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10-16-21
Zachary DesJardins

Dear Mayor Wilson, Members of the City Council and City Manager Jinks,

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) request that the City's FY23 budget include funding for two additional staff for the Complete Streets program, specifically for a Vision Zero program manager and a senior Complete Streets engineer. COVID-19 has laid bare the lack of staff for the Complete Streets program: one of its two members was reassigned to handle COVID-19 issues and has since been reassigned to stormwater duties and the Complete Streets program manager recently left in part due to lack of staff. We also request that position be filled as quickly as possible.

Since the Council adopted the Vision Zero resolution and action plan almost four years ago, no dedicated staff have ever been hired to implement this initiative. As a result, whenever a crash occurred, the two Complete Streets staff would drop whatever they were working on to respond with interim measures. While we applaud staff for being responsive, it significantly reduces staff time available for Complete Streets, Safe Routes to School, and other priorities. Now that no one appears to be in charge of Complete Streets, it is unclear whether even interim measures will be implemented.

The Complete Streets program has never had a dedicated engineer in the nine years since the City Council first approved the program. Staff instead rely on contractors or other T&ES engineers which slows program implementation as it makes incorporating community input more difficult. For example, staff could not make any changes to Commonwealth Avenue in response to community input because they had exhausted their contractor's budget and because they are focused on equity projects.

Although parents, students and staff completed walk audits to make it safer for children to walk and bike to school, only some of the recommendations have been implemented in the four years since the audits were published. Given COVID-19's implications for school buses and the national school bus driver shortage, implementing these recommendations years ago would have saved the city a lot of money in busing costs, reduced emissions and vehicle trips, and improved safety for children.

Lack of staffing has made it impossible to build protected bike lanes or upgrade existing bike lanes or pedestrian infrastructure in most cases during repaving, use any of the city's American Rescue Plan funding to implement projects, move forward in a timely manner with grants such as for the Upper King Street project, or apply for more grants that would improve traffic safety.

We respectfully request that the City Council request and the City Manager include at least two additional staff for Complete Streets in the FY2023 budget.

Sincerely,
Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee members and its officers
Josephine Liu, Erin Meter, Mary-Jane Roth and Zack DesJardins

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submitted by
Bobbie Fisher

Bobbie Fisher
Public Statement – 3 minutes
at
City Council Public Haring Meeting
Saturday, October 16, 2021 at 9:30am

I am an African American retired single woman, a homeowner and registered voter in Arlington County, Virginia. Today, I appear in-person at the City Council Public Hearing to have my VOICE heard!! I am a victim of Alexandria City government NEGLIGENCE and DECEPTIVE practices! FAILED to remove hazardous and dangerous City-owned trees on City-owned property that resulted in the loss of my vehicle.

July 21, 2021. A severe rainstorm hit Alexandria City. My car was parked on the street in front of Barrett Public Library on Queen Street - when 2 large dead tree branches fell on my car TOTALING it! I was inside the Library. I had NO idea a storm occurred until a library employee URGED me to go outside.

I ran outside. My car was CRUSHED! For, 5 hours I stood outside - **alone!** NO HELP from anyone at Barret Library! The Police showed up. The City Arborist showed up. **5pm.** A tow truck arrived taking me and my car home!

As a Black woman, I am sick and tired of hearing empty rhetoric from DEMOCATS running for office LYING to Black VOTERS, just to get our VOTE – with NOTHING in RETURN! I am NOT VOICELESS! My VOICE MATTER!!!

Alexandria City Government is responsible and **100% “legally liable”** for the care and maintenance of all trees located on City -owned property.

For three (3) months, I met with City officials only to be repeatedly told **"your claim will be DENIED."** So, why have victims file personal property claims only to be DENIED???

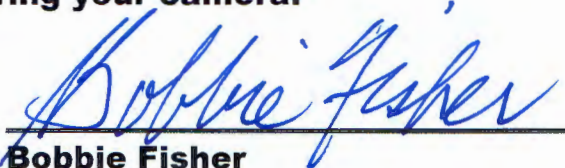
August 19, 2021. A Claims handler telephoned me representing Alexandria City. She said, she **just** received my complaint! Would, read it while we talked over the phone. Then, dismissed my claim **"as an act of God!"** The damages on my car was **"NOT an act of God!"** It was Alexandria gross NEGLIGENCE trying to escape FINANCIAL LIABILITY!!!

The City government, Council members and Alexandria Library 7-member Board, of 4 appointed women and Vice Mayor heard my cry for HELP via a Zoom Public Meeting. The new Library Board Chair response: **"We extend our sympathy for the unfortunate incident of two tree branches falling on your car while you were parked on Queen Street."**

Deceptive Practices. Alexandria City tried to COVER UP its NEGLIGENCE RUSH to removing the hazardous and dangerous conditions that existed on City-owned property it knew about since July 2020, last year! Question. Can a Black woman with **smoking gun EVIDENCE**, BE BELIEVED and win her case against the City at TRIAL!

I PLEDGE. NEVER to VOTE for the DEMOCRATIC Party who seek to push their **"Big Lie" - on Black Voters!** I URGE all residents to visit Barrett Library to see the TRUTH how Alexandria City government made sudden property changes to escape it's FINANCIAL LIABILITY! **Bring your camera!**

DATE SUBMITTED: Oct. 16, 2021


Bobbie Fisher