TALK TO ME

FOSTERING DIAGLOUGE IN TODAY’S WORLD

City of Alexandria | NCAC-APA Conference | June 20th, 2015
NOW, A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOU...
Where do you work?

(https://www.textizen.com/polls/2150)

A. Alexandria, VA       G. Prince William County
B. District of Columbia  H. Other
C. Arlington County      I. Other
D. Fairfax County
E. Montgomery County
F. Prince George’s County

Text the letter of your answer to:

703-810-7482

Standard message fees may apply. We won’t sell or share your number. More info: textizen.com/privacy.

POWERED BY Textizen
In which sector do you work?

A. Public
B. Private
C. Non-Profit
D. Other

Text the letter of your answer to:

703-810-7482

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In which type of organization do you work?

A. Community Development Organization
B. Business Improvement District
C. City/County Government
D. State Government
E. Regional Government
F. Federal Government
G. Other

Text the letter of your answer to:

703-810-7482

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What is your focus area within planning?

A. Urban Design  
B. Land Use Planning  
C. Geographic Information Systems  
D. Environmental Planning  
E. Community Development  
F. Other

Text the letter of your answer to:

703-810-7482

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“I am confident in my ability to engage most members of the community in urban planning issues.”

Text YES or NO to:

703-810-7482

Standard message fees may apply. We won’t sell or share your number. More info: textizen.com/privacy.
WHAT’S NEXT ALEXANDRIA

City of Alexandria
What’s Next Alexandria

Establishing the Engagement Framework

A community conversation about civic engagement and how Alexandrians can best participate in the decisions that shape their City.

• **Expand** the pool of participation
• Make it **easier to participate**
• Establish **shared expectations**
Community Dialogue
Completed Sept-June:

1. Civic Engagement Principles: Standards that *all* will follow. These serve as the FOUNDATION of the City’s Civic Engagement policy.

2. Civic engagement framework: A standard baseline process for all major projects.

3. Communication and Engagement Tools: Working to expand the number of people who participate, and improve the participatory experience.

4. Guidelines for successful implementation and evaluation: How will we make this work, and how will we measure success?
Civic Engagement Principles

+ Respect — civility and open-mindedness
+ Easy Participation - flexibility to participate in many ways
+ Early Involvement - frame issues before conclusions drawn
+ Inclusiveness and Equity - all are informed, empowered
+ Meaningful Engagement — open and unbiased process to solicit and incorporate community input
+ Mutual Accountability – community and government share in responsibility to inform/engage according to Principles
+ Transparency – open process, timely access to full info
+ Evaluation- assessment of performance and Principles
+ Sustained Collaboration – long term partnership
# Civic Engagement Framework

## Phase 1: Information
**Key Principles:**
- Meaningful Engagement
- Mutual Accountability
- Early Involvement
- Easy Participation
- Inclusiveness and Equity

**Engagement Activities:**
- Hold public meetings that are well-organized and include group work to hear community opinions
- Collect research and identify community concerns
- Educate community on important issues about the project (online and in person)
- Reach out to the community to encourage participation (phone calls, door knocks, flyers, online)
- Visit a project location as a group

**Tools:**
- Offer online participation (surveys, forums, social media)
- Use graphics, maps, 3D models, & pictures to explain project

**Products:**
- Community engagement plan
  A preliminary report that describes the project, schedule, tasks, and budget
- Clear goals for each step of the process that must be met before moving to the next step
- Community’s list of issues to address and their view of what we should be working toward

## Phase 2: Options
**Key Principles:**
- Sustained Collaboration
- Easy Participation
- Transparency
- Inclusiveness and Equity

**Engagement Activities:**
- Hold public meetings that are well-organized and include group work to hear community opinions
- Provide information about options, including what has worked well in other places
- Research possible options and potential impacts

**Tools:**
- Offer online participation (surveys, forums, social media)
- Hold group meetings with people who are affected by project
- Use graphics, maps, 3D models, & pictures to explain project

**Products:**
- Short term report with realistic options for achieving the shared view
- Provide tools to help the community choose between the options

## Phase 3: Recommendations
**Key Principles:**
- Transparency
- Easy Participation
- Sustained Collaboration
- Mutual Accountability
- Meaningful Engagement

**Engagement Activities:**
- Hold public meetings that are well-organized and include group work to hear community opinions
- Present final options and how/why they were selected
- Hold public hearings where community members can make statements for City officials to consider, revise, and/or approve

**Tools:**
- Offer online participation (surveys, forums, social media)
- Hold group meetings with people affected by project
- Hold meetings open to the public for elected officials to hear comments and make decisions

**Products:**
- Report with options that have been reviewed and chosen;
  Report will show how community ideas guided the final recommendation, and will include the proposed plan and schedule to complete the work

## Phase 4: Implementation and maintenance
**Key Principles:**
- Transparency
- Meaningful Engagement
- Sustained Collaboration
- Mutual Accountability
- Evaluation

**Engagement Activities:**
- Offer visits to project sites as needed
- Evaluate how well the plan is being carried out
- Identify someone from the City who is responsible for the work and who citizens can call
- Involve the community in carrying out the plan in each phase of the process

**Tools:**
- Provide a schedule of project activities to carry out the plan
- Notify community about public meetings

**Products:**
- Use objective measurements to determine if the community engagement in the decision-making process was successful
- Provide regular progress reports
What's Next Alexandria Handbook for Civic Engagement
Civic Engagement Policy

Establish as City policy the Civic Engagement Principles and concepts in the Handbook in order to more meaningfully engage the public in development of City policy, plans, projects:

– Public participation shall be welcomed and encouraged; all have an opportunity to express views on matters of public policy; and views are given fair and respectful consideration

– Ensure that prior to adoption of policies that significantly impact quality of life (1) the nature of the proposed policy or action is disclosed, (2) public has reasonable opportunity to be informed, consulted, involved, or to collaborate, and (3) decision-making body has had sufficient opportunity to consider and reflect before acting.
What will success look like?

• Working together to solve common problems.
• Public is well informed, has a clear understanding of how to participate.
• More people participate in (and benefit from) City decisions.
• Community takes an active role in organizing others.
• City decisions/actions are accepted because they reflect public participation in a transparent process.
• Engagement approach is consistent throughout City government.
• Community and government have mutual trust.
Implementation
EISENHOWER WEST SMALL AREA PLAN

City of Alexandria
Engagement Work Program

Phasing | Key Meetings | Online Activities

DRAFT EISENHOWER WEST SMALL AREA PLAN AND TRANSPORTATION STUDY WORK PROGRAM DIAGRAM

Pre-Preliminary Work
- Draft Draft Comments
- Comments Draft
- Work Program Draft
- Written Comments Draft

Phase 1: Information
- Engage Community Meeting
- Plan
- Online Activities

Phase 2: Options
- Engage Community Meeting
- Options
- Online Activities

Phase 3: Recommendations
- Engage Community Meeting
- Recommendations
- Online Activities

Phase 4: Implementation + Maintenance
- Engage Community Meeting
- Implementation
- Online Activities
Community Meeting #1: Issue Identification
Community Meeting #2: Visioning
Expressing Preferences

Sub-Area 1
High-Rise
1. Residential
2. Office
3. Retail/Neighborhood Services
4. Restaurants
5. Light Industrial

Sub-Area 2
Mid-Rise
1. Residential
2. Retail/Neighborhood Services
3. Restaurants
4. Light Industrial
5. Senior Living

Sub-Area 3
High-Rise
1. Residential
2. Office
3. Restaurants
4. Hotel
5. Retail/Neighborhood Services

Sub-Area 4
Mid-Rise
1. Residential
2. Office
3. Retail/Neighborhood Services
4. Large Format Retail
5. Restaurants
Community Meeting #3: Locating Centers and Connections
Community Meeting #4: Conceptual Land Use Options
CONCEPT C

OVERALL CONCEPT
Eisenhower Avenue as a great boulevard lined with ground-floor retail and mixed-use nodes anchoring either end.

NODES/ CENTERS
- Major mixed-use nodes at Metro and Clermont
- Smaller node at Trade Center

GREEN SPACES
- Backlick Run enhanced west of Boothe Park
- New park and stormwater management feature
- New park at west end of the plan
- Ped/bike bridges over tracks connect to Boothe and Brennan Parks

LAND USES
- Focus at Eisenhower Avenue as mixed-use retail street
- Office uses at either end and Victory Center
- Residential fills in west end of the plan

SCHOOL LOCATIONS
- General Location: WEST of the multi-modal bridge

Community Meeting #4: Conceptual Options
December 8, 2014
Community Meeting #5: Refined Land Use Option
Draft Concept Plan
(June 19th, 2015)
City encourages participation in Eisenhower West development plan

While residents remain fixated on development along areas of the Port City like the waterfront and Pimmit Yard, city planners want to make sure people don’t forget about other important planning projects in the works.

Specifically, staff wants to direct attention to the Eisenhower West neighborhood — west of Holmes Run and south of Pickett Street — which, despite infrastructure like the Van Dorn Street Metrorail station, Eisenhower West Steering Committee as a way to begin the planning process for the area, but want more residents to get involved and share their vision for future “centers of activity” and connection hubs early in the process.

“Even though meetings have begun and the planning process is underway, now is a great time to get involved,” said Mindy Lyle, chairwoman of the steering committee, in a statement. “Stay tuned for new online civic engagement platform, AlexEngage. There are also continuing opportunities to participate in person.”

The committee will host a community meeting December 8 at Bealey Central Library at 5005 Duke St. Staff will hold an open house beginning at 6:30 p.m., with a presentation and workshop at 7 p.m. For more information, officials encourage residents to visit the project website at www.alexandravi.va/gov/eis-
BUDGET CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

City of Alexandria
Making the Tough Decisions

Strategic Plan Goals

Long Term Outcomes

Programs & Activities

Public Input

Public Input
Civic Engagement Strategy

I: Online Prioritization of Long-Term Outcomes

II: Engage Board, Commission, Civic Group & Community Leaders

III: Public Meetings on Budget Policies & Strategies
Phase II: Engage Lay Leaders

Facilitators' role:
• Help participants do their work
• Listen with respect
• Explore a range of viewpoints
• Explore different solutions to an issue
• Explore disagreements; identify areas of common ground

Agenda
January 26, 2015
6:30 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.

1. Welcome & overview (2 min)
2. City government & budget process (15 min)
• City government structure
• Budget process
• FY 16 budget
3. Focus Area overview (5 min)
• Your Role
• Focus Area Budget
4. Quiet Time (15 min)
• Facilitators provide participants with
• Participants read and discuss
• Participants should be
• Participants can help achieve the
• Facilitators provide
• Participants explain
• Facilitators explain
• Participants explain
• Facilitators provide
5. Sticker Polling (15 min)
6. What program
7. Report out (10 min)
8. Facilitator:
   a. How was the
9. Report out (10 min)
10. Wrap-Up/Closing (5 min)

Small Group Discussion 1: Program

Objectives
The purpose of this discussion is for the group to:
• Hear different perspectives on our priorities for the FY2016 Budget
• Understand each other's interests and why we selected certain programs
• For more or less funding.

Note that we are not asking participants to come to agreement on their priorities.
You may need to remind them of that.

Questions/Prompts
• Start with introductions. Ask for name, any affiliations, or neighborhood.
• Does anyone want to share their top 3 priorities for program investment in 2016?
• Why did you choose those three?
• What about others? How are your top 3 priorities similar or different?
• How do they compare to others in the room based on the sticker polling?
• Try to give everyone an opportunity to share. Encourage discussion about why people selected certain outcomes.
• Explore differences - Disagreement is ok! If there is a lot of agreement at the table, ask someone to play devil's advocate.
• Repeat the exercise for the bottom 3 priorities.
   If you had money to invest in these programs, what would you do with it?
   Would you increase service? Improve service? Something else?
   For low priority programs, if services were reduced, what would the
   impacts be? Do you think it would affect other programs?
   What did you learn from this discussion? Are there any outcomes that you
   would think about differently?
   Do you think City officials have these kinds of conversations?
   Did it give them a sense of the tradeoffs that officials must make
   when setting priorities and funding programs?
   Ask for a volunteer to give a 2 minute report on behalf of your table. The
   report can focus on points of strong agreement/disagreement among the
   group, what they learned from the discussion, whether anyone gained a
   new perspective on certain outcomes.
Phase III: Public Meetings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Priority</th>
<th>Low Priority</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promote neighborhoods that are inclusive and diverse</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Affordable Housing Development &amp; Preservation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Home Ownership</td>
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<td>Housing Rehabilitation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Landlord Tenant Relations</td>
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**The City has a healthy environment that can be enjoyed by all residents**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>High Priority</th>
<th>Low Priority</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Quality Program</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resource Recovery &amp; Street Cleaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Lessons Learned

• Plan & get commitment in advance
• Meaningful discussion is possible with and without high-tech tools
• Trained facilitators are critical
• Less airtime for staff - more for community
• Use multiple engagement methods
• Reach out to existing leaders and networks
• Consistent communication
• Get comfortable with discomfort!
Q + A

- www.alexandriava.gov/WhatsNext
- www.alexandriava.gov/EisenhowerWest
- www.alexandriava.gov/Budget

How do you engage the community in your work?
TALK TO ME

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