

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: MAY 26, 2021

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

THROUGH: MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER

FROM: YON LAMBERT, AICP, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF
TRANSPORTATION & ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

SUBJECT: STREAM RESTORATION WORK SESSION FOLLOW UP

The purpose of this memo is to memorialize City Council guidance regarding stream restoration from the April 27, 2021 work session.

At the work session, City Council instructed staff to perform soil analysis tests on all three streams using the updated Expert Panel protocol. Council also instructed staff to pause the planned stream restoration projects at Taylor Run and Strawberry Run for further evaluation but proceed with Lucky Run while the soil analysis occurs. Council also directed staff to evaluate alternatives to natural channel design in coordination with the Environmental Policy Commission (EPC). Finally, Council instructed staff to return as soon as possible with a planned schedule and summary of impacts.

What does this mean?

- Performing soil analysis testing in accordance with the February 2021 Protocol 1 updated recommendations for all three streams will cost approximately \$45,000 (\$15,000 per stream) and will take 3-5 months. The process includes collection of soil samples for submission to a certified lab to determine soil nutrient concentrations (total nitrogen and total phosphorus), collection and analysis of bulk density samples, and development of a report describing the effort and using the data to potentially recalculate the nutrient reductions using these data.
- The State Stormwater Local Assistance Fund (SLAF) grant deadline was previously extended by the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) for one year due to COVID impacts. While the VDEQ SLAF award requires the City to have a signed grant agreement by the extended deadline of June 30, 2022, VDEQ has recently stated that the intent of the SLAF grant deadline is to ensure that applicants are making a good faith effort to move projects forward, and VDEQ is likely willing to adjust the sunset date if requested by the City. As the analysis of alternatives to natural channel design proceeds, staff will consider requesting an extension to the SLAF grant deadlines if appropriate.

- By analyzing site-specific soils for all the sites, including Lucky Run, it is possible the previously accepted credit calculations will change and the projects may provide more or fewer credits toward the City's Chesapeake Bay cleanup mandates. This may result in the need for additional credits to meet the City's targets in the future.

What are the next steps?

- Staff is in the process of issuing a task order for the consultant to perform the soil sampling and analysis and reporting. The work is anticipated to be completed for the three streams by October 2021.
- Staff has already begun coordinating with the EPC to consider alternatives to Natural Channel Design. The EPC on Monday, May 17 provided staff with a three-prong strategy to move forward. Staff is currently evaluating the strategy, has begun developing discussion alternatives for consideration and will coordinate with the EPC as well as re-engage with the community stakeholders and other interested parties (and communicate next steps to Council).
- While the soil sampling and analysis is being performed, staff continues to advance the design of the Lucky Run project.
- While discussions on the appropriate next steps for Taylor Run and Strawberry Run continue, staff is considering alternatives which include (1) conceptual planning for a sanitary sewer stabilization in Taylor Run, (2) stream stabilization at Strawberry Run to protect private property adjacent to the upstream component and (3) maintenance for the Taft Avenue related downstream restoration.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

cc: Emily A. Baker, P.E., Deputy City Manager