



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** JUNE 8, 2022

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**THROUGH:** JAMES F. PARAJON, CITY MANAGER /s/

**FROM:** KARL MORITZ, DIRECTOR, PLANNING AND ZONING

**DOCKET TITLE:**

FY 2023 Long-Range Planning Interdepartmental Work Program.

**ISSUE:** What planning work priorities should be established for FY 2023 and beyond?

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council review and approve the FY 2023 Long-Range Planning Interdepartmental Work Program.

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

The Work Program is presented early in the calendar year for Planning Commission and City Council feedback and guidance to help inform development of the City Manager's Proposed Operating Budget, after which a final Work Program is considered for adoption in May-June. This annual review ensures coordination of work, staffing and financial resources, and the opportunity for Planning Commission and City Council to ensure alignment of proposed planning work across departments with the City's Strategic Plan. This memo provides a brief summary of project highlights; descriptions of all projects are provided in Attachment 2.

**DISCUSSION:**

**Planning and Zoning**

The Draft FY 2023 Work Program proposed in January 2022 included an update to the City's Strategic Plan. Subsequently, in March 2022, Alexandria City Council adopted six strategic priorities for budget and policy decisions for the upcoming fiscal year. The resulting cohesive priority framework and business plans that are being developed serve the function of a Strategic Plan update, and in its place, staff is recommending a citywide **Vision Plan** process. The purpose of this process is to develop a community vision to guide how Alexandria will meet the challenges of the future as the City approaches the three-century mark (1749 - 2049). The community conversation will discuss how the City has changed through history, the challenges we face, and create a community Vision for how Alexandria will grow into a livable, green, and prospering city for all. An updated Vision for the future, with high-level planning principles, will be part of the Master Plan and inform future updates to Small Area Plans, the City's Zoning Ordinance, the land use chapter of the Master Plan, and other policy and regulatory documents.

Based on feedback from Planning Commission and City Council on the draft work program in January, and considering community needs and priorities, infrastructure, and anticipated future redevelopment sites, Staff recommends prioritizing an **Update to the Alexandria West Plan** (to include the Beauregard Plan) in FY 2023. Last comprehensively addressed in 1992, the Alexandria West land use recommendations need to be updated, particularly to address large-scale properties that have recently requested redevelopment, namely Southern Towers and Newport Village and market pressure to convert existing office space to residential uses. Further, there are specific elements of the 2012 Beauregard Plan that need updating, including the Seminary-Beauregard intersection, requests for some land use reconfiguration, such as on the Monday Properties site, and the developer contributions policy. Staff believes that a planning update for this area of the City is the highest small area planning priority and should begin in FY 2023.

Staff resources to conduct the proposed long-range planning work described above will be at capacity throughout FY 2023 and a portion of FY 2024. When staff begins discussion of the FY 2024 to FY 2025 work program, potential next planning efforts in the queue may include the Duke Street Plan Update and possible citywide planning work, pending the outcomes of the Vision Planning process.

City Council approves practical updates to the Zoning Ordinance on a regular basis. In addition to these, and until a broader Zoning Ordinance update is considered, Zoning staff will study, solicit public input, and bring a variety of higher-level **Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments** to hearing in FY 2023. The amendments are meant to streamline and modernize rules and regulations which regulate development and uses throughout the City and have been identified by City Council, Planning Commission, City staff, developers, and citizens.

In addition, Staff will continue the **Zoning for Housing** initiative to pursue a variety of regulatory initiatives to expand the production and affordability of housing in Alexandria. The project began at the start of FY 2021 to help the City meet its target of 2,250 additional committed and workforce level housing units by 2030 under the 2019 Regional Housing Initiative (RHI) and adopted by City Council Resolution in March 2020. A Prioritization Plan for Phase II (FY23 to FY24) and Phase III (FY24 to FY25) studies will be brought to the Planning Commission and City Council in fall 2022.

**PLANNING COMMISSION:** At their June 7 Public Hearing, Planning Commission recommended approval of the FY 2023 work program, including support for a Vision Plan and Alexandria West Plan Update as the City's next major planning efforts. In addition, several Commissioners encouraged as part of the community process for the future Vision Plan a discussion of systemic racism through Alexandria's zoning history.

**FISCAL IMPACT:** Work program items proposed for FY 2023 have City or grant funding identified.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. FY 2023 Interdepartmental Long-Range Planning Work Program (“Bar Chart”)
2. FY 2023 Project Descriptions
3. Presentation

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