

ECO-CITY ALEXANDRIA

environment | economy | society



Duncan Library Green Roof

WHAT IS AN ECO-CITY?

Eco-Cities are places where people can live healthier and economically productive lives while reducing their impact on the environment. They work to harmonize existing policies, regional realities, and economic and business markets with their natural resources and environmental assets. Eco-Cities strive to engage all citizens in collaborative and transparent decision making, while being mindful of social equity concerns.

WHAT IS ECO-CITY ALEXANDRIA?

Beginning in spring 2007, the City of Alexandria partnered with Virginia Tech's Department of Urban Affairs and Planning (UAP) to design and facilitate a new, strategic collaborative planning process, called *Eco-City Alexandria*, to create an *Eco-City Charter* (June 2008) and *Environmental Action Plan* (Fall 2008) to guide Alexandria toward sustainability.

Alexandria's Environmental Policy Commission (EPC) is the project's principal advisor along with representatives from the Alexandria City Council and City Staff. The Division Chief for Environmental Quality serves as the City's project manager.

In 2007, the *Eco-City Alexandria* team conducted an inventory of existing city programs and plans and examined best practices from across the country and around the world to create a Compendium of Model Programs and Practices. The inventory, *Eco-City Alexandria: A Green-Ventory of City Environmental Policies, Plans and Programs*, is available on the City of Alexandria's website: (<http://www.alexandriava.gov/tes>).

In 2008, the *Eco-City Alexandria* team will consult with Alexandria residents and business owners to determine what it will take to make Alexandria an Eco-City.



WHAT IS SUSTAINABILITY?

Sustainability is progress that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. A sustainable community is an environmentally, economically, and socially healthy place where people can live, work and play for decades to come.

Ecological Sustainability

ensures that all parts of the natural and built environments work together as a single ecological system.

Economic Sustainability

ensures a healthy economy that supports and sustains people and the environment in which they live over the long-term.

Social Sustainability

ensures that a community meets residents' basic needs and has the resiliency to prevent and/or address problems in the future.



WHAT IS AN ECO-CITY CHARTER?

The *Eco-City Charter* will guide city leaders and residents towards a more sustainable, holistic, and healthy environment. It will define Alexandria's commitment to ecological, economic and social sustainability and provide policy makers, staff, and community and business leaders with an overarching direction. The *Charter* will include a set of essential sustainability principles and core values linked with the City's 2015 Strategic Plan.



WHAT IS AN ENVIRONMENTAL ACTION PLAN?

The *Environmental Action Plan* is a road map for city leaders, staff, and citizens to implement the *Eco-City Charter*. Once the City Council formally approves the principles and core values in the *Charter*, the *Action Plan* will be developed to establish specific policy objectives, identify programs and resources, set tentative timelines, and develop measures of success.

The City of Alexandria needs your help to bring Eco-City Alexandria to life.

Upcoming opportunities to shape the *Eco-City Charter* and *Environmental Action Plan* include:

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| March 8 | Eco-City Café (George Washington Middle School, 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.) |
| April 26 | Alexandria Earth Day (Ben Brenman Park, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.) |
| May 10 | Eco-City Summit (T.C. Williams High School, 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m., public forum) |
| May 19 | EPC meeting to formally consider adoption of the <i>Eco-City Charter</i> and refer it to City Council |
| June 2008 | City Council considers adoption of the <i>Eco-City Charter</i> |
| Summer 2008 | City Staff and EPC finalize the program and policy priorities for the <i>Environmental Action Plan</i> |
| Fall 2008 | Formal adoption of the <i>Environmental Action Plan</i> by the City Council |

Eco-City Alexandria is a partnership between the City of Alexandria and Virginia Tech's Department of Urban Affairs & Planning. For more information please visit the Department of Transportation & Environmental Services website (<http://www.alexandriava.gov/tes/>) and Virginia Tech's website (<http://ecocity.ncr.vt.edu>).

