



Photo by Richard Nowitz

AUGUST 2007

LOCAL MOTION

Bike to Work Day & Community Bike Ride – Successes!

Bike to Work Day 2007 — On May 18, 2007 the City of Alexandria celebrated the ninth year of participating in the nationally held Bike to Work Day event. More than 350 bicycle commuters converged on Market Square at City Hall to celebrate bicycle commuting and enjoy free food, beverages, and services offered by area businesses and organizations.



Alexandria regularly hosts one of the largest turnouts in the DC metropolitan area and was the first local jurisdiction in Virginia to host a Bike to Work Day event in 1999. For this year's event, organizers estimate that a record 6,600 people took part in Bike to Work Day activities across the metropolitan Washington, DC region.

Organized by the Washington Area Bicycle Association, the event featured 24 pit stops in Virginia, Maryland and the District of Columbia where bicyclists could stop and relax and listen to various speakers. Many bicyclists then joined "commuter convoys" headed for a rally at Freedom Plaza in the District.

In Alexandria, Mayor Bill Euille, Vice Mayor Del Pepper, City Manager James Hartmann, and Transportation & Environmental Services Director, Rich Baier, were at the Market Square pit stop to welcome bicycle commuters. City leaders support events like Bike to Work Day as a way to introduce more commuters to bicycling – a

transportation option that is clean, quiet, efficient, and much less costly than driving to work.

Bike to Work Day occurs each May, which is National Bike Month. At the Alexandria event, the City and local partners offered information on bicycle and transit commuting, food and beverages, and bicycle tune-ups.

Arlington & Alexandria Community Bike Ride — More than 900 bicyclists, volunteers, and exhibitors signed up for the annual Arlington & Alexandria Community Bike Ride on Sunday, June 3. Despite a drenching rain that started mid-morning, cyclists rolled out from Shirlington for the 23-mile community tour and the 7-mile family fun ride.

The City of Alexandria sincerely thanks all volunteers, participants, supporters, sponsors, and exhibitors for making Bike to Work Day and the Arlington & Alexandria Community Bike Ride successes! Thanks to all of the participants, sponsors, and volunteers for making it happen. We look forward to seeing you again in 2008!

Visit www.alexride.org for links to supporters and to view event photos.



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Bikeways Map Makes its Debut

The new Alexandria Bikeways map of trails and on-road bike routes is now available! Replacing the previous map, which has been used for the last 10 years, the new bikeways map includes useful phone numbers and resources, a great regional trails map, safety tips, and more.

WHY A BIKEWAYS MAP?

A “bikeway” is a street or shared-use path either designed specifically for bicycle travel or with key design elements that support safe bicycle travel. A bikeway may be a street with a bicycle lane, a street with shared use lane markings, or a shared-use (off-street) path.

It is important to note that streets referred to as “part of the City’s bikeway network” are different from other streets because they include some element that helps bicyclists feel safer while riding. Bicyclists are allowed on all streets in Alexandria; however, not all streets may include design elements to improve real (or perceived) safety.

Get Your **FREE** Alexandria Bikeways Map Today!

To obtain a printed copy, stop by your local bike shop, the Old Town Transit Shop, City Hall, or any of the City’s recreation centers. You can also e-mail your mailing address to Yon Lambert at yon.lambert@alexandriava.gov. Please be sure to say “Alexandria Bikeways Map” in the subject line. The Alexandria Bikeways map is also available online at www.alexride.org along with links to maps and resources for neighboring jurisdictions.



Photo by Richard Nowitz

Potomac Yard Construction Forces Changes On Two Alexandria Trails

The construction at Potomac Yard is forcing changes this summer on two well-used Alexandria pedestrian and bicycle paths.

The existing shared-use path adjacent to Route 1 (Jefferson Davis Highway) from Windsor Avenue to East Glebe Road will be closed for 90 days beginning on or around July 9 and relocated thereafter. The closure will allow roadway grading and storm drain installation. The path is the only pedestrian and bicycle facility along the east side of Route 1.

To compensate for the closure, Potomac Yard construction crews will post trail detour signs, provide pedestrian and bicycle safety improvements to the crossing of Route 1 at East Custis Avenue, and provide shuttle service for persons with mobility impairments. During the detour, contact information for the shuttle service will be posted on signs at the site, at detour locations, and online at www.PotomacYardAlexandria.com and www.alexride.org.

During the closure, construction crews will also construct and relocate a temporary trail slightly closer to Route 1. The temporary trail – which will run from East Custis Avenue to East Glebe Road – will open on, or prior to, October 9, 2007.

At Four Mile Run Park, the trail that runs east from the north end of Commonwealth Avenue toward Route 1 will be relocated for approximately one month beginning July 23 to allow for construction of a water main. This trail in Four Mile Run Park provides a major pedestrian and bicycle connection from bicycle lanes on Commonwealth Avenue to Four Mile Run and further east to the Mount Vernon Trail. Construction crews will begin installing a temporary trail in early July and plan to divert pedestrian and bicycle traffic on or about July 23. The existing trail will be rebuilt and restored to its current alignment by the end of August. Pedestrian and bicycle access from Commonwealth Avenue to Route 1, and the bridge leading to the north side of Four Mile Run will be maintained at all times. For updates on trail construction, visit www.alexride.org.

Carshare Alexandria! A Hit With Residents & Commuters

In March, the City of Alexandria held a Carshare Alexandria! event in Market Square. Although the weather was cool, many residents and commuters talked with Zipcar, Flexcar, and City representatives to learn about the benefits of living a car-lite or car-free lifestyle through the use of carsharing.

Carsharing is exactly that. Individuals become members of a carshare agency and share vehicles by reserving one when needed.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS: INTRODUCING...BEN

Ben is considering selling one of the two vehicles he has for his household because his wife regularly uses one during the day and he takes the bus to work. It's only occasionally that he and his wife need a vehicle at the same time. Ben's "Ah-ha!" moment hit while reading *How to Live Well without Owning a Car* by Chris Balish. "This is something we can easily do," he explained to his wife. "And, we'll save thousands of dollars!"

Ben signs up to become a member in a carshare agency such as Flexcar or Zipcar. The carshare agency sends him a member card.

Because this is his first membership in a carshare agency, Ben goes to www.alexride.org and completes and submits the necessary paperwork to get reimbursed from the City for his membership fees.

Then it happens – the opportune time to try his new carshare membership. Ben is due for his semi-annual dental cleaning and will need a car in the morning to get to his appointment which is not easily accessible by public transportation. He goes online to reserve a carshare vehicle.

At the reservation time, Ben takes the bus to the carshare vehicle located at the King Street Metrorail station. He uses his member card to enter the vehicle, goes to his dentist appointment, and then returns the vehicle. From there, he heads to work on Metrorail.



Ben is charged for the time he used the carshare vehicle, which includes fuel and insurance.

Ben is smiling. Yes, he wants to show off his clean, pearly whites, but more so, he now knows he can confidently sell one of his vehicles without being deprived the convenience of car ownership. And saving thousands of dollars is something to smile about!

Two carsharing companies provide service in Alexandria – Zipcar and Flexcar. To encourage a car-free or car-lite lifestyle the City provides residents and businesses a monetary incentive for first-time memberships in either carshare company. Residents will be reimbursed membership and application fees. Alexandria businesses receive reimbursement for up to \$50 for the business membership and half of each employee's application fee.

There are a lot of Bens out there – could you be one? Enjoy the service a car provides minus the costs – sign up to carshare today! Then visit www.alexride.org or call 703-838-3800 to request reimbursement for your membership.

BENEFITS OF CARSHARING

- ▶ Increases use of more efficient and environmentally friendly mode of travel - bicycling, walking, public transportation, carpooling/vanpooling.
- ▶ Reduces personal vehicle usage up to fifty percent.
- ▶ Encourages trip chaining.
- ▶ Enables households to give up owning second and third vehicles.
- ▶ Each carsharing vehicle replaces four to eight privately owned cars.
- ▶ Decreases vehicle ownership.
- ▶ Reduces parking demand.
- ▶ Lessens traffic congestion.
- ▶ Improves air quality.
- ▶ Less costly than owning and operating a personal vehicle.



ATTENTION EMPLOYERS!

Does Your Staff Want a Shorter Commute?

City programs make it easier for them to live near work!

Want to help your employees live closer to work? The City of Alexandria offers a range of homebuyer assistance programs that provide value-added benefits to both employees and employers. Helping employees live near the work site promotes environmentally-friendly community goals through shorter commuting times, resulting in reduced air pollution and wear and tear on our roads. Employees also experience greater work-life balance by using the time saved from a shorter commute toward visiting friends and family and pursuing personal activities. These programs not only make mortgage payments more affordable, but increase the number of homes affordable to first-time buyers.

The City offers up to \$50,000 in down payment and closing cost assistance through the Homeownership Assistance Program (HAP) and Moderate Income Homeownership Program (MIHP). In addition, below market rate mortgage financing is available to first-time homebuyers with incomes as high as \$135,400 through the City's FlexSPARC Program. Participants must be first-time homebuyers, work or live in the City of Alexandria, and be purchasing a home located in the City. To learn more, contact Shane Cochran, Alexandria Office of Housing, at 703-838-4622.

Commuter Connections Awards Local Companies for Raising the Bar on Commuter Benefits



On June 26, 2007, Commuter Connections held the Employer Recognition Awards ceremony, honoring three regional companies for raising the standard of commuter benefits offered to employees.

The event praised employers who have voluntarily implemented outstanding commuter benefit programs to encourage their employees to use transit, vanpools, carpools, bicycling, and telework.

Nicholas Ramfos, Director of Commuter Connections explains, "Thousands of commuters every day are sitting in traffic, contributing to air pollution, wasting gasoline, and increasing their own stress. The organizations we've recognized today have taken serious efforts to reverse this trend, and to help their employees find a smarter way to work."

DISCOVERY COMMUNICATIONS, SILVER SPRING, MD – INCENTIVES AWARD

More than half of the company's 2,526 employees participate in the commuter benefits program. Benefits include:

- ▶ Transit subsidy of \$60 per month.
- ▶ \$350 reimbursement for cyclists for bike purchase.
- ▶ \$100 reimbursement for athletic shoes for walking to work.
- ▶ Discounted and preferential parking for carpools and vanpools.
- ▶ Free shuttle between work sites.

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ATTENTION EMPLOYERS! (Continued from page 4)

FIDELITY & TRUST, BETHESDA, MD – MARKETING AWARD

Generating awareness about the variety of commuting options available to staff is what Fidelity & Trust does best.

- ▶ The designated transportation coordinator provides information to staff throughout the year.
- ▶ The company hosts “Commuter Information Days” for employees.
- ▶ New hires receive extensive commuter benefits information in orientation.

The company also offers a \$65 transit subsidy, carpool and vanpool ridematching, flexible work schedules, and a casual telecommuting program.

BLACKBOARD, WASHINGTON, DC – TELEWORK AWARD

In response to workers’ calls for more flexibility and teleworking opportunities, the company assembled a team to hold focus groups to learn how it could best serve the needs of its 500 workers.

- ▶ Program began in 2005.
- ▶ Employees telework an average of two days each week while some telework full-time.

Teleworkers enjoy the benefit of more time for work and family and realize a savings of up to \$4,000 annually on commuting costs.

Safe Routes to School

More schools express interest in walking, bicycling improvements

Initial funding for Safe Routes to School education and encouragement programs will go to five schools that responded to City and Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) inquiries. They include Francis Hammond Middle School and the elementary schools of Jefferson-Houston, Charles Barrett, James K. Polk, and George Mason.

Now that additional funding is available, more schools are making preparations to begin Safe Routes to School programs. The Maury Elementary School PTA, for example, is actively engaged in establishing Safe Routes to School education and encouragement programs for students. Located on Russell Road, Maury is already within a walkable neighborhood. Residents are fortunate to have parents like Glenn Bailey, who bicycles with six-year-old son, Mark, from the school to their home in Del Ray every day.

“It’s something I really enjoy being able to do with my son,” says Glenn. Mark rides in each morning with his mother and then home with dad year round – including the dead of winter and rainy mornings.

The Baileys have set the pace and the PTA is now actively engaging administration to find out how to encourage active living among its students.



Mark and Glenn Bailey make their way by bike

Can't Get Enough Local Motion?

Visit www.alexride.org for additional Local Motion news:

- ▶ **Safe Routes to School**
City to Receive Funding for Major Initiative
- ▶ **Attention Employers!**
Telework!VA
- ▶ **Transportation Funding Initiatives**
Move City, Region, & State Forward

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Contact us

Public Transportation, Rideshare, Carshare, Trip Planning, Community Outreach, Employer Services

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Stay informed! Sign up for eNews – Transportation Alternatives

Whether it's updates to the Safe Routes to School program, a community meeting you won't want to miss, or an upcoming carshare event, stay informed by signing up for eNews – Transportation Alternatives. Visit www.alexride.org to subscribe.

AlexRide.org

ALEXANDRIA RIDESHARE



OUR MISSION: The City of Alexandria's Office of Transit Services and Programs is committed to developing and administering plans and programs that provide residents, commuters, and visitors the transportation tools necessary to efficiently get to, from, and through the City while ambitiously decreasing traffic congestion and air pollution, resulting in a favorable quality of life for residents and making the City an ideal destination for all.

In compliance with the American with Disabilities Act, this publication is available in alternate formats. Please e-mail Donna Norfleet at donna.norfleet@alexandriava.gov or call 703-838-3800 (TTY 703-838-5056).

The City of Alexandria is a member of



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