



The Alexandria Furniture District



Between 1820 and 1860, Alexandria had a thriving cabinet and furniture-making industry, primarily along King Street, between Royal and Alfred streets. Among the city's best-known furniture makers-and business rivals-were Charles Koonies and James Green. Green's first shop was on King Street between Pitt and Royal streets, while Koonies' was located at the corner of King and Alfred streets, later moving here to King and Columbus. Their furniture reflected the change in customer taste from the elegant, straight lines of the Federal style to the ornate and curved details of Classical Revival. A prime example of this more ornate design is the pictured Koonies sideboard with its carved legs and curved doors. Perhaps what best contrasts Green and Koonies as furniture makers and businessmen was their approach to labor. Green hired itinerant workers and invested early in mass production techniques, while Koonies employed masters, journeymen, apprentices, pieceworkers, and skilled specialists in a more traditional craftsman model. Other furniture makers operating in the Alexandria furniture district were Harrison and C.C. Bradley, William H. Muir, and Robert Abercrombie; these shops shared Koonies' approach to hand-crafted, fine furniture using traditional methods.



Koonies Corner

Koonies moved his shop from its original location on King and Alfred streets to the northwest corner of King and Columbus streets in 1844. With the purchase of two more properties, Koonies Corner, as it came to be known, included a large residence, a furniture showroom and storage, shop space for manufacturing, and outbuildings, including a long shed for horses and vehicles. The growth of rail lines in Alexandria allowed furniture makers in the city to market and deliver their products to an ever-wider audience. In 1855, a fire devastated the Koonies compound, burning the manufacturing shop, a stable, a lumber shed, and the mill house. Then, the economic impacts of the Panic of 1857 spelled the end for Koonies' business; he died shortly thereafter. But, the Alexandria furniture district survived and continued into the Civil War period.



↔ Shopping

→ Barrett Library

→ Christ Church

↑ King Street 10 BLOCKS

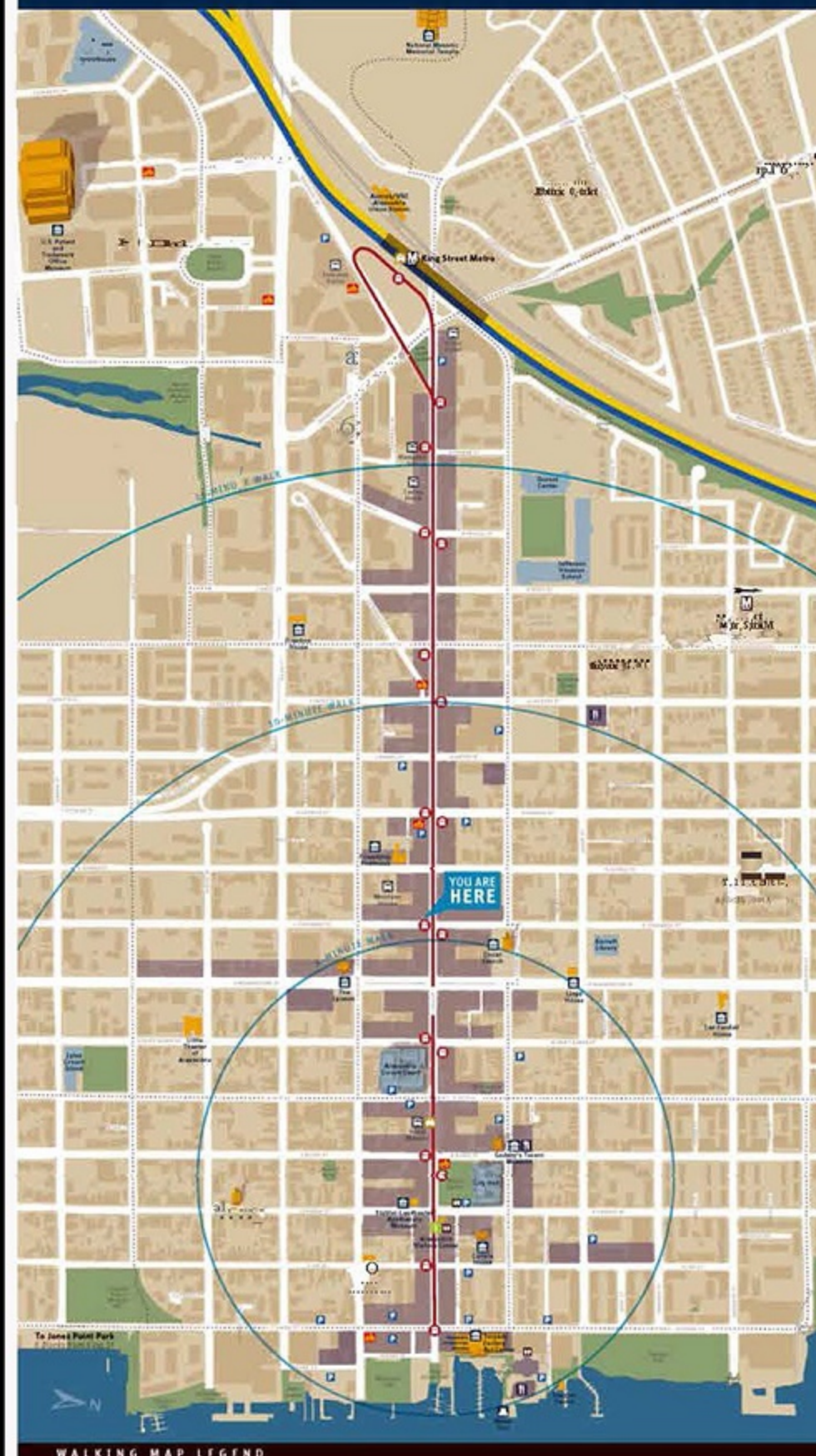
↪ Waterfront 8 BLOCKS

Trolley Departs

Every 10-15 minutes

Sun - Wed 10:00am -10:15pm

Thurs - Sat 10:00am - midnight



WALKING MAP LEGEND

Museum	Public Parking	Shopping & Dining	Park	Public Parks
Lodging	Trolley Stop	Bike Route	Water Text	Waterfront
Civic Destination	Metro Station	5-minute walk (1/4 Mile)	Public Parks	Waterfront