



Eco-City Alexandria's Major Achievements for 2011

Accomplishments include the agreement to retire the GenOn power plant in October 2012, the highest-ever solid waste recycling rate of 41.4% reported for 2010, purchase of new hybrid DASH buses and trolleys, several green initiatives completed under the EECBG program, City's projects to green its facilities and promote green building construction, Alexandria's Aquatic Health Program receiving the prestigious 2011 Dr. Neil Lowry Memorial Award, City's participation in the Capital Bikeshare program, City Council adoption of the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan, several sustainable practices at ASA, and numerous successful community outreach events

1. **GenOn Potomac River Generating Station (PRGS) Permanent Closure** - The City and GenOn Energy reached an agreement in August 2011 to permanently close the company's Potomac River Generating Station. Under the terms of the agreement, GenOn agreed to retire the generating station by October 1, 2012. PRGS has been the single largest source of air pollutant emissions in Northern Virginia, and its retirement will undoubtedly yield significant air quality improvement and health benefits to Alexandria residents and those of neighboring jurisdictions.
2. **Highest-Ever Solid Waste Recycling Rate** - The City reported its highest ever recycling rate of 41.4% to the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality for Calendar Year 2010. This dramatic increase over last year's reported 28.6% recycling rate was due primarily to due primarily to significant increases in overall recycling collections..
3. **New Hybrid DASH Buses and Trolleys** – DASH purchased and received seven 35-foot hybrid buses, three 40-foot hybrid buses and the City purchased five 30-foot hybrid trolleys. The hybrid buses were purchased primarily with Commonwealth of Virginia State Urban Funds. Alexandria Transit also partnered with the City and secured an EPA Stimulus Grant that funds the difference in the cost between the hybrid technology and a conventional diesel powered engine. The five trolley buses were purchased with American Reinvestment and Recovery Act (ARRA) Stimulus funds and will be used for service on King Street.
4. **EECBG Projects** – Using funds received from the Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) program, the City carried out several green initiatives including the following:
 - Developed and launched an online **Virtual Green Building Resource Center**, conducted six workshops and two internal training sessions, and completed 19 energy assessments at residential, commercial, and City buildings.
 - **City Hall Green Roof** - The installation of a vegetative "green" roof on the East and West courtyard structures of City Hall.

- **Greener Fleet** –The City purchased 11 new Ford Fusion hybrid-electric cars, bringing the total number of hybrid vehicles in the City’s fleet to 30.
 - **LED retrofits** of the traffic lights, and a pilot project for replacement of street lights with energy saving LED lights
5. **City Continued to Green Its Facilities and Promote Green Building Construction -**
- New Alexandria Police Department –The City opened the new Alexandria Police Department, a 124,000 square-foot facility that was designed and built according to the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards. The facility is pursuing LEED Gold certification.
 - Community Building at Four Mile Run Park - Completed in June, the former Duron Paint building, located at 4125 Mt. Vernon Avenue, was converted to a 4,700 square-foot, multi-use community building, using green building practices.
 - Green Building Policy – Applied the Green Building Policy (approved by City Council in 2009) to all new developments including the following projects that will obtain a green building certification: a 332-unit residential building (the Calvert), a 52,000 square-foot grocery store with 175 residential units (Old Town North Harris Teeter), and a 23,000 square-foot retail and office building (Yates Corner).
6. **Alexandria Joins Capital Bikeshare** - On October 11, the Alexandria City Council voted to authorize the City to join the regional Capital Bikeshare network, beginning with implementing a pilot program providing six bikeshare stations, with a total of 54 bikes, throughout the city. The Alexandria Bikeshare network is expected to launch by the spring/summer of 2012.
7. **Pocket Park Improvements** - The City, in partnership with the community, enhanced two pocket parks acquired through open space funds:
- Commonwealth/Reed Ave Park - The former Dominion VA Power site was adopted by Arlandria volunteers who have cleaned up, replanted, and maintained the site throughout 2011, in partnership with the City.
 - Del Ray Avenue Pocket Park Phase 1 Site Improvements - Improvements at the pocket park include a rain garden, designed to capture and filter stormwater, and a nature-inspired play area constructed from renewable/recycled materials such as recycled rubber, plastic bags, and other building materials. The park was adopted by the Del Ray Citizens Association.
8. **Alexandria Sanitation Authority (ASA) Strived to Enhance Sustainable Practices** - In 2011, ASA reused more than a billion gallons of treated wastewater on the treatment plant site, minimizing the need to use potable water. It also reused 22,500 tons of biosolids produced on agricultural farmland in Virginia, reducing the need for commercial fertilizers. ASA also used more than 118 million cubic feet of digester gas produced in its process to replace natural gas requirements and saved \$150,000 in natural gas costs. In October, City Council approved plans for an expansion to the wastewater treatment plant. These improvements will help the Sanitation Authority meet stricter Federal and State environmental standards.
9. **Alexandria Recognized as Silver-Level Walk Friendly Community** - Alexandria was recently recognized as a Walk Friendly Community by the Pedestrian and Bicycle Information Center (PBIC), and was one of only ten communities chosen from across the nation to receive this honor at the September 2011 awards. The City’s Silver Level “Walk Friendly” designation

evaluates success in working to improve a wide range of conditions related to walking, including safety, mobility, and access.

10. **Virginia Municipal League (VML) Platinum Certification** - For the fourth straight year, the City was named a Certified Green Government by the Virginia Municipal League (VML). The City earned Platinum level certification, the highest level, in VML's Green Government Challenge. The City received innovation points for its adoption of the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan and development of a virtual Green Building Resources Center.
11. **Alexandria's Aquatic Health Program Receives Prestigious 2011 Dr. Neil Lowry Memorial Award** - The Neil Lowry Award is presented annually to the aquatic health program judged as the best in the United States. Its purpose is to recognize outstanding contributions of public health programs that have advanced the health and safety of recreational waters. The Alexandria's Aquatic Health Program led to a 74% reduction in health and safety violations at Alexandria's pools in just three years. During the same period, ticketed critical and repeat violations were reduced by 53 percent. This represents a significant improvement in the health and safety of Alexandria's recreational environment.
12. **Energy and Climate Change Action Plan Adopted by City Council** - City Council adopted the City's Energy and Climate Change Action Plan on May 14, 2011, following a public hearing on the same day. The plan builds on the existing Eco-City Charter and Environmental Action Plan 2030 (EAP) by providing information on policies and measures that the City is already undertaking, as well as possible new short-term and medium-term measures to achieve the EAP's greenhouse gas emission reduction targets of 10% by 2012, 20% by 2020 and 80% by 2050. Moreover, it identifies measures for adapting to the physical impacts of climate change.
13. **City Staff Hosted Several Education, Outreach and Public Events, Including:**
 - Hugely successful 2011 Earth Day at the Ben Brenman Park with more than 2000 people attending.
 - Presentations at the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce and Environmental Policy Commission open house on the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan.
 - Eco-City @School Series kicked off with presentations at several Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) and private schools, as well as during ACPS afterschool and Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities' summer programs (Cora Kelly).
 - Rain barrel workshops and stream cleanups.
 - Participation in World Water Monitoring Day and Earth Force Youth Summit.
14. **Urban Forestry Progress** - In June 2011, the City's GIS Division completed the first of a three-year baseline study to measure changes in the City's tree canopy cover. Analysis of the 2010 data indicates that the City's overall canopy cover is approximately 34%. Previous studies in 2002 and 2007 using different sources of data and alternative methods of analysis indicated that the City tree canopy was 36% and 30%, respectively. Analysis of the 2011 data has already begun. A report on the 2011 data is expected in June 2012.
15. **Concept plan for Four Mile Run Park Expansion** - This plan, designed pro-bono by Architects Anonymous, transforms several old parking lots (acquired by the City as open space in 2007) along Mt. Vernon Avenue into a vibrant community gathering space, located next to the new

Community Building. The new space will have permeable surface treatments, rain gardens, native plants, an amphitheater, and a natural seating/play area. Design and construction plans, prepared by Architects Anonymous, will be underway in 2012.