

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 14, 2005

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER 

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 47 : BOOTFINDER: LICENSE PLATE SCANNER

This memo is in response to Councilman Macdonald's request for information on the new high-tech license plate "scanner" used to assist in locating and identifying those who failed to pay parking tickets, etc. The device is marketed under the trade name of "Bootfinder" by G2Tactics, Inc., a small company located in Alexandria. There have been news story highlighting Arlington County's effort to use the equipment to locate scofflaw who have failed to pay parking tickets and personal property taxes.

The Bootfinder is a reader device coupled with a computer that is used to read vehicle license plate numbers and associate these numbers with a pre-established City constructed database. When installed in a vehicle, the devise is designed to permit Parking Enforcement Officers to electronically read the license plate numbers of parked vehicle as they pass by.

The City ordered one Bootfinder system, which was delivered in February 2005. The Police Department is currently evaluating the effectiveness of the devise. Due to the device's early stage of development both the City and Arlington have found consistently using the device and its ease of use a challenge. They began using the devise in early March after a period of testing, debugging and training. To date, the device is responsible for locating 25 boot eligible cars with delinquent parking tickets resulting in approximately \$9,000 in revenue. The City and Arlington County are working with the vendor to input delinquent personal property records into the devise.

The City collects approximately 78 percent of parking citations issued. Six percent of the citations issued are voided of dismissed and the remaining 16 percent are outstanding. Last year, the City collected approximately \$3.0 million in parking ticket fines. Nationally, city's collect approximately 70 percent of the issued citations. Early reports indicate the Bootfinder system is an effective tool in locating vehicles whose owners have outstanding parking citations and personal property taxes.