

James K. Hartmann
City Manager
301 King St.
Alexandria, VA 22314
March 11, 2008

Dear Mr. Hartmann,

The Alexandria Waterfront Committee is extremely disappointed to learn that efforts to revise the Alexandria Waterfront Plan have once again been delayed. We believe that the waterfront plays a key role in Alexandria's heritage, recreation and tourism, and the City should proceed immediately to update its waterfront plan.

We urge you to immediately allocate the resources necessary to begin the waterfront planning process.

The Waterfront Plan has been delayed many times over a period of seven years, while other issues have continually been given higher priority.

We note that one of the key recommendations of the Mayor's Economic Sustainability Work Group is to create a "world class waterfront". Another key recommendation is to increase the economic benefits generated by the City's visitor industry. It will be very difficult to achieve either of these important objectives without a plan to guide land use and development along the waterfront.

Delays have already placed the City at risk for ad hoc development along the waterfront. Without the benefit of a comprehensive plan, the City is at a great disadvantage in having to react to any development projects on a case-by-case basis, without an appreciation of the overall needs along the waterfront.

In funding interim improvements along the waterfront to attract visitors from National Harbor, the City Council has already recognized how vital the waterfront is to the commercial base of the City. Participants on the National Harbor Task Force recognized that such improvements were only interim measures, and a comprehensive Waterfront Plan is needed for more long-term improvements

The waterfront is also important to City residents, who look forward to improvements in their access to and enjoyment of the river and its adjacent land, as well as improvements in parking and street congestion.

We note that a plan is likely to take approximately two years to complete, and several more years to implement. Without a coherent, comprehensive plan, it may already be too late to proactively shape some significant development along the waterfront.

Please feel free to contact me at 703-548-8209 if you have questions about our concerns.

Sincerely Yours,

Susan Pettey
Chair
Alexandria Waterfront Committee