

October 25, 2015

Mayor Euille and Members of City Council:

The approach of the Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES) Department now under consideration to manage traffic congestion on W. Taylor Run Parkway is fundamentally flawed. It merely moves traffic to adjacent streets. At a meeting on July 20, 2015 at Bishop Ireton School, T&ES staff promised residents they would provide a holistic solution for traffic congestion. City staff has yet to do so.

Like many streets in Alexandria, W. Taylor Run experiences a combination of local and cut-through traffic that causes significant congestion, longer travel times, inconveniences for residents, and a degraded quality of life in the community. This problem is systemic and not unique to W. Taylor Run. Unfortunately, City staff appears to be tone deaf; continuing to pursue a simple solution that will not work City wide. Staff has issued a survey with proposals to move traffic from one neighborhood to another. The proposals include restricting access to streets that many residents in the immediate neighborhood and others nearby use to access local destinations, such as Bishop Ireton School and Witter Field. This is a flawed approach.

For years, Seminary Hill Association, Inc. (SHA), has heard from City staff that “street grids” with parallel routes are a key component to urban mobility. Why then would City staff now propose to close off sections of “the grid,” which would not solve the problem but only give relief to a few residents at the expense of others? SHA suggests that staff’s time and energy could be spent on developing a City-wide strategy for traffic congestion management rather than on “surveys” for simple solutions to one problem. SHA asks that T&ES start over with a fresh approach, since there is no “silver bullet” solution to traffic congestion management.

In the interim, SHA’s transportation issues are different from those of W. Taylor Run residents and should be addressed separately. SHA’s primary concern is for the safety of residents on Seminary Road and N. Quaker Lane who are at risk from speeding traffic. SHA looks forward to working with you to address safety concerns from excessive speeds on Seminary Road and N. Quaker Lane, while the City separately develops a holistic solution to congestion concerns in neighborhoods.

With respect,



Nancy R. Jennings
President, SHA

CC: Nate Macek, Transportation Commission Chair