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# The Council Connection

*your connection to City Council by:*

*Vice Mayor Justin M. Wilson*

Alexandria, Virginia

November 1, 2016

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This Saturday, the City Council will hold our annual retreat. We will begin discussing our priorities for the upcoming budget process and working to understand the full scope of the challenges that await us.

Additionally, this month marks the beginning of the holiday season. When you have the means and opportunity, please take the time to support the many Alexandria non-profits. They work to address the needs of our community during this time and all year long.

Our non-profit partners work very closely with Alexandria's government agencies to serve our community. Alexandria's Social Services Advisory Committee [recently prepared an excellent video to demonstrate the wide array of services that Alexandria residents benefit from every day](#). It's definitely who we are as a community.

My best wishes for a wonderful Thanksgiving.

[Contact me anytime](#). Let me know how I can help.

## Council Initiatives

### Putting It Underground

Whether the City is dealing with sewers, streets, schools, or municipal buildings, our infrastructure challenges can frequently be



[Schedule Child Safety Seat Inspection](#)

[Smoke Detector Installation Request](#)

[Real Estate Tax Receipt Calculator](#)

[License Your Dog or Cat](#)

[Report a Street Light Outage](#)

## Events/Updates

### Election Day Is Near!

Tuesday, November 8th is Election Day in Alexandria and around our nation. Our polls will be open from 6 AM until 7 PM.

[The sample ballot is available online for review before you vote!](#)

[In person absentee voting continues until 5 PM on Saturday.](#)

In person absentee voting is available at the Registrar's Office (132 N. Royal Street) each day from 8 AM until 8 PM each day this week, except Friday, when voting concludes at 6 PM.

In person absentee voting is available at Beatley Library (5005 Duke Street) each day this week from noon until 8 PM, except for Friday, when voting concludes at 6 PM.

I'll see you at the polls!

### El Galeón Visits Alexandria

[El Galeon, a full-size reconstructed Spanish sailing vessel from Colonial times will be visiting Alexandria.](#)

Beginning Wednesday November 9th through Monday November 14th, the ship will be available for tours on our waterfront.

Tickets are available [online](#) at the City's visitors

traced to a very simple truth: We have an old City with old infrastructure. While our historic nature attracts visitors to our community, it can also confound our efforts to maintain a modern infrastructure.

One such area where this becomes evident is the infrastructure that supports our utilities, namely electricity, cable television, and telephone. Since 1971, [the City Code has required that all new utility construction generally be placed underground](#). Yet, for a City whose history stretches back more than 200 years prior to that point, it leaves quite a bit of overhead utilities remaining around our community.

Primarily, these overhead utilities are an aesthetic concern, with the utility poles and wires as unsightly clutter on our streets. These overhead utility facilities can also impact reliability and safety.

In fiscal year 1992, the City began an effort to conduct under-grounding of utilities in Old Town. This effort provided for cost-sharing with Dominion Virginia Power, with the City installing the conduit and repairing the road and Dominion addressing the remainder of the project.

Year after year, costs escalated for this work. During the FY 2008 budget process, the Council made the decision to shift all of the dollars for this project to other projects effectively shutting it down. At the time, estimates for the cost to complete the project, ranged from \$64 million to \$100 million, roughly \$1 million for each block.

Today, there are typically three scenarios where under-grounding occurs. When redevelopment occurs in an area with overground utilities, the City will typically obligate the developer to underground the utilities. When the City is conducting some sort of public work in the vicinity, the City can include under-grounding of adjacent utilities as part of that effort. Finally, Dominion Virginia Power has advanced underground efforts strategically through the City, usually in areas that are prone to frequent outages.

At the moment, Dominion Virginia Power has six developer-funded under-grounding efforts under way:

- South Union Street/The Strand/Robinson Terminal South
- North Union Street/Robinson Terminal North
- First Street/Giant Food
- St. Asaph Street/Oronoco
- Pickett Street/Cameron Park
- Henry/Pendleton

In addition, there is one effort underway as part of a City-funded project at King Street and Beauregard Street.

Finally, there are four strategic under-grounding efforts initiated by Dominion Virginia Power under way:

- Taylor Avenue
- Trinity Drive
- Saint Stephens Road
- Maury Lane

While the cost makes it highly unlikely that the City itself will pursue any large-scale utility under-grounding initiatives in the near future, we still have opportunities to leverage private resources and discrete public initiatives to advance these efforts.

### Switching Gears On School Capacity

Almost four years ago, the City convened the Joint [Long Range Educational Facilities Work Group](#). The group was given the essential charge to understand our recent increase in student

center at 221 King Street or at the entrance to the ship at the Marina.

### Leaf Collection Begins

The annual City's leaf collection effort has begun.

[Residents may bag leaves using bags that can be picked up from a variety of City government sites.](#)

Additionally, the vacuuming of leaves placed on curbs began yesterday. [A full schedule is available online.](#)

### Community Health Fair

[This Saturday, the Alexandria Community Health Fair returns to George Washington Middle School \(1005 Mount Vernon Avenue\) from 9 AM until 4:30 PM.](#)

Hosted by a variety of community organizations and partners, this fair is designed to provide a comprehensive set of health screens and services to those with difficulty accessing these services.

### Run For Shelter

On Sunday November 20th, Carpenter's Shelter hosts the 6th Annual Run For Shelter road race on Eisenhower Avenue.

With two distances (10K and 5K), this race is for everyone. It begins at the United States Patent and Trademark Office at 600 Dulany Street.

[Join me as we run to help the fight against homelessness.](#)

### Run For Turkey

For the 41st Year, Del Ray will host the best Turkey Trot around!

The 41st Anniversary Alexandria Turkey Trot 5 Miller returns to the streets of Del Ray and Rosemont on Thanksgiving morning.

enrollment, better project enrollment growth in the future, and to decide what to do about it.

The School Board Chair, Vice Chair, the previous Mayor, and I joined a group of community members and staff to steer the effort.

The day after Labor Day, 15,058 students started in the Alexandria City Public Schools. That constitutes a 2.6% increase from the previous year or about 388 additional students.

This year is the tenth straight year of enrollment growth. During that period, ACPS has added over 5,000 students.

The last time [that many children attended our schools was nearly 50 years ago in the early 1970s.](#)

We have also worked to understand where the enrollment is coming from. For example, we learned that low-rise apartments generate nearly three times the students as high-rise or mid-rise apartments do. We learned that single family homes generate nearly double the students as townhouses. We know that public housing and other income-restricted units far outpace any other property type for student generation, as that housing is geared for families.

[We now know that housing units built over 30 years ago account for four times the student generation as those built in the past 30 years.](#)

These data points remind us of the need to address this enrollment growth head-on.

In June of last year, the City Council and the School Board adopted the [Long Range Educational Facilities Plan](#). The Plan is the culmination of the group's work in conjunction with the efforts of both ACPS and City staff. The plan looks at each elementary school building in the City, assesses the facility's educational adequacy, and provides a roadmap for increasing capacity and addressing deficiencies.



We recently launched the [next phase of this effort, planning for additional capacity at the high school level and in the pre-school area](#). With important decisions for the Council and School Board ahead over how to address capacity challenges for 9th Grade at Minnie Howard School, this process has urgency to it.

The City Council's approved Capital Improvement Program included funding for a [new Patrick Henry Elementary School and Recreation Center with increased capacity](#). In December, the Planning Commission and the Council will consider the land-use approvals for the design of the new school and recreation facility. In July, [the School Board approved the selection of a construction management firm to manage the effort.](#)

In Council's budget approved in the spring, we also [included both operating and capital funds to support the School Board plan to use leased space for both a new West End Elementary School and a West End early childhood center](#). Utilizing leased space, while not the most efficient, would allow us to bring new capacity online even sooner than new construction would allow.

Brought to you by the Del Ray Business Association and DC Road Runners, the race is a regional tradition and last year attracted nearly 5,000 finishers!

[Join me on Thanksgiving for a great run through Alexandria.](#)

### Comment on the Next School Calendar

The Alexandria City Public Schools Calendar Committee is working to develop the academic calendar for the 2017 - 2018 school year.

[They would like your input.](#)

The two drafts are posted [online for review.](#)

### City Tree Lighting

[On Friday, November 25th, at 6PM Santa returns to Market Square in Old Town to light the City's tree.](#)

With a welcome from the Town Crier and performances of all kinds, this event cannot be missed!

### Real Estate Tax Bills Due

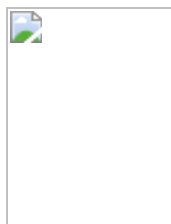
[The second half real estate tax bills are due on Tuesday, November 15th.](#)

Save a stamp and a trip to City Hall by [using the City's eChecks system.](#)

### Request a Bike Rack

Know a good place in the City where we should place a bike rack?

[Let us know!](#)



Racks are installed on a seasonal basis and cannot be installed on private property.

During the search for leased space, ACPS came upon a property that they wished to purchase instead. [At 1701 Beauregard, the property is an office building that ACPS believes can be retrofitted for a school use.](#)

At this point in the process, purchasing (versus leasing) would now require that ACPS re-purpose a significant portion of their approved Capital Improvement Program. That would mean deferring and redefining projects that have been expected to occur this year. In doing so, there will be implications on future years, as alternate funding for those efforts would need to be identified.

While the potential for owning a building versus leasing is a positive opportunity for ACPS and the taxpayers of the City, this is a substantial amendment to the existing budget. Engagement with the community, commensurate with that of our annual budget process, must occur.

While the discussion on 1701 Beauregard continues, the Superintendent [has now released his proposed FY 2018 - FY 2027 Capital Improvement Program](#) (CIP). His proposed CIP represents a radical departure from last year's approved request. It nearly doubles the amount of spending over the next decade, with over \$515 million of capital spending planned.

The proposed CIP includes:

- New Swing Space to accommodate 35 classrooms (2018)
- Demolition and rebuild of Douglas MacArthur Elementary (2020)
- Demolition and rebuild of T. C. Williams Minnie Howard Campus (2021)
- Renovation and capacity increase of Cora Kelly Elementary (2022)
- Construction of a new middle school (2023)
- Demolition and rebuild of George Mason Elementary (2024)
- Construction of a new elementary school (2027)

The School Board will be considering this plan over the next few months as they work to finalize the CIP they will present to the Council for the spring budget process.

This plan is quite ambitious, while realistic about what is necessary to address our enrollment challenges.

To fund a plan similar to this, the City Council will require commitment from the taxpayers of this too aggressively tackle these challenges. It will also require ACPS and the City to develop the capacity and capability to execute this plan to maintain that commitment.

We have a lot of work to do! Let me know your thoughts.

### Potomac Yard Metro

For decades, the City has discussed, planned, and just plain hoped for a Metro Rail station at Potomac Yard.

[Early last month, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority \(WMATA\), issued the pre-solicitation notice to hire the contractor to design, construct, test and commission the new Potomac Yard Metro station.](#) With the formal solicitation coming out this month, we are now closer than we have ever been to bringing Metro to Potomac Yard.

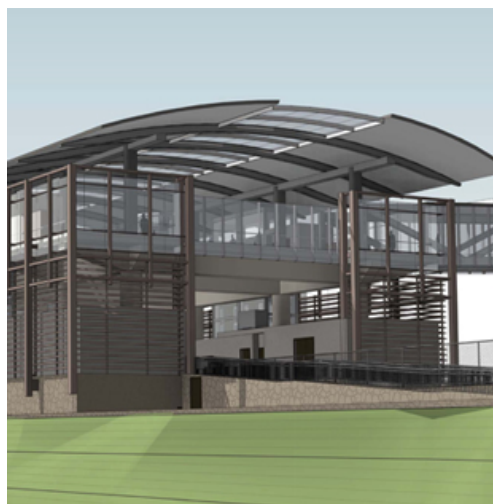
In June, the City achieved two major milestones in the effort to bring this station to reality. The Planning Commission recommended approval of the land-use applications for the construction of the station itself. [The Council scheduled a special meeting and adopted the approvals as recommended.](#)

Earlier in June, [the Final Environmental Impact Statement was completed.](#)

[In May of last year, the City Council unanimously adopted Alternative B as the site of the future Potomac Yard Metro station.](#)

[In May, the Council approved revisions to the formal agreement between the City and the National Park Service.](#) This agreement was necessary to select Alternative B, which requires the use of some National Park Service land. Implementing this agreement will expand National Park Service land, improve existing public spaces, and protect the Memorial Parkway.

In 2008, along with then-Councilman Rob Krupicka, I proposed a new start to efforts to bring Metro to Potomac Yard. [We included language in the City's Transportation Master Plan](#) explicitly calling for a new station at Potomac Yard. We also tied the construction and funding of Metro to the development occurring in the Yard.



The result is [a funding plan for Potomac Yard Metro](#) that not only leverages the development activity in Potomac Yard, but also does so without requiring the contributions of General Fund taxpayers.

The largest environmental, [economic development](#), and transportation initiative in our City's history is being accomplished using [one of the most innovative funding mechanisms used anywhere in the country.](#)

The funding package today consists of [two special tax districts](#), tax increment funding, [Northern Virginia Transportation Authority regional funding](#), a [Virginia Transportation Infrastructure Board loan](#), and a developer contribution.

[The Potomac Yard Metro project will facilitate the creation of up to 26,000 new jobs and will bring up to \\$2 billion of new tax revenue to the City. It removes thousands of vehicles from one of the most crowded corridors in our City. It promotes the creation of the kind of walkable community our City has long desired in Potomac Yard.](#)

Any day now, the Federal Record of Decision should be issued. The Record of Decision is the formal federal document that outlines all of the agreed upon mitigation to any potential impacts that will result from the project.

Along with Councilman Smedberg, I serve as a member of the Potomac Yard Metrorail Implementation Group (PYMIG). [In September of last year, the group received the latest schedule for the station construction, reflecting the beginning of the Design/Build procurement process next summer, with a station opening in early 2020.](#)

Next year, in advance of the issuance of the procurement agreements, the City Council will finalize the mix of funding sources, as well as consider any changes.



Successful completion of this project is a key component in our efforts to promote a stronger economic future for our City. I am excited to see how far we have come.

## Asking Richmond

Every year, the City Council adopts a [Legislative Package](#) for the upcoming General Assembly session. While the state government is certainly a significant financial supporter of the City's budget, Richmond also sets a legal environment that affects how we provide services to our residents.

Contained in the package are specific pieces of legislation that we would like to see proposed as well as the City's position on legislation that may arise during the session.



This upcoming General Assembly session is the so-called "short session." The General Assembly alternates between a 45 day session in odd number years and a 60 day session in even number years.

[Last month, I wrote about the state budget situation](#), which will dominate the upcoming session in Richmond.

In August, [the Governor brought together the Joint Money Committees from the General Assembly](#). He gave them the sobering news had not met the forecasts in the approved biennial state budget. The change to the revenue estimates removes \$1.2

billion from the budget over the two years.

Faced with this reduction of revenue, the state is now forced to dip into its revenue stabilization fund (the so-called "Rainy Day Fund") and defer planned salary increases. With those changes, there is still additional spending to be cut in the upcoming General Assembly session.

The City receives over \$46 million in General Fund revenues from the Commonwealth along with another \$69 million in non-General Fund revenues. This is not an insignificant portion of our revenue.

The Council will be holding a public hearing on the proposed legislative package on Saturday, November 12th beginning at 9:30 AM. Final adoption of the package is scheduled for Tuesday, November 29th.

[I included a number of proposals in this year's proposed package](#), including:

- A request for a change to the state's Virginia Preschool Initiative to ensure access to the City's low income children.
- A request for increase to an assessment charged for each civil case filed as a funding source for the City's law library.
- A request for additional funding for the State's crime lab to ensure a backlog in testing Physical Evidence Recovery Kits (PERK) doesn't again develop.
- Support for reforms of the state's redistricting process to ensure fair, less partisan redistricting.
- A request for legislation that provides our local school board with the authority to set the start date of school at their discretion.

- A request for legislation to prevent utility rate increases without the approval of the State Corporation Commission.
- [Support for funding of the Department of Juvenile Justice Transformation Plan](#), including new funding for community programs.
- A request to expand the right of a renter to assign their purchase right during a condo conversion. Current law allows an elderly or disabled resident to assign their right to purchase to a housing non-profit or government agency. I have suggested that we expand this right to families. This is one way we can maintain affordable housing.
- A request for state funding to partner with the City in efforts designed to lower premiums for residents required to purchase FEMA Flood Insurance.
- A request that the state fully fund its obligations to K-12 education.
- A request for legislation to provide the [Virginia Conflict of Interest and Ethics Advisory Council](#) with the authority to review local government officials' Statement of Economic Interests, in the same way that they review those filings from state officials.

While it is difficult to get legislation passed in Richmond, my hope is that we will be able to make progress on many of these important issues when the General Assembly gets to work in January.

The City is represented in the State Senate by [Senator Richard Saslaw](#), [Senator George Barker](#), and [Senator Adam Ebbin](#). In the House of Delegates, the City is represented by [Delegate Charmiele Herring](#) and [Delegate Mark Levine](#).

[Click here to determine who represents you.](#)

## Funding Transportation

During the 2007 General Assembly session, a bipartisan compromise was forged to provide new funding for transportation around the Commonwealth. The legislation was signed by then-Governor Kaine.

In addition to statewide and regional funding mechanisms, the legislation created authority for local governments in Northern Virginia to enact an [additional commercial real estate tax to fund transportation efforts](#). In Virginia, all real estate had previously been taxed at the same rate. This new authority allowed commercial real estate to be taxed at a higher rate.

Shortly after enactment, the [Supreme Court of Virginia invalidated much of the bipartisan transportation funding package](#). However, the Supreme Court did leave the add-on commercial real estate tax authority intact.

[Fairfax County](#) and Arlington County quickly exercised this new authority and it remains in place today.

In Alexandria, we created a committee of residents to study the issue. [They provided a recommendation that the City gradually begin assessing the add-on tax](#). Largely due to concerns regarding the impact the tax would have on the City's small businesses, the City chose not to pursue the tax in 2008.

In 2010, the issue returned. This time, [the City had developed a priority list of projects and there was considerable political support around adopting the add-on tax](#).

Again, due to concerns about the impact on the City's small businesses, the Council chose not to adopt the commercial add-on tax. However, the Council [did choose to increase the real estate rate \(applying to all properties\) by 2.2 cents to provide the same level of](#)

[funding](#). Thus, the City's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) was born.

Since that time, the TIP has been used to fund new and expanded transportation efforts throughout our City. [This year's TIP](#) funded many important transportation initiatives, including DASH expansion, improvements at Van Dorn Metro station, road improvements throughout the City, and Capital BikeShare.

Unfortunately, two years ago, much of the TIP was changed. [In February of 2015, the Chairman of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority \(WMATA\) Board of Directors touted that WMATA would balance its budget without fare increases or service reductions.](#)

Left unsaid in that statement from the Board was that WMATA intended to request large increases in operating support from its member localities, and by extension, the taxpayers of Alexandria and the region.

In FY 2016, [the City Manager's proposed TIP](#) devoted 25% of the total funding to the increased subsidy request from WMATA. In order to accomplish this, a number of major projects were removed from the TIP and are no longer funded.

It is my view that this violates the intent and community expectation around the TIP and its funding. The TIP was designed to create and operate "new" transportation services and improvements, [not plug budgetary holes for WMATA.](#)



In response to those concerns, the City Manager's proposed FY 2017 budget and the City Council's approved FY 2017 budget reduced the impact of WMATA funding on the TIP. In FY 2016, \$2.9 million of WMATA funding hit the TIP. In FY 2017, the number

was reduced to \$811,926.

Yet the funding challenges of WMATA have not subsided, particularly as the ridership impacts of the ongoing SafeTrak efforts are being felt.

WMATA now enters FY 2018 with an estimated \$275 million gap.

[Earlier last month, the WMATA General Manager presented a Board committee with a draft of scenarios for bridging that gap.](#) Included were the expected fare increases and increased subsidy request from member jurisdictions. Also included was a suggestion of service reductions, including closure of the brand new MetroWay service and elimination of off-peak service at 20 Metrorail stations, including Eisenhower Avenue and Van Dorn Street in Alexandria.

These service reductions would be unacceptable, and the Board has conveyed that message to WMATA leadership.

On Thursday, WMATA leadership will present [their proposed budget to the WMATA Board's Finance Committee](#). The budget as proposed will:

- Cut 1,000 jobs and achieve savings from benefits
- Institute headways to 8 minutes on each Metrorail line (this is an improvement for the Blue Line)
- [Eliminate Rush+ service](#)
- Increase rail headways during non-peak times



- Eliminate under-utilized bus routes (none are in Alexandria)
- Raise rail and bus fares
- Increase jurisdictional contributions, including an additional \$6.5 million from Alexandria

These are very large changes in this proposed budget, at a difficult time for WMATA. As a daily transit rider for over 15 years, it is imperative that the efforts underway restore WMATA to both a state of good repair, as well as a successful system.

We have much work to do as a region.

## The Capacity to Turn Lives Around

In a growing city with changing needs, it can be difficult to properly project infrastructure needs. Particularly when new infrastructure investment requires significant lead-time, that difficulty can be even more challenging.

One such area is our capacity to house those who have been removed from society for the safety of our community.

The Alexandria City Jail is run by the [Sheriff of Alexandria, Dana Lawhorne](#). The jail currently holds roughly 400 state, local and Federal prisoners. The Sheriff has a standing [agreement with the United States Marshals Service](#) to hold an average daily population of 150 Federal prisoners in addition to the state and local prisoners.

In the early 90s, crime trends and concerns about rising jail populations led the City to enter into an agreement to [operate Peumansend Creek Regional Jail in Bowling Green, Virginia](#). The regional jail, operated by several jurisdictions, was designed to supplement our capacity in Alexandria.

Due to overly stringent inmate selection criteria, the location, and lower crime, the regional jail came to be rarely utilized by Alexandria. Efforts by our Sheriff to sell or lease the City's beds in the regional jail were largely unsuccessful.



With the supplemental space never utilized and no likelihood that others would take it over, [in October of 2014, the City Council voted to withdraw from the facility](#) effective June 30, 2017. Once complete, the City will save over \$500,000 per year.

On the juvenile side, we are going through a similar discussion. Along with Arlington County and the City of Falls Church, the City owns [the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Home](#). Located in Alexandria, the facility has a capacity for 70 children who are awaiting disposition by the juvenile system and 10 children who have already received disposition. The home is run by a board with representatives from all three jurisdictions. [There is a school run by the Alexandria City Public Schools](#).

Just like the Alexandria City Jail, the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Home has a contract to hold Federal juveniles as well.

[The City spends a little over a million dollars each year to contribute to the operation of this facility](#). The latest data shows that half of the capacity is being utilized with a little over a third of the usage coming from Alexandria.

During last year's budget process, [additional money was requested to increase staffing to comply with the Prison Rape Elimination Act](#)

[\(PREA\)](#). Council chose to defer a decision on that new investment to allow a larger conversation about the future of the facility to occur. Do we have the ability to partner with other facilities or the state to provide these services?

This conversation the City is having is very much aligned with similar conversations around the Commonwealth. Driven by lower populations of children committed to the state Juvenile Justice system as well as a desire for better outcomes, the state has worked to reduce capacity as well.

[The Department of Juvenile Justice closed a facility in Culpeper in 2014 and is now working to close two larger facilities in the Richmond area.](#) While these closures certainly have the potential to save money, they also provide us with an opportunity to provide more effective, evidence-based community solutions.

Our changing needs as a community provide opportunities for us to consider alternatives to the ways in which these services have been provided in the past. I'm hopeful we will continue such creative thinking.

### Host a Town Hall in Your Living Room!

My regular series of Town Hall Meetings continue!



You supply the living room and a bunch of your friends and neighbors. I will supply a member of the Alexandria City Council (me) with the answers to any of your questions about our City.

Just [drop us a line](#) and we'll get a Town Hall on the calendar! Thanks for the interest!

## Upcoming Issues

### Old Town North

With over 3,000 residents and nearly 10,000 employees, [the area the City knows as "Old Town North"](#) is already an important part of our City. It is blessed with access to the Potomac River. It is fortunate to have two significant arts destinations, the [The Art League](#) and [MetroStage](#). The area is accessible to a variety of transportation options. There is a large redevelopment opportunity on the site of the now-closed NRG power plant.

The question before the community as part of the [Old Town North small area planning process](#) is how we shape the future of this unique space in our City.

Unlike most of our recent planning processes, the Old Town North Plan did not begin with a mission or overarching goal. This process began with [a series of intensive charrettes to help capture the perspective of the residents living within the plan area.](#)

The work of the community has lead to [a draft set of policy statements to help guide the next phase of the planning process.](#) Monday, November 7th will be [the next community meeting.](#) Beginning with that meeting, draft chapters of the plan will be presented for comment by the community.

If it remains on [schedule, the plan comes to the City Council and Planning Commission at the beginning of 2017.](#)

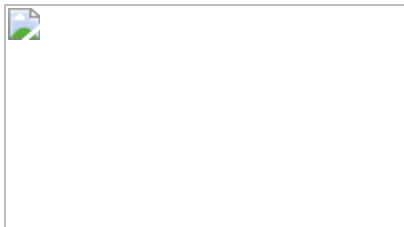
### A HOT Proposal Returns

[Last year, I wrote about the City's efforts to formalize and encourage public-private partnerships to advance recreational infrastructure.](#)

At the state level the Commonwealth has been using public-private partnerships to advance transportation projects, including new High-Occupancy Toll (HOT) lanes. Through [these arrangements](#), a private entity finances a portion of the transportation improvement in exchange for the ability to collect tolls from use.

Under Governor McDonnell, there was an effort to create new HOT lanes on Interstate 395/95 to cover the 35 miles from the border with the District of Columbia south to Stafford County.

Both Alexandria and Arlington had concerns over the details of the proposal. Mainly, what impacts the operation of the new lanes would have on local streets and air quality, as well as potential impacts to private property in order to expand the existing highway right of way.



At the time, Arlington County [filed a Federal lawsuit](#) to oppose the proposal. While the City did not join the litigation, [the City did adopt a resolution expressing the concerns](#) on the details of the proposal.

In the end, state Government [chose to remove the section of the lanes that went through Alexandria and Arlington.](#)

Now, five years later, [Governor McAuliffe and his administration are trying again.](#) They have made a new proposal for extension of the HOT lanes into the District of Columbia.

[The specific proposal is to convert the two existing High Occupancy Vehicle \(HOV\) lanes to three HOT or "Express" lanes for 8 miles from north of Edsall Road to Eads Street near the Pentagon.](#)

This proposal does differ from the original HOT Lanes proposal in several key ways. The most important difference is that this new proposal generally sticks within the existing right of way.

[Last month, the Virginia Department of Transportation \(VDOT\) came before the City Council to present the details of the proposal.](#) Most of the conversation focused on the financial components. VDOT has proposed that \$15 million per year be allocated to the jurisdictions along I-395 for improving transit in the corridor.

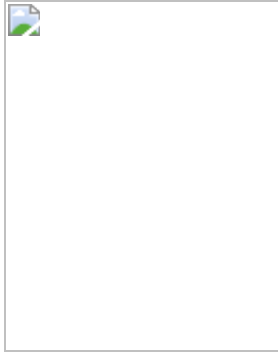
I remain skeptical of the merits of this project and the merits of using these types of agreements to develop major transportation infrastructure. Yet, that is a decision for state policymakers not for local ones.

For this project, my focus is to ensure that the City receives the maximum benefit for the impact that this will have on our community. There will be more discussion as the proposal continues to be refined.

### **Taking Out the Trash In Old Town**

About 20,000 residences in the City receive trash and recycling services from City government. Most condominium developments and private neighborhoods contract with private collection companies. Those that do receive City trash removal pay a residential refuse fee on their real estate tax bill.

Yet for the 4,500 Old Town residents who receive City trash services, they put that trash to the curb in their own trash can, not in a City provided can.



For the past two years, portions of the residential refuse fee revenue have been set aside to purchase new trash cans for Old Town residents.

[On Friday, City staff began distributing new cans to Old Town residents.](#)

Distribution will continue over the next few weeks.

Residents can continue to use a private can if they wish, but they now have the opportunity to utilize the standard 65-gallon City trash can which is in use

throughout the City.

[To opt-out of the new can, use Call, Click, Connect.](#)

Vice Mayor Justin M. Wilson  
703.746.4500

[justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov](mailto:justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov)

[www.justin.net](http://www.justin.net)

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