

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 6, 2005

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

THROUGH: JAMES K HARTMAN, CITY MANAGER

FROM: RICH BAIER, DIRECTOR, T&ES  
 EILEEN FOGARTY, DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND ZONING  
 KIRK KINCANNON, DIRECTOR, RECREATION, PARKS AND CULTURAL  
 ACTIVITIES  
 CHARLES SAMARRA, CHIEF, POLICE

SUBJECT: RESPONSE TO COUNCIL MEMBERS KRUPICKA, SMEDBERG, AND GAINES RE: CITY BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PRIORITIES AND PROPOSED COMMUNITY PATHWAYS PROGRAM

*Handwritten signatures:*  
 - Above "THROUGH": James K Hartman  
 - Above "FROM": Rich Baier, Eileen Fogarty, Kirk Kincannon, Charles Samarra

In their March 17, 2005, memorandum (Attachment 1), Council members Krupicka and Smedberg have recommended a new Alexandria Community Pathways program for the City, as a mechanism by which to coordinate and enhance the City's pedestrian efforts. With the goals of providing a better environment for the bicycling and walking public, establishing a higher priority for efforts for that public by City government, and improving the quality of life for the City as a whole, the memorandum includes numerous, far-ranging suggestions of specific actions that could be taken. Just a few of the many specific ideas include the following:

- Create a system of "metrics," or specific reporting and inventory measures, by which the City keeps track of its efforts, e.g., how many intersections have been improved each year.
- Enhance the traffic calming program by allowing neighborhoods to pay for their own traffic calming projects if they desire.
- Create both a formal transit plan and a pedestrian connection plan for Potomac Yard, with the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force making recommendations on the plan.
- Seek recommendations from the Traffic and Parking Board with regard to speed controls, standard speed limits and other pedestrian safety measures near every school.

- Prioritize intersections for crosswalk and other pedestrian improvements.

Councilman Gaines has also provided his comments about the importance of bicycles and trails for both recreation and transportation and has specifically recommended that the City:

- Create a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) (Attachments 2).

Councilman Gaines' May 5, 2005, memorandum provides further details on this proposal (Attachment 3) and also expresses his support for involvement of the City's pedestrian and bicycle stakeholders in decision making. He also suggests that greater emphasis be placed on pedestrian and bicycle issues in the City's land use, transportation, recreation and public safety planning processes.

All three Council members suggest that the City:

- Update the Bicycle Transportation and Multi-use Trail Plan, as part of the City's Master Plan.

#### **STAFF ANALYSIS**

The City already devotes considerable resources toward improving the pedestrian and bicycle environment in the City.

#### ***Why is the pedestrian important?***

The pedestrian (as used throughout this memo, the term includes bicyclists and walkers, for both recreation and transportation purposes) is an important member of the community. Pedestrians commute to work or school without the automobile, enjoy the outdoors for recreation and exercise, and enjoy the quality of life and the beauty of the City. Therefore, the creation of walkways, paths and trails and their safety, location, appearance, functionality and maintenance, are all critical if Alexandria wishes to attract and keep pedestrians enjoying our City.

#### ***Who is involved in pedestrian activities and functions?***

Four City agencies are involved in the planning, design, creation and maintenance of the City's pedestrian system for its citizens. The pedestrian issue crosses multiple disciplines, budgets, and already existing functions, and includes transportation, recreation, land use, aesthetics and urban design, health, safety and schools components. The following City departments are the main ones involved in making the pedestrian experience a good one in this City:

Department of Transportation and Environmental Services  
Department of Planning and Zoning  
Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities  
Alexandria Police Department

In addition, the Health Department, with its focus on exercise for good health, and the Alexandria City Public Schools, with its concern for the safety of children and parents at school sites, are also involved.

***What has the City done in recent years to recognize the importance of the pedestrian experience?*** The City has already made pedestrian issues a major policy matter, as seen in a series of formal actions, including:

1. *City Council's Strategic Plan*. In its Strategic Plan, Council recognized the importance of the pedestrian to the City's quality of life. Expressly included in Council's adopted goals are that new development should be highly transit oriented and pedestrian friendly, that more residents should use alternate transportation modes such as walking and biking, and that there should be better and more connectivity throughout the City for bicyclists and walkers. Council's Vision Principles emphasize neighborhoods, with convenient access to walkways, trails and public transit and public and open spaces, and urban villages, with a small town "main street" feeling, pedestrian friendly designs, transit-oriented developments, and parks, trails and green spaces.
2. *Pedestrian Coordinator*. Last year, Council approved a new pedestrian coordinator position, recognizing the importance of the bicycle/pedestrian issue, and also the need for coordination among the various agencies involved in the work to enhance the pedestrian experience in Alexandria. The specific functions of the position, as well as the existing and continuing functions of the Departments of T&ES, RP&CA, and Planning and Zoning with regard to the pedestrian, are outlined in a June 2004 memorandum from Bruce Johnson, OMB Director (Attachment 4).
3. *Open Space Plan*. This 2003 adopted chapter of the City's Master Plan highlights the importance of connections and trails – including both green spaces and streets – within the City's overall system of open spaces. One of the specific goals of the Open Space Plan is to "link and expand pedestrian, bicycle and trail system." The Plan calls for the full implementation of the Bicycle and Multi-use Trail Plan, the Alexandria Heritage Trail, and recognition of trails as functioning for both transportation and recreational purposes. The Plan also outlines a Green Crescent, a proposed linkage of connected green spaces from the City's northern end along the Potomac River to its western border. In 2004 Council adopted the Open Space Steering Committee's Open Space Report, which includes 14 recommended properties to be acquired for trail connections, some echoing similar recommendations in the 1998 Bike Plan.
4. *Strategic Plan for Recreation/Needs Assessment*. Adopted by Council in 2003 as part of the Master Plan, the Strategic Plan/Needs Assessment recognized that the #1 priority of Alexandria citizens was additional and improved bicycle and pedestrian paths and connections.
5. *Bicycle Transportation and Multi-use Trails Master Plan*. This 1998 addition to the City's Master Plan is significant because it is an early indication that the pedestrian should be emphasized in any policy discussion. The Plan inventories each mile of existing and proposed trails in the City, and recognizes that trails must be a single system of connections for both bicycles and

pedestrians, that the trail system must rely heavily on City streets, and that the system must function for both recreation and transportation. The mere existence of the Plan allows the City to rise to the top of competitive rankings, for example, with regard to its efforts to compete for grant money, specifically federal transportation (ISTEA and TEA21) monies, where its ability to leverage grant funds is enhanced. Although not every mile of trails included in the Plan has been constructed, the Plan has served as an important guide on the topic of bicycle and pedestrian connections in the City, with its proposals discussed and often specifically adopted in subsequently approved development approvals, such as Potomac Yard, Cameron Station and Mill Race, and in adopted small area plans and in planning studies, such as Arlandria, Mount Vernon Avenue, Eisenhower East, and Landmark/Van Dorn. The hiring of a bicycle/pedestrian coordinator is a specific recommendation of the Plan.

6. Potomac National Scenic Trail. Often overlooked, but critically important in any discussion of City trails, is the already existing Mount Vernon Trail, which runs along the Potomac River, and connects Mount Vernon to Arlington Cemetery and Washington, D.C. As part of the Potomac National Scenic Trail system, it is a significant national trail, attracting visitors to the City, but is also used by Alexandria and regional residents. Alexandria has also recently established the Alexandria Heritage Trail, which includes on- and off-street routes linking over 70 historic sites in the City, and has applied to the National Park Service to include that trail within the Potomac National Scenic Trail. If accepted, federal funds would become available to assist with work on the Heritage Trail.

7. Arlandria, Eisenhower East, Mount Vernon and King Street Plans. Each of Council's planning area priorities over the last few years have involved an exercise in creating and enhancing neighborhoods to benefit pedestrians. Each planning effort is based on a hierarchy of transportation modes, to identify and ensure a system of connections – composed of a street grid, sidewalks, open spaces and private pathways – available for cars, pedestrians, transit and bicycles. Land uses are arranged not only to mix uses and promote transit usage, but also to enhance the ability and convenience of pedestrian traffic, with active street level uses within buildings (such as restaurants and retail) and along sidewalks (such as outdoor seating and festivals), and ensuring connections among activity centers, open spaces and amenities.

Design guidelines for buildings and streetscape ensure that the pedestrian experience is safe, comfortable, active and convenient. Building design assures high quality materials, active store windows, pedestrian level lighting, and prominent building entrances. Sidewalk design must be appropriate in material, size and location to the scale of adjacent buildings and use, and street and sidewalk amenities, such as benches, landscaping, trash cans, bulb outs, and street median refuges, must be included to create an optimum pedestrian environment.

Through the adoption of plans, the emphasis has shifted from an auto-oriented City to an environment where all modes of travel – pedestrian, bicycles, auto and transit – are balanced. The Eisenhower East Small Area Plan has been adopted by Council as an example of what a transit oriented, pedestrian based urban village in Alexandria can be. The Arlandria, Mount Vernon and

King Street plans have as their mission the retention of existing “main street” environments, and the assurance of long-lasting, vital and active pedestrian streets.

8. Duke Street Concourse. In 2004, under Council’s oversight, a new pedestrian concourse connecting the King Street Metro Station with the Carlyle and PTO developments was opened, allowing pedestrian access between these two dense developments and a transit hub. Recognizing the need for safe access across heavily trafficked Duke Street, the City sought to enhance the opportunity for non-vehicular transportation by making the Metro station easily available.

9. City Traffic Calming Program. City Council has budgeted significant monies. The FY 2005 budget included \$400,000 which will increase to \$600,000 in FY 2006 to initiate and complete a traffic calming program which, while designed to slow traffic, also works to balance the roadway environment for non-motorized modes of travel

10. Stream restoration. The City currently has underway several efforts to restore stream beds in the City, including the exciting planning work to restore Four Mile Run being done in conjunction with Arlington County. The proposed plan for the new Four Mile Run area is environmentally and pedestrian friendly, and will include attractive, convenient pathway connections to and along Four Mile Run for both commuting and recreation, including to Potomac Yard and Four Mile Run Park.

11. Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force. Council appointed a citizen group to consider a variety of transportation issues, with emphasis on strengthening non-vehicular modes of transportation, including transit, pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Council will hold a work session with the Task Force on Tuesday, May 10.

12. Alexandria Traffic and Parking Board. The Board provides input on requests for traffic signals, parking, and transportation and pedestrian safety.

13. Funding for pedestrian efforts. Council has annually funded budget requests, though both operating funds and the CIP, for projects to create, improve, and maintain pedestrian connections in the City. At a recent budget work session, T&ES identified a proposed 40% increase in pedestrian improvements spending for FY 2006, which is included in the approved operating budget for FY 2006. RP&CA’s FY 2006 budget also includes funds for pedestrian and bicycle trails work, and the Chair of the Parks and Recreation Commission has annually advocated for funding for trails in the City. Attached is Budget Memo #22 on pedestrian improvements in the T&ES budget (Attachment 5).

***Ongoing activities by City Agencies.*** Beyond these specific existing programs that function to enhance the pedestrian experience, the pedestrian issue is included in the work of City departments in many other ways.

1. Transportation, Streets and Sidewalks System. T&ES is responsible for the City's transportation system, including maintenance of the City's on-street bicycle routes, sidewalks and street crossings. Ongoing activities include:

- concept design with neighborhood input for the City's traffic calming program with goals of reducing vehicular travel speeds, decreasing cut through traffic and increasing pedestrian connectivity;
- overseeing the Duke Street tunnel, King Street platform extension, and Duke Street flyover improvements;
- seeking grants from the Congestion Management Air Quality program for pedestrian improvements;
- staffing of the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force and the Alexandria Traffic and Parking Board and the ACPD;
- maintaining trails that are on the public streets, by striping, paving and sweeping;
- maintaining sidewalks and intersections;
- installing enhanced pedestrian hardware, such as countdown and audible signals;
- striping crosswalks and intersections;
- developing public education efforts with other departments such as APD on events like Bike to Work Day, and the formulation of pedestrian brochures;
- improving intersections consistent with ADA requirements for maximum accessibility;
- reconstructing pedestrian accidents with the Police Department, and upgrading signals and crosswalks as necessary;
- designating school zones and speed limits for them.

2. Development cases. Each new development case considered and approved by the Planning Commission and/or City Council is reviewed by City staff to ensure that it is located, designed and enhanced with the pedestrian in mind. Planning and Zoning staff coordinates this effort and receives important input from T&ES, RP&CA, Code Enforcement and the APD. Requirements are included in each case for improvements to streets and street crossings, often including traffic signals to allow safe pedestrian access. Retail and other active uses are incorporated at ground level to promote pedestrian access, and parking is prohibited in front of buildings, where on-street parking is required to provide a buffer between the street and the uses for pedestrians. Open spaces are designed and located so that they are inviting to pedestrians. In terms of specific pedestrian improvements, every case includes requirements as appropriate for such items as:

- pedestrian and bicycle connections
- sidewalks, including expansion of existing ones where appropriate
- additional landscaping on private and public pedestrian areas
- textured crosswalks
- bulb outs
- street trees
- pedestrian scale lighting
- bike racks and other cyclist amenities like showers and lockers
- bus shelters
- trash receptacles

Beyond these standard requirements, where warranted by a specific location, developers have been asked to provide additional pedestrian amenities. Thus, in the Postmasters case in North Old Town, requirements were included to relocate transformers to provide better pedestrian movement on nearby sidewalks, and to extend sidewalks to provide better connections to the Potomac River, to nearby parks, and to ground level, publically accessible open space. In the Whole Foods project on Duke Street, the applicant was required to eliminate a free right turn lane, provide 18 foot wide brick sidewalks, and relocate a 180K transformer below grade. In the Pentagon Federal Credit Union case on Eisenhower Avenue, pedestrian countdown signals as well as an improved bike trail in front of the building were required.

The new Development Impact Statement prepared by staff at the request of Council, and now part of the development staff reports, highlights the pedestrian issue by listing it as a separate benefit to assess in judging a project.

3. Parks and Trails System. RP&CA is responsible for enhancing and maintaining the City's system of non-street trails and parks which are used for both recreation and transportation. Recent work to improve the trail system includes:

- the 2004 completion of the Hooff's Run Park/Greenway (from Rosemont Avenue to the King Street Metro);
- improvements to the Holmes Run Trail (for which we are seeking grant money for design);
- ADA access to park facilities and park areas, including the recent improvements at Angel Park, Ft Ward playground, and Beach Park;
- completion of Landover Path (connecting Warwick Village to Mount Vernon Avenue and Arlandria);
- Eisenhower Multi-Use Trail, for which RP&CA obtained federal T21 transportation grant money to fund improvements, including the pedestrian underpass and trail realignment near the Vola Lawson Animal Shelter (approximately \$800,000);
- Cameron Station trail, connecting Ben Brenman Park to Armistead Boothe Park along Braddock Run.

4. Pedestrian Safety. In addition to its general obligation toward the safety and welfare of Alexandria citizens, the Alexandria Police Department is involved specifically with pedestrian safety in a number of specific ways:

- APD tracks citizen complaints, as well as incidents and accidents and assesses the tracking data quarterly to find problem locations that need improvements for pedestrian safety. Past examples include changing the location of crosswalks at the King Street/Commonwealth/Metro intersection, working with T&ES.
- APD provides 23 crossing guards at each elementary school in the City each morning and afternoon to assure that children cross nearby streets safely.
- School resource officers are involved in training City students about safe behavior, including safe pedestrian activities.

- APD provides police assistance in response to special requests for school trips, as well as at City special events, such as the Red Cross Festival, the Arlandria Festival, etc.
- Bicycle patrols keep areas under control that are not accessible by typical police car screening, such as Holmes Run and Four Mile Run.
- The GRIP program, which addresses evening rush hour traffic intersection assistance, also aids pedestrians attempting to cross heavily traveled rush hour streets.

The above agency operations, coupled with Council's policy actions, demonstrate this City's commitment to the pedestrian, and the involvement of many staff and agency personnel in ongoing attention to the issue.

### *Specific Issues Raised in Council members' Memos*

The memoranda from Council members Krupicka, Smedberg and Gaines include a list of 31 items for follow-up by staff, the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force or the Traffic and Parking Board. Many of the items are now being addressed in one form or another by ongoing activities, as described above. Others can be addressed in the future, but require significant staff work and may or may not be appropriate tasks for staff or these boards. Given the level of work now being done, and the number of agencies involved, many of the recommendations highlight the critical need for continued and improved coordination of the City efforts. The following discussion addresses a number of the issues that warrant special attention.

1. Trails Function for both Transportation and a Recreation Purposes in Alexandria. Much of Council members Krupicka and Smedberg's memorandum focuses on the pedestrian as a transportation issue. In fact, the issue is multifaceted. As indicated as both a policy and a practical matter in the Bicycle Transportation and Multi-use Master Plan, and echoed in the Open Space Plan, the Recreation Strategic Plan, and the City Council's Strategic Plan, because of the size and density of development in the City, the trails we create and maintain must function for multiple uses, i.e., for both recreation and transportation, as well as for both the pedestrian and the bicycle
2. Proposal to Update the Bicycle/Trails Plan. There appears to be a consensus that the 1998 Bicycle/Trails plan could be updated to better reflect existing conditions and desires. There are also suggestions in the Council members' memos that the recommendations in the existing Bicycle Transportation and Multi-use Master Plan should be fully funded over the next six years, which is a matter for discussion in the FY 2007 City budget. Council members Krupicka and Smedberg suggest that the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force should make recommendations regarding the Plan, but that work is the part of the charge to the Department of RP&CA.
3. Sidewalk and Streetscape Standards. Council members Krupicka and Smedberg suggest that the City establish standards for streetscape design generally, including for landscaping, lighting, and street furniture. They also recommend that there be a standard width for sidewalks and that we consider narrowing existing streets in order to make them more pedestrian friendly. The Plan for Planning process in the City is looking at these issues as it works through specific geographic areas, and streetscape and sidewalk width is an area specific issue. It is important to plan for an area before setting standards for streetscape and sidewalks because the needs and opportunities



are different from place to place and require a balancing of issues. Streetscape issues should always be addressed in the context of existing development, land uses and neighborhoods. Therefore, the standards will be different for each area, or street, studied. For example, in Eisenhower East, sidewalk widths have been established at 22 feet wide, a dimension suitable for the tall buildings there, but not at all suitable for a street like Mount Vernon Avenue or King Street where streets, sidewalks and buildings are well established and where the scale of the buildings is much smaller.

4. Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. Establishment of a committee to address the needs of the bicycle and trails community has been specifically recommended by Councilman Gaines (Attached 3). Council members Krupicka and Smedberg ask that the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force take up the issue as part of its charge, and this topic is expected to be discussed at Council's May work session with the Task Force. In the past, a self selected group of citizens has comprised a bike committee that worked under the auspices of and with the involvement of the Park and Recreation Commission. However, the participants have since separated themselves from the Commission, believing they can be more effective as a private group, with the potential of becoming a 501(c)(3) organization. Establishment of such a committee would enable the City to highlight efforts to address bicycle and pedestrian issues. Staff will study this issue and report back to Council when this subject is docketed for further Council consideration.

5. Specific Geographic Area Improvements. Council members Krupicka and Smedberg's memo suggests that the City needs to look at additional pedestrian improvements for each part of the City, including the Eisenhower Valley, Duke Street, the West End, the central part of the City, Route 1 and the entire City. Staff agrees with the idea that the need for pedestrian improvements must be prioritized, but notes that several areas of the City are now the subject of recently adopted plans or have been recently studied, including Arlandria, Eisenhower East, and Mount Vernon Avenue and King Street. In each case, the streetscape received particular attention either as part of the plan itself or as part of the implementation program now being carried out. In those cases, improvements include appropriate sidewalk widths, landscaping, bulb outs, crosswalks, lighting, and street medians, and improvements will be made as funding becomes available.

For example, one of Council members Krupicka and Smedberg's specific recommendations is that lower King Street be examined for ways to enhance the pedestrian experience, to include ideas such as closing the street to vehicles or extending the sidewalks. However, the *King Street Retail Strategy*, now before Council for adoption, already includes the same recommendation (under Urban Design, Street Uses, at 4-18), with an outline of potential issues and standards to incorporate in a pilot program.

6. Potomac Yard. Council members Krupicka and Smedberg's memo recommends that there be enhanced pedestrian and bicycle and mass transit connections as part of the Potomac Yard development. They also suggest that the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force make recommendations on the issue. The approved concept plan for Potomac Yard, with which any future development must conform, already includes extensive requirements for pedestrian connections both within and to and from the Potomac Yard development. They include specific sidewalk standards, bicycle and pedestrian crossings on the new Monroe Avenue Bridge, specific

access to the Northeast neighborhood, Crystal City, the Braddock Road Metro Station and across Route 1 into Del Ray. Remaining issues include how best to connect the east and west portions of Potomac Yard/Greens, and how to bring transit to the Yard or along Route 1. The Planning Commission discussed the issue of mass transit at its May 2 work session on Potomac Yard. Staff suggests that the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force make recommendations on the transit issue as well, with their recommendations to go to the Planning Commission for its consideration as part of any future development approval.

7. The Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force. Council members Krupicka and Smedberg's memo makes a series of recommendations for the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force, including a transit plan for Potomac Yard, improvements in development projects, streetscape standards, and specific priorities for pedestrian and bicycle connections in geographic areas of the City. As to any work the Task Force performs with regard to the Transportation element of the City's Master Plan, staff recommends that it focus on trails as a means of transportation more than the existing Master Plan chapter does. Councilman Gaines has noted in his May 5, 2005, memorandum that he supports a revised and comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle master plan component of the City's overall Transportation Master Plan. Each of these issues has been addressed above, and staff will be able to answer questions or address the issues further at Council's work session with the Task Force on May 10.

8. The Alexandria Traffic and Parking Board. Council members Krupicka and Smedberg propose to change the title and expand the mission of the Traffic and Parking Board. They would have the new board's mission include oversight over transportation generally, with one of its functions being to track efforts by the City to make pedestrian improvements. The idea overlaps in part with the idea of creating a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, discussed above. In any event, both suggestions need to be studied further before making a determination to expand the Board's authority so significantly.

### STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

The City has already demonstrated that pedestrian improvements and enhancements are a City priority, with a variety of ongoing pedestrian efforts being undertaken by a number of City agencies. Nevertheless, there are excellent ideas in the memoranda by Council members Krupicka, Smedberg and Gaines, and we always look to improve our City efforts. Staff believe that the City needs to enhance its efforts to communicate to the public its many efforts to make improvements for pedestrians and bicyclists and needs to give more emphasis and attention to the pedestrian and bicyclist generally. Finally, City staff needs to improve coordination of its efforts among the various departments in order to deliver the highest level of service to its citizens.

If Council feels that additional steps need to be taken, then the following are potential elements of a new pedestrian program. Given the current budget limitations, however, staff cannot recommend the expenditure of new money or the creation of additional staff positions or committees without further study. Therefore, the following items would take place within existing structures and with existing staff positions could be docketed for further Council discussion, or could be considered in the FY 2007 budget. Specifically, Council could:

1. Create a new Alexandria Community Pathways program.
2. Ask the Pedestrian Coordinator, when hired, to assist with the program to ensure coordination among the different departments, consistent with the outline of responsibilities in the June 10, 2004, pedestrian coordinator memorandum (Attachment 4).
3. Ask staff to prepare an inventory and work plan in the fall which addresses those intersections that have and that need to be upgraded with pedestrian improvements, and report annually to Council on progress with the work plan.
4. Request that the pedestrian issue be the subject of additional marketing and outreach efforts by the City in order to make the community more aware of the work the City is already doing. Given the regular high turnover in population, outreach and education efforts are critical. Working with the City communicators group (chaired by the City Public Information Officer) as well as with Police PIO Amy Bertsch at APD, the involved departments could outline a strategy for educating the public about trails, City pedestrian efforts, and about pedestrian safety.
5. Create a Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee.

Staff will be prepared to address the pedestrian issues in this memo at the Council work session regarding transportation on May 10. If Council desires, staff can forward this staff recommendation for consideration as a docket item in June.

Attachments:

- Attachment 1. Councilman Krupicka and Smedberg memo, March 17, 2005
- Attachment 2. Councilman Gaines memo, March 21, 2005
- Attachment 3. Councilman Gaines memo, May 5, 2005 (Attachments to delivered separately)
- Attachment 4. Bruce Johnson pedestrian coordinator position memo, June 10, 2004
- Attachment 5. Budget memo #22, April 5, 2005

cc: Michele Evans, Assistant City Manager  
Mark Jinks, Assistant City Manager  
Barbara Gordon, Public Information Officer  
Bruce Johnson, Director, Office of Management and Budget  
Ad Hoc Transportation Planning Task Force members  
Planning Commission members  
Traffic and Parking Board members  
Park and Recreation Commission members



*City of Alexandria, Virginia*

*301 King Street, Suite 2300  
Alexandria, Virginia 22314*



MAR 17 2005

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 17, 2005

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL

CC: JAMES HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER  
RICHARD BAIER, DIRECTOR OF T&ES,  
EILEEN FOGARTY, DIRECTOR OF PLANNING,  
CHARLES SAMARRA, CHIEF OF POLICE  
AD HOC TRANSPORTATION PLANNING TASK FORCE  
MEMBERS,  
PLANNING COMMISSION MEMBERS,  
TRAFFIC AND PARKING BOARD MEMBERS, and  
CIVIC ASSOCIATIONS PRESIDENTS

FROM: COUNCILMEMBERS ROB KRUPICKA AND PAUL SMEDBERG

SUBJECT: ALEXANDRIA COMMUNITY PATHWAYS

Alexandria Community Pathways

*To Improve and Enhance Non-Motorized Opportunities for Transportation and Recreation throughout Alexandria*

Our community has a strong history of maximizing the potential of its varied resources to provide for the general good. Transportation issues have dominated community discussions in recent years. The projected growth of our region implies transportation issues will also dominate future community discussions. Our community must work together to develop new solutions to these issues. New solutions will require us to consider and discover alternative transportation approaches that will enhance our common safety, provide for a sensible and coherent plan for moving around our city and help to strengthen community life in Alexandria.

The Alexandria Community Pathways program is an initiative based on the community's desire and need for increased emphasis on pedestrian-friendly infrastructure throughout the City. The formation of the Ad-Hoc Transportation Task Force, the hiring

of a pedestrian and bicycle coordinator and other major redevelopment and planning initiatives currently underway by City staff present us with the opportunity to offer our residents a comprehensive and coherent pedestrian, bike and trails plan that makes Alexandria an even safer and more convenient place to live, work, and play.

**We respectfully request that Council docket this item for discussion and instruct staff to review the memo and work with the Traffic and Parking Board, the Ad-Hoc Transportation Task Force and us to draft a proposal.**

We want to thank you in advance for your attention and careful consideration of this request.

### **Introduction**

This memo outlines a series of policy changes and initiatives that will strengthen Alexandria's non-auto, community-based transportation infrastructure.

These concepts are the result of many conversations with Alexandria residents – they deserve the credit for any good ideas found herein.

Alexandria's quality of life is enhanced by sidewalks, trails, bike paths, METRO and DASH routes linking our neighborhoods and community together. We are pedestrians for at least part of the day whether we walk to our car, to the metro, to a bus, to a store, to school with our children, walk our dogs or stroll through our neighborhoods.

The recent national report, *Mean Streets*, Alexandria was ranked the second safest pedestrian jurisdiction in Northern Virginia. Arlington was first. Out of 19 regional jurisdictions, Alexandria was the 5<sup>th</sup> safest, based on the following statistics:

- 2002/2003 Pedestrian Fatalities: 2
- Percent of Alexandria Traffic Fatalities that are Pedestrians: 38%
- Percent of Alexandria Residents Who Walk to Work: 3%

This report and others like it, make it clear that we have work to do to make Alexandria even safer and more convenient for pedestrians, bikers and other residents who choose to get a round without a car. Few Alexandrians walk to work, to the METRO or to stores.

Recent surveys and citizen comments also highlight these issues:

- The Open Space Plan survey listed trail connections as a top concern of Alexandria Residents.
- Parks and Recreation Assessments put a high priority on trails and pathways.
- The recent Health Survey emphasized the need for Alexandria to be a healthier city and specifically focused on the problems of childhood obesity.
- Recently, residents suggested and the City Council incorporated many pedestrian and bicycle related ideas and concepts in the newly adopted City's strategic plan.

We live in a region that is projected to add another 2 million residents and 1.6 million jobs over the next 25 years. We have to work together to decide how we are going to respond to these changes to our community. The rapid growth and strong economy in the DC Metropolitan area is inevitably going to change our City. Congestion will increase as more residents travel from outlying counties to jobs in the District of Columbia and around the region. The choices we make today will play an important role in whether we become a City beholden to the traffic in our region, or whether we become a City that can function and provide a high quality of life despite automobile congestion.

Alexandria should be a walking and biking city. This is not a silver bullet for our changing region, but it is a critical component of how we improve our quality of life. Our City needs to be one where residents can easily walk or bike to obtain the services they desire. People should not always have to get in their car for a carton of milk or to meet friends for coffee or dinner.

**Our efforts to address these issues and transform Alexandria into a nationally recognized pedestrian and bicycle friendly City require a comprehensive and plan and framework. Therefore, we propose the creation of the *Alexandria Community Pathways* program.** Instead of a focus on cars, this program will focus on people, neighborhoods, parks, schools, recreation areas and trails. The **Alexandria Community Pathways** program is designed to establish clear goals, timelines and a consolidated pedestrian, trail and bicycle plan that can be incorporated into Alexandria's Strategic Plan.

### **Focus Areas**

Below, we offer the following list of areas, programs and neighborhood concerns as a starting point. We ask City staff to provide its guidance and expertise and work with us to draft an **Alexandria Community Pathways** proposal.

**Education:** Education and community involvement has to be the starting point for the Alexandria Community Pathways Program. We should establish a plan to communicate, encourage and educate Alexandrian's about the pedestrian and bicycle opportunities in the City.

**Schools:** Different school zones have different traffic rules, different speeds, and a variety of pedestrian environments. If we want to see children (and their parents) walking to school, they need safe routes to walk. There is much we can do to encourage walking to school. Through the **Alexandria Community Pathways** program we should establish uniform guidelines for traffic, pedestrian and bicycle conditions near public and private schools. This is not only good for transportation, but it is also an important public health priority. As discussed in the recent City Health Assessment, obesity is one of Alexandria's top public health issues. The more often kids can walk to school and in their neighborhood, the better our opportunity to improve the health of our children.

**Traffic Calming:** Alexandria's innovative traffic calming program is one of the most effective and successful neighborhood improvement programs in our City. This year the City had funding for only six of 15 qualifying programs. In the fiscal year 2006 budget, we expect to lose some or all of the federal transportation-related funding. With rising regional congestion, Alexandria's traffic calming initiatives have become more critical to the quality of life in our neighborhoods. Traffic calming has been proven to reduce cut through traffic and the prevalence of speeding cars. Traffic calming makes streets safer for walking and biking. Spending less on such a successful program is the wrong thing to do.

We need to increase our investment in this important pedestrian and bicycle safety initiative. To that end, we would like Council to evaluate a short term funding increase in the traffic calming program. Such an increase would eliminate the current backlog of projects, allowing all 15 approved projects to be completed. In addition, we suggest a change in the current policy that does not allow neighborhoods or their associations to pay for or contribute to their own traffic calming projects. If a project meets the City's guidelines, a neighborhood or the association should have the ability to fund or partially fund the project with their own resources. We are also mindful that guidelines would have to be established for neighborhoods and their associations seeking such approval.

**Aesthetics:** Alexandria's Community Pathways should be inviting and attractive. People should feel safe and comfortable walking and biking through our City.

**Cross Walks:** Throughout the City, many crosswalks are faded, hard to see, or non-existent. In many cases, there are no pedestrian signals to aid a walker's efforts. In order to make our City safer for walkers, we believe it is time to push a concerted effort to clearly mark the major intersections in Alexandria so that automobiles as well as pedestrians can identify the crossing areas. In order to create safe **Alexandria Community Pathways**, we need to identify the most dangerous intersections with no crossing signals and start a multi-year effort to increase the number of crossing signals. Our crosswalks should use materials that help make the crosswalks safe and accessible for the disabled community.

**Multiuse Paths:** Alexandria is fortunate to have a strong and active bicycle community. The City completed the Bicycle Transportation and Multi-Use Trail Master Plan in 1998. We should set out a goal to complete the major areas of this plan in the next six years.

**Police on the Street:** The City increased the number of traffic officers last year. This has enabled us to monitor and patrol more areas of the City particularly during the A.M. and P.M. rush hours. We need to closely monitor these efforts and establish metrics that relate traffic to police in the City. We should have clear metrics to ensure we have the appropriate support to manage our many difficult intersections.

**Sidewalks:** At four feet, the average sidewalk in Alexandria is just wide enough for a wheelchair or a double stroller. All it takes is a tree root, a power pole, an overgrown bush, broken bricks or some cracked cement to make the sidewalk nearly impassible for

strollers and wheelchairs or two people passing side by side. We need to increase the standard width for an Alexandria sidewalk and set a City goal that all new sidewalks and upgraded sidewalks will conform to new standards. In addition, we need to restrict brick sidewalks to historic areas and areas presently with them. Bricks are difficult and costly to maintain, the unevenness of brick makes it dangerous for many walkers (especially physically impaired walkers) and snow removal is more difficult. We should establish new, attractive, but less cumbersome sidewalk standards. In addition, we need to look at ways to continue to provide sidewalk dining in the City, without impairing pedestrian access.

**Route One & Potomac Yard Metro Stop:** Route One is already one of the busiest roads in the City. Families are afraid to let their children cross the road to go to school. Residents in North Old Town and the Northeast neighborhood are reluctant to walk to the Braddock Road Metro for safety concerns. Fortunately, we have opportunities for improvements. The Potomac Yard and Braddock Road development and redevelopment planning initiatives provide an opportunity for improved pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. In addition, the Potomac Yard project includes an opportunity for additional mass transit.

To help make Route One a true **Alexandria Community Pathway**, we need to make it safer to cross the street. We also need to create as much pedestrian and bicycle connectivity to Potomac Yard as possible. This new development will bring many new services that can benefit residents of Alexandria. It will also bring traffic. We should do all we can to encourage people to walk and bike to Potomac Yard, including the creation of pedestrian bridges, paths and other infrastructure.

It is also critical that we exhaust every reasonable option for mass transit at Potomac Yard, especially the construction of a Metro station. Potomac Yard and Braddock Road will not be successful if we do not improve pedestrian, bicycle and transit usage within Potomac Yard and along the Route One corridor. Mass transit in Potomac Yard will help foster the kind of pedestrian orient community that is essential for the **Alexandria Community Pathways** program. Our vision and strategic plan for Route One should include robust transit infrastructure for Potomac Yard. To this end, we need to finalize our plans with Arlington as soon as possible.

**Central City:** Seminary Road and Quaker Lane both experience substantial problems with speeding vehicles. This fact, coupled with a lack of good pedestrian infrastructure (sidewalks, bike lanes, convenient cross walks) makes the central part of Alexandria one of the least pedestrian friendly places in the City. The **Alexandria Community Pathways** program should identify the top central city pedestrian and traffic calming improvements and establish plans to fix them over the next six years.

**West End:** The West End of Alexandria is notoriously difficult for pedestrians and bikers. The Landmark Mall study as well as all development and redevelopment projects in the West End of the City must have a focus on improving pedestrian and bicycle safety. We need to make the Holmes Run Tunnel under I-395 more pedestrian and



bicycle friendly. The **Alexandria Community Pathways** program should identify the top West End pedestrian improvements and establish a plan to fix them over the next six years.

**The Green Crescent – Open Space Plan:** The centerpiece of the Open Space Plan is the bold vision of a green crescent of open space and pathways throughout the City. From the West End to the waterfront, to Four Mile Run, this Green Crescent is the centerpiece of both our Open Space Plan and the **Alexandria Community Pathways** program. It is essential that our open space efforts not lose sight of this vision of a green crescent and that we put the appropriate emphasis on seeing it completed. As recently discussed in a report from the Center for the Advancement of Health, the degree to which city people walk or ride bicycles for their daily transportation needs depends largely on how much green space exists in the City.

**Pedestrian and Bike Connectors:** The growth of the Hoffman Center and other Eisenhower Valley locations as a destination for Alexandrians and businesses provides us with an opportunity to improve pedestrian connectivity between the north side of Duke Street and Eisenhower Valley. We need to ensure we have a multiple safe options for pedestrians and bikers to get into Eisenhower Valley. Already identified in the City budget, the Hoofs Run tunnel under Duke Street is one example of an area that will benefit from better lighting, the clearing of brush and additional repairs to improve the visibility and safety of this pathway. As part of the **Alexandria Community Pathways** program, we should work with the community to identify additional opportunities to improve pedestrian access within and between Eisenhower Valley and the rest of the City.

### **Alexandria Community Pathways Program Project - Concept List**

Below is the beginning of a list of action steps the City should consider in order to implement the **Alexandria Community Pathways Program**.

- 1) Create a **Community Pathways Day** to encourage people to walk, bike and take advantage of the many **Community Pathways** in our City.
- 2) Have Alexandria's Office of Management and Budget prepare a special budget report addressing all Alexandria Community Pathway related efforts in the City.
- 3) Establish clear budget priorities related to the **Alexandria Community Pathways Program**.
- 4) Ensure new development meets clear pedestrian and bicycle criteria – it should create safe pedestrian pathways and in the ideal mixed-use projects, should provide convenient services that are easily accessed by walkers and bikers.
- 5) Increase traffic calming spending so more neighborhood pedestrian and traffic calming projects can move forward. Move money from other, less critical projects. Consider changes to the budget to speed up completion of top 15 traffic calming projects.
- 6) Ensure the Six Year CIP includes plans to complete most components of the City Bicycle Master Plan.

- 7) Re-establish the central city traffic calming & pedestrian focus started a few years ago by former Councilman Speck and through T&ES.
- 8) Re-mark all major crosswalks with disabled appropriate materials. Ask Civic Associations to help us identify the top priorities.
- 9) Place crosswalk signals at major intersections throughout the City. Ask Civic Associations to identify the top priorities.
- 10) Identify the most critical cross-walks and pedestrian areas of the City and ensure they are marked with signs that require motorists to stop. Reinforce this step by enacting a program to fine the motorists that fail to obey the signs.
- 11) Design "Alexandria Community Pathways" signs to mark and identify pedestrian features throughout the City as well as to educate residents about the program.
- 12) Direct the City's Legislative Director to work with the region and the Northern Virginia Regional Commission to ask the State legislative bodies to pass a new Pedestrian Safety Law in 2006. Too many pedestrians feel it is unsafe to cross our streets. Cars must STOP, not just yield, for pedestrians at all crosswalks.
- 13) Continue participation in the State's safe routes to school program.
- 14) Ask the City's Traffic & Parking Board to recommend speed controls, standard speed limits and other pedestrian safety measures near every school. Work to ensure children have a safe way to walk to school within a minimum of a six block radius of each school, though our goal should be that every child has a safe pathway to school.
- 15) Create a formal transit plan for Potomac Yard. Ask our Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force to look into this and bring back recommendations to the City Council. A significant portion of the infrastructure costs savings from Potomac Yard should be set aside for transit and pedestrian improvements along the Route One corridor and Braddock Road Metro area.
- 16) Ensure that pedestrian and bike pathways receive meaningful improvements with every (re)development project considered. The City should establish clear standards for all projects to follow. The guidelines in the Bicycle Master Plan should be re-evaluated in the current context of our City. We seek guidance from the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force on this issue.
- 17) Have the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force establish a new, wider sidewalk standard for all new sidewalks built or repaired in Alexandria. The current minimum width is 4 feet – establish a new standard that provides for a truly accessible pedestrian experience and good quality urban design. Don't allow signs and poles to interfere with sidewalk accessibility, without specific approval from the City. Require easements from property owners when necessary. Limit residential encroachments into pedestrian right-of-ways.
- 18) Ask the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force to develop standards for landscaping, lighting and other pathway infrastructure to ensure safety and convenience.
- 19) Ask the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force to recommend ways to improve existing and identify additional opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle connectivity within and between Eisenhower Valley and Duke Street
- 20) Ask the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force to recommend top priorities for pedestrian improvements on the West End, in the Central City and Eisenhower Valley, along Route One and throughout the City.

- 21) Ask the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force to recommend changes to our streetscapes to give priority to pedestrians. Specifically, they should identify streets that should be narrowed in order to create a more pedestrian and bicycle friendly environment.
- 22) Create a policy that allows neighborhoods or their associations to pay for or contribute to their own traffic calming projects. If a project meets the City's guidelines, a neighborhood or the association should have the ability to fund or partially fund the project with their own resources
- 23) Evaluate techniques to improve the pedestrian experience on lower King Street – including partial street closures, one-way streets, wider sidewalks, and other concepts.
- 24) Establish a time-line, financing concepts and other tasks to bring a Metro and/or other transit infrastructure to Potomac Yard and Route 1.
- 25) Community Participation – Create an area on the City's Web site where people can submit suggestions for pedestrian and bicycle-related safety improvements and ensure that the procedures are in place so that City staff can track and promptly follow-up on the suggestions. Develop other opportunities for the community to participate in this program.
- 26) Conduct a pedestrian and bicycle survey every three years. Enlist support from neighborhood associations and businesses to conduct the survey.
- 27) Consider changes to the mission and title of the City's Traffic and Parking Board to ensure the board's mission includes all modes of transportation as well as pedestrian safety. This new board should track all Alexandria Community Pathways projects through quarterly and annual reports to the Council.
- 28) Ensure that the prioritization of open space through the Open Space Committee includes criteria specifically related to the City's vision for a Green Crescent of parks and pathways around the City.
- 29) Establish metrics to help us measure our progress. Potential metrics include:
  - a. How many Alexandrians walk to work?
  - b. How many Alexandrians bike to work?
  - c. How many Alexandrians can walk to a grocery store?
  - d. How many Alexandrians can safely walk to school?
  - e. How many do walk to school?
  - f. How many cars are there per Household in Alexandria?
  - g. How many cars are there per registered driver in Alexandria?
  - h. How many traffic officers are there per car in Alexandria?
  - i. How many intersections are without marked cross walks?
  - j. How many intersections are without crossing signals?
  - k. How many miles of sidewalk are four feet wide or less?
  - l. What is the average speed through Alexandria's neighborhoods?

# City of Alexandria, Virginia



Ludwig P. Gaines, Esq.  
*Member of Council*

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF COUNCIL  
JIM HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER  
RICH BAIER, DIRECTOR, TRANSPORTATION &  
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES  
EILEEN FOGARTY, DIRECTOR, PLANNING & ZONING  
HONORABLE CHAIR & MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING  
COMMISSION  
MEMBERS OF THE AD HOC TRANSPORTION POLICY &  
PROGRAM TASK FORCE  
CIVIC ASSOCIATION PRESIDENTS  
MEMBERS OF BIKE WALK ALEXANDRIA**

**DATE: MARCH 21, 2005**

**RE: CITY BICYCLE AND PEDESTRAIN PRIORITIES & ALEXANDRIA  
PATHWAYS MEMORANDUM**

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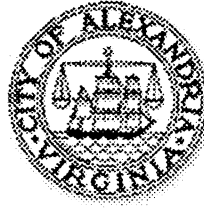
I was pleased to recently receive a memorandum from Council members Paul Smedberg and Rob Krupicka related to City of Alexandria bicycle and pedestrian planning and, in particular, to establishing Alexandria Pathways. Fortuitously, I circulated three weeks ago for comment within certain circles of the City's bicycle and pedestrian community a memorandum

- (1) advocating the need to enhance citizen participation in bicycle and pedestrian planning in the City through the establishment of a bicycle and pedestrian advisory committee ("BPAC"), and
- (2) on the need for a comprehensive bicycle and pedestrian plan for the City as a means of successfully meeting transportation challenges.

To date I have received great feedback and anticipate incorporating the concerns, comments and recommendation shared with me on these important issues into a final memorandum for Council and community consideration in the very near future. Needless to say, I look forward to collaborating with all my colleagues to achieve our strategic goal of maximizing multi-modal solutions to our transportation challenges.

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# City of Alexandria



**Ludwig P. Gaines, Esq.**  
**Member of Council**

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## MEMORANDUM

**TO: JIM HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER**

**DATE: MAY 5, 2005**

**RE: TOWARDS A COMPREHENSIVE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE  
MASTER PLAN & BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY  
COMMITTEE**

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Per my prior memorandum of March 15, 2005, my review of nationwide municipal best practices, and discussions with impacted stakeholders, I write to formally request that the City give strong consideration to establishing a standing Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee ("BPAC") and to formally incorporating into the City's overall transportation master plan an revised and comprehensive pedestrian and bicycle master plan component.

Specifically, I write in favor of greater outreach to and involvement of the City's pedestrian and bicycle stakeholders in decision making, and that greater emphasis be placed on pedestrian and bicycle issues in the City's land use, transportation, recreation and public safety planning processes.

### *To Walk and Bike.*

The public and private benefits of walking and bicycling are compelling.<sup>1</sup> Not only are they healthy modes of transportation, but they are also proven and effective anti-gridlock

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<sup>1</sup> As noted by the **Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center**:

auto alternatives. At a time when the quality of life impacts of traffic congestion, safety, development and re-development, as well as the health concerns associated with obesity are among Council's concerns, establishing a BPAC makes good common sense.

### **BPAC'S MISSION AND GOALS**

What specific role would a BPAC play? An important one.

BPAC's charge would be to advise decision makers on pedestrian and bicycle issues and to facilitate, encourage and incorporate citizen input in

- planning and programming bicycle and pedestrian improvements,
- promoting pedestrian and bicycle safety, and
- promoting walking and bicycle use as significant, healthy and beneficial modes of transportation and recreation.

Modeled after successful BPAC's in other jurisdictions (local and national), the goals of Alexandria's BPAC would be to:

1. Provide citizen input in planning walking and bicycle trails, bicycle parking and pedestrian accommodations (such as benches), and pedestrian and bicycle street and trail access for all, including the disabled in Alexandria,
2. Promote pedestrian and bicycling safety and education and greater use of bicycles and pedestrian opportunities,
3. Inform the City Council, Planning Commission, Transportation Policy Advisory Task Force, staff, and residents about pedestrian and bicycling issues that affect Alexandrians,
4. Provide citizen input on pedestrian and bicycle issues in the planning process for development, redevelopment and new transportation construction in and around the City of Alexandria,
5. Forge links with other citizen advisory committees in Alexandria, as well as in neighboring municipalities, that share issues common to walking and bicycling, and
6. Work collaboratively with the City of Alexandria staff, including the incoming Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, to achieve the above-mentioned goals.

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"The positive consequences of bicycling and walking as healthy modes of transportation, or as purely recreational activities, span across many aspects of our lives. They can be expressed in terms of the health of environment...as well as the health of individuals who are more physically active. A transportation system that is conducive to bicycling and walking can reap many benefits in terms of reduced traffic congestion and improved quality of life. Economic rewards both to the individual and to society are also realized through reduced health care costs and reduced dependency on auto ownership (and the resulting insurance and maintenance costs). There are also other economic benefits of bicycling and walking...such as the increased economic vitality of communities that have emphasized bicycle and pedestrian mobility."

## **WHY BPAC FOR ALEXANDRIA?**

Central to Alexandria's short and long-term future is Council's ability to successfully implement our strategic plan and see realized our collective vision for the city. Our yearlong strategic planning process identified, among other priorities, safeguarding quality of life as a core challenge. Specifically, reducing gridlock, protecting the environment, promoting safety and a healthy community and enhancing citizen input in our deliberative processes are all Council priorities.

Additionally, Alexandria residents through the 2004 Citizen Survey clearly identified transportation and traffic concerns among the city's top unmet priorities. The 2002 Recreation Needs Assessment Survey, based in part on multiple community meetings, specifically included the need for more trails among the city's top priorities.

Lastly, the City's recently completed Community Health Assessment identified obesity as an important community health challenge. Our residents have spoken about what they consider top mobility priorities. Council's ongoing responsibility and challenge lies in identifying and implementing the means to achieve these priorities. BPAC is a proven means to addressing these concerns and achieving our strategic goals.

I acknowledge and applaud the important role the Ad Hoc Transportation Planning Task Force has played and continues to play in the City's transportation planning. They are an invaluable resource to Council, planning Commission and staff and, as this year has evidenced, have more than a full plate of important responsibilities. A separate entity – a BPAC - would provide the Task Force, Commission and Council an entity charged with specifically advising on pedestrian and bicycle issues. They would not be an ad hoc group, but rather a standing committee of local bicycle and pedestrian "experts" established for the specific and sole purpose of addressing ever important pedestrian and bicycle issues in our City. Pedestrian and bicycle issues require the City's full attention. As has been shared with me, it is not clear that the current composition of the Ad Hoc Task Force is adequately representative of bicycle and community stakeholders.

### ***Best Practices***

A review of best practices demonstrates that in communities throughout the nation BPACs have been formed and serve as important resources to local governments wrestling with ever-escalating gridlock and pedestrian accessibility and safety issues, as well as those striving to implement automobile alternatives and multi-modal transportation strategies. Localities that have established BPACs and pedestrian or bicycle advisory committees include:

- Boston and Farmingham, Massachusetts,
- Spartanburg, South Carolina,
- Atlanta, Georgia,
- San Francisco, Fresno, Santa Rosa and Oakland, California,
- Austin, Texas,



- Eugene, Oregon,
- Watham, Olympia and Yakima, Washington,
- Arlington and Prince William Counties, Virginia,
- Miami and Orlando, Florida,
- Ithaca, New York,
- Denver, Colorado and
- Naperville, Illinois, among many others.

Even the state of Alaska has a bicycle and pedestrian plan and committee to implement that plan.

For Alexandria, a BPAC would be a logical resource to City Council and Planning Commission, and a natural complement to the soon-to-be filled Pedestrian and Bicycle Coordinator staff position. Staff facilitation of BPAC's recommendations will be critical if we are to experience any lasting success.

To this end, it bears emphasizing that when it comes to promoting and prioritizing walking and bicycling in Alexandria it is time to formally and fully maximize our hometown resources. Alexandria is home to a community of tremendous bicycle and pedestrian enthusiasts. Our bicycling community has passionately advocated for years to improve the bicycle friendly nature of our city. And, most recently a new citizen group, *Bike-Walk Alexandria*, was formed in response to bicycling and pedestrian concerns and to advocate on related issues.

To be sure, lessons learned from recent development and redevelopment in Alexandria, provide clear examples of where BPAC's role could have been valuable to citizens and appointed and elected officials in fully appreciating the broad range of pedestrian and bicycle transportation and planning options, impacts and opportunities. With more development and redevelopment on the horizon - adding to Alexandria's status as one of the densest jurisdictions in the state and region - the importance of establishing a BPAC is obvious. To be clear, we have made significant advances in recent years, however, the time has come for Alexandria to join others in the region and nation and become an exemplar of pedestrian and bicycle mobility.

### **BPAC & TOWARDS A BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN**

As mobility issues increase in importance, the need for and utility of a comprehensive Pedestrian and Bicycle Strategic Master Plan grows in kind. After some six years of determined work by the Bicycle Study Committee, Council in 1998 adopted a Bicycle Master Plan. Yet, from my service of Planning Commission and Council, it would appear to me that this plan has been implemented in an ad hoc and somewhat less than consistent manner.

Furthermore, to my surprise, a comprehensive Pedestrian Master Plan has never been formulated or implemented for the City of Alexandria. If we are serious about making an

impact on gridlock we need a plan. A plan with clear benchmarks that emphasizes safety, endeavors to maximize auto alternatives, and lays out specific criteria necessary to achieve defined bicycle and pedestrian goals. In this regard, I commend my colleagues, Council members Smedberg and Krupicka, for offering **Alexandria Pathways** for consideration as a framework to implement and achieve important pedestrian and bicycle strategies.

As I and others have stated previously, establishing a citywide network of pedestrian and bicycle pathways linked to each other and to mass transit, businesses, schools, recreational and shopping and commercial opportunities, must be paramount among the City's long-range goals. As the recently released 2005 Community Health Assessment demonstrates, obesity among our residents is a growing problem – especially among school age children. Establishing safe routes to and from our schools for kids to walk and bike would do wonders to promote a healthy lifestyle among our young. The same holds true for all residents, including those in our disabled community.

As we look to the future, I firmly believe it critical that we have in place a process with established standards and guidelines for future development and redevelopment that systematically reaches out to all stakeholders and consistently incorporates pedestrian and bicycling priorities into the planning process. Just as the Open Space Steering Committee advises decision makers on open space issues, so should a BPAC advise on pedestrian and bicycle issues. As with anything, this is a question of Council setting priorities. The lessons learned from past experience at home and from other jurisdictions that share these priorities and have responded with comprehensive planning efforts are clearly instructive (see attachments).

## CONCLUSION

When it comes to protecting our enviable quality of life, make no mistake; the challenge of increased local and regional density and the gridlock that follows will seriously challenge our ability to realize key components of our vision for the City of Alexandria. To meet this challenge, we must fully consider and vet all auto alternatives, especially maximization of mass transit, bicycling and walking opportunities locally and regionally. These options must be central to our transportation, land-use, public safety and recreational planning. Let us make walking and biking clear, articulated and fully embraced and incorporated city priorities. Let us empower our citizens and an entity such as Alexandria's BPAC, in collaboration with Council, citizens, businesses and city staff, to lead the way.

I thank you for your consideration. It is my hope that we move decisively to seize this opportunity.

Attachments



Bruce Johnson/Alex  
06/10/2004 06:30 PM

To Rich Baier/Alex@Alex, Eileen Fogarty/Alex@Alex, Kirk  
Kincannon/Alex@Alex  
cc Phil Sunderland, Mark Jinks, Michele Evans/Alex@Alex

bcc

Subject Pedestrian, Bicycle and Alternative Transportation  
Coordinator Position

To all:

Thank you for your cooperation on developing these points of clarification concerning this new position. I believe all of you can agree to the language in the statement of clarification. I received a few comments on the last version circulated to the three of you. There are three small sections shown in yellow to which I made changes in this the most recent version. Those changes represent what I think would be an acceptable final compromise that represents a consensus from the three of you on the duties and responsibilities of this new position.

I will be out of the office on travel through June 17, so if you have any problems with the last three highlighted changes, please let me know, and I'll work on this with you some more on my return. If you are fine with the document, I'd appreciate your confirmation.

Bruce



Pedestrian and Bicycle Coordinator version 4.wpd

## POINTS OF CLARIFICATION CONCERNING PEDESTRIAN, BICYCLE AND ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION COORDINATOR POSITION

June 10, 2004

### Background

Councilman Smedberg, the mover of this add to the budget process was clearly most focused on the pedestrian side of things. His letter to the City Manager of March 19, requesting information on this topic was titled "Pedestrian Safety Improvements". Particularly, he asked for information on "what T&ES is planning to do to continue, improve and expand upon these pedestrian initiatives and coordinating activities. [Referring to a "series of pedestrian improvement projects and coordinating activities" that T&ES and the Police Dept. have initiated "over the past several months that are designed to develop and promote a long-term pedestrian safety program"] He continued, "In addition, I am interested in knowing what ideas T&ES might have for future initiatives and programs such as the following: (1) formulating a list of the top 15 locations in need of significant pedestrian improvements; (2) expanding engineering education, technology, signage, striping and geometric redesign initiatives; (3) all-pedestrian clearance zones; (4) pedestrian and traffic calming projects in and around school zones; and (5) the feasibility of a "pedestrian, bike and trail coordinator position in light of major transportation, traffic and open space initiatives the City is about to undertake."

### Overview of Position and Division of Responsibilities

- Pedestrian, bicycle and alternative transportation-related activities are spread among at least four City departments (Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES), Planning and Zoning, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities (RP&CA), and Police, and also involve the Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS). The addition of this position is not meant to alter any the existing division of responsibilities between these departments, only provide an additional staff resource in this important area. Any existing, official statements of the division of responsibilities (e.g., the Staff Guide to the Development Process - City Polices and Procedures, Department Roles and Responsibilities: Summer, 2003) continue to remain in effect.

### Overview of Position and Division of Responsibilities

- We recommend placing this position in T&ES. Like the traffic calming position, this position will be a technical expert, particularly one providing transportation and engineering expertise, with a focus on project management and implementation through the construction phase, as well as a responsibility to coordinate his/her work deliberately and carefully with the other City departments. This position also will be a technical engineering resource for all City departments that share responsibility for the city's pedestrian and trail systems as described below.

- Planning and Zoning will continue to be responsible for the urban design of the “streetscape” of the city, including planning for sectors of the City (e.g. area planning, corridors, neighborhoods). Planning and Zoning will continue to conduct the Development Review process for development projects, and reviewing zoning applications. (See the Staff Guide to the Development Process – City Polices and Procedures, Department Roles and Responsibilities: Summer, 2003)
- RP&CA maintains responsibility for implementation, maintenance and design of multi-use trails within the park and open space system.

Below is a proposed description of the particular role of this position in various aspects of pedestrian, bicycle and alternative transportation activities.

#### Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

- The occupant of this position will work with Police, RP&CA, Planning and Zoning and ACPS to develop a priority listing of locations needed significant improvements to promote pedestrian safety and access, and a description of needed improvements, and then to coordinate installation of those improvements once funding is obtained.
- The occupant of this position will work with Police and ACPS to develop school zone speed limits, signs and other regulatory matters, and then to develop effective enforcement strategies, all designed to make walking and driving around schools as safe as can be.
- The occupant of this position will develop standards for pedestrian countdown signals and other traffic control devices affecting pedestrians, including installation and operation (including handicapped accessibility).
- The occupant of this position will work with Police and RP&CA to develop pedestrian and bicycle safety enforcement strategies.
- The occupant of this position will work with the traffic calming program to ensure its activities are compatible with pedestrians and cyclists.
- The occupant of this position will work with RP&CA to track technology developments in pedestrian and bicycle safety.
- The occupant of this position will work with Police and RP&CA on snow and debris removal policies and procedures as they affect sidewalks. RP&CA continues to be responsible for snow and debris removal on multi-use trails within the park and open space system and at recreation facilities and other designated sites.

#### Sidewalks

- The occupant of this position will provide engineering support and a central point of

contact within T&ES and coordinate with Planning and Zoning in the development of safety and transportation-related standards for pedestrian infrastructure features, including lighting, signals, signage, width and markings, fencing, and any other equipment.

- The occupant of this position will provide engineering support and coordinate with Planning and Zoning in the development of technical engineering standards for sidewalk installation, including, engineering design and construction of pedestrian elements of City-approved plans and City maintained sidewalks.
- Engineering support includes:
  - Integration of specific sidewalk pedestrian requirements, street furniture and landscaping features called for in City-approved plans into specific statements or drawings specifying engineering design and material requirements.
  - Engineering design and construction of pedestrian systems within automobile right of way (curb to curb), including both traditional and special pedestrian crosswalks.

#### Bike and Multi-Use Trails/Lanes

- The occupant of this position will be central TE&S point of contact to work with RP&CA to update standards for bicycling infrastructure features, such as lighting, signals, signage, surface materials, width, fencing, information (graphics) elements and other equipment/features. These standards are generally AASHTO-based.
  - RP&CA is responsible for application of these AASHTO-based standards within the parks and open space system.
  - Application of these AASHTO-based standards on public rights-of-way are a TE&S responsibility.
- The occupant of this position provides engineering support for RP&CA implementation of other multi-use trail projects within the parks and open space system.
- Maintenance and care of bike and multi-use trails in the park and open space system, including snow and debris removal, sign installation and renovation of surface material will continue to be the responsibility of RP&CA. Maintenance and care of trails on public rights-of-way will continue to be a T&ES responsibility.

#### Education

- This occupant of this position, working with RP&CA, Planning and Zoning and Police,

will develop informational material for pedestrians and bicyclists and other public education activities, including seminars for residents and outreach to school community.

- RP&CA will have the lead and continue to work with Planning and Zoning and T&ES in refining and preparing the City Bicycle route and trail map for use by the public.

#### Grants

- The occupant of this position identifies and acquires grants for pedestrian, and alternative transportation activities.
- RP&CA will continue to be responsible for efforts to acquire bicycle and multi-use trail grants and to fund the multi-use trail system. The occupant of this position will provide engineering and other support for RP&CA in the preparation of grant proposals.

#### Transit Interplay

- The occupant of this position will be the point of coordination with DASH and WMATA on bus shelter standards, locations and maintenance.

#### Regional Activities

- The occupant of this position will provide a T&ES staff point of contact for regional efforts to promote walking, bicycling and other alternative means of transportation. This position will coordinate with other department's regional representatives.
- The occupant of this position will provide critical review of how neighboring jurisdiction capital projects and development projects might affect pedestrian and bicycle movement in Alexandria in the automobile right of way.

#### Integration with Transportation Planning

- The occupant of this position will provide T&ES staff point of contact for coordination with Planning and Zoning, RP&CA, and Police on updates to Transportation element of the Master Plan and Comprehensive Transportation Policy and Program on pedestrian and bicycle matters within the purview of these other departments. The existing division of responsibility in the preparation of the the Transportation element of the Master Plan is not affected by the addition of this position.
- RP&CA provides long range multi-use trail planning through the open space element in the Parks and Recreation Master Plan and Bicycle Master Plan as adopted by City Council. Expansion and connectivity of the trail system is a major component of the strategic plan under development by City Council and the Open Space plan, and this expansion is part of the Department's goals and is identified for further implementation over the next few years.

- The current Parks and Recreation and Bike Master plans will form the basis of the trail plans contained in both the Comprehensive Transportation Plan and other City plans issued by Planning and Zoning. In 5 years or so the Bike Master plan will need to be updated and that will be done jointly between RP&CA, T&ES and Planning and Zoning.



Attachment 5  
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*City of Alexandria, Virginia*

**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: APRIL 5, 2005  
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL  
THROUGH: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER  
FROM: RICHARD J. BAIER, P.E., DIRECTOR  
TRANSPORTATION & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES  
SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 22: FY 2005 TRAFFIC CALMING PROJECTS AND  
OTHER PEDESTRIAN SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS

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This memorandum is in response to Councilman Krupicka's request for information on the issue of traffic calming and pedestrian safety projects.

**1. *Provide an estimate of the cost to implement all 15 traffic calming projects that met minimum thresholds for implementation this year.***

At an average cost per project of approximately \$66,000, it would cost \$990,000 to complete the 15 traffic calming projects that have been identified as meeting the minimum thresholds for implementation in FY 2005. The 15 projects are listed on the following page. Six of them are to be completed in FY 2005 with funding provided in the FY 2005 - 2010 Approved CIP (\$600,000). A list of projects to be completed in FY 2006 will be developed at the beginning of the fiscal year. It will prioritize the remaining 9 projects plus any additional requests received from the community. The number of projects completed in FY 2006 will depend on the scope and cost of the projects selected. There is \$600,000 budgeted in FY 2006 of the FY 2006 - 2011 Proposed CIP.

**FY 2005 Traffic Calming Projects**

**To Be Completed in FY 2005:**

- Fort Williams Parkway between Seminary Road and Duke Street
- Pegram Street between Polk Avenue and Taney Avenue
- Gunston Road between Martha Custis Drive and Greenway Drive
- Cambridge Road between Duke Street and Dartmouth Road
- Valley Drive between Martha Custis Drive and Gunston Road
- Polk Avenue between Pegram Street and Naylor Street

**To Be Completed in Subsequent Years**

- Braddock Road between Ruffner Avenue and Commonwealth Avenue
- East Monroe Street between Commonwealth Avenue and Mount Vernon Avenue
- Monticello Street between Russell Road and Cameron Mills Road
- West Monroe Street between Commonwealth Road and Russell Road
- West Windsor Street between Russell Road and Braddock Road
- Fort Worth Avenue between Garland Street and Fort Williams Parkway
- Preston Road between Martha Custis Drive and Valley Drive
- Martha Custis Drive between Valley Drive and Lyons Lane
- Colonel Ellis Avenue between St. Stephens Road and Fort Williams Parkway

The criteria for including a project in the traffic calming program include excessive speeding and excessive volume of traffic as specified by the City's *Neighborhood Traffic Calming Program Guide*.

**2. Present all traffic calming, bicycle and pedestrian safety initiatives in one unified budget view and include staff's prioritization view.**

In addition to traffic calming measures, other steps to address pedestrian safety include ADA sidewalk and bus stop accessibility improvements; pedestrian bridges and tunnels; sidewalk, curb and gutter replacements; trails; and improved signalization.

A list of capital projects and operating budget initiatives related to traffic calming and pedestrian safety is provided as Attachment 1. The projects and initiatives are listed in priority order.

Attachment

Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Improvements - Capital Projects

Expenditures	Prior Years (Allocated & Unallocated)	FY 2006						Total
		Proposed	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	
ADA Accessible Ramps and Loading Platforms	30,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	10,000	0	0	70,000
Duke Street Flyover Pedestrian Bridge	400,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	400,000
Sidewalk, Curb, and Gutter Replacement	400,000	0	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	900,000
Telegraph Road Pedestrian Tunnel	100,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	100,000
Bike Trails	77,000	77,000	77,000	77,000	77,000	77,000	77,000	539,000
Eisenhower Avenue Multiuse Trail	834,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	834,000
Arlandria Pedestrian Improvements	0	150,000	500,000	0	0	0	0	650,000
Pedestrian Traffic Signals	0	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	100,000	600,000
King Street Metro Pedestrian Improvements	136,953	0	0	0	0	0	0	136,953
Traffic Calming	400,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	600,000	4,000,000
Transit Facilities Pedestrian Improvements	0	440,000	497,000	0	0	0	0	937,000
School Flashing Signal Control System	0	90,000	45,000	45,000	0	0	0	180,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>2,377,953</b>	<b>1,467,000</b>	<b>1,929,000</b>	<b>932,000</b>	<b>887,000</b>	<b>877,000</b>	<b>877,000</b>	<b>9,346,953</b>
<b>Revenues</b>								
Duke Street Flyover Pedestrian Bridge	320,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	320,000
Transit Facilities Pedestrian Improvements	0	353,000	397,000	0	0	0	0	750,000
Eisenhower Avenue Multiuse Trail	668,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	668,000
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>988,000</b>	<b>353,000</b>	<b>397,000</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1,738,000</b>
<b>Net City Share</b>	<b>1,389,953</b>	<b>1,114,000</b>	<b>1,532,000</b>	<b>932,000</b>	<b>887,000</b>	<b>877,000</b>	<b>877,000</b>	<b>7,608,953</b>

Traffic Calming and Pedestrian Improvements - Operating Budget

	FY 2005	FY 2006	Total
	Approved	Proposed	
<b>Operating Budget Initiatives:</b>			
COG Street Smart Pedestrian Safety Campaign	5,000	5,000	10,000
Sidewalk, Curb, and Gutter Replacement	700,000	900,000	1,600,000
Pedestrian/Bicycle Coordinator Position	87,700	87,700	175,400
Pedestrian Crosswalk Installation	0	75,000	75,000
Pedestrian Crosswalk Maintenance	45,300	175,300	220,600
Traffic Maintenance	170,000	170,000	340,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,008,000</b>	<b>1,413,000</b>	<b>2,421,000</b>