


## City of Alexandria, Virginia

## MEMORANDUM

DATE: JUNE 6, 2006

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMAN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: RECOGNITION BY THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE OF THE ALEXANDRIA HERITAGE TRAIL AS A SEGMENT OF THE POTOMAC HERITAGE NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL

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At Council's Tuesday, June 13 legislative meeting, Don Briggs, the Superintendent of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail for the National Park Service, will be present to recognize the Alexandria Heritage Trail as part of the National Park Service Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail.

Alexandria is a city which prides itself in both its heritage and its standing in the modern world. It brings to the forefront concepts such as green infrastructure and livable communities. And, it prides itself on providing residents and visitors with a meaningful experience.

The Alexandria Heritage Trail (AHT) is a 23-mile loop off the Mount Vernon Trail, a segment of the Potomac Heritage National Scenic Trail (PHNST). The AHT links Alexandria's many stream valleys, parks, historic museums and charming neighborhoods to provide a continuous system for exploring Alexandria's history, culture and communities.

The AHT consists of ten trail segments totaling 17 miles, with six additional miles of treks and detours for exploring sites off of the primary route and to give the biking and walking enthusiast a flavor for Alexandria's richness and variety. The AHT is accessible by Metro, with four stations within walking and cycling distance. Twenty-six facilities along the trail are open to the public, with 24 of these wheelchair-accessible. The AHT also complements the "Tidewater Potomac Heritage Bicycling Route"—between the Arlington Memorial Bridge and Reedville, Va.—part of the National Bicycle Route Network, developed recently by Adventure Cycling Association with assistance from the National Park Service, local agencies and volunteers.

Inaugurated in June 2002, the AHT stands as a model for coordination between public agencies and volunteers. Designation of the AHT as part of the PHNST corridor would enhance outdoor educational opportunities and heritage tourism programs in a regional and corridor-length context.