

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 17, 2004

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER ^{ps}

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE CITY COUNCIL'S DRAFT 2005-2015 STRATEGIC PLAN FOR THE CITY

ISSUE: Update on the City Council's Draft 2005-2015 Strategic Plan for the City.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council receive the attached Draft Strategic Plan and note the many valuable citizen comments that were made at the June 15 public hearing on the draft plan. Staff will work with Vice Mayor Pepper and Councilman Smedberg and our consultant to review those comments, and to revise and improve the format of the plan so that it can be presented to Council in the fall.

DISCUSSION: At its June 15 public hearing on the Draft Strategic Plan, Council heard a number of comments from citizens about the content and design of the draft plan. Some of the comments suggested various changes in the plan's content, while others addressed the format of the plan.

I recommend that over the summer staff work with Vice Mayor Pepper and Councilman Smedberg and our consultant to review the proposed content changes and to work on the format of the plan. We will report back to Council in the fall.

ATTACHMENT: City Council's Draft 2005-2015 Strategic Plan

STAFF: Michele Evans, Assistant City Manager

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA

MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

**2004-2015
STRATEGIC PLAN**

A GUIDE TO THE FUTURE

SUMMARY DRAFT

JUNE 2004

SUMMARY DRAFT

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VISION 2015

ALEXANDRIA VISION 2015

Alexandria 2015 is a
Vibrant,^(A) Diverse,^(B) Historic,^(C) and Beautiful City^(D)
with Unique Neighborhoods^(E) and Multiple
Urban Villages^(F) where we take Pride in Our Great
Community.^(G)

PRINCIPLE A: VIBRANT

MEANS:

1. Alexandria is an exciting place to live, to work and to visit.
2. The community actively participates in dialogues on issues.
3. People enjoy a variety of activities.
4. There is a synergy with our community.
5. The community is inviting to small businesses and entrepreneurs.
6. People come together to enjoy a variety of community events and festivals.
7. Alexandria is always looking to the future and for ways to get better.
8. The community takes actions and provides opportunities for a healthy life style and living.

PRINCIPLE B: DIVERSE

MEANS:

1. People welcome and encourage differences. Age, culture, religion, race, lifestyle and abilities are respected.
2. The history and heritage of different cultures are celebrated.
3. Neighbors take care of neighbors.
4. People have a choice of housing opportunities for a variety of income and age levels and for workers in Alexandria.
5. People want to and are able to continue to make Alexandria their home throughout their lifetimes.
6. Alexandria is a friendly, respectful, open and inclusive community.
7. Alexandria strives to make our community affordable for all.
8. The Alexandria community works together to develop and provide an effective “safety net” for our residents in need.

PRINCIPLE C: HISTORIC

MEANS:

1. We preserve and celebrate our historical roots and diverse heritage from the 18th Century to today.
2. We preserve our historic neighborhoods, homes, and other historic buildings and other historic sites.
3. We maintain our distinctive architectural character and design.
4. We plan new developments so that they are compatible with historic buildings and structures.
5. Residents understand and appreciate Alexandria's colonial roots.
6. Alexandria's history contributes to the local economy through tourism development.

PRINCIPLE D: BEAUTIFUL

MEANS:

1. The Potomac River and Waterfront are attractive, accessible and usable.
2. Our environment – our water, our air, our land – is clean.
3. Open greenspaces and trees are located and well maintained throughout our community.
4. Our streetscapes, public spaces and canopied streets are attractive and well maintained.
5. Our entrances and gateways are welcoming and distinctive and you know that you are in Alexandria.
6. The City has achieved a balance between open space and development.
7. Public art is in many places throughout the community.
8. Our new developments and new city infrastructure are environmentally sensitive.

PRINCIPLE E: UNIQUE NEIGHBORHOODS

MEANS:

1. Neighborhoods have their own distinct character and feeling.
2. Residents and property owners take responsibility for, and have great pride in, their neighborhood.
3. Neighborhoods are safe and secure.
4. Neighborhoods are protected from the impacts of non-residential traffic.
5. New development and redevelopment are integrated into the neighborhood.
6. Residents enjoy convenient access to walkways, trails and public transit.
7. The City maintains and regularly replaces quality public infrastructure.
8. Residents have easy access to neighborhoods, public and open spaces.

PRINCIPLE F: URBAN VILLAGES

MEANS:

1. The City has a variety of mixed use developments that provide places to live, work, shop and recreate.
2. Urban villages are integrated with nearby neighborhoods, maintaining Alexandria's diverse character and charm.
3. The City retains our small-town "main street" feeling with community gathering places.
4. People enjoy pedestrian-friendly designs and signs that allow them to walk throughout the community while offering public places to rest.
5. Transit-oriented designs maximize the use of public transit.
6. Parks, trails and greenspaces are incorporated in the urban center and coordinated with nearby neighborhoods.
7. Convenient retail shopping and restaurant opportunities are available serving residents of the urban village and attracting others to come there.

PRINCIPLE G: A GREAT COMMUNITY

MEANS:

1. Community organizations, businesses, institutions and residents work together contributing to a better Alexandria.
2. Residents of all ages have access to top quality education for life long learning.
3. Members of the community have an opportunity to get involved, to have constructive debates, to build the community, and to shape the future.
4. People feel safe and secure throughout the community.
5. Residents enjoy community events and cultural arts activities year round within the community.
6. Residents care about each other.
7. Individuals with special needs are able to realize their potential and to live in the community.
8. Alexandrians take pride in Alexandria.

CITY OF ALEXANDRIA MISSION

ALEXANDRIA CITY GOVERNMENT

OUR MISSION

Alexandria City Government
is financially sustainable, ^(A)
provides excellent services ^(B)
that are valued by its
customers, and engages
the entire community ^(C) as
it plans for the future.

PRINCIPLE A: FINANCIALLY SUSTAINABLE

MEANS:

1. The tax base and revenues are growing and diversifying to ease the real estate tax burden.
2. The City limits annual increases in City government spending to levels that are sustainable in the future.
3. The City provides services efficiently and within the City's means.
4. Public and private developments have provided maximum public benefits for the community.
5. There are strong financial reserves in place.
6. The AAA bond ratings are maintained with careful management of government resources.

PRINCIPLE B: QUALITY SERVICES THAT ARE VALUED BY THE COMMUNITY

MEANS:

1. Services are responsive to the greatest community needs.
2. The City delivers its services using innovative approaches tailored to the Alexandria community
3. City employees provide City services with a friendly, personal touch.
4. Residents have convenient access to City government and services.
5. The City manages and maintains its facilities and infrastructure in an exemplary manner.
6. Residents have a high level of satisfaction with City services.

PRINCIPLE C: ENGAGES THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY

MEANS:

1. There is a strong partnership between City government and the community.
2. The community and City government are informed of council-established priorities and their measures of success and how they contribute to community well being.
3. City government and community stakeholders communicate with and listen to each other.
4. Community members participate meaningfully in solving problems and in decision making.
5. Community stakeholders have trust and confidence in City government and public officials.
6. The Mayor and City Council lead the city – following the City's vision and strategic plan and producing results.

PLAN 2004 - 2009

ALEXANDRIA PLAN FOR 2004-2009

GOALS 2009

There is Quality Development and Redevelopment that is Well Planned and Consistent with Alexandria's Vision.

The City Respects, Protects and Enhances the Natural Environment.

There is an Integrated, Multimodal Transportation System that Efficiently and Effectively Gets People from Point "A" to Point "B".

The City has a Strong Local Economy that is Growing in Varied Small Businesses and Job Opportunities.

Alexandria is a Caring Community that is Diverse and Affordable.

The City Government is Financially Sustainable, Efficient and Community Oriented.

Public Schools are Among the Best in Northern Virginia (In Partnership with Schools).

Plan for 2004-2009 (continued)

GOAL 1:

QUALITY DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT THAT IS WELL PLANNED AND CONSISTENT WITH ALEXANDRIA'S VISION

► **Objectives**

Objective 1:

Ensure that New Development, Redevelopment and Infill Development are Compatible with the Character and the Scale of Alexandria Neighborhoods and the Natural Environment.

Objective 2:

Ensure that New Development and Redevelopment Enhances the Vitality of Our Neighborhoods and Creates their Own Sense of Place.

Objective 3:

Ensure that New Residential Development and Redevelopment Deliver Mixed Income Housing Units.

Objective 4:

Encourage New Development and Redevelopment that are Highly Transit Oriented.

Objective 5:

Ensure that New Development and Redevelopment Along Major Corridors have High Quality Design.

Objective 6:

Approve and Maintain an Updated Comprehensive Master Plan that Reflects the City's Vision and Community Goals, and is Used in Land Use and Development Decision Making.

Objective 7:

Ensure that the Development Process Encourages Community Participation.

Plan for 2004-2009 (continued)

GOAL 1:

QUALITY DEVELOPMENT AND REDEVELOPMENT THAT IS WELL PLANNED AND CONSISTENT WITH ALEXANDRIA'S VISION (continued)

► **Policy Actions 2004-2005**

1. Landmark Mall Redevelopment and Area Study.
2. Waterfront Development Plan: Schedule, Funding, Initiation.
3. Infill Development Study: Schedule, Funding, Initiation.
4. Hunting Tower/Hunting Terrace Study.
5. Braddock Road Metro Station Area Plan.
6. Potomac Yard Area Redevelopment.
7. Land Use Master Plan.

Top Priority

Top Priority

► **Management Actions 2004-2005**

1. King Street Retail Study.
2. Mt. Vernon Avenue Plan.

Top Priority

Plan for 2004-2009 (continued)

GOAL 2:

A CITY THAT RESPECTS, PROTECTS AND ENHANCES THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

► Objectives

Objective 1:

Apply Greater Environmental Sensitivity in Planning New Development and Redevelopment and Public Facilities.

Objective 2:

Increase the Amount of Open Space and Park Acreage Per Resident.

Objective 3:

Protect and Expand the City's Overall Tree Canopy.

Objective 4:

Improve Appearance of Gateways, Entrances and Corridors.

Objective 5:

Increase the Number of People Who Travel in the City by Mass Transit, Bicycle or Walking and Become Less Auto Dependent.

Objective 6:

Improve the Quality of Air and Water in Alexandria.

► Policy Actions 2004-2005

1. Open Space Plan Implementation.
2. Mirant Plant Study.
3. Streetscape Program: Enhancement.
4. Clean Fuels for Buses and City Vehicles Policy and Action Plan.
5. "Green" Building Policy for City Buildings and Facilities.
6. Environmental Benchmarks and Measures Schedule.
7. Urban Forestry Plan

Top Priority

► Management Actions 2004-2005

1. Solid Waste Management Plan.
2. Four Mile Run Improvement Study.
3. Oronoco Outfall Resolution.
4. City Gateways and Entrances.

Plan for 2004-2009 (continued)

GOAL 3:

AN INTEGRATED, MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM THAT EFFICIENTLY AND EFFECTIVELY GETS PEOPLE FROM POINT "A" TO POINT "B"

► **Objectives**

Objective 1:

Increase the Percentage of Residents and Commuters Who Use Mass Transit.

Objective 2:

Increase the Percentage of Residents Using Alternate Transportation Modes (Walking, Biking, etc.).

Objective 3:

Improve and Increase Connectivity within and throughout the City by Transit, Car, Bicycle or Walking.

Objective 4:

Increase Ridership on DASH Buses through Improved Routing and Other Incentives.

Objective 5:

Ensure that the Design of Future Developments is Pedestrian Friendly and Mass Transit Friendly.

Objective 6:

Move "Through Traffic" through the City as Efficiently as Possible and Minimize its Impacts on Neighborhood Streets.

Objective 7:

Increase City Participation in Regional Decision Making to Develop Effective Transportation for the Region that Efficiently Moves People and Goods throughout the region.

► **Policy Actions 2004-2005**

1. Transportation Master Plan.
2. Pedestrian Improvement Projects and Future Projects.
3. Traffic Signalization Enhancements.
4. Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program: Evaluation and Actions.
5. Woodrow Wilson Bridge Project and City Actions.

Top Priority

Plan for 2004-2009 (continued)

GOAL 3:

**AN INTEGRATED, MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION
SYSTEM THAT EFFICIENTLY AND EFFECTIVELY GETS
PEOPLE FROM POINT "A" TO POINT "B" (continued)**

► **Major Projects 2004-2005**

1. DASH Maintenance Facility Project
Fund project, complete design and begin construction.
2. Bus Shelters Project
Address shelter maintenance and replacement, including the city's role and funding.
3. Eisenhower Avenue Bike Trail Project
Complete design and begin construction.
4. King Street Metro Station Platform Expansion
Monitor construction of the station platform.
5. Duke Street/P.T.O. Concourse Project
Complete construction and complete landscaping and public art.
6. Union Station Pedestrian Improvements Project
Complete project improving pedestrian access.
7. King/Beauregard Intersection Project
8. Eisenhower Avenue Project

Plan for 2004-2009 (continued)

GOAL 4:

**A STRONG LOCAL ECONOMY THAT IS GROWING IN
VARIED SMALL BUSINESSES AND JOB OPPORTUNITIES**

► **Objectives**

Objective 1:

Increase the Percentage of Residents Who Live and Work in Alexandria.

Objective 2:

Achieve a Balance Between the Tax Base Residential and Commercial Real Estate Tax Base.

Objective 3:

Increase Job Opportunities in Alexandria for Persons at Various Income Levels.

Objective 4:

Increase the Number of Small Businesses that Start and Grow in Alexandria.

Objective 5:

Increase the Number of Tourists Who Visit Alexandria.

► **Policy Actions 2004-2005**

1. City Regulation of Small Businesses.
2. City's Economic Development Policy.
3. Industrial Zoning Study.
4. Tourism Development Strategy.

► **Management Actions 2004-2005**

1. Visitors Center and Tour Buses.
2. Streamlining Permit Process for Small Businesses.

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Plan for 2004-2009 (continued)

GOAL 5:

A CARING COMMUNITY THAT IS DIVERSE AND AFFORDABLE

► **Objectives**

Objective 1:

Increase Number and Availability of Affordable Housing Units with Emphasis on Low and Moderate Income City Workers, Seniors, Individuals with Disabilities and Others.

Objective 2:

Provide Youth and Adults with Opportunity to Maximize their Potential and Live Productive Lives.

Objective 3:

Enable Elderly Residents to Continue to Reside in the City.

Objective 4:

Provide and Fund Appropriate Types and Levels of Human and Social Services.

Objective 5:

Increase the Employability of Residents through Skill and Workforce Development and Support Services.

Objective 6:

Increase Availability of Medical and Mental Health Care for Uninsured and Underinsured Residents.

► **Policy Actions 2004-2005**

1. Affordable Housing Policy and Strategy.
2. Most Significant Needs of Elderly Strategy.
3. City Assisted Living Facility and Direction.
4. Safe Haven Program for the Homeless.

Top Priority

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Plan for 2004-2009 (continued)

GOAL 5:

A CARING COMMUNITY THAT IS DIVERSE AND AFFORDABLE (continued)

► **Management Actions 2004-2005**

1. Cultural Competency Assessment/Direction.
2. City Employees Housing Assistance Policy and Program.
3. Primary Healthcare Grant for Low Income Residents.
4. Arlandia Neighborhood Health Center (ANSHI).

► **Major Projects 2004-2005**

1. Health Department and Clubhouse Relocation.

Plan for 2004-2009 (continued)

GOAL 6:

**A CITY GOVERNMENT THAT IS FINANCIALLY
SUSTAINABLE, EFFICIENT AND COMMUNITY ORIENTED**

► **Objectives**

Objective 1:

Expand and Diversify City Tax and Non-Tax Revenue Base.

Objective 2:

Deliver City Services in the Most Cost-Effective Manner.

Objective 3:

Ensure that City Services are Responsive to the Changing Needs
of Our Community.

Objective 4:

Achieve and Maintain a High Level of Community Satisfaction
with City Services.

Objective 5:

Maintain "AAA" Bond Ratings.

Objective 6:

Improve Community Understanding of All Aspects of City
Government: Services, Finances, Processes and Decisions.

► **Policy Actions 2004-2005**

1. City Services Performance Audit and Benchmarking.
2. New Sports Facility Expansion.

Top Priority

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Plan for 2004-2009 (continued)

GOAL 6:

**A CITY GOVERNMENT THAT IS FINANCIALLY
SUSTAINABLE, EFFICIENT AND COMMUNITY ORIENTED
(continued)**

► **Management Actions 2004-2005**

1. New Revenue Sources Study.
2. New Police Department Building Siting.
3. Emergency Management and Preparedness.
4. Debt Policy and Bond Rating Reaffirmation.
5. City Government Spaces Needs.
6. One Stop Shop Permit Processing and Streamlining.
7. Two-Year Budget Study and Action.
8. Residents Academy: Expansion.
9. Outsourcing Study for MR/MH/SA.
10. City Website Upgrade.

Top Priority

Top Priority

Top Priority

Top Priority

► **Major Projects 2004-2005**

1. Patrick Henry Recreation Center Renovation.
2. Charles Houston Recreation Center Renovation.

Plan for 2004-2009 (continued)

GOAL 7:

**PUBLIC SCHOOLS THAT ARE AMONG THE BEST IN
NORTHERN VIRGINIA (IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE
ALEXANDRIA SCHOOLS)**

► **Objectives**

Objective 1:

Quality of Public Schools that will Contribute to Attracting and Retaining a Diversity of Families and Businesses.

Objective 2:

Produce Responsible Adults through the Education System, School Programs and City Programs Who are Prepared for Higher Education and for the 21st Century Workplace.

Objective 3:

Increase Parental Involvement in their Child's Learning, Education and Activities.

Objective 4:

Enhance and Expand the Partnerships for Educational Excellence Between and Among Parents-Schools-City-Business-Community.

Objective 5:

Prepare Children to Enter City Schools with the Basic Knowledge and Skills needed to be Successful.

► **Policy Actions 2004-2005**

1. Before/After School Program Expansion.
2. Early Childhood Intervention Strategy.

► **Management Actions 2004-2005**

1. Teen Pregnancy Reduction Program.

Plan for 2004-2009 (continued)

GOAL 7:

**PUBLIC SCHOOLS THAT ARE AMONG THE BEST IN
NORTHERN VIRGINIA (IN PARTNERSHIP WITH SCHOOLS)**
(continued)

► **Major Projects 2004-2005**

1. TC Williams School Replacement Project.
2. Minnie Howard School Renovation.

► **School Priorities 2004-2005**

1. Education Excellence Strategy.
2. Vocational Education Program Study.
3. Quality Teacher Attraction and Retention Strategy.

ACTION AGENDA
2004 - 2005

Policy Agenda 2004 - 2005

TOP PRIORITY

Landmark Mall Redevelopment and Area Study

Transportation Master Plan

City Services Performance Audit and Benchmarks

Affordable Housing Policy and Strategy

Waterfront Development Plan

Open Space Plan Implementation

Management Agenda 2004 - 2004

TOP PRIORITY

City Entrances and Gateways Beautification Projects

Debt Policy and Bond Rating Reaffirmation

King Street Retail Study

New Revenue Sources Study

New Police Building Siting

Emergency Management and Preparedness

MAJOR PROJECTS 2004 - 2005

- Dash Maintenance Facility Project
- Bus Shelters Project
- Eisenhower Avenue Bike Trail Project
- King Street Metro Station Platform Expansion
- Duke Street/P.T.O. Concourse Project
- Union Station Pedestrian Improvement Projects
- King/Beauregard Intersection Project
- Eisenhower Avenue Project
- Recreation Centers Renovation Projects
 - + Patrick Henry
 - + Charles Houston
- T.C. Williams High School Replacement Project
- Minnie Howard School Renovation
- Health Department and Clubhouse Relocation

Process Commentary

To begin, thanks for beginning this process. I would consider the June 2004 document as not a summary draft, but a summary first draft. Seldom, perhaps closer to never, is a "blueprint for a city" with the word blueprint meaning an original plan for future work completed with only the first cut at it. The draft contains a lot of information, but is it as complete and correct as it could be? The answer to this question could be approached with the inclusion of a key word and key concept index.

This addition (key word/concept) at the first draft stage would allow for cross-referencing of the document and a subjective view-through what is there on a given subject - is it all there? Is it repetitive? Is it too much? Does it need clarifying? This is time consuming to do, but useful for all involved and would aid towards the thoroughness that is of course a goal of such a project. It could even with its usage produce the second draft. With the second draft only needing tweaking to the final.

Embracing the community of Alexandria is a goal, but this has been commendably attempted in a "ya'll come here" venue. Many persons such as Arlandria are not comfortable in a "status quo" setting. Many persons in the West-end of Alexandria where Condo Canyon is fell disenfranchised and ignored and have an animosity about city projects such as this - "we are the other side of the tracks." Some folks just plain do not understand what this is all about. And if some of you recall the first discussion of what was to be done where Ben Brenman Park is now located, residents nearby actually took the microphone and said that the park was not being created as something for them, but for the rich folks where Cameron Station would be. That speaker was a ten to twelve-year old boy. These groups need more of an invitation, need a culturally comfortable setting and someone to talk to them "uncityofficial like" and even in their own language or vernacular.

The Tenants and Workers Support Committee could help immensely with the Arlandria area and the understanding of how to engage other cultures in a meaningful way. At the same time this would go a long way to make people feel welcome and a part of Alexandria. Perhaps the Holmes Run Committee and the Winkler Company would be helpful with the West-end area. There are I am sure other persons or groups who could help extend this project with the outreach needed to be as inclusive as you want it to be and as it should be. Middle-eastern residents with some help from a city representative would want to be included. What about the recreation and parks rec centers managers getting the persons who use their facilities in neighborhoods together with persons who can chat participants through the draft? Maybe civic associations and the meetings of condominium, apartment houses such as Southern Towers or Annie B. Rose would have useful input.

Yes it is a big endeavor, but it is a complex City with unsolved problems, with a serious need for "one Alexandria" and this is a way to accomplish that.

It is not useful now to address whether this facilitator and his planning style are the most desirous. What is important to say is that since Alexandria will be getting another City Manager in the next two to three months that person needs to be included in this process. It is commendable that the process was begun and the first draft produced. It is necessary that the second draft with some observation and input be included by the new City Manager, and an understanding in the presence of discourse and citizen participation be that person's on-site understanding rather than an after the process briefing and orientation per a document only.

If the above does not fit within the facilitator's phases, there could be a suspension where the city would work with the community and then when you have a second draft ready to be tweaked to final, then pick up where you left off with his prescribed phases list.

Draft Plan Commentary

The plan needs to be less in length. Also the Vision is for 2015 with goals listed for 2004-2009. What happens from 2010 to 2015? Something needs to be stated regarding this time period. Even if it is we have five years to realize our 2015 vision. Or will there be an assessment of where the project is; what is complete and what is yet to be completed?

Vision principles are often repetitive within. For example Principle B: Diverse could combine 1 and 2; 4, 5 and 7; 3 and 8.

What are the goals to achieve Principle D: Beautiful? Some of these are not very well addressed in the later principles and goals and others are not addressed at all, at least not with appropriate detail that they are achievable.

Principle E: Unique Neighborhoods - combine 1 and 2; 3, 4 and 5; 6 and 8. Item 7 needs to be reworded as it says replace quality public infrastructure.

Principle F: Urban Villages - Combine 1 and 7; 2, 4, and 6. 3 is an East-end feeling such as Del Ray, Rosemont, Old Town, North Ridge, etc. This is something that would need to be accomplished for much of the West-end. 5 seems unenforceable: How can you enforce that the inhabitants in transit-oriented design use transit if decision history supports lots of parking spaces?

The mission principles in this first draft begin with financial stability (money). The

mission goals in this first draft begin with development and redevelopment (bricks and mortar). Both of these have created contention and many citizens/residents have expressed feelings that these are all the city government cares about - money/tax base and bricks, mortar, and asphalt. Is this the most important mission for a great city? With this I think that the city government needs to either change it's philosophy or, add something....

The section of Alexandria City Government Our Mission seems like government is in charge of the city and the citizens. Its finances are important. What about the citizens as having a financial sustainability? The services to the citizens sounds like everyone is dependent upon government. Is Alexandria a social state? Are its citizens all social dependents? Reference needs to be made to some per capita information of what Alexandria is. Look at the most recent demographics.

Principle C: Engages the Entire Community comes across as a corporate partnership rather than that the City government works for the Community. Does the Council run the city? The second item seems to state that the council establishes and the city government and citizens are informed. Item five should be more like the city government and public officials have proven worthy of the community stakeholders trust and confidence. Has this not been often a stated concern? Why not work towards the reality folks want. The sixth one is better if it states something like, Following the City's vision and strategic plan the Mayor and Council produce results and provide leadership for the city. As much as elected officials may dislike it, accountability is a part of good government. Both the government and the Mayor and council work for the community and not visa versa.

Prioritization of the goals components is very important. I would hope that the goals are all on an even level of importance and one goal is not more or less important than another. These could be worded better.

Goal 1 objectives can be combined. The first objective is already broken if council approves the development plan for the Second Presbyterian site as it does not match the character and scale of the existing neighborhood. Objective five should require high quality design and materials not just along major corridors but as value citizens expect and that enhances the city - could combine it with objective two. Six and seven should be first. Where are the components of these objectives? I.E., what would cause objective 7 to be so? Most of these need some criterion that would validate the statements.

Goal 1 policy actions need to be prioritized with 3 and 7 at the top of the list. It is wiser to look at properties where the owners are ready to do something - Landmark, Braddock Road, Potomac Yard. Ownership of both the Waterfront properties that the

city covets and Hunting Towers/Hunting Terrace are not established as city purchasable or ownable and thus should not be forefront for action. There are other agreements that must take place first for these that may not involve the city in the near future. The waterfront is not going anywhere.

Goal 2 objectives do not include Vision Principle D item 2 about air, water, and land being clean. There is much that needs to be included as basic policy based on an evaluation of the current status of each of these. Objective 6 mentions only one of the three and does not say clean as it should. Perhaps the benchmarks and measures schedule will do this to the level of principle D, item 2 rather than the diluted version of this objective. Objective 1 needs to be defined. What is greater environmental sensitivity? Why only gateways, entrances and corridors in Objective 4? Only on the surface, but not the whole?

Goal 2 policy needs to be inclusive of all businesses and areas for air, water, and soil. What are the practices of businesses and neighborhoods and what should the practices be? Policy 5 includes green building policies for only city-operated entities. This should be addressed to each applicant for a building permit. There could be savings if people were better educated. Where are the incentives for green, energy efficient practices? Green practices are more than just buildings.

Goal 3 should say "people from their starting point to their destination." Objective 6 should keep through traffic out of the city and on the perimeter roads and bypasses - no cut through traffic. Objective 7 is not taken advantage of when the opportunities are there. I can tell you from experience.

Goal 3 major projects needs to prioritize with attention paid to the West-end of King, Duke and the Beauregard intersections. Route 1 needs attention for the light rail project and the increasing traffic at the Potomac Yards area. The Monroe Avenue Bridge is not going to solve the problem there.

Goal 4 objectives 1 and 3 can be combined. Something here needs to reflect Vision Principle C. Objective 5 needs to include something about tourists who contribute to the city, i.e. not travelers or festival attendees just stopping for lunch at the food court or for beer and hanging out.

Goal 4 policy action 1 needs to have something about small businesses enhancing the economy and complementing Vision Principle C. Not cheap stuff like tee shirt shops or junk that can be bought anywhere and everywhere else. However it is also necessary to have the businesses that the local residents need and want. Policy action 4 and management action 1 needs to include activities that visitors alone or in groups can take advantage of - organized walking tour with lunch, places of art and

dinner, dinner the ghost tour and a movie at the Old Town Theatre, antiques and historic buildings. Create packages and guided tours that are what Alexandria has to offer, where Alexandria wants them to go, and brings Alexandria some control and organization of what seems to be not only a deteriorating asset but nothing less than lost buses and tourists on city residential streets.

Goal 5 reword- a diverse, caring community that is affordable. This goal can only be accomplished with the cooperation of property owners who house others, be it business or residential. How much do they have to make? Is it just a moneymaker to the property owner or are they interested in being a part of the solution to providing a home for persons or businesses. Does transience actually benefit a property-owner? Objective 3 is not just elderly residents, but young professionals also. Action 4 should not attract homeless to Alexandria.

This goal seems to be a mixture of social program and for the community. Some are social needs and others are just good economics. These should be separate? (The entire plan speaks as if the community is dependent on government programs. You need to step back from this and look at the way the community is characterized throughout.)

For goal 6 an outward looking in would be worthwhile rather than in looking out. Policy action 1 needs some projections of needs. Policy action 2 is something that only a few insiders have decided upon. It has never even been out in the public and has no specific plans for citizens to look at. It is presumptuous to assume this and inappropriate to include something that is another heavy investment without public input and acceptance. What does it have to do with city government? Why it is considered in this category? Other locales have found that those are not moneymakers. Is government looking to operate a business?

Goal 6 management actions could combine 1, 4 and 7. Outsourcing, as item 9, needs to be looked at only after a complete audit of the city is done, not before. The City website is not so much in need of upgrading as 10 states, it is the city computer system and abilities. Where are the planning softwares that allow for better designs and the urban forestry implementation that has been out and used by others for many years? Why is there not greater archival of information that is cross-referenced?

Why does the major projects section just have recreation centers listed? City government is not sports and recreation. There should be greater substance that will bring improvement and change.

Alexandria desperately needs a thorough audit given the components in Goal 6.

Goal 7 can combine objectives 1 and 2 without the words - contribute to attracting

and retaining a diversity of families and businesses. This would happen without having to state it if the goal were realized. Objectives 3 and 4 can be combined. Objective 5 needs to be more specific with pre-school children rather than children.

Policy actions. ACPS does not need to expand these programs; they need to determine if they are working and if they are being properly run. An early childhood intervention strategy needs to tie educational programs to social services. If families receive services their children have to be in remedial, language, educational programs that complement school programs and constructively occupy their time.

Management actions. There must be more for teenagers than pregnancy reduction programs. There must be other than sports. Alexandria needs functioning teen centers that have educational and entertaining activities that further disadvantaged/immigrants to become contributors to society.

School priorities. Your school systems need computer technology. Recently I requested information that is not in their computers but they say would have to be hand located. This is information that a competent school administration would have in their computers. You need to establish a level of excellence for your administration, teachers and school board. No drunks, no drugs, accountability, and people who are responsible for the betterment of the schools and not political friends. You need to have discipline. Why has ACPS not been confiscating cell phones if used during class? Why do you only have 1 male counselor in a high school? Your faculty's abilities must reflect the population of students and their needs - immigrants and minorities. Those children are the most at-risk and studies have proven that the best teachers teach them. See a movie called **Lean On Me** with Morgan Freeman. You need people like that. Before you embark on an educational excellence strategy you need to make certain that people are in place who know what that is and ascribe to it personally.

Perhaps a consulting/audit firm specifically for school systems would be helpful. The public has not seen the ability to do this from the school board or current superintendent. Also school administration buildings should not be better than the facilities provided for students. It is the students who should be put first not the administration or the politics of any one or any group.

The action agenda 2004 - 2005 is very development oriented. The beginning year for such a plan, while there will be other endeavors going on such as development, has to establish a baseline of information and policies and use workable procedures, plans and technologies for the plan to be achievable. Going along and fixing things or implementing as you go is a less than cost and time effective methodology. Get the foundational information and needs in place.

This is a very useful first draft that reflects a lot of good work.



<none@none.com>

06/21/2004 04:54 PM

Please respond to none

To: <alexvamayor@aol.com>, <delpepper@aol.com>,
<council@joycewoodson.net>, <councilmangaines@aol.com>,
<rob@krupicka.com>, <macdonaldcouncil@msn.com>,
<paulcsmedberg@aol.com>, <rose.boyd@ci.alexandria.va.us>,
<jackie.henderson@ci.alexandria.va.us>,
<tom.raycroft@ci.alexandria.va.us>

cc:

Subject: City of Alexandria Website Contact Us - EMail for Mayor, Vice-Mayor
and Council Members (alexvamayor@aol.com, delpepper@aol.com,
council@joycewoodson.net, councilmangaines@aol.com,
rob@krupicka.com, macdonaldcouncil@msn.com,
paulcsmedberg@aol.com, rose.boyd@ci.alexandria.va.us,
jackie.henderson@ci.alexandria.va.us,
tom.raycroft@ci.alexandria.va.us)

Time: [Mon Jun 21, 2004 16:54:33] IP Address: [151.207.240.3]

Response requested: ☐

First Name: Mr., Mrs., and Miss

Last Name: Barry

Street Address: Crestwood

City: Alexandria

State: VA

Zip: 22302

Phone: unlisted

Email Address: none@none.com

Comments: Upon review of the June 2004 draft of the
Strategic Plan, the following priorities are needed.

1. Alexandria's skyrocketing real estate taxes are making housing unaffordable for Alexandrians. A tax rate on par with that of Fairfax City is needed.

2. Alexandria is overcrowded with residents and traffic. Rental property in Arlandria, for example, stacks people on top of each other. Cut-through traffic on Crestwood Drive, for another example, threatens walkers, joggers, and stroller pushers.

3. With a drunk driving Supertintendent being rewarded with a pay raise, the School Board is not spending its budget wisely. A cut in budget would send them a signal to shape-up.

Thanks!