

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: FEBRUARY 2, 2018

TO: CHAIRWOMAN MARY LYMAN AND MEMBERS OF THE
PLANNING COMMISSION

FROM: KARL MORITZ, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND
ZONING

SUBJECT: DISCUSSION OF THE FY 2019 INTERDEPARTMENTAL LONG-
RANGE PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

ISSUE: What planning work priorities should be established for FY 2019 and beyond?

RECOMMENDATION: Discuss planning priorities for FY 2019 and beyond.

BACKGROUND: Each year, the City departments and agencies engaged in long-range planning and plan implementation jointly prepare an Interdepartmental Long-Range Planning Work Program for the upcoming fiscal year and beyond. The work program includes new plans scheduled to begin, the completion of plans and studies underway, and implementation of previously approved plans.

The draft work program is presented for preliminary Planning Commission and City Council feedback and guidance early in the calendar year to help inform development of the City Manager's Proposed Operating Budget as well as development of a final work program docketed for City Council approval in May.

DISCUSSION: The draft FY 2019 Interdepartmental Long-Range Planning Work Program (Attachment 1) includes the following new additions from the previous year:

Landmark Mall Site Re-Planning: Following almost a decade of project delays based on changes to ownership structure, tenant control and the real estate market, ownership has begun the process of re-planning the site for development. This is a high priority for the City and staff is working closely with the property owner to develop a schedule and process so that the project may proceed as soon as the property owner is ready. At this time, the anticipated project schedule is from late Spring 2018 through early Winter 2019.

Joint City-Schools Facilities Master Plan: The Ad Hoc Joint City-Schools Facility Investment Task Force presented its recommendations to the City Council and ACPS

School Board in January, including a recommendation that the City and ACPS develop a joint facilities master plan. Both bodies generally expressed their support for this recommendation. City and ACPS staff will be developing a scope and timeline for this effort. As proposed, the Master Plan would determine a facilities baseline for the City and ACPS, review existing assumptions about the need for capital projects to support service delivery now and in the future, develop a strategic vision for facilities development for the City and ACPS; and synthesize the facilities baseline, assumptions, and the strategic vision into a roadmap that addresses the City and ACPS' highest needs and biggest risks first, optimizes the use of swing space, and formulates a smart strategy for land acquisition and use.

Transit Vision Study: The goal of this study is to identify existing bus transit needs in Alexandria, as well as future projected needs and untapped markets, and develop an unconstrained, non-biased future bus transit network / alignment that responds to current and projected needs. Similar efforts have been conducted in cities such as Houston, Jacksonville and San Jose, where similar plans were used to adapt the transit system to existing and future demographics and land use. The study will heavily focus on data to develop the proposed network. Procurement for this effort is currently in progress.

Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Initiative: This initiative represents a series of transportation-related technology projects to improve mobility throughout the city. The intent of these projects is to create a technology infrastructure that will allow incorporation of future, yet to be developed emerging technologies such as autonomous self-driving vehicles. The current complement of projects is a multiphase effort including ITS Integration, Transit Vehicle Signal Priority and Traffic Adaptive Control.

Parking Meter Locations and Pricing: This project is a new addition to the parking districts study already on the long-range planning work program, and will review potential updates to the City Code to remove restrictions or barriers to staff initiated parking meter implementation. The effort will analyze staff-led approaches to using parking meters in order to solve problems of parking shortages and promote more parking and turnover in commercial areas.

The FY 2019 Work Program includes potential timing adjustments to projects previously on the FY 2018 Work Program as briefly described below:

Route 1 South Housing Affordability Strategy: Community engagement for this effort is currently underway with a planning charrette scheduled for late February 2018. Barring unforeseen complications, it is anticipated that the Strategy will be completed by the early fall of 2018, in advance of the previously anticipated March 2019 completion. The timely completion of this housing affordability strategy is extremely important due to the pending expiration of affordability contracts on the Olde Town West and Heritage residences.

Eisenhower East Phase 2: As currently proposed, the planning process for Eisenhower East Phase 2 will begin in Winter 2019 and complete in Fall 2019. However, it should be

noted that this timing is closely tied to other work interdepartmental staff will be undertaking, including the Route 1 South Housing Affordability Strategy and the Landmark Mall site re-planning process. Over the next several months, as those efforts proceed, staff will be able to indicate with more certainty the timing for Eisenhower East. It will also be important for the associated traffic and infrastructure studies and economic analyses to be complete in order for this project to proceed. This plan update remains a high priority for the City, recognizing the importance of Eisenhower East as a key economic development engine.

Mount Vernon Avenue Pedestrian Safety Improvements and Plan Update (Mount Vernon Avenue Business Plan and the Arlandria Action Plan): A strategic update to the Mount Vernon Avenue Plans has been in the out-years of the long-range planning Work Program for a number of years. The update is currently slated to begin in Fall 2019, however, like the Eisenhower East Phase 2 effort, timing is tied to completion and scheduling of the Route 1 South Housing Affordability Strategy and the Landmark Mall site re-plan. At the direction of City Council, staff is meeting with stakeholders to determine priorities for the scope of this planning effort.

NEXT STEPS: In March and April, Staff will incorporate preliminary guidance provided by Planning Commission and City Council at their February 6 and February 13 meetings, as well as coordinate among departments and stakeholders to further refine project timing. Community input will continue to be recorded and taken into account in preparation for a final work program to be approved by City Council in May 2018.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Draft FY 2019 Interdepartmental Long-Range Planning Work Program (“Bar Chart”)
2. Project Descriptions

STAFF:

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