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**STATEMENT OF LESLIE ZUPAN,
PRESIDENT, INNER CITY CIVIC ASSOCIATION**

JANUARY 24, 2009

Good morning Mayor Euille, Vice Mayor Pepper and Members of Council:

My name is Leslie Zupan of 1309 Queen Street. I am President of the Inner City Civic Association and a 29-year resident of my neighborhood.

First, a little housekeeping – I want to thank Faroll Hamer of P&Z for identifying the error about the size of the future park at the Wythe Street Post Office. This is a mistake that I'm glad about. We still have issues regarding the park, but look forward to working with the City through the Braddock Implementation Group.

I'm here today, however, to talk about the issue of crime in the Inner City. As you all know, a Yellow Cab driver Khalil Siddiqi was murdered in cold blood at Princess and Buchanan Street less than a week ago. I ride Yellow Cab regularly and Mr. Siddiqi's colleagues are devastated that this has happened. Even more so, our community is shocked by such a blatant act.

Sadly, we are in the midst of a crime wave. In October 2008, there were three armed robberies of victims walking from Braddock Metro station. Thankfully the Alexandria police arrested suspects, but since then we've had another armed robbery. On New Year's Eve, the Smile Market at Queen & Henry Street was robbed in daylight at gunpoint, seven days later the owner of the Alexandria Fish Market was robbed at gunpoint at dusk.

What can you do to help?

The Inner City has been blessed by being able to work with an outstanding community police officer, Michael Sprague. He has been tireless and creative in his approach to solving and preventing crime. But he is only one man and can't be cloned. Are Council aware that the Inner City always had two community officers? When Walter Green was transferred to another beat two years ago, the second position was left unfilled.

We formally request that you assist us in ensuring that a second officer is immediately assigned back to the Inner City beat to deal with the crime wave.

Second, we need a police presence at Queen and Fayette during the day. The drug dealers are keeping bankers' hours, no doubt because our police force has been very effective at night. But drug dealers are taking up their posts at Queen and Fayette as early as 7:15 AM and servicing drive-up customers. We need daytime coverage.

Third, we need to have other City Departments back up our police officers. Be aware that Officer Sprague doesn't complain to me, but when I follow up on an issue I often find that he is not getting cooperation from other departments. We're happy with the support of Code Enforcement regarding blighted houses but it shouldn't have taken six months of repeated inquiries to trim overhanging trees at Queen and Fayette that hide drug activity.

Finally, given that the robberies in October were committed by individuals from PG County, and the fact that more of the loitering at Queen & Fayette is being done by strangers who not only do not live in the neighborhood but in many cases don't even live in the City of Alexandria, we are concerned about City policies both major and minor that continue to beacon to the underworld that this is the neighborhood to come to so they can commit mayhem.

We are concerned about the relaxing of standards for business SUPs, especially those involving alcohol sales, and in particular are worried about the proposals in the Braddock Road plan regarding the future of Queen Street. Queen Street is not a major commercial corridor – it is only two blocks long and half of it consists of townhomes. It is in transition now, with Sarge's, the American Legion and other structures on the market and with several older property owners who may not have a succession plan for their businesses. I can assure you our community would be happy to see the whole street ultimately go residential and that this would do much to reduce the attractions of our neighborhood to bad guys.

Finally, regarding the Braddock Road Plan, we do not want developer contributions being poured into loans for businesses on Queen Street. Developer money is better spent on capital improvements like streetscaping and open space acquisition that are permanent, that add value to surrounding properties and are accessible to everyone. The City is not skilled in managing such a fund, and we are concerned that valuable dollars could be flushed out through businesses that are poorly thought through and which may only continue to require police attention and resources in years ahead.

Thank you.

Alexandria Homicides 2005-2009

Braddock Road Metro area murders highlighted in yellow

105111364	2005-03-09	160C	Arrest	700	N FAYETTE ST	Homicide Offenses
105151089	2005-09-24	140E	Arrest	100	E MASON AV	Homicide Offenses
105164811	2005-12-07	160G	Open	400	N PATRICK ST	Homicide Offenses
105168132	2005-12-27	181D	Arrest	800	MONTGOMERY ST	Homicide Offenses
106102165	2006-01-13	041C	Arrest	6100	EDSALL RD	Homicide Offenses
106113579	2006-03-21	042D	Arrest	300	S WHITING ST	Homicide Offenses
106115788	2006-04-02	070H	Arrest	400	S COLUMBUS ST	Homicide Offenses
106139054	2006-07-29	140G	Arrest	1300	MT VERNON AV	Homicide Offenses
106155692	2006-10-26		Open	0	MT VERNON AV	Homicide Offenses
107101429	2007-01-09	190F	Arrest	100	S WASHINGTON ST	Homicide Offenses
107117591	2007-04-19	160B	Arrest	800	N PATRICK ST	Homicide Offenses
107122080	2007-05-13	060C	Arrest	3800	USHER CT	Homicide Offenses
107135161	2007-07-19	160A	Arrest	900	N HENRY ST	Homicide Offenses
107146821	2007-09-22	182A	Open	400	N COLUMBUS ST	Homicide Offenses
107151399	2007-10-17	013B	Open	5800	QUANTRELL AV	Homicide Offenses
107152140	2007-10-21	123A	Open	3800	EXECUTIVE AV	Homicide Offenses
108129766	2008-06-23	011D	Arrest	3000	PARK CENTER DR	Homicide Offenses
108133559	2008-07-13	123D	Arrest	3700	MARK DR	Homicide Offenses
108141750	2008-08-26	042D	Arrest	200	S WHITING ST	Homicide Offenses
108157609	2008-12-02	042D	Open	300	S VAN DORN ST	Homicide Offenses

This list does NOT include the murder of taxi driver Khalil Saddiqi on January 18, 2009.

The incident on N. Patrick St. in April 2007 was a double homicide.

Total Braddock area murders since 1/1/05: 8 of 21 or 38%.