ALEXANDRIA TRANSIT COMPANY (DASH)

DASH ADVISORY COMMITTEE (DAC) GUIDELINES

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NOTICE: *This document serves as the latest edition of the operating guidelines for the DASH Advisory Committee. These guidelines may only be changed with the approval of DASH's General Manager & CEO. Any proposed changes must be submitted through DASH's Committee Liaison to the General Manager & CEO for review and approval.*

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Section 1: Purpose

The purpose of the DASH Advisory Committee (DAC) is to offer DASH riders an opportunity to provide input, offer feedback, raise concerns, and make recommendations to DASH staff and leadership. The Committee helps ensure that rider experiences, needs, and perspectives are reflected in policy decisions, service planning, operational improvements, etc.

The Committee functions as an advisory body and does not set or establish DASH policy, alter service standards, influence contracts, modify service or routes, or affect personnel matters. It is, therefore, not subject to the rules of public meetings or the requirements of FOIA except where such laws apply generally to DASH business.

Section 1.1: Goals & Objectives

- **Rider Engagement & Advocacy**
  - Foster an inclusive forum for riders, community members, businesses, and advocates to openly share experiences, concerns, and ideas.
  - Gather rider input and offer actionable recommendations to DASH staff and leadership on service quality, safety, cleanliness, accessibility, etc.
  - Occasionally may take formal stances on key issues to advise decision-makers on service, funding, operations, etc.
- **Community Outreach & Partnerships**
  - Serve as DASH ambassadors to foster stronger connections with the community, helping build trust, enhance transparency, and maintain DASH's positive reputation.
  - Attend and assist with public outreach efforts, programs, and activities.
- **Equity & Accessibility**
  - Champion equitable transit access for all, with a focus on underserved/underrepresented populations.
  - Identify and provide recommendations to help remove barriers related to communication, technology, infrastructure, etc.

Section 2: Membership

Section 2.1: Composition

The Committee shall consist of individuals reflecting the diversity of Alexandria and our riders. DASH encourages that members have a broad range of perspectives, identities, backgrounds, connections to, and/or experience working with a variety of communities, including but not limited to:

- Riders from throughout our service area and routes.
- Youth (ages 15–24), seniors (65+), people with disabilities, and other minority/underrepresented groups.
- Individuals with limited English proficiency or speak English as a second language (ESL).
- Advocates from community-based organizations, housing providers, or accessibility groups, etc.

Section 2.2: Size

The Committee shall consist of at least nine (9) members, with a maximum of seventeen (17), depending on capacity, manageability, and representation.

Section 2.3: Eligibility

Members must:

- Live or own a business within the City of Alexandria.
- Be at least 15 years old (parental consent required for minors).
- Use DASH regularly (minimum once a month).
- Not be a current or former employee of DASH.
- Not be a current employee of the City of Alexandria.

Section 2.4: Application & Selection Process

Any person interested in membership shall complete a brief application describing their relevant interests, qualifications, skills, and/or experience.

- Applications are accepted, and appointments are made on a rolling basis.
- Final appointments are made by DASH's leadership, considering all submitted materials and recommendations from the interview process.
    - DASH will work to ensure Committee membership is diverse, equitable, and representative of our riders and community.

Section 2.5: Term Length & Limits

- A standard term is two (2) calendar years from January 1 – December 31.
    - If a member is appointed prior to July 1, they shall serve the remainder of the current year plus one (1) additional calendar year to conclude one full term.
    - If a member is appointed after July 1, they shall serve the remainder of the current year plus two (2) calendar years to conclude one full term.
- Members may serve up to three (3) consecutive terms for a maximum of six and a half (6 ½) years.
    - Previously term-limited members may seek reappointment after waiting one full term (2 calendar years) before reapplying.
- DASH leadership may grant non-standard terms or exemptions to term limits under special circumstances.

Section 2.6: Removal

Any member who fails to adhere to these guidelines, demonstrates blatant disregard for their duties or fellow members, and/or behaves in a manner that may adversely affect DASH's public image shall be considered for removal.

When considered:

- The offending member shall meet with the Committee Liaison, Chair, and/or Vice Chair to discuss the situation and potential remedies.
    - If a remedy is appropriate, possible, and unanimous, the panel may offer one.
    - If a remedy is not appropriate, possible, or unanimous, the panel should refer the situation to DASH leadership.
- When escalated, the Chair and/or Vice Chair shall meet with the Committee Liaison and DASH leadership to discuss the situation and provide any insights or recommendations.
    - Depending on the situation:
        - The offending member may be requested to attend the meeting with DASH leadership.
        - Members may volunteer or be asked to provide recommendations for consideration.
- DASH leadership will make the final determination considering all provided facts and recommendations.

Section 3: Meetings

Generally, Robert's Rules of Order (See "Section 5.3: Parliamentary Procedure") shall govern the business procedures of the Committee in all cases not provided for in these guidelines.

Section 3.1: Frequency

- Regular meetings shall be held quarterly each year.
    - All regular meetings will be coordinated and scheduled by the Committee Liaison after consulting the full Committee.
- Additional special meetings may be scheduled as needed.

Section 3.2: Format

Meetings will typically be held at the DASH Facility (3000 Business Center Drive, Alexandria, VA 22314), but alternate locations may be considered or proposed at the discretion of the Committee.

- Meetings may be held in-person, virtually, or in a hybrid format, depending on public health conditions, member needs, available technology, etc.
- Agendas and materials will be distributed prior to any meeting.
- Interpretation (e.g., Spanish, Amharic, ASL), large print, and other formats will be available upon request.
- Meeting summaries and recordings (if applicable) will be posted on DASH's website.

Section 4: Roles & Responsibilities

Section 4.1: Committee Members

Members are expected to:

- Regularly attend scheduled meetings (in-person or virtually).
- Participate in discussion and provide constructive, actionable feedback.
- Serve as a conduit for rider/community concerns and ideas.
- Complete any training and/or orientation provided by DASH.
- Participate in at least one DASH event per calendar year.
- Notify the Chair, Vice Chair, and/or Committee Liaison of absences in advance, where possible.
    - See "Section 4.5: Code of Conduct" for attendance policy.

Section 4.2: Chair & Vice Chair

- Chair and Vice Chairs shall be elected annually by Committee members.
    - Chair and Vice Chairs may not serve more than four (4) consecutive terms.
        - If a Vice Chair is term-limited, they may seek election as Chair or must allow one (1) term to pass before seeking another term as Vice Chair.
        - If a Chair is term-limited, they must allow one (1) term to pass before seeking another term as either Chair or Vice Chair.
- The Chair will facilitate meetings, collaborate on agenda development, and serve as Committee spokesperson as needed.
- The Vice Chair will assist and assume the Chair's duties as needed.

Section 4.3: Subcommittees

The Committee may establish subcommittees as needed to focus on topic areas including, but not limited to, rider experience, events, public engagement, membership, recruitment, and advocacy.

- Subcommittees may be formed or dissolved by a simple majority vote.
    - Subcommittees may be active or inactive.
        - An active subcommittee must have at least 3 members committed to support and participate.

- Subcommittees should report progress, findings, and/or recommendations during regular meetings.
- Subcommittees may not act or represent the full Committee without majority approval.

Section 4.4: DASH Staff

DASH staff will:

- Coordinate meetings, logistics, and communications.
- Distribute agendas and meeting materials prior to any meeting.
- Provide relevant data, plans, and updates.
- Record meeting notes and track follow-up actions.
- Act as liaisons between the Committee and DASH leadership.
- Maintain a public list of all open seats and term expirations.

Section 4.5: Code of Conduct

By accepting appointment to the Committee, members agree to the following:

- **Respect & Professionalism**
  - Treat one another, staff, and community members with courtesy, dignity, and respect at all times.
- **Confidentiality**
  - Maintain the confidentiality of sensitive information and respect privacy as appropriate.
- **Integrity & Objectivity**
  - Make decisions and recommendations free from outside influence and in the best interest of DASH, our riders, and the community.
- **Active Participation**
  - Regularly attend meetings, be prepared, and contribute constructively to discussions.
  - ***Attendance Policy:***
    - Members who miss more than two (2) consecutive meetings or more than four (4) in one term without valid excuses may be removed or not considered for reappointment to the Committee.
- **Accountability**
  - Members are accountable for upholding this Code and for acting in accordance with the Committee's purpose and values.

Section 5: Addendum

Section 5.1: File Storage

A dedicated SharePoint site, managed by DASH staff, will be made available to all Committee members to house all Committee documents, surveys, forms, calendars, work products, etc.

Section 5.2: Confidentiality

DASH staff may share non-public or otherwise confidential information with the Committee. Members are expected not to use or disclose, or permit the use or disclosure of, any confidential information without permission from DASH leadership. Violating this confidence may result in removal.

Section 5.3: Parliamentary Procedure

- **Robert's Rules of Order**
  - (https://assembly.cornell.edu/sites/default/files/roberts_rules_simplified.pdf)
  - **Guiding Principles**
    - Everyone has the right to participate in discussion if they wish, before anyone may speak a second time.
    - Everyone has the right to know what is going on at all times. Only urgent matters may interrupt a speaker.