


City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 9, 2006
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL
FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 
SUBJECT: CONSIDERATION OF COMMUNITY PATHWAYS RESOLUTION

ISSUE: Consideration of a resolution that the City create the Alexandria Community Pathways program to focus on people, neighborhoods, parks, schools, recreation areas and trails to improve and enhance non-motorized opportunities for transportation and recreation throughout Alexandria.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council adopt the attached resolution.

DISCUSSION: After considerable community input and dialogue with staff, Councilmembers Krupicka and Smedberg forwarded an overview of a new program called "Community Pathways" to my office. Councilmember Gaines forwarded a separate memorandum that also outlined an initiative to enhance Alexandria's pedestrian and cyclist experience. To date, City Council has included the basic goals of enhancing the pedestrian/cyclist experience within their adopted Strategic Vision. City staff from Planning and Zoning, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, Transportation and Environmental Services and the Police Department implement and enhance the pedestrian/cyclist experience in their work as described in the attached memorandum. This resolution provides the benchmarks and reporting mechanisms necessary to track these pedestrian/cyclist initiatives.

ATTACHMENTS:

- Attachment 1. Resolution
- Attachment 2. May 6, 2005 Memorandum to City Council from Rich Baier, Eileen Fogarty, Kirk Kincannon and Charles Samarra
- Attachment 3. March 17, 2005 Memorandum from Councilmembers Rob Krupicka and Paul Smedberg
- Attachment 4. March 21, 2005 Memorandum from Councilmember Ludwig Gaines

STAFF:

- Richard Baier, P.E., Director, T&ES
- Eileen Fogarty, Director, Planning and Zoning
- Kirk Kincannon, Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
- Charles Samarra, Police Chief

COMMUNITY PATHWAYS RESOLUTION
OF THE
ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA CITY COUNCIL

RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, it is projected that the metropolitan Washington region will experience rapid growth and a strong regional economy that will add another 2 million residents and 1.6 million jobs over the next 25 years; and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria has adopted a Strategic Plan with an underlying principle to protect and encourage neighborhoods and urban villages with safe and secure pedestrian walkways, bicycle paths and trails that contribute to overall community health and well-being; and

WHEREAS, over sixty-percent of the traffic on Alexandria streets is often regional traffic that often spills into our neighborhoods and disrupts our community quality of life; and

WHEREAS, we seek to encourage 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 ; and

WHEREAS, we have created an Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force who is reviewing and rewriting our transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan in part to make it more accommodating to non-SOV (single occupancy vehicle) modes of transportation; and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria recently sponsored two very successful walk-able communities forums and in recognition of the broad community support of the forums, the dialogue that was begun, and goal of walk-able communities; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria's quality of life is enhanced by sidewalks, trails, bike paths, METRO and DASH routes linking our neighborhoods and community together; and

WHEREAS, to ensure that Alexandria is nationally recognized as a safe pedestrian and bicycle friendly City we seek a comprehensive plan to achieve this goal.

NOW, THEREFORE, BY RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA, IT IS HEREBY:

RESOLVED, that the City create the *Alexandria Community Pathways* program to focus on people, neighborhoods, parks, schools, recreation areas and trails to improve and enhance non-motorized opportunities for transportation and recreation throughout Alexandria; and

RESOLVED, the City Council formally requests the City Pedestrian/Bicycle coordinator prepare for the City Manager, an annual "Community Pathways" report on all pedestrian and

bicycle accomplishments and challenges during the previous year, as well as goals and objectives for the upcoming year. Such a report should include clear benchmarks and metrics that the residents of Alexandria can use to measure success; and

RESOLVED, the City Council asks City staff to develop an education program for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists to promote pedestrian safety in Alexandria in collaboration with businesses, schools, neighborhood associations and that efficient mechanisms be developed to ensure compliance with governing rules and regulations;

RESOLVED, that the City Council recognizes mass transit as a critical piece of the long-term transportation future for Alexandria and directs staff, the Traffic and Parking Board and the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force to ensure Alexandria's mass transportation infrastructure is convenient, accessible and safe for pedestrians;

RESOLVED, that the City Council recognizes that bike lanes, sidewalks and cross walks not only make it easier for pedestrians and bicyclists to move throughout our community, they also help to slow down speeding traffic and ensure our neighborhoods are people-friendly and therefore directs staff and the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force to ensure bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is a significant component of their efforts;

RESOLVED, that the City Council directs staff to work with the community to evaluate and recommend pilot programs to test various parking, bicycle, pedestrian traffic calming and other strategies discussed during the walk-able communities forums;

RESOLVED, that City Staff review its guidelines for the creation of sidewalks and other pedestrian infrastructure to ensure adequate sidewalks for pedestrian traffic and that pedestrian and bike pathways receive meaningful attention with every (re)development project considered as well as all capital improvement projects; and

RESOLVED, that City Staff and the Traffic and Parking Board work with parents, PTA organizations, neighborhood associations, and businesses to ensure every school in Alexandria is a pedestrian safe zone allowing children to walk to school whenever possible and that all areas of Alexandria are safe, accessible and encouraging for pedestrians and bicyclists.

This ___ day of _____, 2006.

ADOPTED: _____
Date

William D. Euille, Mayor

ATTEST:

JACQUELINE M. HENDERSON, CMC CITY CLERK

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

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 5th 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 at 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

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**

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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RESOLUTION NO. 2178

WHEREAS, it is projected that the metropolitan Washington region will experience rapid growth and a strong regional economy that will add another 2 million residents and 1.6 million jobs over the next 25 years; and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria has adopted a Strategic Plan with an underlying principle to protect and encourage neighborhoods and urban villages with safe and secure pedestrian walkways, bicycle paths and trails that contribute to overall community health and well-being; and

WHEREAS, over sixty-percent of the traffic on Alexandria streets is often regional traffic that often spills into our neighborhoods and disrupts our community quality of life; and

WHEREAS, we seek to encourage 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 ; and

WHEREAS, we have created an Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force who is reviewing and rewriting our transportation element of the Comprehensive Plan in part to make it more accommodating to non-SOV (single occupancy vehicle) modes of transportation; and

WHEREAS, the City of Alexandria recently sponsored two very successful walk-able communities forums and in recognition of the broad community support of the forums, the dialogue that was begun, and goal of walk-able communities; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria's quality of life is enhanced by sidewalks, trails, bike paths, METRO and DASH routes linking our neighborhoods and community together; and

WHEREAS, to ensure that Alexandria is nationally recognized as a safe pedestrian and bicycle friendly City we seek a comprehensive plan to achieve this goal.

NOW, THEREFORE, BY RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA, IT IS HEREBY:

RESOLVED, that the City create the *Alexandria Community Pathways* program to focus on people, neighborhoods, parks, schools, recreation areas and trails to improve and enhance non-motorized opportunities for transportation and recreation throughout Alexandria; and

RESOLVED, the City Council formally requests the City Pedestrian/Bicycle coordinator prepare for the City Manager, an annual "Community Pathways" report on all pedestrian and bicycle accomplishments and challenges during the previous year, as well as goals and objectives for the upcoming year. Such a report should include clear benchmarks and metrics that the residents of Alexandria can use to measure success; and

RESOLVED, the City Council asks City staff to develop an education program for pedestrians, cyclists and motorists to promote pedestrian safety in Alexandria in collaboration with businesses, schools, neighborhood associations and that efficient mechanisms be developed to ensure compliance with governing rules and regulations; and

RESOLVED, that the City Council recognizes mass transit as a critical piece of the long-term transportation future for

Alexandria and directs staff, the Traffic and Parking Board and the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force to ensure Alexandria's mass transportation infrastructure is convenient, accessible and safe for pedestrians; and

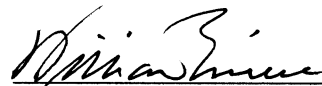
RESOLVED, that the City Council recognizes that bike lanes, sidewalks and cross walks not only make it easier for pedestrians and bicyclists to move throughout our community, they also help to slow down speeding traffic and ensure our neighborhoods are people-friendly and therefore directs staff and the Ad Hoc Transportation Task Force to ensure bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is a significant component of their efforts; and

RESOLVED, that the City Council directs staff to work with the community to evaluate and recommend pilot programs to test various parking, bicycle, pedestrian traffic calming and other strategies discussed during the walk-able communities forums; and

RESOLVED, that City Staff review its guidelines for the creation of sidewalks and other pedestrian infrastructure to ensure adequate sidewalks for pedestrian traffic and that pedestrian and bike pathways receive meaningful attention with every (re)development project considered as well as all capital improvement projects; and

RESOLVED, that City Staff and the Traffic and Parking Board work with parents, PTA organizations, neighborhood associations, and businesses to ensure every school in Alexandria is a pedestrian safe zone allowing children to walk to school whenever possible and that all areas of Alexandria are safe, accessible and encouraging for pedestrians and bicyclists.


ADOPTED: February 14, 2006



WILLIAM D. EULLE

MAYOR

ATTEST:



Jacqueline M. Henderson, CMC City Clerk