



CITY COUNCIL & DASH BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Joint Work Session

Date: September 10, 2025

Time: 5:30pm – 7:30pm

Location: City Hall, Sister Cities Room

Purpose: To provide guidance to staff regarding Goals, Priorities, and Policies advancing DASH in the coming Fiscal Year and beyond

AGENDA:

1. Welcome, Introductions (Mayor Gaskins and Chair Kaplan)

2. Goals of this Session:

- a. Understand DASH's Goals, Priorities, and existing Policies guiding the Board and Staff.
- b. Provide input for navigating Operational funding challenges and prioritizing the allocation of resources.
- c. Provide input on Capital Investments: understanding status, future needs, and anticipated challenges.
- d. Provide input on Electrification Goals for the DASH fleet and determine the path forward considering current and future funding realities.

3. Staff Led Presentation and Discussion

- a. About DASH
- b. Core Questions
- c. Goals and Metrics
- d. Focus Areas:
 - i. Operations
 - ii. State of Good Repair (SGR)
 - iii. Fleet Expansion
 - iv. Zero Emission Bus Transition/Plan

4. Wrap up and Next Steps

5. Adjourn



Our Vision:

A community with equal access to convenient and sustainable transportation that improves overall quality of life throughout the City of Alexandria.

Our Mission:

We deliver a safe, trusted, customer-focused experience by providing exemplary bus service to the diverse Alexandria community.

Our Values:

The **DASH Difference** is evident every day to its riders, the community, its workforce, and its regional partners.

In everything we do, DASH values:

Connecting lives, enriching journeys:

We ensure a smile on every ride through timely, convenient, and stress-free transportation that adds value to the community and builds trust with all our stakeholders.

Driving progress with heart:

We welcome and nurture a diverse, passionate, service-first workforce who are empowered to innovate, grow, and thrive.

Weaving a city together:

We create and nurture a welcoming, safe, inclusive, and accessible environment for our employees, customers, and the Alexandria community.

Riding on tomorrow, today:

We pioneer customer-centric innovations and embrace technology to anticipate future customer needs and to expand seamless transportation connections, all while doing better tomorrow than we did today.

Our Strategic Goals:



Goal 1: System Excellence

Provide a robust transportation system that meets our customers' needs



Goal 2: Customer Experience

Deliver a top-notch customer experience so that people choose to ride



Goal 3: Environmental Stewardship

Minimize the community's carbon footprint on the environment



Goal 4: Workplace Excellence

Foster an environment that champions inclusion, work-life balance, innovation, and professional growth and satisfaction



Goal 5: Fiscal Responsibility and Efficiency

Deliver high-quality, cost-efficient services that offer maximum value to the community



WHAT TO KEEP IN MIND

The Role of City Council: Council sets the overall priorities and strategic direction for the city, and in doing so informs the DASH Board, and DASH leadership. Approving plans such as the City's strategic plan, environmental initiatives, and economic development policies craft a framework for DASH to follow.

City Council appoints the Board of Directors who are tasked with ensuring that DASH's actions are aligned with council's direction.



HOW DASH IS GOVERNED

The Role of the DASH Board:

Governance & Oversight: The DASH Board is appointed by the Alexandria City Council and is responsible for providing overall governance of the transit company. They do not manage daily operations but instead ensure that the organization is aligned with the City's transit goals and accountable to the public.

Policy & Strategic Direction: The Board sets broad policies, long-term goals, and strategic priorities for DASH. This includes approving the operating and capital budgets, guiding major service or fleet decisions, and ensuring alignment with City transportation plans.

Fiduciary Responsibility: As directors of a publicly owned corporation, they have a fiduciary duty to safeguard DASH's financial health and ensure compliance with relevant federal, state, and local regulations.

Representation: Board members provide a bridge between the City (through Council) and DASH management. They serve as stewards of the public interest, helping to reflect community values in the agency's decisions.

The General Manager (CEO) of DASH is hired by and reports directly to the Board. This ensures independence from any day-to-day political pressures while still maintaining accountability to the City through its appointed representatives.

Division of Responsibilities:

- **Board:** Defines *what* DASH should achieve (mission, policies, financial oversight, strategic priorities).
- **General Manager:** Determines *how* to achieve those goals (operations, workforce, implementation, partnerships).



YOUR INPUT

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT AS WE CHAT

All thoughts are welcome, please help us keep on track – if something requires additional investigation by staff we will follow up later.

At the end of our discussion, we seek your feedback in answering the following:

- Should DASH reconsider the timeline for expanding to the network promised under the ATV?
- Should DASH stick with the current plan for transitioning to Zero-Emissions buses?
Three possible directions:
 - **Business as usual** - continue to pursue small purchases when we can, tapping into Federal money if and when it is available. Stay focused on 2037 but recognize funding is inadequate, and that goal is not funded today.
 - **Focus on decarbonizing by enhancing service** – redirect any available funds for ZEB transition to providing more service and better reliability; moving more people from cars to buses – agree that public transit no matter the propulsion method is an environmental benefit.
 - **Adopt a “middle ground” approach** – electrify the fleet incrementally using funding that does not have Federal restrictions (i.e. Buy America) and tap into the global market for ZEB’s (including China).
- What is most important for you (*as a stakeholder*) to see from DASH?



REFERENCE MATERIALS

There are a number of plans, studies, and reports available for review as needed. Should you need to reference anything prior to or during our discussions we have assembled them in one convenient location for your perusal.

Here is the link: <https://www.dashbus.com/majorprojects/>