

City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: JANUARY 22, 2003

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *ps*

SUBJECT: ALLOCATION OF FUNDS FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

ISSUE: Consideration of additional funding for professional consulting services for the Department of Planning and Zoning, as designated in the contingent reserves account in the FY2003 budget.

RECOMMENDATION: That Council approve the transfer of \$50,000 in funds designated in contingent reserves to the Department of Planning and Zoning to complete ongoing planning initiatives.

DISCUSSION: In the FY2003 budget process, City Council designated \$50,000 from the City's central contingent reserves account for professional consulting services for the Department of Planning and Zoning to implement the new development review process and/or to carry out the development of new plans. It is proposed that these funds be used for the completion of the Eisenhower East planning effort and for the preparation of manuals and procedures for the development review process.

Eisenhower East Planning Effort: The Department is nearing the end of the complex planning effort for Eisenhower East and is working to bring forward a comprehensive plan for the area in the coming month. This effort includes coordination of the plan preparation to bring the individual elements of the plan together as a cohesive, integrated document, development of the graphics to illustrate the plan vision and preparation/printing of the final document. Several implementation elements of the plan will then need to be developed and finalized, including the parking management strategy, detailed and refined design elements and performance standards/development guidelines for individual blocks within Eisenhower East, based on the Carlyle model.

Development Review Procedures & Manuals: The Department has established procedures and guidelines to facilitate the development review process. The effectiveness of these procedures is largely dependent upon a clear understanding by City staff and by the development and

residential communities of those steps that compose the development process and the roles that the staff, the applicant, and the residential community carry out. A critical element in this understanding is a knowledge of the timing and sequencing of review procedures and the specific opportunities for input and comment by each participating agency, individual or group.

To assist in achieving this understanding, the Department of Planning and Zoning is finalizing manuals and guidelines to document the development process, including a "*Citizen's Guide to the Development Process*," "*Small Business Guide to Development*," and "*Applicant's Guidebook to the Development Process*." In addition, staff is preparing revised applicant forms, administrative instructions and checklists necessary to implement the procedures.

An extensive outreach program is being developed to inform and secure understanding and acceptance of the procedures by the development community, civic associations, and residents. This information program will address what is expected to occur at each development stage with a step-by-step identification of when and where it is appropriate for the residential community to comment. In addition to the manuals, the Department's web site will provide more comprehensive and accessible information and forms for both the development community and the general public.

FISCAL IMPACT: \$50,000 as previously designated from the General Fund contingent reserves account.

STAFF:

Eileen Fogarty, Director, Planning and Zoning