

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: OCTOBER 21, 2011

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

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

SUBJECT: PROPOSED PRIORITIES FOR THE LONG RANGE PLANNING AND PLAN IMPLEMENTATION WORK PROGRAM FOR FY 2013 AND BEYOND

The objective for the October 25 work session is for the City Council to review the following proposed long range planning initiatives, including staffing levels and potential funding estimates, and provide feedback on the proposed priorities for FY 2013. This feedback will help form the final proposed long range planning initiatives which will be reflected in the FY 2013 proposed budget.

Proposed Major Interdepartmental Planning Initiatives:

- Support Landmark Mall redevelopment planning and other initiatives to implement the Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan.
- Begin the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan.
- Begin planning for the reuse of the GenOn (Potomac River Generating Station) site in Old Town North.
- Begin implementation of the Waterfront Plan, with particular emphasis on flood mitigation and parking.
- Begin implementation of the Beauregard Corridor Small Area Plan.
- In conjunction with Landmark and Beauregard implementation, plan implementation of Transit Corridor C.

Special Projects and Ongoing Implementation Work

- Engage in a discussion with the community about the public engagement process with the goal of increased public confidence in decision-making.

- Continue interdepartmental support for new school construction and long range planning for ACPS school facilities.
- Continue to move forward with the planning for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station and the Crystal City/Potomac Yard/Braddock Transitway.
- Continue work on specific action items to implement the Braddock Neighborhood Plan, the Arlandria Action Plan and initiatives in Four Mile Run, and King Street retail initiatives.
- Continue to work on parking and wayfinding.
- Continue to work on Eco-City initiatives.
- Begin implementation of the Housing Master Plan, the Sanitary Sewer Master Plan, and the ARHA Strategic Plan. All of these plans are scheduled for consideration and adoption in FY 2012.
- Conduct 2010 Census data analysis, reporting and forecasting.

DISCUSSION: As in previous years, City departments and agencies engaged in long range planning and plan implementation have jointly prepared a proposed work program for FY 2013. A bar chart/timeline, which depicts this, is attached. It shows the planning projects anticipated by the departments and agencies and this memorandum describes the resources required to complete them.

Although the FY 2013 work program is the focus of our discussion, the chart covers the FY 2012 to FY 2013 time period 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 after each plan is adopted.

As in last year's work program material, there is a greater emphasis on implementation of the City Council's new Strategic Plan adopted earlier in 2010, on the interdepartmental nature of the planning program, and more attention to the staff resources needed to complete each project. The proposed work program has been coordinated by the Department of Planning and Zoning with the Office of Housing; the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities; the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services; the Office of Historic Alexandria; and the City Manager's Office. Discussion of initiatives to implement the Strategic Plan involved the above Departments, as well as the Department of Code Administration, the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership and the Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association.

As in past years, City departments jointly develop estimates of the staff resources needed to provide the recommended level of effort on each project. As is usually the case, **there is greater demand for work to be undertaken and completed than there are currently staff and technical resources to devote to it.** At the October 17, 2011, worksession with the City

Council, the Acting City Manager provided a budget outlook that means new resource requests must be very constrained, if not new dollar neutral.

This imbalance may be addressed in one or more of the following ways:

- Prioritizing certain types of projects over others;
- Delaying some projects until others can be completed;
- Reducing the scope of work of a project;
- Authorizing additional staff resources.

To assist the Council in making these trade-offs, staff has prepared a recommended “base staff resource plan” that does not require additional staff (but does require some additional operating and capital funds). Staff has also prepared an “added staff resource plan” that shows the resources to complete the entire proposed work program if resources were not constrained.

Base Staff Resource Plan

It appears at this stage that this proposed work program can be completed without additional City-funded staff resources.

1. *Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan implementation:* Includes the work to prepare infrastructure costs and developer contributions, creating the Coordinated Development Districts, and processing the Landmark Mall redevelopment proposal (anticipates a developer-funded new P&Z staff person)
2. *Waterfront Plan implementation (first priority level of effort):* Includes only phase 1 flood mitigation, conversion of the Beachcomber building into a restaurant, completing the purchase of the Strand properties for open space, and parking advisory group work.
3. *Transit Corridor C* planning:* This project involves continued planning, including environmental work, on transit corridor C, which goes through both the Beauregard and Landmark planning areas. This project would utilize existing and already-funded staff.
4. *Beauregard Corridor implementation:* other than work on transit corridor C, the implementation consists of processing the CDD and DSUP(s).
5. *Public engagement process:* This project, envisioned as dialog with the community about the small area planning public engagement process, is planned to begin in late spring 2012 and continue through the fall.
6. *GenOn/Old Town North Plan:* Proposed to begin after a dialog with the community about the small area planning public engagement process.

7. *Eisenhower West Small Area Plan*: Start in January 2012, when the Landmark/Van Dorn project planning has been completed.

The following additional resources would be needed to fund the base staff resource plan:

Project	Outside Technical Assistance	Capital Improvement Program
Landmark/Van Dorn Plan Implementation	\$100,000	--
GenOn/Old Town North Plan	\$375,000 ¹	--
Waterfront Plan Implementation (flood mitigation – Phase I)	--	\$750,000
Transit Corridor C Planning	Funded	--
Beauregard Corridor Implementation	--	--
Public engagement process	--	--
Eisenhower West Small Area Plan	\$175,000 ¹	--
Total	\$650,000 ¹	\$750,000

¹Represents total project need, but would be less in FY 2013 as the project would continue into FY 2014.

Added Staff Resource Plan

The Waterfront Phase 2 may be added to the work program and the Eisenhower West planning could be accelerated for FY 2013 with the addition of resources for staff and outside technical assistance.

1. Eisenhower West to start July 2012 (2 staff: P&Z and T&ES).
2. Waterfront (higher level of effort): flood mitigation phase 2 and associated park design, waterfront infrastructure design and engineering plan, marina study. (3 staff: P&Z, RPCA, T&ES).

Project	FTEs	Outside Technical Assistance	Capital Improvement Program
Eisenhower West Small Area Plan to start July 2013	2	Included above	--
Waterfront Plan (higher level of effort)	3	--	\$500,000

Relationship to the FY 2013 Budget Process

The work program planning needs to be closely aligned with the budget process because it is through the budget that resources are provided to complete the projects. City departments are currently working with the Acting City Manager to prepare a proposed budget for FY 2013, which will be released on February 14, 2012.

The City Council reviews the long range planning work program each fall to provide early guidance on proposed planning priorities for the proposed budget. The fall work program discussions are also a useful opportunity to review the issues, information and events that engender changes in the proposed work program schedule or in work program priorities. The public work sessions also keep the public informed about the work program and schedule.

Themes for FY 2013

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 one department that will require contributions by other departments.

Within that framework, there are still choices to be made, particularly during constrained budget times. Last year, the interdepartmental long range planning team identified four themes that it used to make choices for the work program: supporting Goal 1 of the Strategic Plan (i.e., the goal that advocates for quality development and redevelopment), increased attention to plan implementation, expanded intergovernmental coordination, and continuously improving civic engagement. These themes continue to guide the work program.

Descriptions of Work Program Items

The attached chart shows 15 work program items that have some work expected in FY 2013 which are described in more detail below.

Major New Projects

Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan Implementation

The Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan was approved in February 2009 and redevelopment of Landmark Mall has been high on the City's economic development priorities for a long time. The principal mall owner through the preparation of the small area plan was GGP, who went into bankruptcy reorganization as the Plan was finalized. GGP's reorganization was finalized last year and the property transferred to a new entity – Howard Hughes, Inc. Howard Hughes has approached the City about starting the process to obtain the necessary approvals for the redevelopment envisioned in the small area plan approved in 2009. They have hired a regional development director and contracted with a consultant team. City staff has requested that Howard Hughes propose a timeline and Howard Hughes has indicated that they will do so in the late fall of 2011. Howard Hughes has indicated that the Landmark Mall is one of its top redevelopment opportunities and they want to move forward as soon as possible. Howard Hughes, Inc. also expressed support for the Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan's vision for the Mall redevelopment.

Consideration of the Mall redevelopment will have elements of plan implementation and development review and will include creation of a new Coordinated Development District, coordination with transit planning (the site is at the junction of two planned high capacity transit

corridors) and may include coordination with adjacent redevelopable parcels (on the bluffs across Duke Street). In addition to transit, there are several complex infrastructure issues, including engineering, design, and financing of roadways, recreation and open space, and stormwater facilities, and more.

With two proposed transit lines and about 7+ million square feet of potential development, Landmark Mall and the redevelopable parcels across Duke Street comprise a project that is similar in scale to North Potomac Yard. The typical estimate for a development proposal to move through the development approval process is 18 months. An important step in the plan implementation process is to prepare a detailed assessment of potential public amenities, infrastructure requirements, their costs and a detailed financing program to fund identified public benefits. This element would involve all of the Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor landowners; it would take 6 to 9 months to complete and require \$100,000 for outside technical expertise. The small area plan indicates that public participation in infrastructure improvements may be considered. Funds for more detailed infrastructure design and engineering will also be requested in the CIP.

Staff estimates at this time that this project would require at least an additional staff person in P&Z for which there is potential for developer funding by Howard Hughes, Inc. Without a specific planning proposal and timetable from Howard Hughes, Inc., the likely staff resource need is a guesstimate and may need to be higher to accommodate T&ES engineering staff needs.

Public Engagement Process

Staff proposes using a 6 month period between the completion of the Beaugard and Waterfront Plans and the start of the Eisenhower West and GenOn/Old Town North Plans to conduct a discussion with the community about the long range planning process, particularly the public engagement element of that process. This will provide residents and other stakeholders with an opportunity to discuss what's worked, what could be improved, and which new approaches should be pursued. A product may be a set of "principles of engagement" or other document that provides a shared expectation of the small area planning process in the future.

Eisenhower West Small Area Plan

Eisenhower West is the last major plan in the *Plan for Planning* schedule. In the adopted FY 2012 work program, the Eisenhower West Plan was scheduled to begin in July of 2012 (FY 2013) or after the Beaugard Corridor Plan is completed, and that schedule is in this proposed work program shifts out by six months to January 2013.

The Eisenhower West Small Area Plan involves several elements, some of which build on completed work, including an initial work assessment of the industrial land uses (2009). The Plan will require significant transportation/transit analysis to resolve the "connector" issue to the satisfaction of VDOT and FHWA. Other elements include: determination of geographic boundaries for the plan and the community/citizen participation approach, followed by a planning process to include development of a community vision, and evaluation of alternatives (land use, zoning, density, environmental, transportation, and more). The project could involve

extensive facilitation, coordination with Fairfax County and some additional economic/financial analysis will be necessary. The least amount of market demand /pressure for redevelopment is in the Eisenhower West area, which is the rationale for recommending that its planning come *after* the Landmark/Van Dorn work is completed.

As noted earlier in this memo, this project and the Landmark project cannot both be completed simultaneously with existing staff. However, if Eisenhower West comes after Landmark, no new staff would be needed. Costs for outside technical expertise for economic and financial analysis and technical expertise costs for the transportation element of this plan are estimated at \$350,000, which would be split between FY 2013 and FY 2014.

GenOn/Old Town North Small Area Plan

The GenOn Potomac River Generating Station (PRGS) is anticipated to cease operations and to close October, 2012 or shortly thereafter. The 22-acre site is located between the George Washington Parkway and the Potomac River at the northern edge of Old Town. The site consists of a power plant, operating since the 1940s, and a PEPCO substation (which occupies about 5 acres). It is expected that the substation function will need to remain on or near the site, although not necessarily occupying as much acreage. A significant portion of the site is occupied by a coal pile and the site is now served by a rail spur that continues through Old Town North through Oronoco Bay Park to Robinson Terminal North. With the PRGS closure and the expected redevelopment of Robinson Terminal North, the current use of the rail spur will cease.

The site represents a significant benefit for the City of Alexandria, both in terms of the undesirable use that will be departing as well as the prospect of creating new public amenities and economic opportunities. Among the amenities long identified as desirable: an increase in waterfront open space that significantly improves the connection between Daingerfield Island and Old Town North's waterfront. From a development point of view, the site has many positive attributes, including a waterfront location, great views, access to the GW Parkway and to National Airport, but considerable care will need to be taken to address potential neighborhood impacts and to maximize the public benefits to the degree feasible.

It is expected that there will be considerable interest in starting the long range planning for the site as soon as possible. For a variety of reasons, staff believes the GenOn planning should start in early 2013. Other considerations affecting elements of the planning effort:

- Resolution of issues between GenOn and PEPCO.
- A decision by GenOn as to who, how and when to pursue the planning/redevelopment process, including, potentially, the selection of a development partner or alternatively, a decision to sell the property.
- Greater understanding and detailed studies by GenOn of the environmental remediation issues on the site, their cost, and potential impact on site layout and use. This is likely to be a significant schedule driver.

- Open space issues and expectations, including those presented by the bike trail, the City's Open Space Master Plan, the expectations of the National Park Service for this site and for Daingerfield Island, and the potential for water-related activities.

Staff notes that this project can be completed with existing staff resources. If a developer is selected by GenOn and becomes an active participant in the planning process, the scope of the project may expand and require additional resources, toward which the developer may be willing to contribute. Outside technical expertise will be required for analyses of transportation impacts and opportunities. For FY 2013, the estimate at this time is \$175,000.

Other Major New Implementation Projects

- *Beauregard Corridor Small Area Plan implementation:* The pending Beauregard Corridor Plan is anticipated to be approved in the spring of 2012. The major implementation element other than planning for Transit Corridor C (below) is the processing of the CDD and DSUP(s) for proposed development projects (depending on the outcome of the planning process). In addition, the Office of Housing anticipates engaging in efforts to identify and leverage non-City funding sources to supplement developer contributions and City resources for the production of long-term affordable housing.
- *Corridor C Transit Planning:* Coinciding with the Beauregard Corridor planning process is a companion Transit Corridor Feasibility Study that analyzed several different transportation/transit modes and alignments for the Beauregard Corridor which is identified as Corridor C. In September of 2011, the City Council approved Alternative D for Corridor C, which includes a proposal for Bus Rapid Transit connecting to the Pentagon and Shirlington. Refined estimates for the Transitway Corridor C preliminary planning/engineering, construction and operations will be developed during subsequent phases of design for the Transitway. It is anticipated that additional alternatives analysis for Corridor C would require up to \$1 million in funding for which a \$0.8 million federal grant has just been awarded with the \$0.2 million balance to originate from existing City Transportation Improvement Funds. The City also anticipates that planned redevelopment within the Beauregard Corridor will result in dedicated right of way and significant developer contributions towards a large portion of the capital costs for construction of the project. Transportation Improvement Program and potentially Federal funds could provide the balance.

This project will also require significant levels of coordination with the Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor plan implementation, as the corridor is planned to go through the redeveloped Landmark Mall and along Van Dorn to the Metrorail Station.

- *Waterfront Plan Implementation and King Street:* The City's Strategic Plan places a high priority on King Street and the Waterfront as areas with solvable challenges and a high potential for a return on investment in the relatively short term. Projects in this category include:

- Wayfinding: Phase 1 of the Wayfinding program is expected to be installed by early 2012. Phase 2 is programmed in the CIP for FY 2013 and would provide information and directional signage for pedestrians in King Street/Old Town area.
- King Street Retail Initiatives: Several initiatives were identified in the Strategic Plan to help improve the appeal of King Street to shoppers and diners. Proposed for FY 2013 may be lighting and streetscape/landscaping/beautification improvements, as well as smaller projects such as additional umbrellas, tables and chairs for Market Square.
- Waterfront Plan Implementation: The Waterfront Plan is anticipated to be approved in FY 2012; early action items in the proposed plan include:
 - *Flood mitigation*: Design and engineering of the flood mitigation concept in the Waterfront Plan, consisting of two phases. The first phase involves raising the roadway surface and stormwater inlets in the unit block of King Street and adjacent portions of The Strand and Union Street. This first phase is estimated to cost \$750,000 in capital funds and can be completed independently of other waterfront projects and without additional staff. The second phase would be a flood wall to be integrated into the landscape between ODBC and Robinson Terminal South. The second phase of flood mitigation design and engineering will be coordinated with the preliminary design and engineering plan described below.
 - *Preliminary design and engineering plan*: The first phase of Waterfront Plan implementation is the preparation of a preliminary design and engineering plan (to 15% design) for Waterfront infrastructure and other capital investments in the public realm. Tasks will include geotechnical and underwater investigation; preliminary engineering for grading of streets, pathways and park areas; preliminary design of parks and public space improvements; and a preliminary layout of flood mitigation elements, storm sewer improvements, utility relocation, and bulkhead replacements. The majority of these elements are interdependent, so preliminary design and engineering should encompass all of them together. A product of this work will be a construction phasing plan to establish how the improvements will be accomplished while allowing continued access to the waterfront and to prioritize capital expenditures. The anticipated need for outside technical expertise to complete this project is \$1.25 million, of which \$250,000 is in the adopted CIP for years FY 2013 and \$500,00 has been included for FY 2014.
 - *Parking*: Working with a stakeholder's group to consider next steps in parking management for Old Town, including triggers for monitoring and action and strengthening resident parking protections.

- *Beachcomber*: Assuming that reuse of the Beachcomber building on the Strand is in the adopted Waterfront Plan, develop an RFP and contract with the private sector to convert the building into a restaurant.
- *Development review*: Proposals for redevelopment in the Cummings/Turner block are anticipated to be submitted after the Waterfront Plan is adopted.
- *Open space*: Complete acquisition of Strand parking lot for open space.
- *ODBC*: Implement a future resolution of the ODBC parking lot issue. If a resolution is found, capital funds may be needed for implementation.
- *Marina study*: Build upon the analytical work completed for the Waterfront Plan, which will go to the next level of detail in the design of the marina area.

To achieve this work program, Planning and Zoning, RPCA and T&ES would require one additional staff person for this project; in the case of T&ES, an engineer with expertise in marine engineering and flood mitigation; in the case of P&Z, a landscape architect; in the case of RPCA, a park planner. The initial focus of the new staff will be, to a large extent, initially on flood mitigation and the public realm where flood mitigation is to be implemented.

- *Transit Corridor A (Potomac Yard Transit)*: The FY 2013 work program will devote resources to continuing both the Environmental Impact Statement process for the Potomac Yard Metro Station, an environmental study for the Crystal City – Potomac Yard - Braddock potential streetcar project as well as implementation of bus rapid transit (BRT).
- *Other Small Area Plan Implementation*: Staff suggests allocating resources sufficient to make continued progress on plan implementation in Arlandria and Four Mile Run and in Braddock.
 - The *Arlandria* Action Plan is being implemented with the support of an advisory group created by the City Council two years ago. In FY 2013, plan implementation will continue with executive committee and advisory group meetings (4-6 per year), greater emphasis on prioritizing/executing CIP projects (such as the Four Mile Run community building & park expansion), additional staff/advisory group research and analysis of key group interest areas (such as an arts district) and an Interdepartmental work team necessary to carry out key areas of responsibility for plan implementation including P&Z, T&ES, Housing, AEDP and RP&CA. The work program anticipates continuing the same level of P&Z staff support for Arlandria in FY 2013.
 - In *Braddock*, implementation work will focus on developing an agreement with the U.S. Post Office on the future of this block. Planned development in the neighborhood is moving forward, and as it does, contributions will begin to

accrue from developers toward the Braddock open space and community amenities funds.

- *Master Plan and Strategic Plan Implementation*
 - *Housing Master Plan Implementation:* This plan is currently underway with a goal of Council adoption in FY 2012. Staff anticipates implementation work will include policy and regulatory changes (including possible amendments to the zoning ordinance), some of which may involve items for the City's 2013 Legislative Package. Other tasks include the pursuit of additional affordable housing partners and funding sources, development of specific program options identified in the plan, and outreach/education efforts to inform stakeholders about relevant aspects of the plan.
 - *ARHA Strategic Plan Implementation:* The ARHA Strategic Plan is anticipated to be adopted by the ARHA Board of Commissioners and presented to City Council during FY 2012. Many of the recommendations are anticipated to relate only to ARHA's internal organization or to agency activities and programs related to resident self-sufficiency. However, Plan recommendations regarding the future/near term redevelopment of ARHA properties in the Braddock Metro area and in Old Town North may involve coordination and participation of City staff from multiple departments, including Housing, Planning and Zoning, T&ES and others.
 - *Sanitary Sewer Master Plan Implementation:* This plan is currently under way with a goal of adoption by Council in mid FY 2012. Among the Plan's objectives: better understanding of the current state of the system and how it is working, analyzing the impacts of future growth, evaluating infrastructure improvements and their costs, and identifying funding strategies for large scale projects. T&ES staff will be responsible for the majority of this work with interdepartmental staff collaborating on specific issues.
- *School Facilities Planning and New School Construction:* This project includes a variety of long range school facility planning elements that are currently underway or anticipated to commence as resources are made available. Tasks include, but are not limited to: student enrollment forecasting, demographic trends, shared services, facilities analysis, site location analysis, transportation coordination and planning, and facilities master planning. Significant staff commitments on the part of ACPS and P&Z to coordinate and collaborate on these tasks will be occurring in 2013 and beyond.

The recently adopted FY 2012 - FY 2021 CIP provides for significant funding (\$84.3 million) for new school (Jefferson-Houston and Patrick Henry) capacity increases for the FY 2012-2016 time period. To meet aggressive timetables, interdepartmental staff teams have been formed to help inform and facilitate the design and construction process while ensuring conformance with applicable codes.

- *Census and Demographics*: By FY 2013, the majority of Census 2010 data releases will be available. The Department of Planning and Zoning (Neighborhood Planning and GIS) will continue to update City databases; make the information available to City staff, public officials, and the public; conduct some analytical work; and prepare updated long-range forecasts of population, housing and employment.

cc: Chair and Members of the Planning Commission
Bruce Johnson, Acting City Manager
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