

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MARCH 24, 2021

TO: CHAIR MACEK AND MEMBERS OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION

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

SUBJECT: ADVISORY RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE CITY MANAGER, UNDER SECTION 6.14 OF THE CITY CHARTER, REGARDING THE CAPITAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

ISSUE: The Planning Commission is asked to provide advisory recommendations to the City Manager on the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) as required under Section 6.14 of the City Charter.

RECOMMENDATION: Indicate concurrence with the staff recommendation that the proposed CIP is generally consistent with the City's Master Plan.

BACKGROUND: One of the responsibilities of the Planning Commission is to provide guidance to the City Manager on the CIP. Section 6.14 of the City Charter states, "The city manager shall obtain and transmit to the council the advisory recommendations of the planning commission with regard to the consistency of proposed capital improvement projects with the master plan and the priority and timing of those projects in comparison to other elements in the master plan."

Accompanying this memo is one from Morgan Rout, the Director of the Office of Management & Budget, transmitting the Proposed FY 2022 – FY 2031 CIP. Also included is the [FY 2022 Budget Calendar](#). The proposed CIP can be found at alexandriava.gov/Budget. Appendix B of the CIP notes the Small Area Plan associated with each project in the CIP.

The FY 2020 Annual Master Plan Status of Implementation Report provided for the Planning Commission's review earlier this year demonstrates the City's implementation progress made over the previous year on the City's Small Area Plans and topical plans. This report can be found at alexandriava.gov/Planning.

DISCUSSION

The programming of capital projects into the City's CIP is one tool in implementing the infrastructure and community amenities projects identified in the City's Master Plan. In addition, the proposed 2022-2031 CIP includes funding for affordable housing projects implementing the Housing Master Plan and development studies to support small area planning work that will be undertaken in FY 2022. The following items are proposed for inclusion in the FY 2022-2031 CIP.

Affordable Housing

Over the 10-year CIP, \$67.9 million is committed for affordable housing projects. For FY 2022, an additional \$2.6 million of general fund cash capital was added to maintain the funding level originally anticipated in FY 2021 and FY 2022 from the meals tax dedication. Meals tax revenues have dropped substantially, due to the COVID-19 pandemic's impacts on restaurant sales. In addition to supporting investments in the construction or renovation of affordable housing, FY 2022 funding will be used for the following initiative:

- **Affordable Housing Initiatives (\$1 million):** As part of Northern Virginia's efforts to attract the Amazon HQ2 campus, the City continues to be committed to an additional \$1 million per year of support to Affordable Housing initiatives in Alexandria. Over the 10-year CIP, this commitment will provide an additional \$10 million in cash funding for Affordable Housing projects that support the Housing Master Plan.

Small Area Planning

- Development Studies (\$280,000 in FY 2022): The development studies project is the parent project for various studies undertaken by the City to begin feasibility, planning and design work to implement or support small area plans that have either been adopted or are in the process of being developed by the City. This funding will be used for updates to the City's Master Plan through development, updates, and/or implementation of Small Area Plans. Expenditures are dependent on City Council's final Long Range Planning Work Program, which gets approved in May. The proposed expenditures reflect the proposed draft work program, which may be adjusted over the course of the budget cycle. In addition, the City may secure potential grants for specific initiatives, which could change the total expenditures.

Small Area Plan Implementation Projects

- Landmark Van Dorn Corridor Plan/Eisenhower West Small Area Plan: \$130 million over the 10-year CIP, including \$21 million in FY 2022, to facilitate the redevelopment of the 4 million square foot **Landmark Mall site**. The City would fund \$76 million in onsite infrastructure improvements and acquire for \$54 million three parcels of land for the hospital to construct its new facilities. The City would then lease the land long-term to Inova through the City Industrial Development Authority. This redevelopment may also include the relocation of **Fire Station 208**

(\$11.3 million in FY 2022 - FY 2024), anticipated to co-locate with workforce/affordable multi-family housing. In December, City Council approved the cancellation of the **Backlick Run Multi-Use Path** project with the understanding that it is currently not constructable due to the inability of the City to acquire the necessary right-of-way and will instead be completed through future redevelopment. The Backlick Run Multi-Use Path project has been removed from the Proposed CIP, however, \$4.6 million of Congestion Mitigation Air Quality (CMAQ) and Regional Surface Transportation Program (RSTP) grant funding are still in the 10-year funding plan (FY 2022-2024). This funding is to be held as contingency and/or reallocated to other projects as to be determined by City Council following a staff recommendation. The City received a \$75M NVTA 70% grant in June for the **Transit Corridor “B” (Duke Street) Bus Rapid Transitway** project (in addition to the \$12M previously awarded) to be used for planning, design, right-of-way, construction and asset acquisition, such as buses and shelters. In FY 2022, a community engagement process will update the community’s vision and needs for the corridor, resulting in an updated concept plan and implementation schedule for the project. Design is anticipated to begin in FY 2023 followed by construction in FY 2025. Construction will likely be phased depending on the results of the outreach findings as well as adjacent private redevelopment projects.

- Waterfront Plan: \$102 million over the ten-year CIP to support the design and construction of the Plan-recommended infrastructure, including **flood mitigation**, prioritized through community engagement processes. Projected construction costs have increased due to further scope refinement, further design development, and market drivers. Cost estimates have been escalated to anticipated mid-construction date. The most significant changes were due to more detailed design for stormwater and pumping system, structural bulkhead, and electrical infrastructure. The current CIP budget is funded at approximately 50% of the current cost estimate. Alternative strategies and value engineering studies are currently underway. The design-build process will likely include further alternatives analysis and cost development to facilitate a firm budget. It is anticipated that the CIP budget request will be further refined after the project alternatives and value engineering process is complete. In addition, in FY 2022 \$125,000 is requested to conduct a **Waterfront Museum Feasibility Study** to assess the viability of a history center as recommended in the Waterfront History Plan and the Waterfront Area Plan. If supported, the museum would house items such as the conserved ship timbers of an 18th century merchant ship and associated artifacts excavated as part of the Robinson Terminal South and Hotel Indigo construction projects.
 - Torpedo Factory Art Center Revitalization: \$1.7M in the 10-year CIP to implement the Action Plan for Vibrancy and Sustainability at **Torpedo Factory Art Center**. Due to FY 2021 funding reductions and delay of the Action Plan in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, \$300,000 of funding for this project was deferred to FY 2022. Funding proposed for FY 2022 was increased to \$845,000 to implement first and third floor improvements

to increase vibrancy as recommended in the Action Plan, complete a preliminary space study, and perform a structural assessment of the rooftop. Annual funding is included in this project for ongoing capital facilities maintenance needs, starting in FY 2022. Additional funding is included in FY 2026, but is subject to change pending the outcomes of the FY 2022 building studies.

- Braddock Metro Neighborhood Plan: The CIP includes two developer contribution/City matching funds established to fund community amenities identified by the Plan – the **Braddock Community Amenities Fund (CAF)** and the **Braddock Open Space Fund (OSF)**. The first project funded by the CAF, the Fayette Streetscape Project, which was identified as a priority by the Braddock Implementation Advisory Group, was completed in fall 2019. The CAF is estimated to accrue an additional \$450,000 in developer contributions in the next ten years for programming into the Capital Improvement Program, seen under the Braddock Road Area Plan - Streetscape Improvements project. The OSF is intended to fund a future one-acre park, with expenditures to date on the interim park. \$3.7 million in City funding was added to FY 2030 to support implementation.
- Beauregard Plan: \$69.4 million in NVTa and State and Federal Grants funding between FY 2022-2025 is budgeted for construction of the **West End Transitway**; \$36.5 million for the period FY 2023-2026 (primarily private development capital contributions) to reconfigure the intersection of Beauregard Street and Seminary Road to an **Ellipse**. Due to updated travel patterns and data, a study is being conducted to reevaluate the ellipse concept and explore alternatives to address existing and projected traffic conditions while also considering multi-modal accommodations. The study will not only identify the preferred alternative intersection improvement and concept-level design, but also include a cost estimate of the preferred alternative which will assist in determining a plan to obtain additional funding to finalize design and construct the project. The study will occur during FY 2022. Community engagement will begin in FY 2022 and a complete concept design will be determined by FY 2023.
- Eisenhower East Small Area Plan: Funding in the amount of \$2.2 million was transferred to the **Eisenhower Avenue Roadway** project budget to address a construction cost shortfall in FY 2020 via a supplemental appropriation ordinance. Transferred funds included \$400,000 from the Van Dorn Metrorail Station Improvements and \$900,000 in savings from the Montgomery Street Reconstruction project, and \$900,000 in excess CIP Bond Interest Earnings. The Van Dorn Metrorail Station Improvements have been completed by WMATA, and therefore the City's funds for this project were eligible to be reallocated. The Eisenhower Avenue project includes the construction of an additional westbound left turn lane and sidewalk/streetscape improvements from Mill Road to Elizabeth Lane, revising the Mill Road receiving lanes to accept the dual left turns from Eisenhower Avenue, converting the traffic circle at Eisenhower and Holland to a "T" intersection, and repaving the roadway between Holland Lane and Mill Road.

The existing **Eisenhower Avenue Metrorail station** includes \$6.8 million in prior year funding to reconfigure and enhance the bus platform area to accommodate increased development in the area. Overall improvements include renovation of the bus loop into a realigned street grid to serve future adjacent development, relocation of transit services and kiss and ride for improved efficiency, design and construction of an attractive pedestrian plaza in front of the station, bus shelters for rider comfort, and real-time bus information displays. These station improvements are contingent on the reconstruction of the loop roads surrounding the station by the adjacent developer. The project also includes near and longer term **pedestrian improvements across Eisenhower** at the Metrorail station to improve safety and access between the station and existing and future development to the north of Eisenhower Avenue. The near-term pedestrian improvements will be constructed in spring 2021, and the longer-term pedestrian improvements will be designed in 2021 and constructed as part of the platform improvements.

- Old Town North, Eisenhower West, Landmark Van Dorn Small Area Plans: \$1.8M in the ten-year CIP funding schedule for the study, design and construction of **Green Infrastructure** projects, updated to reflect recommendations to City Council in January regarding an expanded and accelerated program addressing the city's flood and stormwater infrastructure needs. Infrastructure is a critical element of the Master Plan and completion of these projects will provide the following benefits: increase stormwater infiltration, reduce stormwater runoff, provide stormwater treatment (nutrients and sediment), and decrease the volume of discharges; along with providing co-benefits including creating habitat, reducing heat island effect, and enhancing air quality.

Transportation projects recommended in Small Area Plans but not yet included in the CIP are prioritized and tracked in the unconstrained Transportation Long Range Plan biannually prioritized by the Transportation Commission, or have not progressed to the stage of being proposed as a capital project. Other infrastructure projects recommended in Small Area Plans may be projects that will be constructed as part of a developer contribution package.

Funding for Capital Project Planning and Review Staff

Over the past decade, the City's CIP has significantly expanded in scope, volume, and complexity, particularly as a result of an increased commitment to City and School facility needs, state and federal mandates regarding stormwater management and sanitary sewer systems, and significant investments in local and regional transportation systems. Consistent with FY 2021, the proposed CIP includes funding for staff directly working on the implementation of the City's capital plan.

Joint City/School Facility Planning: The Joint City Schools Facilities Master Plan recommended by the Ad Hoc Joint City-Schools Facility Investment Task Force was initiated in early 2020 and is anticipated to conclude in April 2021. The lists below highlight major City and ACPS capital facility projects proposed for funding in this CIP.

Major City Capital Facility Projects in the proposed FY 2022-2031 CIP:

• 2355 Mill Road CFMP	\$ 4,502,600
• Alexandria Transit - DASH CFMP	\$ 1,890,900
• City Hall Renovation and HVAC Replacement	\$63,800,000
• City Hall Swing Space	\$ 8,461,400
• DCHS Consolidation and Co-Location	\$81,624,000
• Fire Station 207 (Duke Street)	\$21,836,200
• Fire Station 208 Replacement	\$11,350,000
• Fleet Building CFMP	\$ 8,714,200
• Market Square Plaza and Garage Structural Repairs	\$ 8,861,800
• New Burn Building	\$ 2,888,200
• Office of the Sheriff CFMP	\$15,141,300
• Vola Lawson Animal Shelter	\$ 3,550,700
• Witter Wheeler Campus Funding reservation	\$32,960,000

Major ACPS Capital Facility Projects in the proposed FY 2022-2031 CIP

• Cora Kelly	\$ 86,728,000
• George Mason	\$ 80,060,700
• High School Project- Minnie Howard replacement	\$174,933,900
• New School	\$ 76,507,900
• Transportation Facility Modernization	\$ 6,710,000

P&Z Involvement in Development of the CIP

The Director of Planning and Zoning served on the CIP Steering Committee, the group responsible for outlining major policy issues facing the CIP and crafting a balanced CIP recommendation for the City Manager. Through this Committee, Planning and Zoning ensures that both the projects and the details of the projects are consistent with adopted planning policies, small area plans, and functional plans.

Staff believes that the proposed CIP maintains consistency with the City's Master Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT: Details are included in the Proposed FY 2022 – FY 2031 CIP.

STAFF:

Karl Moritz, Director, Department of Planning & Zoning
Morgan Rout, Director, Office of Management & Budget
Carrie Beach, Division Chief, Department of Planning & Zoning
Arthur Wicks, CIP Coordinator, Office of Management & Budget
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