

**CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION
ON
DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING WORK PROGRAM**

TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 2010

5:30 PM

COUNCIL WORK ROOM

AGENDA

- | | | |
|------|---|---|
| I. | Welcome and Opening Comments | William D. Euille, Mayor |
| II. | Overview | Faroll Hamer, Director
Planning & Zoning |
| III. | Long Range Planning Initiatives

Council Discussion | Faroll Hamer |
| IV. | Special Projects and Implementation

Council Discussion | Faroll Hamer |

Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in the City Council Work Session may call the City Clerk and Clerk of Council's Office at 703-746-4500 (TTY/TDD 838-5056). We request that you provide a 48-hour notice so that the proper arrangements may be made.

WS

3-23-10

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 22, 2010

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

VIA: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER *JH*

FROM: FAROLL HAMER, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING *FH*

SUBJECT: PRIORITIES FOR THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING'S WORK PROGRAM FOR FY 2010 AND BEYOND

ISSUE: Consideration of the planning priorities for the work program for FY 2011 and beyond.

RECOMMENDATION: That the City Council review the following FY 2011 proposed planning initiatives and work program. The proposed work program is consistent with the FY 2011 proposed budget in regard to staffing and other budget resources.

- Complete small area plans for the Waterfront and the Beauregard Corridor.
- Begin a small area plan for Eisenhower West.
- Continue implementation of the Arlandria Action Plan, potentially expanding into a small area plan.
- Continue implementation of the Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan and the King Street retail studies. Begin implementation of Waterfront plan.
- Continue to work on small business and green building initiatives.
- Continue to work with the Office of Housing on the Housing Master Plan, now planned to begin in April 2010 with adoption targeted for June 2011. Continue to support several other initiatives led by other departments, such as the Sewer Master Plan, school facilities planning, the BRAC IJR, parking, the environmental studies for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station and the Crystal City-Potomac Yard transitway, and the feasibility studies for the three dedicated transit corridors designated in the Transportation Master Plan.

DISCUSSION: As in previous years, the Department of Planning and Zoning has prepared a bar chart/timeline of a proposed program for FY 2011. The chart is attached and shows how the Department recommends allocating expected resources to the current and anticipated planning initiatives.

Although the FY 2011 work program is the focus of our discussion, the chart covers the time period from January 2009 through June of 2012 to give a broader picture of the history and proposed schedule of major planning projects. In addition, the chart shows work associated with plan implementation, which continues to occur for some years after each plan is adopted.

This chart focuses primarily on the work program of the Neighborhood Planning and Community Development division. Much of the work in the other P&Z divisions is determined by the regulatory caseload.

Because the role of the community is so critical at each phase of the planning process, the City realizes that it must continue to find ways to make it work better for all participants. The civic engagement process must deliver accurate, timely and complete information in an accessible way; provide multiple opportunities and means for community members to engage with each other and to provide advice to the City, and respond fully to the input provided. Even when community members do not agree with a final document, they should always feel that their voices were heard. Discussions led by the City Manager's Office and representatives of the Alexandria Federation of Civic Associations have been initiated to address these issues.

Themes for FY 2011

The basic approach to developing the proposed work program involves some constants from year to year: projects that have been started must be completed, adopted small area plans may be followed by plan implementation, and there will be projects led by other departments that will require contributions by Planning & Zoning staff.

Within that framework, there are still choices to be made, particularly during constrained budget times. The Department of Planning and Zoning identified four themes that it used to make choices for the FY 2011 work program:

- (1) preparing for the upturn,
- (2) more emphasis on action and less on study,
- (3) expanded intergovernmental coordination, and
- (4) further regulatory reform.

Preparing for the Upturn and Further Regulatory Reform

Our current level of effort on small area planning is geared towards readiness for the next economic upturn. The Department is currently working on three major small area plans, a first for the City, and we propose one or potentially two more next year. We are focused on the areas of the City that meet the City's criteria for smart growth (near Metrorail or other transit, existing public facilities and services), and the areas with the most potential for redevelopment/revitalization.

Jointly with AEDP, ACVA and Code Administration, the Department supported the Council's work on Strategic Plan Goal 1. With an emphasis on achieving economic results in the next three to five years, the three draft objectives in Goal 1 offer priorities for the City's FY 2011 work program, including the P&Z work program:

- Objective 1: Increase the vitality and economic success of the City Waterfront and King Street Corridor while maintaining and strengthening the City's commitment to historic preservation and neighborhood quality of life.
- Objective 2: Increase office and retail occupancy rates through business attraction, retention, and expansion
- Objective 3: Maintain an environment where businesses can thrive.

Over the past several years, as recommended in the Economic Sustainability and Small Business Task Force reports, making the development process in Alexandria more efficient and understandable and to improve the City's business reaction has been a priority for the City Manager and his staff, the Department of Planning and Zoning, Transportation and Environmental Services and the Office of Building Code Administration. Some of the improvements that have been successfully implemented recently include: participating in the *Inter-Agency Permit Center*; establishing a new *Menu of Standardized Condition Language* for development cases; updating the *Concept and Preliminary Plan Checklists*; standardization of IDR meeting times and creation of a regular *Development Project Workgroup* to meet with applicants during the development review process; *Small Business Improvements*, including creation of an expanded Administrative SUP process and publication of a *Small Business Checklist*; allowing for administrative approval by BAR staff of certain signs in historic districts; and a text amendment to extend the validity period for DSPs and DSUPs.

This effort at regulatory improvement will continue and expand during the next fiscal year. Specific goals include:

- Coordinating with Code Administration and T&ES on functional and procedural streamlining, including Permit Plan protocols, permitting service improvements, online application filing, consolidated inter-department checklists for building permit submissions and cross training and realignment of staff roles to gain efficiencies, as well as to improve customer service;
- Creating a Simplified Site Plan application for cases that require a site plan, but are small in size and straightforward in scope;
- Publishing a guide to the development review process;
- Completing the transfer from RPCA to P&Z of review of landscape elements in development applications, including training P&Z staff and making improvements to the review process;

- Clarity in processing BAR applications, including additional administrative approvals and policies for application of new and replacement materials in the historic districts; and
- Additional Small Business Improvements, including Updating the Small Business Guide, expanding the minor amendment process, and refining the administrative SUP process.

More Emphasis on Action

Over the past few years, the Department has completed several small area plans that, after the Planning Commission and Council have acted, added more than 15 million square feet of development capacity to the City. By the middle of FY 2011, three more plans will be completed. Each of these plans will have been complex and will have required a significant investment of time and other resources to address multiple challenging issues. In the near future, we will not only be able to have a more nimble planning program but also one that builds on already-adopted plans.

The proposed FY 2011 work program reduces the number of simultaneously developed small area plans from the current three to one (and potentially two if the Arlandria small area plan is activated). Partly this is because the Department does not have the resources for three small area plans, but it is also because there are fewer areas of the City where a full scale small area plan is needed. The proposed FY 2011 work program shifts staff resources toward implementation of adopted plans. It should be noted that implementation work in the current fiscal environment will largely be limited to planning, pricing, and prioritizing projects to a finer grain of detail for future use in subsequent CIP budget preparations. Implementation work can include pursuing public facilities and other improvements called for in a plan; it can also include actions that ensure that planned development can move forward and when it does, provides the public benefits and neighborhood safeguards expected in the plan. Full, and even partial, implementation will be tempered by fiscal realities since capital funding for many desired projects was not able to be funded in the proposed FY 2011 to FY 2016 City Capital Improvement Program (CIP).

Expanded Intergovernmental Coordination

The proposed work program expands the number of projects led by other City departments that are supported by planning staff. The work program also envisions building on the partnership with AEDP, ACVA and the business community that was strengthened by work on the Strategic Plan and economic sustainability. It also anticipates increased levels of coordination with neighboring jurisdictions and state and federal agencies.

Descriptions of Work Program Items

The attached chart shows 24 work program items, most of which have some work expected in FY 2011. Those work program items are:

- *North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan*. This plan is expected to be complete in FY 2010, but implementation work will follow initially in the form of *Potomac Yard Metro/ Transitway Environmental Review*, which will involve completing NEPA and/or other

regulatory reviews related to the Potomac Yard Metrorail station and the Crystal City Potomac Yard transitway.

- *Wayfinding*. The design guidelines for the Wayfinding program are expected to be adopted in FY 2010. An implementation effort awaits future year CIP funding.
- The *Sewer Master Plan* is expected to be completed in FY 2010. It is being led by T&ES, and will be funded by Sanitary Sewer User Fees.
- The *Waterfront Small Area Plan* is now expected to be brought to the Council for adoption in the fall. The extensive public outreach effort for the plan has been enormously helpful in identifying the common goals of the many Alexandrians who care passionately about the waterfront. This planning effort is addressing numerous social, environmental, economic, legal and logistical issues with multiple important stakeholders, so listening carefully and working deliberately will ultimately result in a better product than we could have delivered sooner. A concept plan will be released in April, which will allow the public a fresh opportunity for input.
- The *Beauregard Small Area Plan* has now been scheduled for release of a draft by mid-summer and adoption in the late fall. Staff and consultant work is proceeding expeditiously. *BRAC IJR* and related transportation issues have been a major focus in comparison to other Beauregard plan issues.
- *Green Building Phase II* continues the pursuit of opportunities to improve the sustainability of the built environment in such topic areas as existing buildings, incentives, and outreach.
- The *Housing Master Plan*, led by the Office of Housing, begins next month and runs for about a year, with adoption planned for the end of FY 2011. The ARHA Strategic Plan is expected to begin soon as well. In both cases, P&Z will play a supporting role.
- *Transit Corridor Feasibility* studies, led by T&ES, will be under way soon and will conduct detailed work to identify the best specific alignments for the three transitway alignments generally shown in the Transportation Master Plan. Because transit alignments have multiple and important land use impacts, P&Z staff will be a key part of the project team. These studies are largely federally funded.
- *Eisenhower West Small Area Plan*. This plan has been scheduled to follow the Beauregard Small Area Plan. The consultant funds included in the City Manager's proposed budget allow the plan to begin in January 2011.
- *Arlandria*. The Arlandria Action Plan Advisory Group has begun meeting; one of the tasks for the group is to explore whether changes to the adopted plan are needed to enable desired redevelopment. During the first meeting, a number of Advisory Group members called for a broader look at the redevelopment area, including some tasks typical of a small area plan. The Department recommends devoting some additional staff resources to supporting this community-based planning/implementation initiative. If major land

owners in Arlandria wish in FY 2011 to engage the City in re-planning their parcels, then funding for additional City planning resources would need to be identified.

- *Beauregard, Landmark/Van Dorn and Wayfinding Implementation.* There are currently no resources allocated to any of these implementation efforts. If developer interest accelerates (such as General Growth at the Landmark Mall site), staff will either need to be reassigned from other projects to meet the needs, or additional resources will need to be identified.
- *King Street*, as well as *Waterfront*, initiatives will be multi-agency and address the issues raised in the new Strategic Plan to strengthen economic vitality while protecting neighborhoods and historic authenticity. Among the major issues is *parking*, while will have already moved from the “study” phase to the “action” phase for Old Town in FY 2010. Parking Phase II will address the Mt. Vernon and Braddock Metro station areas.

Proposed FY 2011 Budget for the Department of Planning and Zoning

The City Manager released his proposed FY 2011 Operating Budget. The proposed budget includes numerous reductions in many departments to close the budget gap.

For the Department of Planning and Zoning, the proposed reductions come in two forms: a reduction in the number of staff positions (or “FTEs”) and a reduction in the funds available for consultant support. The City Manager’s Proposed FY 2011 budget reduces the number of Planning staff positions from 49.5 to 47.5. The amount of funds available for consultant support is \$100,000, which is a reduction from \$164,709 from FY 2010 (the Beauregard Corridor consultant work is funded through a \$600,000 federal grant).

In general, the FY 2011 staff and consultant reductions will primarily affect Neighborhood Planning and Community Development projects in FY 2011. This is because last year the Department took its cuts on the regulatory side – commensurate with the reduction in regulatory activity due to the economic downturn – and also reallocated some regulatory staff time to work on Neighborhood Planning initiatives. As a result, there is little unused capacity in the regulatory divisions of the department.

The proposed budget provides capacity for one new small area plan (Eisenhower West) supported with the available consultant funds; support for long range planning efforts led by other departments (Housing Master Plan, etc), and further refinement of the costs, details, and priorities of some previously adopted plans and studies. Actual implementation of previously adopted plans will be significantly influenced by the current economic climate which has limited both City and developer ability to finance capital projects contemplated in these adopted plans.

cc: Chair and Members of the Planning Commission
Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager
Rich Baier, Director, Transportation and Environmental Services
Jim Spengler, Director, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
Mildrilyn Davis, Director, Office of Housing
Val Hawkins, CEO, AEDP
Stephanie Brown, CEO, ACVA

**Department of Planning and Zoning
Accomplishments and Activities FY 2010**

In partnership with T&ES, RPCA, the Office of Housing, AEDP, ACVA, ARHA, ACPS, community and business groups, and residents, the Department of Planning and Zoning:

- Completed *Eisenhower West Industrial Land Uses* study in September.
- By the end of the fiscal year, will finish the *North Potomac Yard* small area plan, which is expected to include 7.5 million square feet of mixed use development and a Metro station. Will complete the *North Potomac Yard CDD* and the *North Potomac Yard Design Guidelines*
- By the end of the fiscal year, will finish *Wayfinding* design guidelines.
- In April, release the concept plan for the *Waterfront* small area plan.
- Initiated *Beauregard Corridor* planning process.
- Staffed the *BRAC Advisory Group*.
- Revised, updated zoning changes to *Infill Regulations*, with report to Council and support from the Infill Task Force.
- Through the *Small Business Zoning* program, approved half of applications administratively. Continued assistance on Small Business, including zoning changes for: Cameron Station to allow retail space to participate in Small Business Zoning, BAR signs in historic districts by administrative approval, and development of 2010 small business zoning changes, outreach, and text amendments.
- Completed zoning changes to create more consistent standards for subdivision variation process.
- Completed the 2009 *King Street Retail Study* and follow up implementation work.
- To implement the *Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan*, established dedicated open space and community amenity funds; supported the City's acquisition of property for the new park.
- Initiated the *Arlandria Action Plan Advisory Group*.
- Completed the *Four Mile Run Design Guidelines*.
- By the end of the fiscal year, supported the completion of a *Sewer Master Plan*.
- By the end of the fiscal year, completed a comprehensive update of the City's *long range forecasts* for population, jobs and households.

- Initiated and staffed a *Census Complete Count Committee* as well as a series of programs and activities to boost the return of Census forms by City residents.
- Achieved a listing of the *Parker-Gray Historic District* on the National Register of Historic Places
- Approved the Final Site Plans for first two phases of James Bland redevelopment project.
- Supported work on the *Housing Master Plan*.
- Partnered with T&ES on the *Old Town Parking Study* and in implementing the resulting recommendations.
- Began leading *Phase II Green Building* work, with emphasis on existing buildings, outreach, and enforcement.
- GIS Updated the *aerial photography* used City-wide for planning and analysis to 2009.
- Began work on a regional road centerline project; this project will provide Fire/EMS with regional vehicle routing capabilities (GIS).
- In partnership with ACPS, applied GIS to determine *Safe Walks to School*. Also with ACPS, analyzed recent school enrollment trends and trends in *student generation by housing type*.
- Created a *Unified Parcel-Address-Building Model* to significantly improve the breadth and accuracy of information about properties, buildings, and businesses in the City. And to better integrate GIS with multiple City-wide enterprise applications.
- Developed a much more user-friendly web-based interface for GIS, nicknamed *GARI* and added several new themed and analytical tools– scheduled for late FY2010 release. Developed a “widget” to allow the easy incorporation of custom interactive maps on the City’s website.
- In partnership with T&ES, working to create a suite of GIS based analytical & maintenance tools and databases to define and manage the stormwater utility program.
- Completed a geospatial analysis of how Alexandria scores on some critical *LEED Sustainable Sites* criteria.
- Provided support for T&ES and RPCA’s GIS based *Computerized Management and Maintenance System (CMMS)*.
- Provided situational awareness and planning support through GIS for Emergency Operation Center activities (developed a prototype for tracking snow removal activities during the February storms) and began work on a “*Strategic Response System*” for the Fire Department.

- Approved a number of notable DSPs and DSUPs including:
 - Restaurant Depot, with \$500,000 voluntary proffer by applicant for parks and open space
 - Polk Elementary Gymnasium
 - Church of God Addition
 - Hoffman Blocks 11 and 12
 - The Calvert
 - Freedmen's Cemetery
 - Umbrella Site Plan for Relocatable Classrooms at Alexandria Schools
 - 21 North Quaker Lane
- Monitored/inspected two major projects through to completion: *1701 Duke Street/Edmonson Plaza* and *Mount Vernon Commons*.
- Completed planning work on the *South Carlyle* area in order to consider appropriate develop options for Block P East – work included a detailed retail study of the Carlyle and Eisenhower East area.
- Provided extensive input to T&ES on the *Eisenhower Avenue Widening Project*.
- Supported RPCA staff in the development of a new *Arts Policy*.
- Supported Fire Department and General Services in the design-build process for two new *City fire stations*.
- Improved the regulatory process by establishing a new *Menu of Standardized Condition Language* and updating the *Concept* and *Preliminary Plan Checklists*.
- Regulatory Caseload for FY2010 (balance of year is a projection):
 - Development approved: 1,600,000 square feet
 - Development cases: 33
 - SUPs: 76
 - Zoning complaints and SUP compliance cases: 680
 - Permits/BZA applications/plot plans: 5,000
 - Historic preservation applications/permits: 1,200

Proposed Work Program FY 2011

	Calendar 2010												Calendar 2011																							
	FY2011												FY2012																							
	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun				
LONG RANGE PLANNING																																				
North Potomac Yard SAP (incl Metro Feasibility)				■	■	■																														
Wayfinding																																				
Sewer Master Plan (T&ES)																																				
Waterfront Small Area Plan																																				
Beauregard Corridor Small Area Plan																																				
Green Building Phase II																																				
Housing Master Plan (Housing)																																				
ARHA Strategic Plan (housing)																																				
Transit Corridor Feasibility Studies (T&ES)																																				
Eisenhower West Small Area Plan																																				
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King Street Retail Implementation																																				
Landmark/Van Dorn Implementation*																																				
Potomac Yard Metro/Transitway Environmental (T&ES)																																				
Parking Phase I (Old Town) (T&ES)																																				
Parking Phase II (Mt. Vernon/Braddock Metro) (T&ES)																																				
Regulatory Reform																																				
School Facilities Planning (ACPS)																																				
Wayfinding Implementation																																				
Waterfront Implementation*																																				

KEY
 ■ Internal staff work
 ■ Public meetings/plan development
 ■ Plan approval process
 ■ Special projects/Plan implementation
 ■ Plans and projects in current work program are shown in black
 ■ Projects led by other departments are shown in purple
 * Timing/level of effort is developer-dependent