

City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

DATE: JANUARY 28, 2002  
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL  
FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*  
SUBJECT: SAFETY AND SECURITY MEASURES

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At the January 8 City Council meeting, I said I would be sending a memorandum to City Council on the progress we are making toward establishing new security measures in light of the events of September 11, 2001. Last fall, I formed a staff Safety and Security Committee, headed by Fire Chief Tom Hawkins, to review and make recommendations on issues related to the safety of City employees and the public while in public facilities, and to the security of City Hall and other City-owned and leased facilities. Below is a summary of the short-term measures that the committee has recommended and I have approved, as well as a description of the further review work that the committee will undertake regarding security measures that can be taken in the long run.

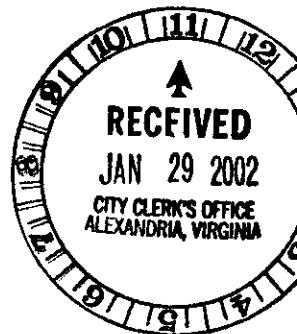
City Hall and other facilities, like group homes, fire stations and recreation centers, were considered during the committee's deliberations. The committee did not address the Public Safety Center or the Courthouse, as these facilities are being addressed by other groups.

Alexandria has a rich history of open government. Citizens are accustomed to moving freely in and out of our public facilities and communicating directly with staff. Our challenge is to secure our public facilities in order to provide a safe environment, yet preserve as much as we can that feeling of open government.

**I. Short-Term Measures**

**A. City Hall**

1. During the week, most entry doors at City Hall will be locked at 9:00 p.m. When City Council and other evening public meetings are scheduled, the following entrances will remain open after 9:00 p.m., until the last meeting is concluded:
  - Cameron Street (Vola Lawson Lobby)
  - Market Square/Center door
  - Market Square/Royal Street door



2. On Saturday mornings during the Farmer's Market and the hours the Department of Finance is operational, only the Market Square/center and Market Square/Royal Street doors will be open for public access. These doors will be locked at the conclusion of the Market and Finance hours.
3. On Saturdays when the City Council is in session, the Cameron Street, Market Square/center, and Market Square/Royal Street doors will be open. At the end of the meeting, these doors will be locked.
4. The stairwells on each side of the building will not be used by the public after 9:00 p.m. on weekdays, or anytime on the weekends (including during Saturday Council public hearing meetings). Signs will be placed at strategic locations, directing visitors to the main elevator lobby and the nearby interior stairs.
5. A safety and security survey will be completed for City Hall by representatives from Police, Fire and General Services by March 31, in conjunction with department heads. This survey will also include an evacuation plan, and a plan for designating specific areas of the building as "not open to the public" during certain hours. Evacuation drills for City Hall will be conducted at least once a year, and all fire alarm and fire suppression systems will be tested in accordance with appropriate code requirements. Records of each test will be maintained by General Services and on site.
6. The current electronic card entry system will be reviewed to determine who has access, and who needs and should be allowed access. Council members and Council aides will be able to access the building with user entry cards after normal hours.

B. Other City-Owned and Leased Facilities

1. Within the next twelve months, department heads and agency directors in all City facilities (owned or leased) will complete a safety and security check with the Police Department's Crime Prevention Unit and a representative from the Fire Department. A determination will be made as to which areas should remain open to the public, and which areas should not. Areas not open to the public will be designated and signed appropriately, and access to these areas may be denied by the installation of security devices.
2. Evacuation plans and procedures will be developed by March 31, 2002, and will become part of each department's emergency preparedness plan.

Evacuation drills for all facilities will be conducted at least once a year, and all fire alarm and fire suppression systems will be tested in accordance with appropriate code requirements. Records of each test will be maintained by General Services and on site.

C. Employee Identification Cards

1. Many public and private employers require their employees to wear identification (ID) cards as a way of knowing immediately who is and is not an employee. Within the next three months, all City employees will have an ID card containing the employee's name, picture, position, department and payroll number (in lieu of a social security number). The card may also serve other functions, e.g., to gain entry into City Hall and the Market Square parking garage.
2. Most City employees will be required to wear their ID card at work at all times. The only exceptions will be employees who wear a City uniform or, for safety reasons, cannot wear the ID card while performing their job. In these cases, the employees will carry their ID card with them and present it when requested.

D. Security Personnel in City Hall

1. Employees have said that they would feel more secure if a uniformed law enforcement official were on duty in City Hall during the day and evenings. Currently, the City contracts with a security company to provide coverage by a security guard during the evenings and on Saturdays.
2. The Safety and Security Committee will study the costs and benefits of having a Special Police Officer on duty during the day, evening, and weekends, and report its recommendations to me by March 31.

E. Vehicle Security

1. The proper securing of all City vehicles is essential.
2. The following information will be placed in each City vehicle in a conspicuous place:

“TO SECURE THIS VEHICLE PLEASE DO THE FOLLOWING:

- ▶ Remove all items or property from the vehicle or store in the trunk
- ▶ Close all windows
- ▶ Remove the key from the ignition
- ▶ Lock the vehicle
- ▶ Inspect the vehicle for damage
- ▶ Double check to insure that vehicle is locked.”

3. City departments will be required to conduct regular checks of vehicles to ensure that all vehicles are accounted for.

**II. Long-Term Measures**

- A. Develop further recommendations based on the results of the safety and security surveys for City Hall and other City-owned and leased facilities.
- B. Redesign specific areas of City Hall to increase safety and security.
- C. Monitor and make changes to the employee ID card system.
- D. Develop a process for monitoring visitors to City Hall.

Over the next month, the Safety and Security Committee will prepare a plan for the timely implementation of the short-term measures summarized above.

If you have any questions about any of these measures, please give me a call.

cc: Department Heads