

**City of Alexandria Strategic Planning Goals
for Alexandria Waterfront Committee Review**

February 23, 2010

Goal 1: There is quality development and redevelopment, support for local business and a strong, diverse and growing local economy.

Goal 2: The City Respects, Protects and Enhances the Health of its Citizens and the Quality of its Natural Environment.

Goal 3: There is an Integrated, Multimodal Transportation System that Efficiently and Effectively Gets People from Point "A" to Point "B"

Goal 4: The City of Alexandria is a community that supports and enhances the well-being, success and achievement of children, youth and families.

Goal 5: The City Government is Financially Sustainable, Efficient, Community Oriented and Values its Employees

Goal 6: The City Protects the Safety and Security of its Residents, Businesses and Visitors

Goal 7: Alexandria Is a Caring Community That is Affordable and Diverse With a Rich History and Culture

Portions of draft strategic planning objectives that are generally related to the waterfront are included on the following pages, including excerpts of Goals 1, 2, and 3. Goal 1, Objective 1, regarding the vitality and economic success of the City Waterfront is particularly relevant. No portions of goals 4, 5, 6, or 7 are excerpted below.

For a detailed summary of the strategic planning process and complete drafts of each goal, see <http://alexandriava.gov/StrategicPlanning>.

Goal 1: There is quality development and redevelopment, support for local business and a strong, diverse and growing local economy.

January 12, 2010

Potential Objectives and Initiatives

Potential Objective 1: Increase the vitality and economic success of the City Waterfront and King Street Corridor while maintaining and strengthening the City's commitment to historic preservation and neighborhood quality of life.

Potential Objective 2: Increase office and retail occupancy rates through business attraction, retention, and expansion

Potential Objective 3: Become more business friendly

Vision for Goal 1 Objectives: Pursue objectives to sharpen Alexandria's competitive advantage and profile within the region through discerning development, operational excellence and community investment through incentives.

Themes: Because of current market conditions, the supply of increasing amounts of office and retail space in the region (e.g. Crystal City, Arlington, National Harbor) creates more options for businesses considering relocation; approval processes are sometimes perceived as cumbersome and time-consuming; the City does not have a history of offering incentives or participating in Public Private Partnerships (PPP's); competitive markets are ones that can attract and retain successful firms and maintain or increase standards of living for its inhabitants.

All of these themes have historically been viewed as high barriers to market entry in Alexandria; competitiveness in region means that the City must better communicate the long-term value which accrues from these premium processes and policies for development; they ultimately reduce competition and increases value over the long term for the community and property and business owners.

Through increased/targeted/new branding, marketing and advertising, Alexandria will more assertively communicate its position as a business destination in the region.

Supporting conditions: Feedback from existing tenants, developers, and brokers shows that the perceptions of the marketplace are not keeping pace with changes in City processes and policies; results from Economic Sustainability Working Group are not being experienced because of decrease in activity due to fall of the economy.

Since 2000, 7 million square feet of non-residential space and 8,200 housing units have been constructed in the City. The City has approved plans that would allow the approval of more than 27 million square feet of new development.

Desired results: The initiatives proposed in support of Goal 1 seek to increase the economic success (e.g., revenue per square foot) of businesses in Alexandria – in part by attracting new customers and increasing spending per customer; to attract and sustain high-quality, and high-

paying jobs; to encourage desired economic activity with improved regulatory processes; and by making strategic public investments where the potential for economic return is great.

Strategic Principles: At the outset of this, the 2009-2010 Strategic Planning effort, the City Council re-affirmed the City's commitment to the principles in the 2004-2015 Strategic Plan as amended in 2006. Many of the principles provide important context for the recommendations on the following pages. In other words, these recommendations envision the City pursuing these goals and initiatives while continuing to honor these important principles. Some of the principles that are most relevant to Goal 1 are:

Vibrant:

- Alexandria is an exciting place to live, to work and to visit.
- The community is inviting to small businesses and entrepreneurs.
- People come together to enjoy a variety of community events and festivals.
- Alexandria is always looking to the future and for ways to get better.

Historic:

- We preserve and celebrate our historical roots and diverse heritage.
- We preserve our historic resources including neighborhoods, buildings, structures, places, and archaeological sites.
- We maintain our distinctive architectural character and design.
- We plan new developments so that they are compatible with historic buildings and neighborhood character.
- Residents understand and appreciate Alexandria's heritage.
- Alexandria's history contributes to the local economy through tourism development

Beautiful

- The City has achieved a balance between open space and development.
- Public art is in many places throughout the community.
- Our new developments and new city infrastructure are environmentally sensitive.

Unique Neighborhoods

- Neighborhoods have their own distinct character and feeling.
- Neighborhoods are protected from the impacts of non-residential traffic.
- New development and redevelopment are integrated into the neighborhood.
- Residents enjoy convenient access to walkways, trails and public transit.

Urban Villages

- The City has a variety of mixed use developments that provide places to live, work, shop and recreate.
- Urban villages are integrated with nearby neighborhoods, maintaining

Alexandria's diverse character and charm.

- The City retains our small-town "main street" feeling with community gathering places.
- People enjoy pedestrian-friendly designs and signs that allow them to walk throughout the community while offering public places to rest.
- Transit-oriented designs maximize the use of public transit.

- Parks, trails and greenspaces are incorporated in the urban center and coordinated with nearby neighborhoods.
- Convenient retail shopping and restaurant opportunities are available serving residents of the urban village and attracting others to come there.

Potential Objective 1: Increase the vitality and economic success of the City Waterfront and King Street Corridor.

Themes: Proximity to the waterfront and authentic historic fabric make this corridor a unique and valuable asset that distinguishes Alexandria from competitors; from an economic point of view it is an underperforming asset; immediate actions could yield results within the plan's 3 year timeframe.

Supporting conditions: Several different studies demonstrate lower than average spending per customer and per square foot at King Street and Waterfront businesses. Hotel occupancy is doing well compared to other areas but is declining as the number of rooms increases.

Plans and studies: King Street Retail Strategy, Waterfront Plan*, Torpedo Factory Strategic Plan*, Parking Plan*, AEDP's Tourist Infrastructure Study*, ACVA branding analysis.

Potential initiatives:

1. Increase the appeal of King Street and the Waterfront to shoppers and diners.

Possible tactics to support this initiative:

- a. Pursue initiatives to increase appeal and sales to shoppers and diners, such as by restoring the lights in trees and trolley service; supporting later hours with parking, marketing, or other initiatives; and increased attention to streetscaping. Investigate the possibility of a partnership with a merchant's group and provide incentives for membership.
- b. Implement a pilot food cart program on Market Square in summer of 2010.
- c. Complete a Waterfront Plan and a Torpedo Factory Strategic Plan that together create a stronger anchor for the King Street retail corridor.
Give implementation priority to plan recommendations for the City Dock/foot of King/and the Strand and to Robinson Terminal redevelopment.
 - i. Optimize the appeal and success of existing attractions, such as the Food Court site and the Torpedo Factory.
 - ii. Improve access to and along the river and provide improved and expanded open space. Consider adding a carousel and other appropriately scaled attractions and activities to the Waterfront open space.
 - iii. Plan for additional commercial redevelopment, including additional waterfront dining and lodging(s).

- iv. Improve marina operations to attract and service transient and commercial boaters.
 - v. Ensure that new development is compatible with existing neighborhoods, natural environment, and historic character.
- d. Preserve, maintain and interpret the City's historic assets.

2. Support a vital hotel sector by attracting more overnight guests.

Possible tactics to support this initiative: Identify demand generators (which may include increased marketing, office **mix**, retail enhancements, more/improved anchors and waterfront features, meeting space) that support hotel occupancy – increased numbers of visitors and/or encouraging the same visitors to spend more – and implement programs, policies or regulations to increase them.

3. Improve access, circulation and parking: make it easier and more pleasant for visitors and residents to travel by all modes to the King Street/Waterfront area, to locate their intended destination and parking options, and to discover additional places of interest.

Possible tactics to support this initiative:

- a. Increase operating hours and frequency of King Street Trolley to achieve higher use. Upon completion of the Waterfront Plan, implement the recommended set of circulation improvements.
- b. Achieve a balance of customer and employee parking demand and supply (consistent with the City's transportation objectives) to improve the customer experience, increase sales, support businesses with employee parking options that do not conflict with customers, maximize the use of existing spaces, and generate revenue.
 - i. Upon completion of current parking study and the Waterfront Plan, implement the recommended set of parking initiatives, which may include the number, location, pricing and modernizing of meters; garage pricing and availability, employee parking programs, valet parking, access to currently-private garages, etc.
 - ii. Complete and implement a wayfinding program, giving priority to those aspects that direct visitors to parking resources, and encourage incremental commercial activity.
 - iii. Upon completion of the Waterfront Plan, implement the improved facilities for non-driver visitors, such as increasing the availability of secure bicycle parking.

Goal 2: The City Respects, Protects and Enhances the Health of its Citizens and the Quality of its Natural Environment.

December 14, 2009

Objective: Maintain and Improve the Quality and Sustainability of Alexandria's

Initiative 2B: Urban Forestry

Implement the recommendations of the Urban Forestry Master Plan and move towards the American Forest's suggested goal of 40% tree canopy and ensure the sustainability of Alexandria's urban forest by promoting tree planting on public and private properties to produce a multi-aged and diverse tree community.

Measure:

- Percentage change in canopy cover.
- Number of trees planted through City sponsored activities.

Initiative 2E: Open Space

Continue to implement the strategies identified in the approved Open Space Master Plan, including its current, measurable actions to protect an additional 34 acres to reach the 100 acre goal for open space by 2013.

Measure:

- Number of valuable open space sites preserved through acquisition and other protective methods and total acreage protected by 2013.

Initiative 2G: Water Quality

Enhance the ecological integrity of waterways by maintaining and improving storm water and sanitary infrastructure and stream system health to minimize environmental impacts.

Measure:

- Track and quantify the number of projects between 2010-2015, that have water quality related benefits. Examples include: upgraded infrastructure, stream/RPA restoration/stabilization projects, retrofitted stormwater facilities, green roofs, water conservation including grey water and other innovative practices.

Objective: Support Healthy Lifestyles and Disease Prevention

Initiative 3G: Pedestrian and Bicyclist Travel

Increase access to safe walking and biking trails in the City.

Measure:

- Earn a Silver "Bicycle Friendly Community" designation by 2013.
- Improve the "Walk Score" for neighborhoods across Alexandria.
- Reduce pedestrian and bicycle crashes.
- Annually increase the total miles of sidewalks, shared-use paths and bikeways

Goal 3: There is an Integrated, Multimodal Transportation System that Efficiently and Effectively Gets People from Point “A” to Point “B”

December 14, 2009

Objective 2: Promote strong linkages and coordination between transportation and land development.

Themes:

Members of the public and stakeholders shared enthusiasm for ensuring better coordination between land use and transportation infrastructure; specific projects such as Potomac Yard Metro, BRAC-133 and HOT lanes present opportunities for reassessment; an incentive-based approach may best encourage improvements to the multimodal network and concurrency between development and transportation infrastructure.

Supporting Conditions:

Various strategies are available to increase the efficiency of the transportation system and reduce the demand for single-occupant vehicle travel.

Initiatives:

- a) By 2011, develop parking policies that maximize the efficiency of Alexandria’s parking supply.
- b) By 2011, adopt Zoning ordinance changes to Transportation Management Plans that encourage more coordination and economy of scale
- c) By 2012, approve Transportation Impact Analysis methodology for use in development analysis
- d) Continually pursue development at Potomac Yard that supports a Metrorail Station

Objective 3: Ensure safe and accessible travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, transit and motorists on Complete Streets with design and implementation that is context

Themes:

Increasing transportation choices that allow more people to use transit, walk and bike is already a priority for planning and infrastructure improvements in Alexandria. However, residents and panel members remarked that multimodal opportunities can be improved by strategically using street space for dedicated transit corridors, wider sidewalks, bike paths, transit shelters and better managing parking resources.

Supporting Conditions

A comprehensive network of local and arterial streets enables safe access by all user groups and allows a full range of daily activities. Alexandria is working on a program, a policy and on a project-by-project level to encourage a mode shift to public transportation and active transportation – mobility options powered solely by human energy such as bicycling and walking.

Initiatives

- a) Construct Eisenhower Avenue Complete Streets initiative by 2014
- b) Construct King-Beauregard Intersection Multimodal Improvements by 2013

- c) Continually construct Active Transportation spot improvements including intersection safety improvements, on- and off-road bikeways and new sidewalks