

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: NOVEMBER 28, 2013

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: RASHAD M. YOUNG, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: UPDATE ON THE EISENHOWER WEST SMALL AREA PLAN AND CONSIDERATION OF A RESOLUTION TO ESTABLISH AN EISENHOWER WEST STEERING COMMITTEE

ISSUE: Update on the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan and Establishment of an Eisenhower West Steering Committee.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council:

- (1) Receive the update;
- (2) Approve the resolution establishing an Eisenhower West Steering Committee ("Steering Committee");
- (3) Request that the Chairs of the Planning Commission, Transportation Commission, and Environmental Policy Commission and Parks and Recreation Commission each nominate a member from their commission to serve on the Steering Committee; and
- (4) Authorize the City Manager to appoint the remaining members and designate the Chair of the Steering Committee.

EISENHOWER WEST SMALL AREA PLAN UPDATE:

The FY 2014 Interdepartmental Work Program approved by City Council on May 29, 2013 identified the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan as the next major land use planning effort to begin in FY 2014. Staff has developed a proposed outline for the planning process, which will follow the principles, framework and strategies outlined in the *What's Next Alexandria* Civic Engagement Handbook and will be shared with the community for review before the process begins. The small area planning process will have an anticipated duration of 18 months, with the timing of the Plan's kickoff depending on the timing of securing consultants. It is anticipated that the Steering Committee will begin meeting in January or February, and the first public meeting will be held in March, after the consultant team is hired.

In their April 2013 letter to City Council, a self-organized Eisenhower West Landowner Group indicated their support for starting the Eisenhower West Plan in FY14 and offered to provide financial assistance for unfunded consultant support for this purpose. City staff is working with the landowner group on a memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the City and the landowner group. When finalized, the MOU will be an agreement between the landowner group and the City for the landowner group to contribute funds in the amount of \$440,000 for the City to engage the necessary consultants to carry out the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan, including support for general planning, civic engagement, infrastructure and environmental analysis, economic analysis, developer contributions analysis and the transportation study. This is in addition to the \$175,000 that the City has budgeted for transportation studies for this planning process. It is anticipated that the MOU will be executed in December 2013.

As discussed with City Council at the May 29, 2013 Legislative Session T&ES will begin the associated Eisenhower West transportation study prior to the March 2014 public launch of the Eisenhower West Small Area planning effort. It is anticipated that the study will take about 9 months and be completed in early fall 2014. The transportation study will have three key components, including:

- Serve as the transportation element / analysis of the SAP, which will include the analysis of various land use scenarios to be further explored in the SAP;
- Conduct additional analysis of the Multi-modal bridge concept that was recommended in the Landmark/Van Dorn Corridor Plan (adopted in 2009);
- Conduct additional analysis of the previously proposed extension of the Clermont Connector between Eisenhower Avenue and Duke Street (Eisenhower to Duke Connector) to determine/confirm that recent and future planned improvements have and will meet the intent of the original VDOT I-95 Eisenhower Connector interchange project, thereby negating the need for such a connector and therefore any need to reimburse VDOT for the project costs.

Staff is recommending appointment of an Eisenhower West Steering Committee to provide guidance on process related issues, including review and input on the proposed engagement process, the small area plan boundary, tools and strategies for engagement, agenda setting, community outreach and communications, among other tasks. Larger community meetings will complement the Steering Committee work, focusing on issue identification, visioning, and the plan framework. Online engagement will play an integral role in updating the public on the progression of the planning process, and providing a platform for polling, comments, and feedback on specific questions. The Steering Committee will also weigh in on some technical content elements, such as the project scopes and development scenarios for consideration in the transportation study.

EISENHOWER WEST STEERING COMMITTEE

Staff recommends establishing an Eisenhower West Steering Committee as described below:

Mission: The mission of the Eisenhower West Steering Committee is to provide guidance to city staff on issues of process related to the Eisenhower West Plan.

Tasks: The Steering Committee will provide guidance during the Eisenhower West planning process, to include both the transportation study and Small Area Plan. The Committee's main role will be to provide guidance on process related issues, including review and input on the proposed civic engagement process, tools and strategies for engagement, meeting agenda setting, outreach and communications, among other tasks. They will also weigh in on some technical content elements, such as the project scopes as well as development scenarios for consideration in the transportation study. The main community planning work, such as identifying issues, developing a vision, considering options, and selecting recommendations will be completed through community wide meetings and online engagement.

Steering Committee Composition: The Steering Committee is proposed to consist of twelve members appointed by the City Manager. The City Manager will ask chairs of the City commissions below to each nominate a member from their commission. The City Manager will also ask the heads of civic and homeowners associations, business organizations, and landowners group for nominations. The City Manager will designate one of the twelve members to serve as the Chair of the Committee. The Steering Committee is proposed to have the following representation:

Community representatives	(4)
<i>(with the goal of not more than one from the same development)</i>	
Planning Commission member	(1)
Transportation Commission member	(1)
Environmental Policy Commission member	(1)
Parks and Recreation Commission member	(1)
Business Organizations	(3)
Landowners Group	(1)
Total	(12)

Process and Reporting: The following decision making structure would be utilized:

- Formal voting will only be used to get a sense of the group preferences.
- In cases where common ground cannot be identified, dissenting members may include a minority opinion report or letter to ensure an accurate reflection of the viewpoints of the Steering Committee.
- The Steering Committee will support the public outreach process by reporting back to the boards, commissions, organizations and civic groups that they represent and communicate to the Steering Committee any positions, comments, or advice from the groups they represent.

Expectations of Members:

- Attend every meeting. When absence is unavoidable, members will need to make up for missed meetings by reviewing all information and completing any assignments;
- Arrive at meetings prepared by doing any assigned reading or activities;
- Support the process and each other in finding solutions to the assigned tasks; and
- Serve as a conduit to the community or commissions by keeping them informed of the activities of the Eisenhower West planning effort and bringing their ideas and concerns back to the group.

Responsibilities of the Chair:

- Preside over meetings;
- Serve as a spokesperson for the Steering Committee; and
- Work with City staff to set agendas.

Communication and Outreach: Consistent with the principles of *What's Next Alexandria*, City staff will keep the public informed of the schedule, issues, materials and progress of the Steering Committee through the City's Eisenhower West Small Area Planning process webpage (www.alexandriava.gov/EisenhowerWest) as well as multiple other outreach methods including eNews, social media, mailed postcards, posted flyers and community volunteers. Steering Committee meetings will be open to the public.

Staff Support: City staff will provide support to the Steering Committee through an Interdepartmental City Work Group, led by staff of the Planning and Zoning Department with major work components executed by the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services. The Work Group will also include staff from other departments and offices such as the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, the Alexandria Economic Development Partnership, the Office of Housing, and the Department of Project Implementation.

Next Steps: It is intended that the Steering Committee will begin meeting in January 2014 and meet regularly to discuss the topics outlined above. The first topic will be the proposed civic engagement process for the Eisenhower West Plan. In addition, staff envisions formal updates to the Planning Commission and City Council on the status and progress of the Steering Committee and Eisenhower West planning process.

Sunset: The Steering Committee will sunset upon City Council approval of the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan.

ATTACHMENT: Draft Resolution

STAFF:

Mark Jinks, Deputy City Manager

Faroll Hamer, Director, Department of Planning and Zoning

Richard Baier, Director, Transportation and Environmental Services

DRAFT RESOLUTION NO.

WHEREAS, City Council wishes to establish a Eisenhower West Steering Committee;
and

WHEREAS, the Eisenhower West Steering Committee will comment on the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan and conduct specified tasks outlined in this resolution.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED
BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA:**

1. That there is hereby established the Eisenhower West Steering Committee (the "Steering Committee").
2. That the Steering Committee shall consist of 12 members, and the composition of the group shall be as follows:

Community representatives	(4)
<i>(with the goal of not more than one from the same development)</i>	
Planning Commission member	(1)
Transportation Commission member	(1)
Environmental Policy Commission member	(1)
Parks and Recreation Commission member	(1)
Business Organizations	(3)
Landowners Group	<u>(1)</u>
Total	(12)

3. That the Chairs of the above named City commissions shall nominate a member of their group to serve on the Steering Committee.
4. That the City Manager will ask for nominations from the heads of civic and homeowners associations, business organizations, and the landowners group for appointment of the remaining slots.
5. That the City Manager shall designate the Chair of the Steering Committee.

6. That the mission of the Steering Committee shall be to provide guidance to City staff on the Eisenhower West planning process.
7. That the Steering Committee complete the following tasks:
 - a. Provide guidance on process related issues.
 - b. Review the civic engagement process.
 - c. Advise on tools and strategies for engagement, agenda setting, outreach, and communications.
 - d. Offer input on some technical content elements, such as project scopes and development scenarios for consideration within the transportation study.
8. That the Steering Committee need not necessarily develop a consensus position, broker a compromise or take formal votes. There may be differing opinions reported to City Council.
9. That staff assistance to the Steering Committee shall be managed by the Department of Planning and Zoning with assistance from other City departments and offices as needed.
10. That the Steering Committee shall meet on a regular basis.
11. That the Steering Committee shall forward a letter to the Director of Planning and Zoning, which shall include comments on the Eisenhower West planning process to be included in the final staff report.
12. That the Steering Committee shall sunset when the Eisenhower West Small Area Plan is approved by City Council.

Adopted:

WILLIAM D. EUILLE MAYOR

ATTEST:

Jacqueline M. Henderson, MMC City Clerk