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The Council Connection

your connection to City Council by:

Mayor Justin M. Wilson

Alexandria, Virginia

September 1, 2019

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Summer is coming to an end and it's time to head back to work!

On Tuesday most of the students in the Alexandria City Public Schools head back to class.

Best wishes for a wonderful school year.

The following week the City Council will get back to work. This fall promises to be a busy time for the Council with important land-use decisions ahead of us along with the initial phases of our upcoming budget process.



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

Council Initiatives

Metro Reopens Next Weekend

[Barring anything unexpected, Alexandria's Metro Stations will reopen a week from today.](#) Metro is [now in the process of doing the final testing and clean-up work.](#)

This has been a challenging period for our City, its residents, our visitors, and our businesses and their employees.

With a year of planning and regional collaboration, we were able to throw nearly everything we had at this event.

While riders settled into new, slower routines, there were still challenges that impacted our City. The shuttle buses had issues with capacity and traffic flow. Some Metro Bus and DASH routes had similar problems as well. Traffic impacts exacerbated existing congestion. Some businesses have seen reductions in revenue.

[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

Voting Starts This Month

On November 5th, Alexandria voters will choose our General Assembly representation (members of the State Senate and members of the House of Delegates) and the Clerk of the Circuit Court.

[Sample ballots are now available online for the election.](#)

The deadline to [register to vote, or change your registration](#) is October 15th.

[In-person and mail absentee balloting will begin later this month on September 20th.](#)

In-person absentee balloting can be conducted from 8 AM until 5 PM Monday through Friday at 132 N. Royal Street in Old Town.

[Requests for an absentee ballot to be delivered by mail can be submitted online now .](#)

Day of the Child Celebration

[On Saturday September 28th the "Day of the Child" celebration comes to Northern Virginia Community College's Alexandria campus.](#)

Jointly hosted by the Alexandria Police Department, Casa

Metrobus ridership is up 30%. The two DASH routes serving the Pentagon have seen 14-15% ridership increases. The water taxis are carrying 819 passengers per day. Parking garage utilization in Old Town is up 12%.



In late July, Metro [began to highlight some of the other station improvements that were made during this shutdown.](#)

We will have time to take stock of the lessons from this shutdown, but there are a few that come to mind immediately:

1. We cannot let this ever happen again! Our transit systems (and all of the rest of our important infrastructure) must be maintained in a state of good repair. This requires consistent funding and priority.
2. Resiliency is key. An urban area cannot be overly dependent on single points of failure. We survived this shutdown by expanding existing alternatives, and creating new ones.
3. Integral to resiliency is education and awareness. Many residents displaced from Metro Rail took advantage of bus routes that existed before the shutdown and will continue after it concludes. Many of those residents have told me they will stick with the buses, now that they know about them.
4. We're all in this together. The partnerships between public agencies and private businesses made this bearable.

The work to restore Metro back to the level required to support this region continues. In the short-term, additional sacrifice will be required. As a daily Metro rider myself, I know the service challenges first-hand. I'm optimistic that these efforts will result in a more reliable system for Alexandria and the entire region.

Measuring Student Achievement

On Tuesday, my kids will head off for 9th grade and 6th grade in the Alexandria City Public Schools. With their hard work, great educators in the classroom and our efforts at home, my kids will meet success. That's typically the measure most parents hope for.

Whether we like it or not, our schools, our kids, and our educators will ultimately have their success each year measured by standardized tests. In our case, [the battery of tests we call the Standards of Learning \(SOL\)](#) is how we measure that success in Virginia.

[With the release of the SOL testing results for the Alexandria City Public Schools last month, we see a mixed bag of results across the system.](#)

Three years ago at this time we were celebrating modest increases and the narrowing of the achievement gap for students of color, students with limited financial means, and students with limited English proficiency.

This year, we had significant progress to celebrate in math, with scores showing large increases overall and in every student category.

Yet the progress in other areas of testing is uneven with slight regression in some areas and no change in others. [Across the](#)

Chirilagua, and the Northern Virginia Community College, this community arts festival will include food and entertainment.

The event occurs from 11 AM until 2 PM at 5000 Dawes Avenue.

North Ridge Trees

The North Ridge Canopy Tree Fall Sale is back!

Organized by neighbors in the neighborhood, North Ridge residents can take advantage of discounted pricing to purchase new trees for private property locations.

Fifteen gallon container trees are \$300 and 2 inch caliper ball and burlap trees are \$540.

Cost includes planting and mulching. Orders must be placed by September 15th. [E-mail Jane Seward to place an order!](#)

Run! Geek! Run!

The Run! Geek! Run! 5K race returns to the streets of Alexandria on Sunday September 29th.

This year, the race will benefit the National Industries for the Blind.

[Sign-up online!](#)

Back to School Night

With schools back in session this month, the Alexandria City Public Schools have scheduled Back to School Nights for parents throughout this month.

[Mark your calendars today and plan to learn more about your student's education.](#)

King Street Art Festival

The King Street Art Festival returns to Old Town!

[Commonwealth, scores dipped in all categories.](#)

Alexandria continues to have good schools, filled with dedicated, creative, and hard-working educators that inspire our children everyday.

However, we cannot be satisfied with the fact that we have children who are not achieving in our schools.

There are certainly plausible explanations. [Alexandria maintains the highest percentage of students receiving Free and Reduced lunches in Northern Virginia, with a rate double or triple that of our neighbors in Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William counties.](#) There is [ample data to suggest that poverty is one of the most significant impacts on academic achievement.](#)

[Of that peer group of jurisdictions, Alexandria has the highest percentage of English Language Learners with just over 32% of our students arriving with limited English proficiency.](#) Again, this presents another barrier to student achievement.

It should not be ignored that the four jurisdictions with the highest pass rates, Falls Church City, and Arlington, Loudoun and Fairfax Counties, are also the four jurisdictions with the lowest rate of Free and Reduced lunch recipients in the region. The very same variation exists within our City, with the highest test scores in our City being posted by schools with the lowest rates of Free and Reduced lunch recipients.

Yet there are school systems around the country that have excelled in educating children challenged by poor backgrounds or limited English proficiency.

The variation in test scores within our city show that there are schools in Alexandria that have even excelled in educating these children.

As a member of the City Council, it can be easy to make the case that this is an issue for our School Board. There is no question that the Board, which was elected to lead our schools, has an enormous responsibility for ensuring our students' success.



That being said, our children are in school for 32.5 hours a week. What they experience in the other 135.5 hours of each week (as well as the five to six years before they enter our schools) has a dramatic impact on their achievement.

We cannot ignore the significant role that the City government plays in the success of our children.

Many of our children receive pre-school, day care, after-school and summer camp from City government. They may access programs from our Health Department, our Recreation Department, our Court Services Unit, or some of the many non-profit organizations that receive City funding.

The children may live in public housing units owned and operated by the [Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority](#) or in affordable housing units created or supported by the City.

Throughout the past several years, the Council and School Board have been working collaboratively to improve coordination and delivery of [early childhood services](#) and [after-school services](#). These two areas are currently provided in partnership with existing public and private providers and provide us with a great opportunity

[With more art than you know what to do with, the festival will be September 21st and 22nd from 10 AM until 7 PM on King Street.](#)

Relay for Pre-K

On Saturday October 5th, the Child and Family Network Center will be hosting a "Relay for Pre-K" 3 mile walk to benefit their early childhood education programs.

[Information is available online including registration!](#)

Africa Fest

On Saturday September 7th from noon until 5 PM, the City will host Africa FEST at the Patrick Henry Recreation Center (4653 Taney Avenue).

[This event will celebrate African heritage through dance, music, cultural activities and food.](#)

Energy Masters

Energy Masters are trained volunteers who conduct community education in energy efficiency and water conservation techniques.

These volunteers help our residents save money and help our planet.

The 2019-2020 program is now enrolling for the training class that begins in October.

[Learn more and sign up today!](#)

REVIVE Training

[Twice a month the City offers free training to residents seeking to learn how to spot and reverse an opioid overdose.](#)

No RSVP is required, and attendees receive a free medical kit upon completion.

to improve the success of our children.

This is part of the rationale behind our effort to adopt our [Youth Master Plan](#). A coordinated approach tailored to each child, utilizing all of the resources available within our City will best equip us to reach every child.

The wealth of a student's family should not dictate academic achievement. We have more work to do in order to make that aspiration, reality.

First Source Hiring

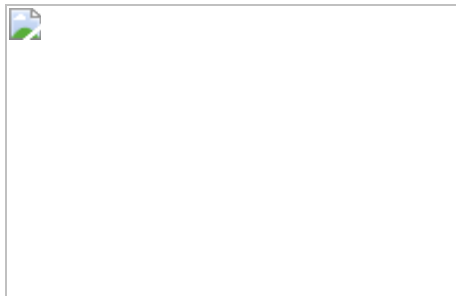
The [Alexandria Workforce Development Center](#) is the City's one-stop shop for both employers seeking qualified applicants and our residents seeking employment. They administer a variety of Federal, state and local programs designed to support employees seeking employment and job training.

Working to match qualified applicants with employers who are seeking their skills is difficult work in a tight labor market.

The City will expend \$761 million in our operating budget this year, and another \$1.62 billion in capital expenditures over the next decade. That level of spending presents an opportunity for the City to leverage those expenditures to advance a variety of City policy aims.

In the past, the Council has imposed [living wage requirements on those bidding on City projects](#). We have advanced initiatives to

expand contracting with small, woman-owned, and minority businesses. We have also considered whether equal pay requirements can be a component of our contracting activity. The goal is to fully leverage this spending to benefit our community.



In communities around the nation, jurisdictions have imposed "[First Source](#)" hiring requirements to ensure that those bidding on municipal contracts are giving local workforce development agencies the ability to help place employees in the positions created.

[Vice Mayor Elizabeth Bennett-Parker and I have jointly proposed that the City adopt a similar First Source requirement for our future procurement efforts.](#)

When implemented, such a requirement would serve the companies that bid on City projects, in helping them find the right talent, as well as benefiting our residents in making these jobs available to them.

This proposal will return to the Council this fall, and I'm hopeful we will see it implemented shortly.

Potential HHS Facility

Just about a year ago, [I wrote in this newsletter about the Northern Virginia Juvenile Detention Center \(NVJDC\)](#). The facility, jointly owned by the City of Alexandria, Arlington County and the City of Falls Church, had an agreement with the United States Department of Health and Human Services' (HHS) Office of Refugee Resettlement (ORR) to house children in the agency's custody.

Help become a lifesaver in our community!

Play Space Survey

We want your opinion as we work to design new play space for children in our community.

[Please complete the 2019 Play Space survey online!](#)

Recreation & Parks Survey

How can the City's Parks and Recreation better serve you?

[Please fill out our survey to assist our needs assessment effort.](#)

Census Jobs

As part of the preparation for the 2020 Decennial Census, the United States Census Bureau is already hiring in our area.

Click [here](#) or [here](#) to review the various jobs listed for hiring.

Thanks for joining our effort to ensure a full and complete count!

Mason Speakers

Is your club or organization interested in having a speaker?

The George Mason University speakers program is comprised of over 100 faculty and staff who provide lectures and guest presentations on hundreds of topics to organizations and businesses free of charge.

[Available speakers can be reviewed and reserved online!](#)

At that time, ORR's role in housing children who had been separated from their families, either at the Southern border or elsewhere, was becoming well documented. [Given concerns over the welfare of those children, and in response to pressure from the three governing bodies, the Board of Directors of the NVJDC chose to end that relationship with ORR.](#)

Last month, the City of Alexandria, along with numerous other jurisdictions, was notified that HHS/ORR was looking to site a permanent facility for youth in their custody in our community. [I notified HHS that Alexandria was not interested in hosting this facility.](#)

Children who are in the custody of HHS/ORR have typically come through horrific circumstances. These are children that have been separated from their parents through a variety of events, some tragic and violent. These are youth that are in a foreign nation, and impacted by trauma. I want something better for these kids.

That being said, a Federal facility placed in our City would not be subject to the City's oversight or meet our standards of care. If the Federal government wished to provide the City with the resources to care for these children, in partnership, I would be open to discussing such a scenario. But as it has been presented to the City at this point, I do not believe this is something the City should be a part of.

Putting Our River to Work

Alexandria exists as a City due to our proximity to the Potomac River. The City's access to the Potomac has provided an ingress and egress for goods and people for centuries.

While today the Potomac still supports commerce tied to tourism, Alexandria exists in one of the few regions blessed with a major body of water completely ignored for commuting traffic. As hundreds of thousands of commuters pack onto crowded roads and public transit systems, the Potomac River sits largely untouched by those seeking to get across the river to reach job centers in Washington, DC and beyond.



There have been efforts in the past two decades to leverage this resource. [Numerous studies have been conducted to test regional viability of commuting by ferry. Federal grant dollars have even been provided](#) to support these efforts in the past.

Yet, the City of Alexandria [has traditionally resisted these efforts. largely concerned that any ferry terminus in Old Town, would necessarily lead to increased parking saturation.](#) In fact, [the City's leases which allow existing water taxi services to operate on our waterfront specifically preclude commuting activities by limiting any service until after 9:30 AM.](#)

Yet sometimes necessity is the mother of experimentation instead of invention. During the summer metro shutdown, the City allowed a waiver of the 9:30 AM restriction and Potomac Riverboat Company has been operating commuting by boat between the Wharf and Alexandria. This service has been very popular with Alexandria residents and both anecdotal and actual evidence suggests that these riders have not severely taxed our limited parking supply.

After consultation, the City Manager has informed the lessees that the City will be allowing commuting services to continue through the end of the year. I am optimistic that this success will provide an

opening to make the use of our water as a viable commuting option, a permanent feature for our community.

The Future of High School

Late last month, the Superintendent [returned to the School Board with a comprehensive analysis of options available to configure the future of high school instruction in our City](#). This is now a decision that faces our community and ultimately our School Board this fall.

When Alexandria's students came back to school in the fall of 2009, [there were 2,233 students at T. C. Williams High School's King Street campus \(10th, 11th and 12th grades\) and 688 students at the Minnie Howard campus \(9th grade\)](#). The combined 2,921 students across four grades was after several years of stagnant enrollment numbers.

When school started this past fall, [there were 3,959 students across the four grades at T. C. Williams High School](#). Not only is T. C. Williams High School [the largest four grade high school in the Commonwealth of Virginia, the next largest school has a thousand less students!](#)

The configuration of the future of high school capacity will be one of the most important issues that our City works through over the next few years. In approving the most recent 10-year Capital Improvement Program, [the School Board included \\$124 million spread over 3 years to address high school capacity](#). This is a portion of the overall capital funding that the City Council provided for the School Board in our most recently approved budget.

The Board's approved Capital Improvement Program assumes an opening of a new high school facility during Fiscal Year 2023 (begins July 1, 2022). With the money in place, we must now determine the location and configuration of that new capacity.

[The City's decision to allocate significant resources to high school capacity began several years ago with requests for resources to add classrooms to the Minnie Howard campus](#). Ultimately that request would have only been a stop-gap, as we would have spent tens of millions of dollars to add capacity to a building that was not intended for high school use and would not have resolved the capacity challenges.

With the funding now in place for a more comprehensive answer to high school capacity, [the School Board has been conducting outreach to determine how to configure this capacity](#).

The City Council and School Board recently [approved the second phase of the Long Range Educational Facilities Plan](#). This phase focused on high school and early childhood education facilities and provided a series of recommendations for addressing capacity challenges for both.

[The Ad Hoc Joint City-Schools Facilities Investment Task Force included resources to address high school capacity in their recommendations, but paired the resources with policy recommendations.](#)



The residents of our City have offered a variety of ideas for how we might configure this additional capacity. [Some residents support a rebuild of Minnie Howard,](#)

[with a transition from a 9th grade center to one that houses 9th and 10th grades](#). Others have suggested that additional capacity be built on the existing King Street campus: either the site of the existing stadium, in conjunction with a rebuild of the Chinguapin Recreation Center or on the Chinguapin Park circle. Other residents have advocated a totally separate four-grade high school elsewhere in the City. Some have suggested that we obtain capacity outside of the King Street and Minnie Howard campuses for discrete programs (STEM Academy, International Academy, etc) to relieve pressure.

The ACPS Superintendent ultimately made a recommendation to the School Board to pursue a "[connected high school network model](#)." The Superintendent's [formal recommendation](#) was to pursue a campus approach retaining one high school, over multiple buildings.

The School Board received and cast votes on the Superintendent's recommendation earlier this year. [You can watch the School Board's discussion and votes online](#).

The Board ultimately cast two votes. The first vote was a unanimous vote to pursue building a new high school building on the site of Minnie Howard School, while incorporating that building in the connected high school network model as the Superintendent had proposed.

The second vote was a closely divided 5-4 vote that directed the Superintendent to provide multiple preliminary design proposals, with analysis for each, including a proposal for a second four grade high school.

Responsive to the Board's request, the Superintendent's analysis presents two options: 1) two distinct high schools utilizing existing school sites 2) the connected high school model, with one high school existing in multiple buildings.

This is a project that will serve the students of our City for a few generations to come, and the process must reflect the importance of the investment.

This month, the Board will host three public meetings/open houses, one in each School Board District.

The District A meeting will be held on Wednesday September 11th at George Washington Middle School.

The District B meeting will held on Tuesday September 17th at T. C. Williams High School.

The District C meeting will be held on Saturday September 14th at Ferdinand Day Elementary School.

As we enter a new era of joint collaboration and investment in partnership with the Alexandria City Public Schools, this project will be a crucial test of our ability to work together and work to satisfy multiple municipal needs on a single site.

[Please let me know your thoughts!](#)

Equal Justice Initiative

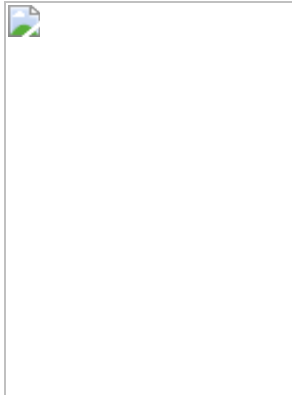
Just over 120 years ago, Benjamin Thomas was lynched on a lamppost on Fairfax Street near the intersection with King Street in our City.

Just two years prior, Joseph McCoy was lynched on a lamppost at Lee and Cameron Street.

These two men were two of thousands of Americans who became the victim of racial terror lynchings during a sad era in our history.

As we have worked over these past several years to broaden the perspective of history we recognize and interpret, coming to grips with our City's piece of this violent bigoted history is an essential undertaking.

The Equal Justice Initiative undertook an effort to develop a comprehensive museum and memorial to reflect on our nation's history of racial inequality. [The National Memorial of Peace and Justice](#) opened over a year ago in Montgomery, Alabama as a result of this initiative.



[The Memorial has developed 6-foot pillars for each community with documented lynchings](#), including Alexandria. They have invited communities like ours to collect this pillar and install it in our City.

The Office of Historic Alexandria has been working to plan this effort. To involve the community further in this process, [a community meeting is being hosted later this month on Saturday September 21st from 1 PM until 3 PM at Charles Houston Recreation Center \(901 Wythe Street\)](#).

I hope you will take the time to get involved in this meaningful recognition of this horrific chapter in our history.

The End of the Decal

Last week Alexandria vehicle owners received their vehicle personal property tax bills. This annual mailing was notable in what it did not include. This year taxpayers did not receive a decal for their vehicle windshield.

[Almost 12 years ago, during my first stint on the City Council, I proposed that the City consider eliminating the windshield decal used to enforce payment of the vehicle Personal Property Tax.](#)

Earlier this year, [the City Council voted unanimously to end the requirement to display the decal.](#)

When proposing the elimination of the decal originally, I cited the diminished efficacy of the windshield decal as a tool for enforcement of payment, and the improved customer service by eliminating the decal. At the time, Fairfax County had just scrapped the decal for their vehicles, which was forcing consideration of the change throughout the region.



Now, over a decade later, 76% of Virginia localities have all transitioned away from the windshield decal. Loudoun County eliminated their decal last year and Arlington plans to do the same in 2020.

While concerns around potential lost revenue prevented the City from pursuing this change back in 2007, it is now believed the

the revenue impact would be negligible.

[Our staff returned with new analysis of the option and the financial impact.](#) Ultimately the City Manager [included a formal proposal to eliminate the decal](#) in his proposed budget. Included in that proposal are changes in enforcement methodologies and technology to ensure no lost revenue.

As a result of this change, the City will need to make changes to [existing Overnight Parking Districts](#) in place in our City to ensure the enforcement of those restrictions remain feasible.

The Council chose to make a revenue trade-off to address the Vehicle Registration Fee (formerly the "decal fee"). Last year that fee was \$33 and was estimated to bring in \$3.85 million of revenue to the City in this current budget.

[The Council chose to increase the Vehicle Personal Property Tax rate, up to \\$5.33 \(from the existing \\$5 rate\) and eliminate the Vehicle Registration Fee, while maintaining the same revenue level overall.](#)

The average value of a personal use vehicle in our City is \$11,137. This change would have the effect of lowering the tax burden for a little over 69,000 vehicles in our City, and increasing the tax burden for a little over 48,000 vehicles.

[This change ultimately added more progressiveness into our Vehicle Personal Property Tax.](#)

[I would love to hear your thoughts !](#)

Host a Town Hall in Your Living Room!

As Mayor, I am continuing my regular series of Town Hall Meetings.

You supply the living room and a bunch of your friends and neighbors. I will supply the Mayor who will hopefully have 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

Seminary Road

The art of governing is largely consumed with the act of allocating scarce resources. Never is that more evident than when we are adopting a budget. The same scarcity and budgeting is present when we are allocating the asphalt on our roads.

Over time, we have changed the way we allocate our right-of-way; as we made way for cars, eventually made way for sidewalks, and grew right-of-way to accommodate highways.

Later this month, the Council will allocate the scarce right-of-way on the portion of Seminary Road from Quaker Lane to North Howard. With the scheduled repaving of Seminary, we have the opportunity to affirm or modify the status quo.

A protracted community process ultimately led to three alternatives:

- [Alternative 1](#): Which largely maintained the status quo
- [Alternative 2](#): Which removed one eastbound lane and added bike lanes
- [Alternative 3](#): Which removed an eastbound and a westbound lane, added a center turn lane and bike lanes

After further community input, the City's Transportation & Environmental Services staff [presented a staff recommendation that](#)

[blended alternatives 1 and 2.](#)

This staff recommendation was heard in June by the City's Traffic & Parking Board. Ultimately the Board voted 3-2 to recommend to the City staff that a modified version of Alternative 1 be pursued.

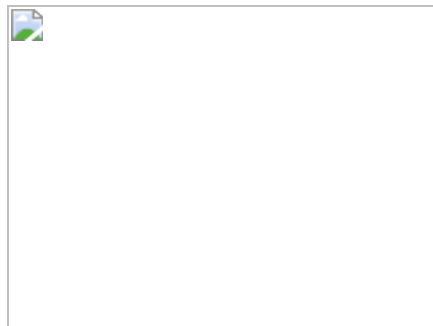
While ordinarily these matters would not come before the City Council unless they were appealed, given the significant community interest, Council will later hold a public hearing on Saturday September 14th at 9:30 AM to receive public testimony and make a final decision about the configuration of this road section.

It is unfortunate that the future of this small section of roadway has become a terribly divisive issue for our City. Residents of our community have advanced dueling petitions, [with a petition of residents in support of Alternative 3](#) and [a petition of residents in support of the Traffic & Parking Board's recommendation.](#)

Each year, an average of 37 people are killed or seriously injured on Alexandria's streets. Each of these tragic incidents change the lives of the victims and their families in dramatic ways. But for each tragedy, there are also countless close calls and near misses that don't get reported.

In Alexandria, we are fortunate to have pedestrian scale, walkable neighborhoods with urban amenities throughout our City. Yet if residents do not feel they can safely traverse the streets of our City, then all the urban amenities are for naught.

The City [has invested millions of taxpayer dollars to improve pedestrian safety throughout our community.](#) Those resources have included improving pedestrian access to schools, building and improving sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic calming efforts, bike lanes, new signalization, and more.



With the recent large increases in road resurfacing budgets, [the Council has also steered new dollars into our "Complete Streets" efforts, the City's program for improving non-vehicular transportation infrastructure.](#)

Yet there are still areas of our City where sidewalks are non-existent or unusable, intersections are unsafe and unsafe driving is rampant. We must improve the safety of our streets for all users. Doing so requires changing the behavior of all users of our roads.

[In the current budget the adopted a year ago, the Council added 6 new sworn traffic safety officers.](#)

Our Police Chief has worked to increase the focus of existing resources on traffic enforcement efforts. This has resulted in education and significant increases in traffic citations being issued throughout our City.

Over 3 years ago, [the Council adopted an overhaul of the City's Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan.](#)

We kicked-off a [Vision Zero initiative](#) for Alexandria. While this initiative will involve significant resources and planning, it simply means that we would design road spaces, traffic regulations and operations to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries. [At the end of 2017, the Council approved our Vision Zero Action Plan.](#)

Later this month, we will have the opportunity to determine the best configuration for this road. This decision will leave a large group of residents in our community unhappy. While we will be unable to make everyone happy, I'm hopeful we can make the correct decision for our City's future.

72-Hour Rule

In the summer of 2015, [I proposed that the City take a look at the so-called "72-hour Rule."](#) The 72-hour Rule [is officially 10-4-8 of the City Code](#) . This code section has been on the City's books for many years and was last revised 30 years ago. This is in addition to any existing on-street restrictions.

Essentially the 72-hour rule provides that a vehicle cannot be parked on a City street for longer than 72 hours. The rule was enacted to prevent abandonment and long-term storage of vehicles on our streets. Unfortunately, today it is primarily used as a tool in "neighbor versus neighbor" disputes.

From 2000 to 2015, our Police Department has been asked to check a vehicle for compliance 7,500 times and they have issued roughly 1,300 citations for violations. This is a law where enforcement is primarily initiated by complaint. That was true 87% of the time.

In neighborhoods without off-street parking, the rule can become particularly problematic when residents are on vacation or on a business trip, without any place or anyone to move their vehicle.

[Our City staff worked with the Traffic and Parking Board to conduct the review. They distributed an online survey to collect input. Over 700 participants provided input on the survey. Public meetings were also held to solicit input.](#)

In March of 2017, [the Traffic and Parking Board unanimously endorsed a reform proposal](#) that allows for residents to electronically request extensions to the 72 hour period to avoid ticketing during leisure and business travel. The proposal is to try this change as a pilot.

Ultimately, the City Council also adopted this proposal, and [you can now register your vehicle using the City website in the event your car will be parked for greater than 72 hours](#). This exemption is set to sunset on November 1st.

With the ordinance set to sunset, the Council must determine whether to maintain the exemptions passed by Council, or go in a different direction. Our City Staff will also be proposing to increase the number of annual exemptions allowed per resident.

The City Council will be taking this issue up in advance of the sunset date. [Let me know your thoughts!](#)

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