



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** FEBRUARY 18, 2015

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

**FROM:** MARK B. JINKS, ACTING CITY MANAGER /s/

**DOCKET TITLE:**

Consideration of the Draft FY 2016 Interdepartmental Long Range Planning Work Program.

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**ISSUE:** What planning work priorities should be established for FY 2016?

**RECOMMENDATION:** Receive and provide comments on the revised draft planning priorities for FY 2016.

**BACKGROUND:** The Planning Commission on January 6, 2015 and the City Council on January 27, 2015 provided preliminary input on the Draft FY 2016 Interdepartmental Long Range Planning Work Program (see Attachment 3). Based on this input, staff revised the work program as indicated on a revised draft Interdepartmental Long Range Planning Work Program for the upcoming fiscal year (see Attachments 1 (arranged chronologically) and 2 (arranged by program areas)).

The input from the Planning Commission and City Council will help inform development of the FY 2016 City Manager's Proposed Operating Budget, scheduled to be released in the first week of March 2015. A final Interdepartmental Long Range Planning Work Program will be docketed for City Council approval in May 2015, after the adoption of the FY 2016 Budget.

**DISCUSSION:**

Based on input from the Planning Commission and City Council in January, the following revisions have been made to the Draft FY 2016 Interdepartmental Long Range Planning Work Program and are reflected in revised Attachments 1 and 2:

- The Old Town North Small Area Plan has been accelerated to show preparatory staff work and technical

analysis beginning in March 2015 and public engagement beginning in September 2015. The plan is anticipated to be completed in January 2017. Staff will have to accelerate work with landowners/developers to identify funds for staff and technical studies. The Old Town North Small Area Plan will include an exploration of pilot environmental initiatives, particularly related to energy.

- **Green Building Policy:** City staff will work with the Environmental Policy Commission over the next several months to explore an alternative work program for the Green Building Policy with the goal of accelerating work on key issues. The report back to the City Council in May will build on the analysis already completed by the EPC (outlined in the letter to Council dated Dec 18, 2014) and address four topic areas: benchmarking Alexandria's Green Building Policy compared to neighboring jurisdictions, identification of priority issues, the resources (staff, funds, and time) required to address those issues, and exploration of work models whereby the EPC shares in the work load. Staff and the EPC will reach out to stakeholders involved in developing the Green Building Policy for input in developing the work program. The Old Town North Small Area Plan will also be an opportunity for exploring enhanced green building initiatives.
- **Updating of the Environmental Action Plan (EAP):** Updating the existing EAP and having it adopted by City Council as a revised policy document involves the collaborative efforts of several City departments as well as public outreach program that could take a year or more to complete. This interdepartmental work program is currently under consideration by City Council. In the meantime, and as the first step in a planned incremental approach to updating the EAP, City staff and the Environmental Policy Commission (EPC) will work together through the end of FY2015 on the review of the existing EAP. Specifically, working with the Virginia Tech Alexandria Campus, staff and the EPC will: (a) review the City's existing sustainability efforts through meetings and discussions with key City staff; (b) carry out a sustainability gap analysis to inform future priorities; and (c) prepare an internal draft version of the key priorities, targets and action steps that can be used as the starting point for the work program under consideration. EPC and Staff intend to share this draft with Council before the end of FY2015 as well as a revised work plan recommendation for FY16. As part of this effort, Staff and the EPC plan to leverage other City planning efforts, such as the Bike & Pedestrian Master Plan, the CSO long-term control planning and the stormwater management efforts, to avoid duplication of effort. The North Old Town Small Area Plan under consideration for FY2016 might also represent an opportunity to pilot new Green Building policies, such as the Eco-District concept, which could assist in shaping the updated EAP.
- Two items have been added to the list of Ongoing Implementation Work/Special Projects: (1) support for regional transportation initiatives and (2) support for regional planning and policy initiatives.
- **Regional Transportation Planning**  
Many important regional transportation and transit planning initiatives are shown in the FY 2016 Interdepartmental Long Range Planning Work Plan, notably the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station, the West End Transitway, the Eisenhower West Transportation Study, and the update of the Transportation Master Plan, including the Pedestrian and Bicycle chapters of the Transportation Master Plan. There are also important transportation implications for all of the small area plan updates that Transportation and Planning staff will collaborate on. In addition, staff continues to allocate significant time to coordinating with regional agencies such as NVTA, NVTC, TPB, WMATA, and VRE to address issues related to state and federal funding for local and regional transportation projects, improving air quality and relieving congestion throughout the region, and providing an efficient and effective public

transportation network which connects the City to the rest of the region. Staff also continues to address ongoing issues such as potential transit options across the Woodrow Wilson Bridge, which could be a joint project with Prince Georges County in the lead.

- **Regional Planning and Policy Initiatives**

City staff participates in a variety of regional planning and policy initiatives, primarily through the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG). For FY 2016, staff will be participating in several initiatives including the Round 9.0 Forecast based on a new, regional economic model, and the Multi-Sector Working Group tasked with identifying a set of viable greenhouse gas reduction strategies.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Bar Chart: Draft Revised FY 2016 Interdepartmental Long Range Planning Work Program (arranged chronologically)
2. Bar Chart: Draft Revised FY 2016 Interdepartmental Long Range Planning Work Program (arranged by program areas)
3. January 21, 2015 Memo to City Council from Mark B. Jinks, Acting City Manager, on Consideration of the Draft FY 2016 Interdepartmental Long Range Planning work Program
4. Transportation and Environmental Services Memo to City Council, dated October 22, 2014, on Citywide Parking Work Plan
5. Powerpoint Presentation

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