

# City of Alexandria, Virginia

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## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** MAY 22, 2019

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER

**DOCKET TITLE:**

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Public hearing and consideration FY 2020 Long Range Planning Interdepartmental Work Program.

**..BODY**

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**ISSUE:** What planning work priorities should be established for FY 2020?

**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council adopt the proposed Long-Range Planning Interdepartmental Work Program for FY 2020.

**BACKGROUND:** In January 2019, the Planning Commission and the City Council provided input on the Draft FY 2020 Long Range Planning Interdepartmental Work Program to help inform both the FY 2020 budget process and the final FY 2020 Work Program. In addition, at its regular meeting on February 26, the City Council adopted a 2019 City Council Work Program to identify the policies and initiatives Council will work on during the calendar year. Based on Council and Commission input, as well as necessary updates to timing of some planning work, staff has prepared a revised draft FY 2020 Work Program, provided as Attachment 1 (“Bar Chart”), for final review and adoption. At its May 7, 2019 public hearing, the Planning Commission voted to recommend adoption of the Long-Range Planning Interdepartmental Work Program for FY 2020 as presented. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0. Description of all projects included in the work program as well as background on the process for developing the overall draft work program can be found in Attachments 2 and 3 respectively

**DISCUSSION:** The following sections provide discussion on the main land use planning efforts scheduled for FY 2020 as well as primary changes proposed to the draft work program presented at the work sessions in January 2019. The staff report associated with the January 2019 work session, provided as Attachment 3, provides further background and highlights the four themes reflected in the proposed work program: Amazon HQ2 and Virginia Tech Innovation Campus, Equity and Affordable Housing, Mobility Initiatives, and continuation of transit corridor/growth crescent planning.

In FY 2020, land use planning will focus on completion of the *Eisenhower East Plan Update* (anticipated for September 2019) and an update to the *Mount Vernon Avenue Plans* (the Arlandria Action Plan and the Mount Vernon Avenue Business Area Plan). With regard to the latter, discussions with stakeholders regarding the scope of the plan update have surfaced a number of potential topics:

- 1) Business District sustainability, competitiveness, and unique cultural identity;
- 2) Update to guidelines for redevelopment sites and Leslie Avenue;
- 3) Implementation priorities and funding;
- 4) Pedestrian safety and accessibility;
- 5) Historic preservation;
- 6) Equity in the provision of services and infrastructure;
- 7) Preservation and potential expansion of housing affordability; and
- 8) Neighborhood infill. Phase 1 of the planning process is slated to begin in September with a series of listening sessions and information gathering in both neighborhoods to identify and develop a planning process responsive to community concerns and priorities, followed by a check-in with Planning Commission and City Council prior to initiating the planning work.

The potential scope of the Plan and size of the planning area, encompassing two distinct neighborhoods, will likely require more time than recent planning efforts, such as South Patrick Street and Landmark Mall, which featured significantly narrower scopes and geographies. Therefore, the duration of the Mount Vernon Avenue process is anticipated for approximately 18 months beginning in September 2019, with potential for completing some elements of the work in phases during that time.

Another major planning effort that will begin in FY 2020 is the *Joint City Schools Facilities Master Plan* to create a roadmap that addresses citywide facilities needs, including a common process to develop and evaluate capital projects, opportunities for collaboration, ways to implement effective project design and project planning; strategies for maximum cost efficiencies, reflecting ongoing fiscal responsibility in the City's and ACPS' CIP; and allowing both the City and ACPS to maximize the use of real estate while making smart decisions about future needs.

In the Spring of 2020, the City will initiate the *Duke Street Area Plan*, a planning effort for the area around Duke Street west of Old Town generally between Dove Street and Wheeler Avenue (the specific plan area remains to be mapped out). The Small Area Plan for this area of the City was last updated in 1992 and multiple sites have demonstrated interest in or a high likelihood for future redevelopment, including ARHA's Cameron Valley property. The planning effort will be informed by the Witter Wheeler Feasibility and Campus Master Plan (anticipated for Fall 2019 completion) and will be coordinated with planning for the Duke Street Transitway. Duration of the Duke Street Area Plan public planning process is anticipated for Spring 2020 to Spring 2021.

Already underway and planned for the duration of FY 2020 is the City's *Census 2020 Complete Count* effort. A City Council-appointed Committee will lead development and implementation of a communications and engagement strategy in pursuit of a "complete count" for all

Alexandria residents. Since many funding, budget and other decisions are based on a locality's population, and the decennial census is the one chance every ten years to get it right, it is important that every Alexandrian be counted.

Open space planning in FY 2020 will include a number of initiatives, including completion of the *Pocket Park Plan* in the fall, and beginning three new efforts: a *Public Open Space Policy Plan*, *Dog Park Master Plan Update*, and a *Stream Valley and Trail Plan*.

The list below reflects other notable changes or additions made to the Draft Work Program since it was presented in January 2019 and which, if approved, may require adjustments to City Council's 2019 work program:

- Timing for the start of the planning for the *Virginia Tech Innovation Campus* has been extended to accommodate Virginia Tech's need for additional time.
- Timing for the start of the *North Potomac Yard CDD Concept Plan and Conditions update* has been extended. The updated CDD will enable Phase 1 redevelopment (the 20-acre theater site adjacent to the future Metrorail Station) of North Potomac Yard to proceed.
- The timing for completion of the *Duke Street Area Plan* has been shifted from Fall 2020 to Spring 2021, allowing sufficient time for a robust community process to develop a new long-term vision for this area which has not been reviewed since 1992, as well as sufficient time for technical studies (including a transportation study and coordination with the transit corridor study).
- A citywide *Public Open Space Policy Plan* has been added to FY 2020 to implement the Environmental Action Plan and Open Space Master Plan goal to increase the publicly accessible open space quantity and improve its environmental quality, management, and social benefits.
- An *Update to the 2009 Urban Forestry Master Plan* has been added to FY 2020 to ensure that the goals around urban forest health and canopy coverage are progressing, and that additional elements, such as planting programs and citizen engagement, grow the City's urban forest grows into the future.
- An *Update to the Parks and Recreation Master Plan* has been scheduled for FY 2021 to provide a broad policy and management framework to guide decision-making for current park and recreational needs of Alexandria residents for the next 10 years.
- The timing for the *Waterfront History Implementation Plan* has been shifted to FY 2021 timed with City Council's approved CIP.
- The timing for completion of the *Transit Vision Study* has been moved to December to provide more time for community feedback, and the *Alexandria Mobility Plan* is anticipated for completion in May of 2020.
- The timing for completion of the *Accessory Dwelling Unit Study* has been moved to June 2020.
- The timing for completion of the *Parker-Gray/RB Zoning Study* has been moved to November, 2019.

- New Implementation initiatives:
  - *Environmental Action Plan (EAP) implementation*, education, and outreach initiatives per the EAP update approved in June
  - *Electric Vehicle Charging Infrastructure Strategy* – recommendation of the EAP update
  - *Commercial Property Assessed Clean Energy (C-PACE) Program* – recommendation of the EAP update
  - *Landmark Mall CDD Rezoning* per the recommendations of the Master Plan Amendment adopted by Council in April

**FISCAL IMPACT:** The proposed FY 2020 work program takes into account the resources allocated to the recommended planning initiatives in City Council’s approved FY 2020 Budget, including the FY 2020 to FY 2029 Capital Improvement Program.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Revised FY 2020 Interdepartmental Long-Range Planning Work Program (Bar Chart)
2. Project Descriptions
3. January 2019 Memo to City Council
4. Presentation

**STAFF:**

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