

# Old Town Alexandria Waterfront Plan

**Background Information:** The Alexandria Waterfront Small Area Plan focuses on an approximately 3-mile length of the Virginia side of the Potomac River, specifically the waterfront area from Old Town Alexandria up to the Washington Sailing Marina on Daingerfield Island. Like Annapolis, Alexandria's historic origins as a busy port long predating automobile-centric planning have given the area a layout that continues to be ideal for pedestrians. The Waterfront Plan seeks to restore and improve pedestrian access where it has been impeded by visual and physical barriers and to improve multi-modal transportation. Critically, the Potomac River is sufficiently hazardous that while recreational swimming and boating occur, most waterfront recreation takes place in waterfront promenades and parks.

## Highlights / Best Practices:

### • Equitable Transportation Access

- Conducts the Alexandria Waterfront Traffic Impact Study to analyze future conditions in the transportation network, determining that signal timing adjustments, left turn management, and replacement of street parking with parking structures will meet parking demands without adding or widening streets in the existing grid

- Recommends a parking approach for the waterfront that builds on the work of the recent Old Town Area Parking Study to identify parking locations and intercept vehicles before they reach the waterfront to reduce congestion and protect the residential neighborhoods near the Potomac River

- Implements Alexandria Wayfinding Program to facilitate access to and throughout the area for pedestrians and cyclists, while directing motorists to parking garages

- Calls for preserving and possibly expanding accessible motorcoach on-street parking that can be reserved through online permitting or by phone

### • Network and Multimodal Connectivity

- Creating continuous waterfront public space at least 50 feet wide with at least 25-foot walkways

- Adding bicycle parking and implementing bikeshare stations connecting the waterfront, extending reach of transit and parking systems

- Reconnecting waterfront bicycle routes to nearby parks and historic sites

- Segregating commercial and pleasure boat activity, making public locations in both accessible

### • Water Access – While the Waterfront Plan focuses on access to the *waterfront* rather than the water itself, to improve recreation access on the water the Plan recommends:

- Providing locations for the public to launch or land canoes, kayaks, and other non-motorized watercraft at Tide Lock Park and Rivergate Park; trailered boat ramp activity should be kept outside Old Town, but may be permissible elsewhere in the study area

- Redesigning Oronoco Bay Park to integrate stormwater management and restored wetlands with art walks, interpretive sites, recreational areas, shelters, and children's play areas

- Adding or replacing public piers to bring park users onto the water or access water taxis

**Conclusion:** The Old Town Alexandria Waterfront Plan is expansive in its efforts to guide development of public spaces in a mixed-use area. The plan prioritizes what changes can be made locally, attempting to enhance rather than shape interstate or state systems such as the Washington Metro or highway routes.

