

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 20, 2009

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 115: UNFUNDED PROJECTS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING AND ZONING'S WORK PROGRAM FOR FY 2010

This memo is in response to a request from Councilman Krupicka for information about unfunded projects in the Department of Planning and Zoning's Work Program for FY 2010. Although each of the project amounts exceed \$50,000, and given the Council add/delete adopted policies would make it difficult to consider these additions at this point in the budget process, the information on the fiscal impact of expanding the Planning and Zoning work program beyond its proposed FY 2010 funding level is important information for Council to have in hand.

On April 7, 2009, the Department of Planning and Zoning presented a proposed draft FY 2010 work program to the Planning Commission. That work program includes some projects that are not funded in the City Manager's proposed FY 2010 budget because the need for them was identified after the proposed budget was released. The memorandum explaining the proposed work program was provided to the Mayor and Council Members on April 7, 2009, and Council is scheduled to have a work session on the FY 2010 work program in May.

Given the proposed work program, the three projects which are not funded (which total \$570,000) are:

- Upon adoption of the Potomac Yard plan (estimated to occur in December of 2009), begin a small area plan for the rest of the Route 1 Corridor (either Braddock Fields/Landbay L or Route 1 West)(total \$340,000);
- Embark on Phase II of the Green Building program, addressing incentives, existing buildings and outreach (total \$150,000); and
- Accelerate support for implementation of the Arlandria Action Plan (total \$80,000).

The April 7 memorandum to the Planning Commission contained a smaller estimate of the resources required for these projects because it did not include the cost of the consultant services needed for a small area plan for Route 1 Corridor West or Braddock Fields/Landbay L.

Project Descriptions and Resource Requirements:

1. ***Route 1 West or Braddock Fields/Landbay L Small Area Plan (total \$340,000):*** The Potomac Yard Small Area Plan, as well as the associated Metrorail Station Feasibility Study, is well under way with completion expected by December 2009. The Department is not proposing a delay in this Plan. However, at a Potomac Yard community workshop held in January, the public raised the possibility of looking at Potomac Yard's Landbay L in combination with the Braddock Fields adjacent to the Braddock Metrorail Station (although the Rosemont Civic Association has taken a position opposing such a study). Currently staff is engaged in a "threshold analysis" which will help the Commission and the Council determine if a Landbay L/Braddock Fields plan be conducted separately from the Potomac Yard plan. (The Braddock Road 7-11 can be looked at as it relates to the small area plan, understanding that redevelopment of the 7-11 site should not be unduly postponed by the planning effort.)

If a Landbay L/Braddock Fields plan is added to the work program, staff recommends that it should begin immediately after the Potomac Yard plan because the technical studies will still be valid and many members of the public will already be engaged.

If Landbay L/Braddock Fields is not added to the work program, staff recommends that planning for the west side of the Route 1 Corridor commence immediately after the Potomac Yard plan. Given the major transportation infrastructure projects that are contemplated for Route 1 – not only the possibility of a new Metrorail station but the investment in high occupancy transit along Route 1 itself – it seems prudent to continue planning within the walkshed of these major investments.

The Department has determined that \$300,000 in consultant services would be required for this Plan, approximately one-half that of the Potomac Yard Small Area Plan. In addition, because of the significant open space/playing field element, the Department of Parks and Recreation would need \$40,000 for a one-half time contract staff person. If the Braddock Fields/Landbay L plan moves forward, there will need to be supplemental traffic analysis to address impacts on nearby neighborhoods, the Metrorail station, and the school(s). Transportation circulation will be especially challenging given site constraints, the need for a high occupancy transit alignment from Route 1 to the Braddock Road Metrorail Station, and school bus (and other school related) circulation issues. Consultant support will also be required for expertise in the development economics involved in determining the financial value of the properties involved. Optimal placement of potential land uses (educational, recreational, and potentially office, retail and residential) may require site design assistance, and the project will require models, renderings, and computer graphics to give the community a clear vision of the various options.

2. **Green Building Phase II (total \$150,000):** The April 2 *Green Building Policy for Alexandria* staff report calls for the continuation of the Work Group to pursue issues such as: standards for existing buildings, incentives for high levels of sustainability, outreach and education for the community, and enforcement strategies. Staff recommends pursuing this project in FY 2010 if the Industrial Uses Study's findings indicate that it is not urgent to initiate Eisenhower West planning in FY 2010.

The Department has determined that this project would require one-half FTE (contract) staff person for Planning and Zoning for one year (\$40,000) and a total of \$110,000 in consultant services: \$70,000 in consulting funds for the Department of Planning and Zoning (which is the same as for Phase I) and \$40,000 in consultant funds for the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services. Consultant services will provide the expertise in feasible and effective strategies for existing buildings, successful and balanced incentive and enforcement programs. These funds will also support the education and outreach strategy. It's possible that there will be stimulus funds from the ARRA available to fund this project, in which case no consultant services will be necessary.

3. **Arlandria Action Plan (total \$80,000):** In February, the City Council added work on the Arlandria Action Plan to the work program, and this effort will involve multiple departments. The proposed work program shows this project following completion of the Wayfinding design guidelines because even if the necessary additional resources are provided, the Department as a whole cannot absorb another project until Wayfinding reaches that milestone. The proposed work program for Arlandria consists of:

- Establishing an Implementation Advisory Group (IAG).
- With the IAG, reviewing the 2003 Action Plan, the progress in implementing the Action Plan, and developing the IAG's priorities for moving forward.
- Coordinating with the IAG on issues related to public facilities, infrastructure and other improvements such as intersections, traffic control and signaling, parking, streetscape improvements (including bulbouts, crosswalk enhancements, and gateway enhancements), park design and development, and public art.
- Assessing redevelopment market potential by engaging landowners in an assessment of the factors that have inhibited redevelopment and by issuing a Request for Expressions of Interest for redevelopment of key parcels that permits respondents to propose projects that may require changes to the current set of development constraints (zoning, height, land use mix, other requirements).
- Continuing to explore the potential benefits and implications of an arts district and other options for pursuing community development in cooperation with arts organizations.

- Empowering community residents and businesses by identifying improvements and other projects they can do themselves, such as supporting tree planting/care and other beautification projects, implementing the wayfinding program, through raising money and direct action.

The Department has determined that this project would require one-half FTE (contract) staff person for one year for the Department of Planning and Zoning (\$40,000) and \$40,000 in consultant services for the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services.

Staff: Faroll Hamer, Director, Planning and Zoning
Karl Moritz, Deputy Director, Planning and Zoning

cc: The Chairman and Members of the Planning Commission
Bruce Johnson, Chief Financial Officer
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Emily Baker, Acting Director, T&ES
Rich Baier, Acting Director, Department of Parks and Recreation
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