

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS & EVENTS

### Transportation and Environment

**DASH Bus Service.** The City's DASH bus system, operated by the Alexandria Transit Company (ATC), carried more than 2.2 million passengers in FY 1996, maintaining the same patronage levels as in the previous year. DASH remained in service throughout the Blizzard of '96 and experienced one of its highest ridership periods of the year. Passenger fares covered 44% of operating costs, making DASH one of the most cost-effective transit systems in Virginia and the nation. Ten new DASH buses were received in May 1996 to begin replacing buses purchased when the bus system started twelve years ago and to expand service between the Eisenhower Corridor and Old Town.

**Metrorail Service.** Metro and RF&P Corporation, owner of Potomac Yard, entered into an agreement in late 1995 to construct a new Metrorail station at Potomac Yard. It will be Metro's first privately financed rail station, and will include a Virginia Railway Express station. Construction of both stations is expected to be completed by 2000.

Severe winter weather and federal government furloughs significantly impacted Metrorail ridership throughout the region. Average daily passenger boardings at the City's four Metrorail stations declined during FY 1996. To boost ridership, the City is working with employers to introduce transit subsidies for their employees and is continuing other promotional efforts. Ridership at the King Street, Braddock Road, and Van Dorn Street stations is down 4%, mirroring the trend throughout the region. The largest ridership reductions are at Eisenhower Avenue, where average daily boardings fell by nearly 16% due to the closing of the Woodward & Lothrop headquarters and the start of DASH shuttle bus service between the King Street and Eisenhower Avenue Metro stations in June 1995. Virginia Railway Express passengers who alight at Alexandria's Union Station ride free on the DASH shuttle, enticing commuters



Repairs to the Duke Street Bridge over the CSX rail tracks were completed in early June. The repairs were necessitated by soil conditions that caused the bridge's abutments to shift. An innovative engineering solution allowed four lanes of traffic flow throughout the 16-month reconstruction.

**Alexandria Rideshare.** The Office of Transit Services works with major employers to solve employee commuting and parking problems. DynCorp, the American Diabetes Association, and the American Society of Travel Agents are among 11 City employers that provide financial incentives to employees who use public transit.

**Potomac Yard Environmental Studies.** In July, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) issued the third in a series of Potomac Yard environmental studies prepared by the RF&P Corporation, owner of the Yard. The three studies stemmed from a 1992 Consent Order that required RF&P to investigate the nature and extent of contamination at the Yard and to develop a plan for mitigating its impacts. In November 1995, the City hired an environmental consultant, Carlos Stern Associates, to review and analyze the RF&P studies. The City's consultant agreed with RF&P and EPA that contaminants at the

bound for the Eisenhower Valley employment center to ride DASH.

**DOT Paratransit Service.** DOT ridership remained virtually unchanged in FY 1996. Approximately 4,270 trips were provided each month by participating taxicab companies to City residents who, because of disability, are unable to use Metro or DASH. Trips to destinations outside the City increased, thus increasing the overall average trip length to 5.3 miles and the City's subsidy for DOT to \$505,470 in FY 1996, nearly 12% above FY 1995. DOT riders pay a fare that is twice the cost of taking a similar trip on Metro or DASH. The fare for intra-City trips is \$1.50, but the average fare for travel outside the City is about \$2.25, based on the average trip length. The City continues to improve DOT service to meet the Americans with Disabilities Act requirements for compliance by January 26, 1997.



Groundbreaking for the new Eisenhower Avenue Interchange took place in April. Construction is expected to take about 18 months. The new interchange will link Interstate 95/495 to the Eisenhower Corridor, one of the City's primary development districts.

site pose a very low overall risk to human health, and that risks to the environment can be minimized by sedimentation controls, measures to control dust during construction, and the ongoing recovery of spilled petroleum products. After the public comment period for the latest Potomac Yard study closes on August 24, EPA will select measures that RF&P will be required to implement.

**Recycling.** In January, the City expanded its recycling efforts to include the weekly collection of newspapers (including magazines, catalogs, and telephone books). By changing from every other week to weekly collection, City recycling customers received double the service and double the convenience at no extra cost. This service has produced an 18% increase in tonnage collected. The Recycling Office also conducted on-site recycling assessments for businesses interested in trying to implement a recycling program. Businesses receiving City trash service may now participate in the City's curbside recycling collection programs.