



Accomplishments & Events

Community & Economic Development

Off-street public parking in the central business district increased in 1995 with the opening of the 200-space Church Square garage near historic Christ Church.

The garage is enclosed by 16 townhouses and three small office buildings.

Cameron Station Redevelopment. The U.S. Army in May accepted a bid of \$33 million by Greenvest of McLean, Va., for 93 of the 165 acres at the Cameron Station military base that will close in September. The developer has until May 1996 to finalize the sale. At that time, the property will be added to the City's real estate tax base. Under the reuse plan adopted by City Council in 1990, up to 1,910 housing units, including single-family and apartments, could be constructed on the site, along with the possibility of a small amount of retail space. The City has filed with the National Park Service to acquire 63 acres of Cameron Station for park and recreation uses. This fall, the Parks Commission will seek City Council approval of a recreation plan for the 63 acres. The developer will contribute a minimum of \$3.5 million to build recreation facilities, which could include a roller blade/ice skating rink, tennis courts, a soccer field, a bicycle trail, a lighted ball field, basketball courts, and improvements to the existing pond and playground areas.

Carlyle Project. This 80-acre site at the eastern end of the Eisenhower Corridor is in the midst of a massive transformation from a railroad yard to a major urban center. Approved by City Council in 1990, this mixed-use project of the Norfolk Southern Corporation is located on the south side of Duke Street at Holland Lane. Roads and water and sewer lines are under construction. The first phase includes a new 400,000-square foot Federal Courthouse that will be occupied by January. The IDI Group is building 178 condominium units in the 16-story Carlyle Towers East Building, the first of three high rises planned on that site. Time Life Inc. is building a five-story, 156,000-square-foot headquarters building on Duke Street.

Potomac Yard. The RF&P Corporation, which owns the former Potomac Railroad Yard, is proceeding with several development proposals for the site. Prior to developing the site, RF&P intends to relocate the main rail tracks from the western edge of the Yard to an area west of the Metrorail tracks. RF&P also plans to construct a new railroad bridge across Four Mile Run in 1996. In the spring of 1997, the company will open a 667,000-square-foot retail shopping center on 50 acres at the north end of the Yard near Jefferson Davis Highway. To the south, RF&P is building a 107,000-square-foot warehouse for use by the U.S. General Services Administration. RF&P has agreed to give the City an easement to use 10 acres of land immediately north of the Monroe Avenue Bridge for ten years to build three soccer fields. RF&P will also give the City \$500,000 to construct those fields. RF&P has also filed plans to construct

up to 272 housing units and up to 60,000 square feet of retail space at the former Piggyback Yard. Recent discussions among RF&P, the Virginia Retirement System (which owns RF&P), and several development groups interested in acquiring RF&P's real estate holdings may affect future development of the Yard.

Convention Center. The 1995 General Assembly authorized an independent study of the feasibility of a convention center at Potomac Yard. The study's \$100,000 cost was to be paid for jointly by RF&P Corporation, owner of Potomac Yard, and area local governments, including the City. In July, RF&P and its real estate holdings became the subjects of possible acquisition, and State Secretary of Economic Development Robert Skunda postponed indefinitely the appointment of a committee to oversee the study.

Residential Construction. With commercial office construction at a standstill throughout much of the region, development activity has focused on townhouse projects. Eight are currently under construction at various locations throughout the City. When completed, they will add 704 mostly two-and three-bedroom units to the City's housing stock. Within the eight projects, 275 units were completed as of June 30; 97 were under construction; and 332 units remain to be built. Developers have also obtained approvals or announced plans to construct nearly 1, 000 townhouse and low-rise condominium units over the next ten years.

Alexandria Economic Development Program Inc. (AEDP). This partnership of the City and the business community promotes expansion of the City's commercial tax base and the creation of new jobs. The Alexandria Economic Development and Tourism Board directs the AEDP's marketing efforts that target high technology firms, corporate headquarters, and national trade and professional associations. Other priorities include attracting a higher education institution, hotels, major retail stores, and business and professional services.

Enterprise Zone. In its first year, the Mount Vernon Avenue/Route 1 Enterprise Zone attracted 34 new businesses and over 161 new jobs to the City. The City continues to fund capital improvements and marketing efforts to encourage private sector investment in this area.

New Businesses. In November 1994, Inc. magazine recognized Alexandria as one of the top ten centers in the nation for Inc. 500 firms. New businesses and business expansions accounted for nearly a million square feet of space in the past year. Major businesses locating in Alexandria since January include: Systems Planning and Analysis, Inc.; the headquarters of Vie de France; Crate & Barrel Outlet; and the World Presidents Organization. Business attraction and retention efforts pushed the City's office vacancy rate to a record low of 6.7% in the first quarter of 1995, according to the commercial leasing firm of Cushman & Wakefield, Inc. As of July 1, the AEDP estimated that the total "class A" office space available for lease or purchase was 350,000 square feet, or 2.3% of the City's total office inventory.

Small and Minority Business Task Force. City Council, in conjunction with the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce, established this citizen/business Task Force in April to review the needs of and the

potential for small and minority-owned businesses in the City. The 13-member Task force is scheduled to submit its report by November.