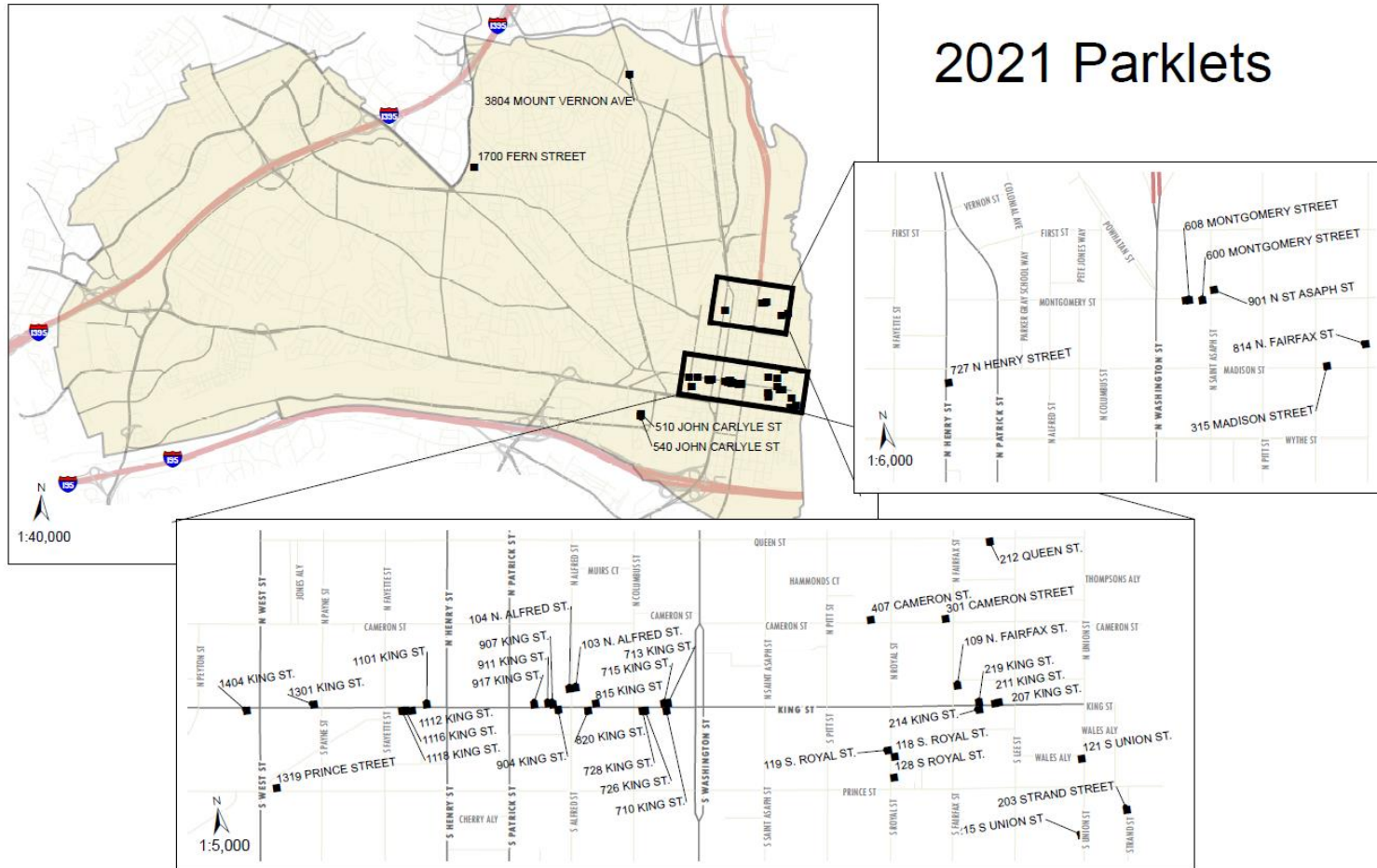
## Curb Space Prioritization Framework

Priority:	Residential	Main Streets	Office & Commercial Districts	Warehouse & Industrial
High  Low	City Plan Priorities			
	Access for People	Access for People	Access for People	Access for Goods
	Parking	Access for Goods	Access for Goods	Access for People
	Access for Goods	Activation	Parking	Parking
	Activation	Parking	Activation	Activation

### “Main Street” examples:

- King Street in Old Town
- Mt. Vernon Ave in Del Ray

# Map of Pandemic Parklet Applicants



\*Map of applications for Parklets, not current installations

\*\*Includes applications for temporary spaces

# Concentration of Parklets

- No formal limit on parklets per block
  - Concern with staff evaluation of competing applications
  - Proposed process allows for public hearing and Board review
- Curb Space Prioritization Framework
- Anticipate reduced demand for Parklets
  - Use requirements (Zoning)
  - Cost to construct
  - Fees (to be set by Council)

# Closed Streets

- Added flexibility for parklets on streets closed to traffic
  - No buffer space required
  - Continuous edges/railings not required
- Necessary to authorize the use as a permitted encroachment



***100 Block of King Street, 2020***  
*Photo Credit: Chris Cruz for Visit Alexandria*



# Temporary Parklets

## Requirements allow for temporary Parklets

- 7 days or less
- Anticipate applications for events
  - Sidewalk Sale – allow for commercial use
- Exempt from some design requirements, reflecting the short-term nature



***Small Business Saturday, 2020***  
*Photo Credit: Chris Cruz for Visit Alexandria*

# Outreach/Feedback

- Feedback Form
  - 2,700+ responses
  - 74% of residents/visitors support a permanent on-street dining program
  - 66% of business respondents support a permanent program
- Business Associations
  - General support for the program and goals; lots of interest in the specific details
- Civic Associations
  - No comments

# Next Steps

- Emergency authorization for Parklets through April 1, 2022
  - Provide applicants lead time; begin pre-submittal conversations
  - Make use of low season for outdoor dining
- Board of Architectural Review
  - Presentation in December, Approval in January
  - Anticipate adopting same guidelines for King Street Outdoor Dining
- Fees
  - Council Resolution anticipated this winter
- Permits
  - Accept permits in February/March

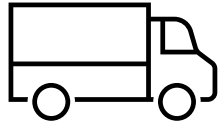
# Staff Recommendation

That the Traffic & Parking Board  
approve the Parklet Requirements

# Staff Updates

# MAPPING AND STREET CLASSIFICATION





# PURPOSE OF DISCUSSION

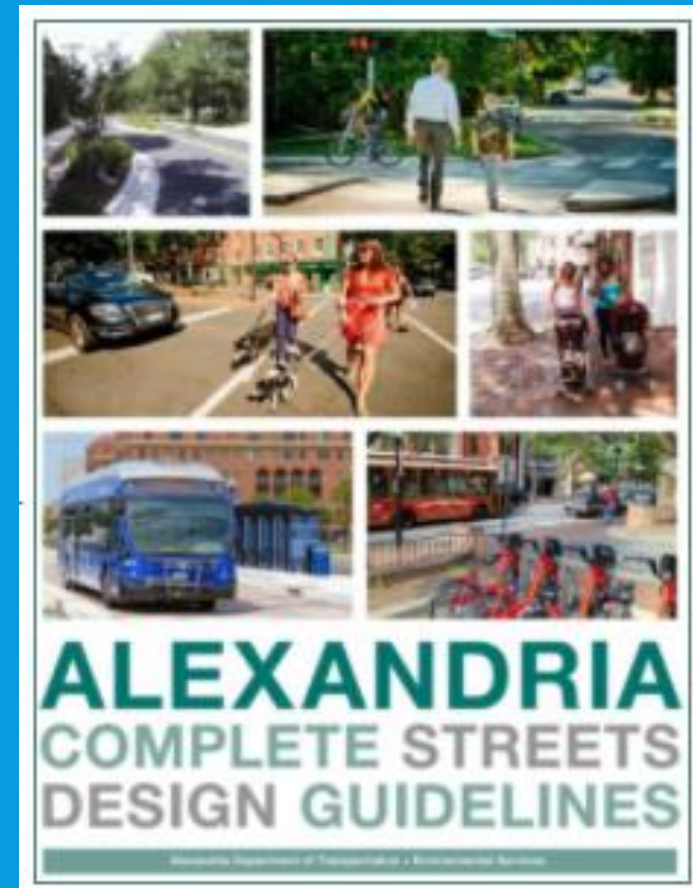


- Resident requests for changes to City and State classification maps to reduce or ban truck traffic.
- Staff to provide update to Board on current maps under discussion.
- Staff DOES NOT agree that changing map designation will have an impact on vehicular or truck traffic volumes
- Staff DOES NOT agree that changes are needed or warranted
- Staff has committed to a study that will be completed this spring to address resident questions and concerns

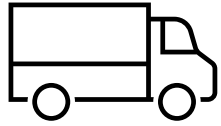
# COMPLETE STREET DESIGN GUIDELINES

## How do the Complete Street Design Guidelines work alongside functional classification?

- Complete Streets considers the context of the roadway (land use, traffic volume, etc.) when designing the street to accommodate all road users.
- Functional classification is used as part of the process for determining eligibility for certain types of traffic calming or mitigation measures



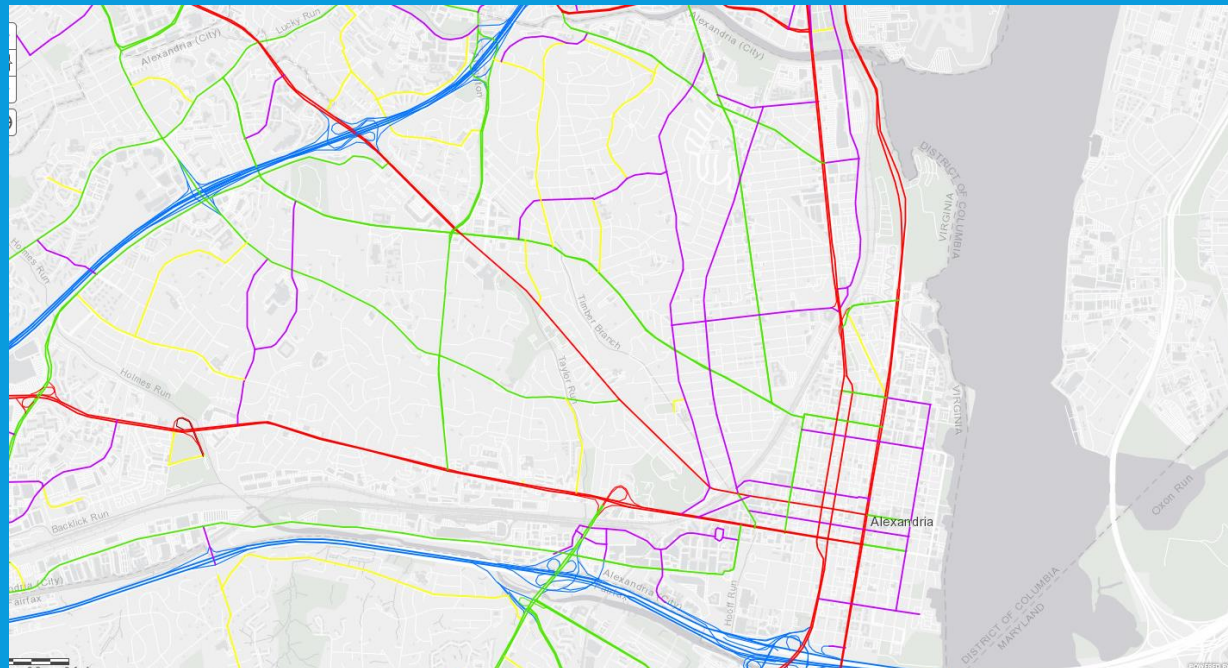


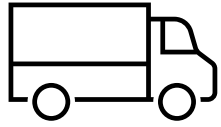


# STREET CLASSIFICATION AND DESIGNATION MAPS



- VDOT Functional Classification Map
  - The process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes according to the character of service they intended to provide.
  - The State's Use: A uniform system that allows the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to determine national needs through federal aid
  - The City's Use: To prioritize and determine appropriate traffic mitigation measures





# STREET CLASSIFICATION AND DESIGNATION MAPS



- City Maps:
  - **Truck Restrictions** – Designates Truck and No Through Truck Routes
    - Used by for City purposes only
    - PDF File
  - The City's **Transport GIS Layer** through the Open Data Hub
    - Used for Emergency Vehicle Routing
    - Purposes is to improve Emergency Vehicle routing and Regional Emergency Response
    - Road Classification consistent with MTFCC Code (5 digit code assigned by the Census Bureau intended to classify and describe geographic objects or features)

# CITY POSITION

- **VDOT Functional Classification** is defined through statewide process. Staff does not support applying for a change through VDOT's Change Request Process.
  - VDOT uses process to identify street designation
  - VDOT process for downgrading classification is intended to relax standards on access management
  - Equity concerns with requests for changes
- **Truck Restrictions Layer:** Staff will not use the unofficial street designation map for the Truck Restriction Program and will continue to use the VDOT Functional Classification map for this purpose.
  - Staff does not believe this will impact traffic
- **Transport Layer:** City changed the designation to a Secondary Road as agreed upon our Regional Emergency Response partners.
  - Staff does not believe this will impact traffic as this map is used primarily for emergency vehicle routing



# QUESTIONS??



# 2022 Meeting Calendar

## Continue with 4<sup>th</sup> Monday of the Month:

- January 24
- February 28
- March 28
- April 25
- May 23
- June 27
- July 25
- August 22
- September 26
- October 24
- November 14\*
- December 19\*

\*Date changed to avoid Holiday conflicts

# Meeting Times

## **Virtual Meetings:**

- Meet via Zoom
- Start at 7:00 pm

## **In-Person Meetings:**

- Meet in Council Chambers at City Hall
- Start at 7:30 pm

# Questions?

## **Hybrid Meetings?**

- Staff support
- Technology support
- Expectations for Members

## **Potential changes in law:**

- City legislative priority to support electronic participation