

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 27, 2010

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: ADOPTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING'S WORK PROGRAM FOR FY2011 AND BEYOND

ISSUE: Consideration of the Proposed FY2011 work program for the Department of Planning and Zoning.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council adopt the proposed FY2011 work program for the Department of Planning and Zoning, commensurate with staffing levels and funding in the adopted FY2011 operating budget:

- Complete small area plans for the Waterfront and the Beauregard Corridor.
- Begin a small area plan for Eisenhower West.
- Continue implementation of the Arlandria Action Plan, potentially expanding into a small area plan.
- Continue implementation of the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan and the King Street Retail Studies. Begin implementation of Waterfront plan.
- Continue to work on small business and green building initiatives.
- Continue to work with the Office of Housing on the Housing Master Plan, now planned to begin this Spring with adoption targeted for June 2011, as well as several other initiatives led by other departments, such as the sewer master plan, school facilities planning, the BRAC IJR, parking, the environmental studies for the Potomac Yard Metro Station and the Crystal City-Potomac Yard transitway, and the feasibility studies for the three dedicated transit corridors designated in the Transportation Master Plan.

DISCUSSION: In March, City Council held a worksession on the Department of Planning and Zoning's work program. The staff memorandum for the worksession, along with the proposed project timeline (the "bar chart"), is attached (Attachments 1 and 2).

On April 1, staff provided City Council with budget memorandum number 40, which responds to questions about the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan raised during the worksession on the P&Z workprogram. That memorandum (Attachment 3) notes that staff available for long range planning efforts are engaged through the end of the calendar

year. While staff will take advantage of any opportunity to start the preparatory work for the Eisenhower West Plan, it is not likely we will be able to materially accelerate the start of the plan earlier than we have, which is December 2010/January 2011.

The Council held a worksession on the Planning and Zoning budget on April 5. At that worksession, Councilmembers asked how the Department would respond if leasing of the Victory Center occurs in the short term and if that leasing creates conditions whereby accelerating the Eisenhower West plan would be desirable. Staff responded that the best approach would likely be to take advantage of the current availability of high quality planners willing to work on a short-term basis due to the economy. Staff would likely recommend a startup team consisting of two temporary staff in P&Z (one senior, one junior) and one in T&ES (to address a variety of infrastructure issues, not just transportation), probably through January 2011.

STAFF:

Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager
Rich Baier, Transportation and Environmental Services
Jim Spengler, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
Mildrilyn Davis, Office of Housing

ATTACHMENTS:

Attachment I. Planning and Zoning Work Program chart
Attachment II. Planning and Zoning Work Program Priorities
Memo to Council, May 6, 2009
Attachment III. Eisenhower West Small Area Plan Budget Memo

cc: Chair and Members of the Planning Commission

Proposed Work Program FY 2011

	Calendar 2010												Calendar 2011																		
							FY2011						FY2012																		
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May
LONG RANGE PLANNING																															
North Potomac Yard SAP (incl Metro Feasibility)	[Orange]																														
Wayfinding	[Orange]						[Orange]																								
Sewer Master Plan (T&ES)	[Yellow]						[Orange]																								
Waterfront Small Area Plan	[Orange]						[Orange]																								
Beauregard Corridor Small Area Plan	[Orange]						[Orange]																								
Green Building Phase II							[Orange]																								
Housing Master Plan (Housing)	[Yellow]						[Orange]						[Orange]						[Orange]												
ARHA Strategic Plan (housing)							[Yellow]						[Orange]																		
Transit Corridor Feasibility Studies (T&ES)							[Yellow]						[Orange]						[Orange]												
Eisenhower West Small Area Plan													[Orange]						[Orange]												
Arlandria Small Area Plan													[Yellow]						[Orange]												
SPECIAL PROJECTS AND IMPLEMENTATION																															
Arlandria Action Plan	[Blue]						[Blue]						[Blue]						[Blue]												
Beauregard Implementation*													[Blue]						[Blue]												
Braddock Implementation*													[Blue]						[Blue]												
BRAC IJR (T&ES)	[Blue]						[Blue]						[Blue]						[Blue]												
King Street Retail Implementation	[Blue]						[Blue]						[Blue]						[Blue]												
Landmark/Van Dorn Implementation*													[Blue]						[Blue]												
Potomac Yard Metro/Transitway Environmental (T&ES)							[Blue]						[Blue]						[Blue]												
Parking Phase I (Old Town) (T&ES)	[Blue]						[Blue]						[Blue]						[Blue]												
Parking Phase II (Mt. Vernon/Braddock Metro) (T&ES)	[Blue]						[Blue]						[Blue]						[Blue]												
Regulatory Reform	[Blue]						[Blue]						[Blue]						[Blue]												
School Facilities Planning (ACPS)	[Blue]						[Blue]						[Blue]						[Blue]												
Wayfinding Implementation													[Blue]						[Blue]												
Waterfront Implementation*							[Blue]						[Blue]						[Blue]												

KEY
 Internal staff work
 Public meetings/plan development
 Plan approval process
 Special projects/Plan implementation

Plans and projects in current work program are shown in black
 Projects led by other departments are shown in purple
 * Timing/level of effort is developer-dependent

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 6, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

VIA: FAROLL HAMER, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING

SUBJECT: PRIORITIES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING'S WORK PROGRAM FOR FY2010 AND BEYOND

ISSUE: Consideration of Planning Commission priorities for planning projects in the Department of Planning and Zoning's work program for FY 2010 and beyond.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Planning Commission confirm the following priorities, staffing levels and funding for the Department of Planning and Zoning.

- Complete small area plans for Potomac Yard and the Waterfront.
- Upon adoption of the Potomac Yard plan, begin a small area plan for the rest of the Route 1 Corridor (Braddock Fields/Landbay L or Route 1 West).
- Continue planning efforts on the Beauregard Corridor small area plan, with major work beginning in May 2009 and completion targeted for November 2010.
- Complete design guidelines for the Wayfinding program.
- Begin implementation of the Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan.
- Accelerate support for implementation of the Arlandria Action Plan.
- Provide enhanced planning attention to development proposals in Carlyle including Block P and nearby ASA property.
- Embark on Phase II of the Green Building program, addressing existing buildings and outreach.
- Complete Eisenhower West Industrial Use Study in FY 2009. Consider phasing initiation of Eisenhower West small area plan to focus first on parcels identified in industrial use study as having greater near-term redevelopment potential, or initiate the full plan in late 2011.

- Work with the Office of Housing on the upcoming Housing Master Plan with adoption targeted for January 2011.

The resources required for this work program would require for FY2010:

- For the new projects proposed to be added to the work program, the additional resources (\$270,000 to \$290,000) outlined in budget memorandum #123 to the City Council (attached); and
- Receipt of a federal BRAC grant of approximately \$600,000 to pay for the consultant work on the Beauregard/Alexandria West small area plan.

DISCUSSION

Work Program

Attached to this memorandum is a chart showing the proposed work program for FY2010. Although the FY2010 work program is the focus of our discussion, the chart covers the time period from January 2009 through December of 2012 to give a broader picture of the proposed schedule of major planning projects. In addition, the chart shows work associated with plan implementation, which continues to occur for some years after each plan is adopted.

There are several new projects proposed, either due to Council direction (such as the unfunded Arlandria Action Plan) or because they are logical next steps to a recently completed project (such as Green Buildings Phase II and the Route 1 Corridor). Also, the Potomac Yard plan is currently underway, as a result of development pressure from the owners of Landbay F, even though resources were not allocated in the FY09 budget.

Proposed new projects that were not on the approved FY2009 work program include:

- Potomac Yard (Landbays F and L)
- Route 1 Corridor (either Braddock Fields/Landbay L or Route 1 West)
- Green Buildings Phase II
- Phase I of the Eisenhower West small area plan
- Arlandria Action Plan
- ASA/Carlyle Block P

With these new projects, this proposed work program is not possible with the resources in the approved FY2010 budget. Although the Wayfinding program was not funded in the CIP for FY2010, it is important to complete the design guidelines, so when the program can be funded, it can be quickly implemented.

The Department has taken some steps to reduce the level of effort in this work program to increase efficiency and make room for new projects. For example, this work program

proposed that work on the Arlandria Action Plan not begin until November, after work on the Wayfinding Design Guidelines is completed.

During discussions of the FY2009 budget, the Department pointed out that the budgeted complement of 53.5 FTEs created capacity for 3 major plans and 2 smaller planning projects – if fully staffed. The proposed work program has up to six projects occurring simultaneously. Resource issues are explored in greater detail later in this memorandum, but as Council members read the descriptions of the proposed FY2010 work program, Council may wish to be thinking about which projects should be retained by adding resources, and which should be delayed for lack of resources. In staff's estimation, there are no obvious candidates for delay. Interrupting projects that are well underway is counter-productive, especially if the public is already engaged. Some projects (Beauregard, Arlandria) are also time-sensitive.

Proposed Work Program

Small Area Plans

1. Potomac Yard Small Area Plan: This plan, as well as the associated Metro Feasibility Study, is well under way with completion expected by December 2009. The Department is not proposing a delay in this Plan. However, at a Potomac Yard community workshop held in January, the public raised the possibility of looking at Potomac Yard's Landbay L in combination with the Braddock Fields adjacent to the Braddock Metro Station (although the Rosemont Civic Association has taken a position opposing such a study). Currently staff is engaged in a "threshold analysis" which will help the Commission and the Council determine if a Landbay L/Braddock Fields plan be conducted separately from the Potomac Yard plan.

If a Landbay L/Braddock Fields plan is added to the work program, staff recommends that it should begin immediately after the Potomac Yard plan because the technical studies will still be valid and many members of the public will already be engaged. If it is added to the work program, it will likely require some additional consultant resources.

If Landbay L/Braddock Fields is not added to the work program, staff recommends that planning for the west side of the Route 1 Corridor commence immediately after the Potomac Yard plan. Given the major transportation infrastructure projects that are contemplated for Route 1 – not only the possibility of a new Metro station but the investment in high occupancy transit along Route 1 itself and the need for coordination with Arlington County – it seems prudent to continue planning within the walkshed of these major investments.

2. Waterfront Small Area Plan: The initial public meetings were held in April; the goal is to have work on the Plan completed in 14 months (June 2010), shorter than the original estimate of 18 months. This Plan is now fully under way and in staff's estimation, is not a good candidate for delay because of broad community expectations as well as the critical role the waterfront plays in the City's economy and quality-of-life.

3. Beauregard Corridor Small Area Plan: Although staff has been conducting preliminary work throughout the spring, efforts on this Plan will accelerate in July as consultants are brought on board in preparation for a likely first community meeting in September. There are several factors creating a sense of urgency for this Plan's completion, the primary of which is the relocation of 6,400 Department of Defense jobs to the Mark Center. Others include the redevelopment intentions of more than one major residential landowner, and the planning for high occupancy transit along the Beauregard corridor, as well as the Columbia Pike streetcar project being planned by Arlington and Fairfax Counties. Completion is targeted for December 2011, or 18 months from commencement. The Department is pursuing BRAC grant funding to support this planning effort.
4. Eisenhower West Small Area Plan: The Eisenhower West Industrial Study will be completed in June and this report will shed significant light on the readiness of the Eisenhower West industrial area for redevelopment. An option for this proposed work program is to institute a two-phase small area plan, focusing initial planning work on the properties identified by the study as having the greatest near-term development potential. This approach will allow the Beauregard Plan to be completed before the balance of the Eisenhower West Plan begins; staff believes that having two major West End plans occurring simultaneously strains not only City staff but also residents and businesses who wish to participate fully in both planning processes. In addition, the Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan has just been adopted and a redevelopment proposal in the Pickett Place area has just been approved. At a recent community meeting on the Industrial Uses study, some members of the public expressed concern about this initiative diverting attention from Landmark/Van Dorn's redevelopment. Upon receipt of the study's findings, the Planning Commission and City Council may conclude that it is not urgent to initiate Eisenhower West planning in FY2010. If that is the case, the Department recommends devoting those resources to the Green Building Phase II project instead.

Special Projects and Implementation

5. Green Building Phase II: The April 2 *Green Building Policy for Alexandria* staff report calls for the continuation of the Work Group to pursue issues such as: standards for existing buildings, incentives for high levels of sustainability, outreach and education for the community, and enforcement strategies. Staff recommends pursuing this project in FY2010 if the Industrial Uses Study's findings indicate that it is not urgent to initiate Eisenhower West planning in FY2010.
6. Wayfinding: This project has been under way for some time and has reached the stage where stakeholders are in the final rounds of design review. This project is scheduled for delivery of design guidelines in October 2008, and is subject to a City Council funding decision (the Wayfinding program is not funded in the FY2010 CIP, but possibly could be funded if the City Council raises the real estate tax rate above that reflected in the proposed FY2010 budget).

7. Arlandria Action Plan: In February, the City Council added work on the Arlandria Action Plan to the work program, and this effort will involve multiple departments. The proposed work program shows this project following completion of the Wayfinding design guidelines because even if the necessary additional resources are provided, the Department as a whole cannot absorb another project until Wayfinding reaches that milestone. The proposed work program for Arlandria consists of:
- Establishing an Implementation Advisory Group (IAG)
 - With the IAG, reviewing the 2003 Action Plan, the progress in implementing the Action Plan, and developing the IAG's priorities for moving forward
 - Coordinating with the IAG on issues related to public facilities, infrastructure and other improvements such as intersections, traffic control and signaling, parking, streetscape improvements (including bulbouts, crosswalk enhancements, and gateway enhancements), park design and development, and public art
 - Assessing redevelopment market potential by engaging landowners in an assessment of the factors that have inhibited redevelopment and by issuing a Request for Expressions of Interest for redevelopment of key parcels that permits respondents to propose projects that may require changes to the current set of development constraints (zoning, height, land use mix, other requirements)
 - Continuing to explore the potential benefits and implications of an arts district and other options for pursuing community development in cooperation with arts organizations.
 - Empowering community residents and businesses by identifying improvements and other projects they can do themselves, such as supporting tree planting/care and other beautification projects, implementing the wayfinding program, through raising money and direct action.
8. ASA/Carlyle Block P: Development proposals for these key parcels are being prepared by landowners and there are a number of issues that will require a higher-than-normal level of planning attention. Among these issues: the role of retail on these sites and desirability of and mechanism for transferring density.
9. King Street Retail: This spring's King Street Retail study offered several suggestions to continue our implementation of the 2005 King Street Retail Strategy and to support and strengthen retailers in the King Street corridor. Given the priority of some other projects, and the fact that the proposed work program already requires more resources than budgeted, the proposed FY2010 work program would focus on small-scale but important projects that require relatively modest levels of staff time and funding. City staff is coordinating with AEDP and ACVA to identify these next steps. Implementation of the King Street Retail

strategy will also be coordinated with the Waterfront Plan, the T&ES-led parking study now underway, and the Wayfinding plan.

10. Housing Master Plan: Staff is engaged in the preliminary work on this planning effort, which will be led by the Office of Housing with support by the Department of Planning and Zoning. Final scheduling is still under consideration, but significant staff time will be devoted to the project throughout FY2010.

Last September, the City Council reviewed and approved a modified work program for the Department of Planning and Zoning. Recognizing the capacity limitations of the Department's staffing and consultant resources, the Council (1) directed staff to begin work a Small Area Plan for Potomac Yard this fall, to be completed by the end of calendar year 2009; and (2) agreed that no items shall be added to the Special Studies and Projects category of the work program until the completion of the Potomac Yard Small Area Plan, which is scheduled for December 2009.

In the proposed work program, a Route 1 plan would follow adoption of a Potomac Yard plan, which means that the staff resources allocated to Potomac Yard would remain allocated throughout FY2010.

Staffing and Consultant Resources

The capacity of the Department to complete work program initiatives comes in two forms: staffing levels and funds for consultant resources. In order to meet expenditure targets, the City Manager's proposed FY2010 budget reduces both types of resources for the Department.

Last fall, staff hypothesized that the economic slowdown would result in a slowdown of regulatory activity. Less regulatory work would mitigate the impact of staff reductions and allow some development review staff to work on neighborhood planning projects.

This has happened to an extent: there is a reduced caseload of SUPs, DSUPs, and other regulatory work, and some development staff are now working on neighborhood planning projects, including the Potomac Yard Small Area Plan and the Industrial Uses study. However, unless development activity falls still further, there is no staff capacity that can be reallocated from regulatory cases to support an increased planning work program.

We cannot be certain that the regulatory caseload will not increase during the next fiscal year. While some development-related activity levels – such as building permit reviews – increase and decrease along with economic conditions, it is also true that landowners continue to pursue development approvals during slow economic times. As there is no “reserve” of staff or consultant resources in this budget, unexpected increases in the caseload could result in slower-than-average review times or delays in some planning projects.

Unfunded Resource Requirements

During the budget process, the Department of Planning and Zoning presented the Council with memoranda discussing the unfunded initiatives in the FY2010 work program. The Council agreed to take the issue up again during this worksession on the Work Program. Attached to this memorandum is a copy of the second of the two budget memoranda, which is the refined (and lowered) cost estimate.

Note also that the Department is pursuing a federal BRAC grant of approximately \$600,000 to pay for the consultant work on the Beauregard Corridor small area plan. City staff is currently engaged in the grant process and will be requesting Council's authorization to pursue the grant in June.

Planning & Zoning Highlights and Accomplishments
July 1, 2008 to June 30, 2009

- completed/approved Braddock East Plan
- initiated implementation phase of the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan
- completed/approved Landmark/Van Dorn Plan
- initiated Potomac Yard planning process
- initiated the Waterfront Plan
- completed/approved Wayfinding Program Phase I Signs Concept
- completed a King Street Retail Study
- enacted temporary portable sign program to assist side street businesses on King Street
- completed/approved changes to the zoning ordinance to assist small businesses
- revised the outdoor dining ordinance
- completed Eisenhower East Industrial Uses Study (June)
- BRAC133/WHS review
- adopted zoning regulations to allow covered open porches in required front yards by special exception
- improved the City's GIS with updated software and systems architecture; initiated program to expand use of GIS in land use planning
- created and staffed the joint City Permit Center with Code Administration and T&ES.
- GIS division supported multiple projects for City departments including the Computerized Maintenance Monitoring System for T&ES, an SRS Viewer for Police, and Automated Vehicle Location monitoring (several applications, including King Street Trolley).
- developed a draft green building policy to be considered by City Council
- participated in Four Mile Run Restoration Project and development of Design Guidelines
- provided technical support to ACPS regarding demographic and forecasting analysis
- completed/approved text amendment to extend the validity period of site plans and DSUPs from 18 months to 36 months
- approved the James Bland redevelopment project
- approved Landbays G and I & J East in Potomac Yard

- approved Landmark Gateway project
- reviewed ATA and IDA projects for June 2009 docket
- regulatory caseload:
 - development approved: 5,489,488 square feet
 - development cases: 61
 - SUPs: 44
 - zoning complaints and SUP compliance cases: 610
 - permits/BZA applications/plot plans: 3,416
 - historic preservation applications/permits: 853
- achieved State approval of the Uptown/Parker-Gray Historic District for Listing on the Virginia Landmarks Register
- initiated Census Complete Count Committee
- implemented new Infill Regulations to protect single-family and two-family neighborhoods outside the historic districts
- made significant progress on a Citywide Wayfinding program (for October 2009 approval)

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 1, 2010

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 40 : EISENHOWER WEST SMALL AREA PLAN

This memorandum is in response to Councilmembers' questions about the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan raised during the March 23, 2010 work session on the Department of Planning and Zoning's (P&Z) FY2011 Work Program. These questions include:

- What will the consulting funds be used for?
- Why is the process shown as lasting 16 months? Doesn't the fact that the City has already conducted an Eisenhower West Industrial Land Use Study mean that the process can be shortened?
- What Eisenhower West planning activities can be started sooner than January 2011?

BACKGROUND: The Eisenhower West Small Area has been one of the small area plans in the long range work program of P&Z since the Department produced the "Plan for Planning" in 2001. Eisenhower West is last major plan on the "Plan for Planning" schedule.

During last year's discussion of the P& Z work program, the Planning Commission and the Council discussed the timing of the Eisenhower West plan. The timing that was selected was for the staff work on the plan to begin in April 2011 and the public process to begin in June 2011. There were a number of reasons why this timing was chosen:

- A decision that two small area plans for the West End should not occur simultaneously because there are a large number of stakeholders who are interested in both plans. The Beauregard Corridor Plan, particularly with the BRAC-133 issues included, has a relatively intensive public meeting schedule.
- The expectation was, at the time, that consultant funds would not be available in FY2011 for the Eisenhower West plan. The schedule anticipated that consultant funds would be available in FY2012, which is why the public process was not scheduled to begin until then.
- Because, the findings of the Eisenhower West Industrial Land Use study, that the market will not support redevelopment of the four key sites (Virginia Paving, Vulcan Materials, the Norfolk Southern ethanol transloading facility, and the

Covanta Waste-to-Energy plant) except over the long term., there was no perceived rush for development.

Related to the timing of the plan, there is a provision in Virginia Paving's Special Use Permit (SUP) which states that about 3 years after the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan is adopted, the Council will make a determination about whether the continued operation of Virginia Paving is consistent with the small area plan. Delaying the completion of this Plan would also delay the date when the Council can consider Virginia Paving's SUP as it relates to consistency with the small area plan.

Because the City Manager's Proposed FY2011 Operating Budget includes \$100,000 in consultant support for the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan, P&Z is able to accelerate the start of the plan from April 2011 to January 2011.

DISCUSSION:

Use of Consultant Funds

The Eisenhower West Industrial Land Use Study¹ conducted analysis of the local and regional development market, of redevelopment financials (potential for profit), of environmental conditions and impacts, and the costs and benefits of redevelopment to the City. Much of the material is easily applied to other sites in the plan area, and as a result, the City will not need to conduct those analyses again.

The main additional consultant work will be transportation-related, and the traffic analysis will be a major element of the transportation work. The transportation consultant support for the Beauregard Corridor plan is \$140,000. The roadway network in Eisenhower West is complicated by proximity to the Beltway and other factors, but there is already a Metrorail station in place and the issues are not as complex as in the Beauregard Corridor. The constrained width of the plan area may require some level of engineering beyond the typical of a small area plan in order to ensure that proposed plan elements are feasible. Investigating ways to provide better access to the Metrorail station, and other means to take greater advantage of the station, may also involve consultant support.

If there is money available beyond the transportation analysis, it would be used to evaluate the potential for redevelopment of the area to pay for needed public facilities and to address environmental/stormwater/floodplain issues beyond those addressed in the previous studies.

¹ Located on the web at: <http://alexandriava.gov/IndustrialStudy>

Beginning of the Eisenhower West Planning Process

The proposed P&Z work program discussed by the Council on March 23 shows the staff work for the plan starting in January 2011 and the public process beginning in April 2011.

Staff work includes assembling all of the relevant background material for the plan area (such as property ownership, locations of floodplains and Resource Protection Areas, SUPs and other regulatory issues), identifying stakeholders, developing the scope of work and schedule, tentatively identifying the main issues and goals for the plan, and putting together an advisory group.

The Eisenhower West Plan is shown as starting in January because the Waterfront and Beauregard Corridor Plans are scheduled for adoption in the fall, freeing staff capacity for Eisenhower West and for Arlandria. No other major plans are anticipated to conclude in the fall.

Rather than make a commitment to accelerate the start of the plan in a significant way, staff will look for opportunities to begin work on the initial plan elements in the fall if/when staff capacity is available. Certainly the staff work can be started in December 2010, rather than January 2011, and staff will look for ways to supplement staff with unpaid internships, etc.

Length of the Eisenhower West Planning Process

The proposed P&Z work program discussed by the Council on March 23 shows the plan process starting in January 2011 and being adopted in April 2012, which is 16 months. Council members have asked if the process could be shortened.

It is very likely that process can be shortened. The current Beauregard Corridor Plan, which is likely to be considerably more complicated than the Eisenhower West plan, is now scheduled to be completed with a public process of about a year. Reducing the public process to nine months for the Eisenhower West plan is feasible.

If the plan were to begin in December 2010, rather than January 2011, and if the public process were to run nine months instead of twelve, the plan would be ready for consideration by Council in December 2011.

There are challenges to successfully involving the public in plans that come before the Council in December and January. Members of the public have advised staff that they are not able to be fully engaged in review plan documents between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day. Because the Planning Commission's January public hearing is very early, members of the public would be completing their final reviews of the proposed plan in the last week of December, which many are reluctant to do.

Staff will work toward a goal of accelerating the plan process further. Staff will schedule one or more mid-plan work sessions or otherwise communicate with the Planning Commission and Council, during which we will report on our progress in accelerating the plan. By then, too, the range of plan issues will be clearer.

ATTACHMENT #
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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 22, 2010
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL
VIA: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER *J*
FROM: FAROLL HAMER, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING *FH*
SUBJECT: PRIORITIES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING'S WORK PROGRAM FOR FY 2010 AND BEYOND

ISSUE: Consideration of the planning priorities for the work program for FY 2011 and beyond.

RECOMMENDATION: That the City Council review the following FY 2011 proposed planning initiatives and work program. The proposed work program is consistent with the FY 2011 proposed budget in regard to staffing and other budget resources.

- Complete small area plans for the Waterfront and the Beauregard Corridor.
- Begin a small area plan for Eisenhower West.
- Continue implementation of the Arlandria Action Plan, potentially expanding into a small area plan.
- Continue implementation of the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan and the King Street retail studies. Begin implementation of Waterfront plan.
- Continue to work on small business and green building initiatives.
- Continue to work with the Office of Housing on the Housing Master Plan, now planned to begin in April 2010 with adoption targeted for June 2011. Continue to support several other initiatives led by other departments, such as the Sewer Master Plan, school facilities planning, the BRAC IJR, parking, the environmental studies for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station and the Crystal City-Potomac Yard transitway, and the feasibility studies for the three dedicated transit corridors designated in the Transportation Master Plan.

DISCUSSION: As in previous years, the Department of Planning and Zoning has prepared a bar chart/timeline of a proposed program for FY 2011. The chart is attached and shows how the Department recommends allocating expected resources to the current and anticipated planning initiatives.

Although the FY 2011 work program is the focus of our discussion, the chart covers the time period from January 2009 through June of 2012 to give a broader picture of the history and proposed schedule of major planning projects. In addition, the chart shows work associated with plan implementation, which continues to occur for some years after each plan is adopted.

This chart focuses primarily on the work program of the Neighborhood Planning and Community Development division. Much of the work in the other P&Z divisions is determined by the regulatory caseload.

Because the role of the community is so critical at each phase of the planning process, the City realizes that it must continue to find ways to make it work better for all participants. The civic engagement process must deliver accurate, timely and complete information in an accessible way; provide multiple opportunities and means for community members to engage with each other and to provide advice to the City, and respond fully to the input provided. Even when community members do not agree with a final document, they should always feel that their voices were heard. Discussions led by the City Manager's Office and representatives of the Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations have been initiated to address these issues.

Themes for FY 2011

The basic approach to developing the proposed work program involves some constants from year to year: projects that have been started must be completed, adopted small area plans may be followed by plan implementation, and there will be projects led by other departments that will require contributions by Planning & Zoning staff.

Within that framework, there are still choices to be made, particularly during constrained budget times. The Department of Planning and Zoning identified four themes that it used to make choices for the FY 2011 work program:

- (1) preparing for the upturn,
- (2) more emphasis on action and less on study,
- (3) expanded intergovernmental coordination, and
- (4) further regulatory reform.

Preparing for the Upturn and Further Regulatory Reform

Our current level of effort on small area planning is geared towards readiness for the next economic upturn. The Department is currently working on three major small area plans, a first for the City, and we propose one or potentially two more next year. We are focused on the areas of the City that meet the City's criteria for smart growth (near Metrorail or other transit, existing public facilities and services), and the areas with the most potential for redevelopment/revitalization.

Jointly with AEDP, ACVA and Code Administration, the Department supported the Council's work on Strategic Plan Goal 1. With an emphasis on achieving economic results in the next three to five years, the three draft objectives in Goal 1 offer priorities for the City's FY 2011 work program, including the P&Z work program:

- Objective 1: Increase the vitality and economic success of the City Waterfront and King Street Corridor while maintaining and strengthening the City's commitment to historic preservation and neighborhood quality of life.
- Objective 2: Increase office and retail occupancy rates through business attraction, retention, and expansion
- Objective 3: Maintain an environment where businesses can thrive.

Over the past several years, as recommended in the Economic Sustainability and Small Business Task Force reports, making the development process in Alexandria more efficient and understandable and to improve the City's business reaction has been a priority for the City Manager and his staff, the Department of Planning and Zoning, Transportation and Environmental Services and the Office of Building Code Administration. Some of the improvements that have been successfully implemented recently include: participating in the *Inter-Agency Permit Center*; establishing a new *Menu of Standardized Condition Language* for development cases; updating the *Concept* and *Preliminary Plan Checklists*; standardization of IDR meeting times and creation of a regular *Development Project Workgroup* to meet with applicants during the development review process; *Small Business Improvements*, including creation of an expanded Administrative SUP process and publication of a *Small Business Checklist*; allowing for administrative approval by BAR staff of certain signs in historic districts; and a text amendment to extend the validity period for DSPs and DSUPs.

This effort at regulatory improvement will continue and expand during the next fiscal year. Specific goals include:

- Coordinating with Code Administration and T&ES on functional and procedural streamlining, including Permit Plan protocols, permitting service improvements, online application filing, consolidated inter-department checklists for building permit submissions and cross training and realignment of staff roles to gain efficiencies, as well as to improve customer service;
- Creating a Simplified Site Plan application for cases that require a site plan, but are small in size and straightforward in scope;
- Publishing a guide to the development review process;
- Completing the transfer from RPCA to P&Z of review of landscape elements in development applications, including training P&Z staff and making improvements to the review process;

- Clarity in processing BAR applications, including additional administrative approvals and policies for application of new and replacement materials in the historic districts; and
- Additional Small Business Improvements, including Updating the Small Business Guide, expanding the minor amendment process, and refining the administrative SUP process.

More Emphasis on Action

Over the past few years, the Department has completed several small area plans that, after the Planning Commission and Council have acted, added more than 15 million square feet of development capacity to the City. By the middle of FY 2011, three more plans will be completed. Each of these plans will have been complex and will have required a significant investment of time and other resources to address multiple challenging issues. In the near future, we will not only be able to have a more nimble planning program but also one that builds on already-adopted plans.

The proposed FY 2011 work program reduces the number of simultaneously developed small area plans from the current three to one (and potentially two if the Arlandria small area plan is activated). Partly this is because the Department does not have the resources for three small area plans, but it is also because there are fewer areas of the City where a full scale small area plan is needed. The proposed FY 2011 work program shifts staff resources toward implementation of adopted plans. It should be noted that implementation work in the current fiscal environment will largely be limited to planning, pricing, and prioritizing projects to a finer grain of detail for future use in subsequent CIP budget preparations. Implementation work can include pursuing public facilities and other improvements called for in a plan; it can also include actions that ensure that planned development can move forward and when it does, provides the public benefits and neighborhood safeguards expected in the plan. Full, and even partial, implementation will be tempered by fiscal realities since capital funding for many desired projects was not able to be funded in the proposed FY 2011 to FY 2016 City Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

Expanded Intergovernmental Coordination

The proposed work program expands the number of projects led by other City departments that are supported by planning staff. The work program also envisions building on the partnership with AEDP, ACVA and the business community that was strengthened by work on the Strategic Plan and economic sustainability. It also anticipates increased levels of coordination with neighboring jurisdictions and state and federal agencies.

Descriptions of Work Program Items

The attached chart shows 24 work program items, most of which have some work expected in FY 2011. Those work program items are:

- *North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan*. This plan is expected to be complete in FY 2010, but implementation work will follow initially in the form of *Potomac Yard Metro/ Transitway Environmental Review*, which will involve completing NEPA and/or other

regulatory reviews related to the Potomac Yard Metrorail station and the Crystal City Potomac Yard transitway.

- *Wayfinding.* The design guidelines for the Wayfinding program are expected to be adopted in FY 2010. An implementation effort awaits future year CIP funding.
- The *Sewer Master Plan* is expected to be completed in FY 2010. It is being led by T&ES, and will be funded by Sanitary Sewer User Fees.
- The *Waterfront Small Area Plan* is now expected to be brought to the Council for adoption in the fall. The extensive public outreach effort for the plan has been enormously helpful in identifying the common goals of the many Alexandrians who care passionately about the waterfront. This planning effort is addressing numerous social, environmental, economic, legal and logistical issues with multiple important stakeholders, so listening carefully and working deliberately will ultimately result in a better product than we could have delivered sooner. A concept plan will be released in April, which will allow the public a fresh opportunity for input.
- The *Beauregard Small Area Plan* has now been scheduled for release of a draft by mid-summer and adoption in the late fall. Staff and consultant work is proceeding expeditiously. *BRAC LJR* and related transportation issues have been a major focus in comparison to other Beauregard plan issues.
- *Green Building Phase II* continues the pursuit of opportunities to improve the sustainability of the built environment in such topic areas as existing buildings, incentives, and outreach.
- The *Housing Master Plan*, led by the Office of Housing, begins next month and runs for about a year, with adoption planned for the end of FY 2011. The ARHA Strategic Plan is expected to begin soon as well. In both cases, P&Z will play a supporting role.
- *Transit Corridor Feasibility* studies, led by T&ES, will be under way soon and will conduct detailed work to identify the best specific alignments for the three transitway alignments generally shown in the Transportation Master Plan. Because transit alignments have multiple and important land use impacts, P&Z staff will be a key part of the project team. These studies are largely federally funded.
- *Eisenhower West Small Area Plan.* This plan has been scheduled to follow the Beauregard Small Area Plan. The consultant funds included in the City Manager's proposed budget allow the plan to begin in January 2011.
- *Arlandria.* The Arlandria Action Plan Advisory Group has begun meeting; one of the tasks for the group is to explore whether changes to the adopted plan are needed to enable desired redevelopment. During the first meeting, a number of Advisory Group members called for a broader look at the redevelopment area, including some tasks typical of a small area plan. The Department recommends devoting some additional staff resources to supporting this community-based planning/implementation initiative. If major land

owners in Arlandria wish in FY 2011 to engage the City in re-planning their parcels, then funding for additional City planning resources would need to be identified.

- *Beauregard, Landmark/Van Dorn and Wayfinding Implementation.* There are currently no resources allocated to any of these implementation efforts. If developer interest accelerates (such as General Growth at the Landmark Mall site), staff will either need to be reassigned from other projects to meet the needs, or additional resources will need to be identified.
- *King Street, as well as Waterfront,* initiatives will be multi-agency and address the issues raised in the new Strategic Plan to strengthen economic vitality while protecting neighborhoods and historic authenticity. Among the major issues is *parking*, while will have already moved from the “study” phase to the “action” phase for Old Town in FY 2010. Parking Phase II will address the Mt. Vernon and Braddock Metro station areas.

Proposed FY 2011 Budget for the Department of Planning and Zoning

The City Manager released his proposed FY 2011 Operating Budget. The proposed budget includes numerous reductions in many departments to close the budget gap.

For the Department of Planning and Zoning, the proposed reductions come in two forms: a reduction in the number of staff positions (or “FTEs”) and a reduction in the funds available for consultant support. The City Manager’s Proposed FY 2011 budget reduces the number of Planning staff positions from 49.5 to 47.5. The amount of funds available for consultant support is \$100,000, which is a reduction from \$164,709 from FY 2010 (the Beauregard Corridor consultant work is funded through a \$600,000 federal grant).

In general, the FY 2011 staff and consultant reductions will primarily affect Neighborhood Planning and Community Development projects in FY 2011. This is because last year the Department took its cuts on the regulatory side – commensurate with the reduction in regulatory activity due to the economic downturn – and also reallocated some regulatory staff time to work on Neighborhood Planning initiatives. As a result, there is little unused capacity in the regulatory divisions of the department.

The proposed budget provides capacity for one new small area plan (Eisenhower West) supported with the available consultant funds; support for long range planning efforts led by other departments (Housing Master Plan, etc), and further refinement of the costs, details, and priorities of some previously adopted plans and studies. Actual implementation of previously adopted plans will be significantly influenced by the current economic climate which has limited both City and developer ability to finance capital projects contemplated in these adopted plans.

cc: Chair and Members of the Planning Commission
Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager
Rich Baier, Director, Transportation and Environmental Services
Jim Spengler, Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
Mildrilyn Davis, Director, Office of Housing
Val Hawkins, CEO, AEDP
Stephanie Brown, CEO, ACVA

**Department of Planning and Zoning
Accomplishments and Activities FY 2010**

In partnership with T&ES, RPCA, the Office of Housing, AEDP, ACVA, ARHA, ACPS, community and business groups, and residents, the Department of Planning and Zoning:

- Completed *Eisenhower West Industrial Land Uses* study in September.
- By the end of the fiscal year, will finish the *North Potomac Yard* small area plan, which is expected to include 7.5 million square feet of mixed use development and a Metro station. Will complete the *North Potomac Yard CDD* and the *North Potomac Yard Design Guidelines*
- By the end of the fiscal year, will finish *Wayfinding* design guidelines.
- In April, release the concept plan for the *Waterfront* small area plan.
- Initiated *Beauregard Corridor* planning process.
- Staffed the *BRAC Advisory Group*.
- Revised, updated zoning changes to *Infill Regulations*, with report to Council and support from the Infill Task Force.
- Through the *Small Business Zoning* program, approved half of applications administratively. Continued assistance on Small Business, including zoning changes for: Cameron Station to allow retail space to participate in Small Business Zoning, BAR signs in historic districts by administrative approval, and development of 2010 small business zoning changes, outreach, and text amendments.
- Completed zoning changes to create more consistent standards for subdivision variation process.
- Completed the 2009 *King Street Retail Study* and follow up implementation work.
- To implement the *Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan*, established dedicated open space and community amenity funds; supported the City's acquisition of property for the new park.
- Initiated the *Arlandria Action Plan Advisory Group*.
- Completed the *Four Mile Run Design Guidelines*.
- By the end of the fiscal year, supported the completion of a *Sewer Master Plan*.
- By the end of the fiscal year, completed a comprehensive update of the City's *long range forecasts* for population, jobs and households.

- Initiated and staffed a *Census Complete Count Committee* as well as a series of programs and activities to boost the return of Census forms by City residents.
- Achieved a listing of the *Parker-Gray Historic District* on the National Register of Historic Places
- Approved the Final Site Plans for first two phases of James Bland redevelopment project.
- Supported work on the *Housing Master Plan*.
- Partnered with T&ES on the *Old Town Parking Study* and in implementing the resulting recommendations.
- Began leading *Phase II Green Building* work, with emphasis on existing buildings, outreach, and enforcement.
- GIS Updated the *aerial photography* used City-wide for planning and analysis to 2009.
- Began work on a regional road centerline project; this project will provide Fire/EMS with regional vehicle routing capabilities (GIS).
- In partnership with ACPS, applied GIS to determine *Safe Walks to School*. Also with ACPS, analyzed recent school enrollment trends and trends in *student generation by housing type*.
- Created a *Unified Parcel-Address-Building Model* to significantly improve the breadth and accuracy of information about properties, buildings, and businesses in the City. And to better integrate GIS with multiple City-wide enterprise applications.
- Developed a much more user-friendly web-based interface for GIS, nicknamed *GARI* and added several new themed and analytical tools– scheduled for late FY2010 release. Developed a “widget” to allow the easy incorporation of custom interactive maps on the City’s website.
- In partnership with T&ES, working to create a suite of GIS based analytical & maintenance tools and databases to define and manage the stormwater utility program.
- Completed a geospatial analysis of how Alexandria scores on some critical *LEED Sustainable Sites* criteria.
- Provided support for T&ES and RPCA’s GIS based *Computerized Management and Maintenance System (CMMS)*.
- Provided situational awareness and planning support through GIS for Emergency Operation Center activities (developed a prototype for tracking snow removal activities during the February storms) and began work on a “*Strategic Response System*” for the Fire Department.

- Approved a number of notable DSPs and DSUPs including:
 - Restaurant Depot, with \$500,000 voluntary proffer by applicant for parks and open space
 - Polk Elementary Gymnasium
 - Church of God Addition
 - Hoffman Blocks 11 and 12
 - The Calvert
 - Freedmen's Cemetery
 - Umbrella Site Plan for Relocatable Classrooms at Alexandria Schools
 - 21 North Quaker Lane
- Monitored/inspected two major projects through to completion: *1701 Duke Street/Edmonson Plaza* and *Mount Vernon Commons*.
- Completed planning work on the *South Carlyle* area in order to consider appropriate develop options for Block P East – work included a detailed retail study of the Carlyle and Eisenhower East area.
- Provided extensive input to T&ES on the *Eisenhower Avenue Widening Project*.
- Supported RPCA staff in the development of a new *Arts Policy*.
- Supported Fire Department and General Services in the design-build process for two new *City fire stations*.
- Improved the regulatory process by establishing a new *Menu of Standardized Condition Language* and updating the *Concept* and *Preliminary Plan Checklists*.
- Regulatory Caseload for FY2010 (balance of year is a projection):
 - Development approved: 1,600,000 square feet
 - Development cases: 33
 - SUPs: 76
 - Zoning complaints and SUP compliance cases: 680
 - Permits/BZA applications/plot plans: 5,000
 - Historic preservation applications/permits: 1,200

