



Alexandria Waterfront Commission

Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

1108 Jefferson Street

Alexandria, Virginia 22314

May 20, 2026

To: Jim Parajon, City Manager

Subject: Expansion of Public Restrooms Along the Waterfront

Given the popularity of the Alexandria waterfront and the importance of increased tourism in Alexandria's economic development strategy, the need for public restrooms near the Potomac waterfront is critical. Local restaurants and shops shouldn't be expected to make their rest rooms available to non-customers. We are getting into the height of tour bus season, which increases the number of visitors to this part of the City and the demand for public restrooms. This year, we expect the waterfront to be especially busy as people come to this region to celebrate America 250. Some individuals are resorting to using bushes in the parks or flowerpots in front of homes – this must be addressed. Increasing the availability of restrooms would be a very welcome amenity for the many people enjoying our waterfront area. Currently, other than during festivals and other big events, there are currently insufficient public restrooms along or near the waterfront, none of them in Old Town north of the City marina:

- The National Park Service maintains public restrooms in Jones Point Park and the Washington Sailing Marina.
- The restrooms at Robinson Landing are open only when Barca is open (beginning at 11:30 am on weekdays and 10:00 am on weekends).
- The restrooms at the Torpedo Factory are available during the hours the arts center is open to the public (generally 10:00 am to 6:00 pm), but there is no signage to that effect.
- The restrooms adjacent to Blackwall Hitch at the City marina only recently reopened after a lengthy closure for repairs. They are open from 9:00 am to 11:00 pm.
- A little further from the waterfront, the Ramsey House visitors center has public restrooms that are available, but only during the hours the visitors center is open.

Adequate signage for visitors of available restrooms is woefully lacking.

The planned development of the Robinson Landing North includes public restrooms in the west building, but they will not be available until construction is completed, which isn't expected for at least several years.

The Waterfront Commission recommends that among the conditions to the DSUPs for the planned PRGS development, including those being considered by the City Council next month, the HRP Group be required to include multiple sets of public restrooms, given the plans for retail stores, sports activities, a children's playground, and other event and other open space, and the

distance of that site from the nearest public restroom facilities. It will be a number of years before the buildings are constructed; therefore, the HRP Group should be required to provide portable toilets when the open spaces become available to the public.

The addition of public restrooms in the RTN and PRGS developments alone will not be sufficient. The City should identify where additional restrooms should be located, such that they meet the public's needs but do not detract from the aesthetic beauty of the waterfront area.

We recommend the following:

- 1) Explore potential other facilities that could offer toilet facilities to the general public.
- 2) Explore opportunities to add portable toilet facilities convenient to visitors but not detracting from the local ambience while the City waits for the above-mentioned new facilities to come online.
- 3) Enhance signage for all public restrooms indicating locations and open hours; also post a sign with this information at the Alexandria Visitor Center and include this information online.
- 4) Consider adding security cameras near the restrooms as a welcome security enhancement.

We would greatly appreciate your consideration of these requests. Please let me know if you would like to discuss this issue.

Sincerely,



Louise L. Roseman
Chair

- c: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council
Members of the Waterfront Commission
Alethea Predeoux, Deputy City Manager
Hashim T. Taylor, Director, Department of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities
Jack Browand, Deputy Director, Department of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities