

# Richmond Connects Steering Committee

## MEETING SUMMARY

March 29, 2022 | 10:00 am to 12:00 pm | ZOOM

### Attendees

Kelli Rowan, OETM	Councilmember Andreas Addison
Dironna Moore Clarke, OETM	Michelle Brown Peters, Housing and Community Development
Atiba Muse, OETM	Sam Patterson, City Council Office 7 <sup>th</sup> District
Brandon King, OETM	Alicia Zatcoff, Office of Sustainability
Crystal Lowery, OETM	Torrence Robinson, Dept. of Public Works
Matthew Clites, Dept. of Parks & Recreation	Paul Trapp, Timmons Group
Carla Childs, Dept. of Economic Development	Thomas Ruff, Timmons Group
Make Sawyer, Dept. of Public Works, Traffic Engineering	Vlad Gavrilovic, EPR
Dominique Thaxton, City Council Office, 9 <sup>th</sup> District	Jessica Dimmick, EPR
Jakob Helmboldt, Dept. of Public Works, Pedestrian and Trails Coordinator	Kate Ange, Renaissance Planning Group
John Kim, Dept. of Public Works	Ebony Walden, Ebony Walden Consulting
Maritza Marcado Pechin, Office of Equitable Development	Brad Shelton, Michael Baker International
Yessenia Revilla, Office of Equitable Development	Mike Carosi, On Point Transportation PR

### MEETING OUTCOMES

Kelli Rowan, City of Richmond Office of Equitable Transit and Mobility, opened the meeting and outlined four objectives for the meeting:

- Understanding of Steering Committee definition of a successful Richmond Connects
- General consensus on the project schedule and key milestones
- Select reoccurring meeting date and time
- Participants will have an understanding of their role in Richmond Connects and their next steps

### AGENDA ITEMS

Kelli Rowan provided a copy of the meeting presentation to the Steering Committee. This summary documents the key points of discussion, action items, and next steps.

#### Opening Remarks from Councilmember Andreas Addison

Councilmember Andreas Addison gave opening remarks on the goals for a successful Richmond Connects plan and process, touching on several key points:

- Richmond Connects is shaping a vision for how people get around our City – connecting everyone equitably.
- Creating a 10-15 minute city is a key goal that came out of the Richmond 300 Master Plan.



- Invest in transportation and what's around it – access to green spaces, schools, jobs, entertainment, and quality of life opportunities.
- The City of Richmond can lead the region to invest in multimodal transportation connectivity, including high frequency bus service.
- Richmond Connects is an opportunity to examine how CVTA spends funds and how that should be changed – the City can lead the narrative around new multimodal investments.
- It's about human focus, human design, and how we interact with each other; not just a focus on cars.

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## Defining Success

Kelli Rowan asked the Steering Committee to respond to a poll:

What is one word or phrase that describes a successful Richmond Connects plan?




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## Project Team Introductions, Project Overview, and Timeline

Jessica Dimmick and Kelli Rowan introduced the project team, gave an overview of the Richmond Connects project, and the timeline. The presentation slides provide more information on these items.

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## Steering Committee Introductions

The Steering Committee Members introduced themselves and identified a project or accomplishment they are proud of since the last Richmond Connects was completed in 2013. The following responses were provided:

- Matthew Clites, DPR – Parks & Rec – Meeting at train station to establish core values
- Carla Childs, - Dept of Economic Development, Anti-poverty commission worked on getting the Pulse BRT
- Mike Sawyer, Traffic Engineering, Vision Zero Coordinator – We brought in \$250 million from grant writing
- Dominique Thaxton, City Council Office, 9<sup>th</sup> District (Michael Jones) – Pulse BRT, and the level of engagement and intentionality
- Jakob Helmboldt – Pedestrian and Trails coordinator, Dept. Public Works – completion of City's first bike master plan; 40+ miles of bike lanes implemented, a dozen more planned for this year
- John Kim – 84 bridges, crossing over bridges and railroads; replacing 108-yr old bridge is in the works

- Maritza Mercado Pechin, Office of Equitable Development (Planning) – implementing the Citywide master plan; current plan to reconnect Jackson Ward
- Yessenia Revilla, Planning – Reconnect Jackson Ward; looking for needs first instead of outcome of applying for grants
- Michelle Brown Peters, Director Housing Community Development – intentionality; needed conversations about equity
- Sam Patterson, City Council Office, 7<sup>th</sup> District
- Alicia Zatcoff, Sustainability Manager in Office of Sustainability – City will soon have a climate action plan – centered in equity, goal to reach net zero emissions by 2050; address local climate impacts of extreme heat and extreme flooding; integrated in our approach to Richmond300
- Torrence Robinson, Deputy Director for Public Works – Implementation of bike lanes throughout the city and different modes (e.g. scooters) that have allowed citizens to access various parts of the city

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### Changes Since 2013

Kelli Rowan reviewed notable accomplishments and projects since the last Richmond Connects plan was completed in 2013, some of which overlapped with the accomplishments the Steering Committee members noted:

- Inaugural deployment of 200 bikes and docking stations took place in summer 2017.
- Virginia Capital Trail Design-Build Construction Completed (2015)
- Richmond Bicycle Master Plan Implementation (2011-present)
- Virginia Capital Trail Design-Build Construction Completed (2015)
- Design-Build Construction of The Pulse, GRTC’s Bus Rapid Transit System (2016-2018)
- E-Scooters Pilot Program Implementation (June 2019)
- COVID-19 GRTC Zero Fare Operations (March 2020)
- Richmond 300 Master Plan Adoption (December 2020)
- ConnectRVA 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan Adopted (October 2021)
- Plan RVA Richmond Regional Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan (underway)
- UCI Road World Cycling Championships in Richmond (2015)
- Franklin Street Bike Lanes (MILES of bike lanes added)
- GRTC Route Redesign Implementation (June 2018)
- The GRTC route redesign, also known as The Great Richmond Reroute, went into effect June 2018. The Reroute included transitioning from a network with 1,834 stops and 44 routes to 1,608 stops and 42 routes including 7.6 miles of bus rapid transit running east and west from Willow Lawn to Rocketts Landing.
- T. Tyler Potterfield Memorial Bridge (T. Pott.) - The long anticipated physical link between Brown’s Island and Manchester, this pedestrian and cycling pathway sits atop a former hydroelectric dam, some 20 feet above the river. Completed in 2016.

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### Maintaining Momentum from the Path to Equity

Kelli Rowan described how the process to develop the Richmond Connects plan with actualize the Investment Need Categories and Equity Factors from the Path to Equity Policy Guide and policy statements from Richmond 300 and RVAgreen 2050 into meaning metrics that assess how well the current and programmed multimodal network meets desired outcomes and identify a comprehensive set of needs. The needs will be stratified to identify the top, most pressing needs. From these needs, we will develop project recommendations, as well as policy and strategic solutions.

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### Conceptual Public Engagement Schedule

Jessica Dimmick reviewed the draft conceptual public engagement schedule – see the presentation slides. Initial comments from the Steering Committee:

- Build in preparation time for creating the materials in between the Steering and Advisory Committee meetings and the public engagement activities. The schedule seems like it might be rushed.

- Make note of funding program timelines. September 2023 is when the CIP is developed. SMART SCALE Round 6 applications will occur in October 2023.
- Don't forget the senior population and their input and needs
- Include a representative from the Dept. of Blind and Visually Impaired. Mike Sawyer will provide a contact name.
- Mike Sawyer shared a list of foundational links, including:
  - Richmond Vision Zero Action Plan
  - VDOT's Crash Tool
  - Richmond's Vision Zero Dashboard
  - Richmond Regional Transportation Safety Plan
  - Virginia's Pedestrian Safety Action Plan
  - Virginia's Pedestrian Safety Action Plan 3.0 Map
  - Virginia's Health Opportunity Index
  - Virginia HOI Dashboard
  - USDOT Transportation Disadvantaged Communities Map
  - RRTPO Needs and Gaps for Transportation Disadvantaged Communities
  - Richmond's Better Streets Manual
  - 2016 Richmond City Council Vision Zero Resolution
  - 2014 Richmond City Council Complete Streets Resolution
- Consider changing the way to ask the question about needs to the public to best get information from the public, such as "How do you feel walking in the street?" or "Why are you having a hard time in your day today?"
- Organizing locally is a key factor for obtaining grants from the federal government. We need to start from the ground up.

## NEXT STEPS

Action items	Person responsible	Deadline
Review the conceptual public engagement schedule and provide comments	All Steering Committee members	Friday April 8, 2022
Designate an alternate representative and provide alternate's contact info to Kelli Rowan	All Steering Committee members	Friday April 8, 2022
Send additional ideas for representatives to serve on the Steering Committee to Kelli Rowan	All Steering Committee members	Friday April 8, 2022
Respond to data requests	All Steering Committee members	To be requested
Review draft Outreach Plan	All Steering Committee members	To be requested

## DECISIONS MADE

Steering Committee meetings will be held on the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of odd months, from 10 am to noon.

## NEXT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

Tuesday May 24, 2022 | 10am to noon