

Richmond Connects Steering Committee MEETING SUMMARY

November 22, 2022 | 10:00 am to 12:00 pm | ZOOM

Attendees

Meloni Alexander, City of Richmond Dept. of Public Works (DPW), Parking & Shared Mobility Division

Aaron Bond, City of Richmond Dept. of Planning & Development Review (PDR)

Chenice Brown, City of Richmond Office of Equitable Transit and Mobility (OETM), Community Outreach Specialist

Carla Childs, City of Richmond Dept. of Economic Development

Dironna Moore Clarke, OETM

Matthew Clites, City of Richmond Dept. of Parks & Recreation (DPR)

Jessica Dimmick, EPR (Richmond Connects Consultant Team Project Manager)

John Everett, OETM

Vlad Gavrilovic, EPR (Richmond Connects Consultant Team)

Jakob Helmboldt, DPW, Pedestrian and Trails Coordinator

Osita Iroegbu, City of Richmond Office of Community Engagement, Inclusion, and Equity

Brandon King, OETM

Brian Kingery, Timmons Group (Richmond Connects Consultant Team)

Lynne Lancaster, DPW, Parking

Crystal Lowery, DPW

Atiba Muse, OETM

Maritza Pechin, PDR

Michelle Peters, City of Richmond Dept. of Housing and Community Development

Yessenia Revilla, PDR

Kelli Rowan, OETM

Thomas Ruff, Timmons Group (Richmond Connects Consultant Team)

Mike Sawyer, DPW, Traffic Engineering

Sam Sink, GRTC

Paul Trapp, Timmons Group (Richmond Connects Consultant Team)

Diane Whitfield-Tyree, DPR

Alicia Zatcoff, City of Richmond Office of Sustainability

MEETING SUMMARY

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

To obtain a copy of the meeting presentation, email Kelli Rowan at Kelli.Rowan@rva.gov.

Project and Schedule Update

At the last Steering Committee meeting in September 2022, the committee had reviewed the results from the Public Engagement Phase 1 survey, reviewed the approach for Engagement Phase 2, and prepared for the October Advisory Committee meeting.

The Richmond Connects team has prepared the draft set of needs analysis maps and has begun outreach activities for Public Engagement Phase 2. During today's meeting, the Richmond Connects team shared an update on Engagement Phase 2, and



shared the StoryMap of the draft needs analysis maps for committee review. The Steering Committee engaged in discussions about the un-mappable needs through breakout groups.

At the next Steering Committee meeting, scheduled for January 24, 2023, the Committee will review the results from Engagement Phase 2 and start developing the long-term scenarios.

Phase 2 Public Engagement Summary

Kelli Rowan shared updates on the activities and efforts to engage the 3 target audiences for outreach.

1. General public and existing contacts – short (1 minute 40 second) video on RVAConnects.com website, opt-in for text messages, and upcoming telephone town halls
2. Communities of Concern – Intercept activities with portable banners sharing top issues in each focus area and asking what would you fix first?
3. Vested stakeholders – Review of the data-driven needs analysis maps

View the video on www.RVAConnects.com!

Needs Analysis Update

The Richmond Connects team has completed the draft set of 11 unweighted Investment Need Category maps and 10 Equity Factor maps. Jessica Dimmick shared the StoryMap with the interactive maps.

Please review the maps at <http://bit.ly/3Xfzjji> and provide comments and feedback by email to Kelli Rowan at Kelli.Rowan@rva.gov by **December 6th**. Note this link is for Steering Committee review only at this time.

As you review the maps, please consider:

- Do the needs maps generally make sense?
- Do they align with your gut sense of where the needs are?
- Do you see any areas that are questionable?

The Richmond Connects team is currently working on integrating the Equity Factor layers into the Investment Need Category maps to produce the weighted INC maps.

Un-Mappable Needs (Breakout Group Discussions)

The Richmond Connects team compiled an initial list of non-mappable needs (including programmatic and policy-based needs as well as city-wide infrastructure and services needs that are not location specific) for each Investment Need Category.

The committee broke out into three groups to review the non-mappable needs and add to them. Below are the results from those discussions.

Programmatic & City-Wide Needs

Pedestrian



- Sidewalks generally in disrepair everywhere
- General lack of key sidewalk connections/connectivity.
- Lack of pedestrian priority at signalized intersections
- Lack of painted crosswalks, elevated walkways, and/or flashing ped crossings
- Problematic accessibility of sidewalks, too narrow, lack of curb cuts
- Lack of shared-use paths
- Lack of paths along railroad corridors
- Lack of ped-only lanes or closing streets to vehicular traffic
- Need for better lighting
- Lack of access exacerbated if disabled
- Trash, general unkempt feeling of walk facilities.
- General lack of maintenance of existing facilities
- Richmond is too car-centric overall
- Lack of knowledge about how to navigate pedestrian network, knowledge of local attractions
- LACK OF DRIVER AWARENESS OF PEDESTRIANS (SAFETY CULTURE) - HOW DO WE INFLUENCE THE PERCEPTION OF PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY?
- HOW DO WE GET CONTINUITY OF PEDESTRIAN PRIORITY ON ROADS BEYOND CITY BOUNDARIES (PHYSICAL & BEHAVIORAL)?
- ADA ACCESSIBILITY CONTINUITY
- REGIONAL APPROACHES TO ADDRESSING THE CAR-CENTRIC CULTURAL ISSUES



Programmatic & City-Wide Needs

Bike



- Lack of dedicated bicycle infrastructure with physical separation, sharrows are ineffective, lack of proper signage
- Bike infrastructure needs to be more connected to create a real network
- Lack of shared-use paths
- Lack of paths along railroad corridors
- Drivers don't share the road, aren't friendly with bicyclists, park in bike lanes
- Lack of maintenance of existing bike lanes (vegetation, trash, etc.)
- Missing bike lanes to connect to important areas
- Missed opportunities for closing streets to vehicular traffic
- Lack of bike racks
- Lack of access to bikes if low income, cost burden.
- COSTS OF BIKESHARE (GRTC IS FARE FREE NOW)
- INTEGRATION OF TRANSIT WITH BIKESHARE SERVICES (INTEGRATED TRANSFERS?)
- INCREASED HOURS AND ALLOWABLE AREAS FOR E-SCOOTERS (EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION OF SCOOTERS)



Programmatic & City-Wide Needs

Transit



- Lack of sheltered waiting areas with seating, trash, lighting, other amenities
- Not enough frequent transit routes
- Limited service areas, including shopping centers, parks, etc.
- Infrequent stops
- Poor reliability of service
- Limited service hours
- Uncertainty in fare-free duration
- Limited dedicated bus lanes
- SIGNAL PRIORITY IN SELECTED AREAS
- Driver shortage
- Lack of on-demand services, limited to high income users
- Lack of micro-transit

- Lack of incentives for TDM; Lack of options for TDM
- Lack of N/S BRT
- Limited park & rides/commuter parking lots
- Lack of permanent GRTC transfer plaza
- Richmond is car-centric overall
- Lack of opportunities for trolleys/light rail
- Lack of opportunities for high-speed rail
- MICROMOBILITY FOR LAST MILE CONNECTIVITY
- LOW DENSITY AREAS AT EDGES OF CITY - EITHER ADDRESS WITH MICROTRANSIT OR WITH BIKE/WALK ACCESS
- MORE REGIONALISM IN ADDRESSING TRANSIT ACCESS TO GOOD PAYING JOBS IN THE REGION - MAY NEED STATE INVOLVEMENT

Programmatic & City-Wide Needs

Freight



- Lack of truck restrictions on some streets
- CDL-Qualified Driver shortage for trucks - translates to transit drivers too
- Lack of options for clean fleet, flexibility in technologies, funding programs
- Lack of truck parking (on-street loading zones) generally
 - Broad Street deliveries challenging - trucks stopping in the middle of the street; alleys
 - Transit-only lanes spur the question of curb-side management
 - Is this less of an public right-of-way issue; it is an off-site parking question
- Lack of truck parking near distribution facilities
- Lack of unified programs for trucking waivers during pandemics and other emergency orders (they need to park, eat, shower, so do rail workers)
- Problematic rail working conditions (this also affects passenger rail, if workers strike)

- Redundancy for workers/labor during pandemics
- Vulnerability of supply chain for low-income residents
- Growing inequities in home delivery costs
- Automation of freight - driverless commercial vehicle - need to prepare for this;
- Curb-side management - reserving loading zones
- Last mile freight delivery
- Global freight movement via Port of Virginia facilities; rail facilities just outside of City



Programmatic & City-Wide Needs

Land Use



- More parking
 - Less space for parking
 - Parking minimums are cumbersome
 - If city takes out the parking minimums, the city needs to be ready with a plan to provide parking (public opinion)
 - If it's privately-provided parking, there needs to be security/safety measures in place
 - More density near transit
 - Not enough shopping nearby in many parts of the city
 - Not enough grocery stores nearby
 - Lack of access to mental health facilities
 - Inability to require (beyond incentives) affordable housing at TOD and Node locations
 - Affordable housing adjacent to transit lines on arterials is important. It can reduce the burden of needed to have multiple vehicles per household.
 - Lack of access to all services
- Parking is not necessarily land use, it's an extension of transportation into land use
 - It matters whether it's paid parking (the public says there is enough paid parking, we want more free parking)
 - There's an education component - parking needs to be paid, explain the importance/reasoning for it
 - Are there opportunities in the upcoming rewrite of the zoning ordinance to identify areas of shared interest across departments to address these topics related to parking?
 - Sunday free parking, it's confusing because people don't know when you're supposed to pay vs. when it's free (after 6 pm?)
 - Tying parking to affordable housing - if you can decouple parking from housing, it becomes more available.
 - Parking is mappable and location is not un-mappable



Programmatic & City-Wide Needs

Safety



- Safety 'culture' and awareness is lacking
 - Safe routes to school under-resourced
 - Bike safety awareness is lacking
 - Pedestrian safety awareness is lacking
 - Driver safety awareness is lacking
 - Lack of road diet measures, such as bumpouts or speed bumps, to make drivers more cautious
 - These are mappable needs
 - Drivers do not share the road with bicyclists or people on scooters
 - Unsafe speed limits - these are mappable needs; and it's less about speed limits, more about operating speeds
- Lack of 4-way stops or roundabouts at certain intersections
 - Richmond feels unsafe for people in wheelchairs
 - Poor lighting at night
 - Lack of public seating around the city, public restrooms
 - Create Department of Transportation within City
 - Enforcement can have unintended harm to BIPOC communities - AND lack of enforcement harms BIPOC communities. There needs to be a presence to get the worst behaviors off the road. We've seen increases in pedestrians being hit and killed.
 - Poor enforcement for drivers, including for illegal parking & not stopping for crosswalk

Group 3 wants to stress importance of education. - not just adults, teens/kids also.



Programmatic & City-Wide Needs

Connectivity



- Lack of connectivity of bike infrastructure results in disjointed network
 - As the bike infrastructure gets built, it will be less disjointed
 - Site plan review - are there opportunities to strengthen requirements for providing/contributing to bike infrastructure (currently this is the PDR director's call, working on a checklist for site plan review)
- Limited service area for GRTC
- Lack of transit or affordable ride-sharing in less dense areas
 - Is the fact that it's a less dense area make it unaffordable? Would more density make it more affordable and more connected?
 - An area doesn't have to become more dense to be more affordable and more connected. How do we address affordability and connectivity in areas that will stay less dense?
 - The Fan is the densest area of Richmond, it's unaffordable currently, but there is a change to the ADU zoning to attempt to address
- Lack of first mile/last mile solutions
- These first four are mappable
- Cultural/Language barriers to understanding multimodal connectivity
 - What does this mean? Language of signage, graphic? Maps need to be in different language?



Programmatic & City-Wide Needs

Economic Development



- Problematic food deserts
- Lack of affordable housing near transit
- Limited multimodal transit improvements results in missed opportunities for economic benefits
- Lack of close by relevant job opportunities
- Issue of gentrification, problem of investments contributing to gentrification
- Wealth building opportunities (community solar, community utility hub, revenue generating capacity of home solar and EV charging)
- Broadband access, business level speeds and office functions, - can be implemented with transportation
- Amenities in general, lack of general shopping for daily household needs.
- Lack of affordable transportation options to jobs, need for more employer responsibility in cost sharing
- Child-care is lacking, and access to it
- Parking in some neighborhoods (appropriate for neighborhood needs), or access to substitute when parking isn't available
- Lack of vendor parking (think food trucks), vendor pop-up space (sidewalks, parks, etc).. not just food trucks, other pop up businesses
- Lack of neighborhood scale incubator space and access to it
- Green space as econ development tool, access to event spaces and public gathering/event spaces



Programmatic needs

Technology

- Limited bikeshare locations
- Limited e-scooters
- Lack of sufficient E-bike rebate/incentives
- Lack of access to technologies for unbanked and/or low-income
- Lack of understanding of options and how to access them, cultural and language barriers
- **Lack of understanding around safety of new technologies, and**
- **Lack of long-term planning conflicts/safety conflicts of new technologies (comes back to education, no formal form training of how to interface with these technologies...)**

Maintenance

- Overload of truck traffic on some streets
- Perceived lack of road maintenance (potholes noted specifically)
- General need for roads to be repaved
- General need for sidewalk maintenance (cracks, tree roots, overflowing trashcans etc.)
- General need for bike lane maintenance (vegetation, trash, etc.)
- Lack of public trust and understanding of maintenance prioritization
- **Lack of process and guaranteed funding for long term/lifetime maintenance costs**

Programmatic needs

Sustainability

- Making Richmond less car-centric to improve GHG emissions, etc.
- Urban heat island issues for pedestrians - more tree canopy
- Road flooding/drainage issues overall
- Lack of EV uptake.
- Lack of incentives to go electric.
- General education about going solar and electric is lacking.
- Access to EVs is limited by income.
- **EV charging can be gentrifying (possibly need to target employer based)**
- Access to e-bikes is limited by income.
- Lack of investment in cool pavement, permeable pavement.
- Lack of street planting.
- Lack of clear consistency in certification for COR projects. (ENVISION)
- Lack of truly public EV charging (eg. City has some EV charging that is not public)
- Lack of air quality monitoring to measure transportation related air pollution.
- **Lack of understanding (due to rate of change of technology) by policy makers**
- **Lack of community gardens, access to them, access to fresh food, access to identified community space for food vending/farmers market**
- **Lack of education regarding storm water**
- **Lack of storm water repair/new facilities implementation pairing with transportation projects**

NEXT STEPS

| Action Items | Person responsible | Deadline |
|---|--------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Review the unweighted needs maps at http://bit.ly/3XfzfJi and provide comments and feedback by email to Kelli Rowan at Kelli.Rowan@rva.gov . | All Steering Committee members | Tuesday December 6 th |
| View the video on www.RVAConnects.com | All Steering Committee members | - |

NEXT STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING

The next Steering Committee is scheduled for Tuesday January 24, 2023, at 10:00 AM.