



*City of Alexandria*

# Voter's Guide for Council Elections



May 2, 2000

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Inner City Civic Association  
Northeast Citizens' Association  
North Old Town Independent Citizens

## Meet the Candidates

**Candidates for Mayor:**

Kerry Donley\*

Bob Peavey

**Candidates for City Council:**

A. Andrew Anderson

Ross Bell

Bill Cleveland\*

Claire Eberwein

Bill Euille\*

Andrew Macdonald

Judy McVay

Matthew Natale

Del Pepper\*

Paul Smedberg

David Speck\*

Van Van Fleet

Lois Walker\*

Doug Wood

Joyce Woodson

*\* denotes incumbent*

## Kerry Donley - Candidate for Mayor

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Party affiliation: Democrat

**Question #1:** How do you intend to approach a comprehensive traffic plan for Alexandria which would address the problems created by existing and future developments?

**Answer:** Our success in dealing with traffic issues in Alexandria depends in large part to the regional context in which we exist. Alexandria is part of a larger Washington Metropolitan region, and our location close to Washington is certainly part of the problem since most of the traffic we experience neither originates nor terminates in Alexandria. Consequently, we must operate in a regional context in which we must promote increased transit usage by those who reside outside of Alexandria. This year, the Transportation Coordinating Council approved a plan at the request of the General Assembly which outlines the region's transportation priorities through the year 2020. Along with Council Member Lois Walker, I was happy to represent the city in developing a plan which promotes mass transit extensions to our west and our south. This was a dramatic departure over past plans which were dominated by new road projects. Now our goal is to work with the federal and state governments to obtain sufficient funding and to retain the balance between mass transit projects and road projects.

Locally, Alexandria must continue to promote mass transit enhancements within our borders. New development should be encouraged at locations where Metro rail stations exist or which could be easily linked to Metro stations. We should continue to study mass transit options such as Metro rail or light rail at Potomac Yards, consistent with Council's approval at that site. Road improvements such as the straightening of the Monroe Avenue bridge will also relieve congestion.

**Question #2:** Describe your position on the creation and preservation of open space in the face of redevelopment and how would you specifically propose to achieve these goals.

**Answer:** First, the Planning Commission is currently redefining open space as part of the city's zoning code and the Council should adopt their recommendations as a first step toward preserving open space. Second, the city needs to be creative when looking for opportunities to create open space. For example, the Council was successful in preserving 60 acres of open space at Cameron Station and we did so at no cost to city taxpayers through a public benefit grant of land from the federal government. This is a wonderful example of vision relating to open space at Cameron Station. Another creative example might be the creation of a land bank (suggested by Councilman Speck) enabling the city to look at ways to acquire open space through donation or acquisition. Finally, we should direct staff to examine ways to finance acquisition of open space using federal or state grants along with private grants which might also be available. Matching local funds might also be required, so we must be prepared to allocate local tax dollars if necessary.

## **Kerry Donley – Candidate for Mayor (cont'd)**

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**Question #3:** What specific measurements would you take to improve the quality of the Alexandria Public School system?

**Answer:** There are currently a variety of measurements currently exist ranging from SAT scores, the Standards of Learning, the Literacy Passport Test, and Criterion Reference Tests. The last thing our schools need at this point is a new standard. We must let our teachers focus on teaching rather than jamming yet again another measurement down their throats. Alexandria continues to lead the state in terms of per pupil expenditures, and I have and will continue to work to ensure that financial resources are available to our students. I will continue to work with the School Board to understand and improve education in Alexandria. As the parent of five students in the Alexandria schools, I am satisfied they are receiving a great education, and I want to work to ensure that the same is true for other Alexandria youngsters.

**Question #4:** How would you plan to better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards (i.e., Small Area Plans, SUP enforcement, Washington Street Guidelines)?

**Answer:** I believe we must look at some structural changes in City Hall which would improve not only enforcement but planning. Transportation and Environmental Services should be restructured so they can focus more on public works and environmental issues separately. This might involve the creation of two separate departments of restructuring within the current organization. Right now the department is too big and potentially hard to manage. Such a restructure would enable the department to get closer to the community which it serves. Second, the Planning and Zoning Department needs to develop a higher priority on planning rather than its administrative role which has dominated much of its time. Involving that department in community exercises like the Washington Street Task Force provides greater opportunity for civic input and understanding thus leading to easier enforcement as properties are developed or redeveloped.

**Question #5:** How would you ensure that future development/redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of life of the neighborhoods?

**Answer:** Our Master Plan is our basic statement about development in Alexandria. We recently went through a review of the Master Plan, and communities like the North Old Town area have had substantial input in the Master Plan which has led to beneficial development and redevelopment. In fact, North Old Town has had more meaningful input into the Master Plan than any other section of the city. The next Council will oversee another review of the Master Plan, and we should encourage a process similar to Old Town North where civic input was solicited and used to formulate a small area plan which has been successful.

Finally, the term quality of life has a different meaning in almost every neighborhood in the city. Involving citizens from the neighborhood in the planning process is the best way to not only define the quality of life for that neighborhood, but also the best way for the view future development and its effect on the quality of life. In our "Council on the Road" program, we have gotten out in the community to address neighborhood issues in a dialogue with our citizens. I plan to continue this program if I am reelected.

## **Bob Peavey - Candidate for Mayor**

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**Question #1:** How do you intend to approach a comprehensive traffic plan for Alexandria which would address the problems created by existing and future developments?

**Answer:** I support the creation of a Traffic Master Plan that is prepared in partnership between citizen involvement and professional traffic engineers and planners who are completely independent of commercial developers who had business interests with the city. I would insist on the conduct of a comprehensive traffic analysis of Alexandria (paid by the city), so that we could accurately baseline current traffic patterns (volume, origin, destination, duration, parking, motivations, cycle times, etc.). Once baselined (updated at least every five years), I would insist that data be compared to other local jurisdictions to determine regional patterns that could adversely effect or impact Alexandria. The Traffic Master Plan and Master Development Plan should be fully integrated.

**Question #2:** Describe your position on the creation and preservation of open space in the face of redevelopment and how would you specifically propose to achieve these goals.

**Answer:** Having sufficient open space (not defined as streets, alleys, rooftops or cemeteries) is critical to the preservation of a high quality of life, the attraction of businesses and residents as well as the protection of real estate values. I have four priorities about open space. First, preserve existing open space by only approving development projects that honor the Master Plan. Second, I would budget annually for the acquisition of land that would be preserved as open space. Third, I would look to create incentives for developers who would employ building approaches that preserve more open space while still conforming to zoning and Master Plan considerations. And finally, I would solicit proposals from builders across the nation for innovative building designs that would ensure that open space was the highest priority for dense developments. And, in promoting these priorities, I would learn to say "NO!" to developers whose building objectives are not satisfactory to Alexandrians and did not honor the Master Plan!

**Question #3:** What specific measurements would you take to improve the quality of the Alexandria Public School system?

## **Bob Peavey – Candidate for Mayor (cont'd)**

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**Answer:** Realizing that property values are directly linked to the availability of quality schools, I would pursue five objectives: 1. A complete independent audit of every expense associated with the public school administrative and capital improvement budgets. This would be done to ensure that the money spent produced the benefits reported and expected. I would have the results released and react appropriately. 2. Conduct a comparative analysis of national as well as neighboring jurisdictions that are trendsetters and consider emulating programs that are working. I would look at schools that spend less on education than Alexandria but who are realizing a higher return on their school investment. 3. Recommend incentivized pay (bonuses) to teachers whose performance is unusually high. Performance would be linked to the number of their students who achieved a pre-established level of testing. (The swift removal of ineffective teachers who have been given sufficient notice to improve performance is critical, as well.) 4. Encourage the State Board to revise the Standards of Learning to reflect the realities of ESL students. 5. Listen and learn from involved parents and professional teachers.

**Question #4:** How would you plan to better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards (i.e., Small Area Plans, SUP enforcement, Washington Street Guidelines).

**Answer** Government enforcement of every standard is too expensive and really unnecessary. A very effective random enforcement strategy should be employed where a small percentage of sites are inspected regularly and violators are fined or penalized. I would increase the fines and penalties to incentivize rapid and complete adherence to the standards. I would also seek “stop work” orders on egregious violations until the violation desists or is cured. I also encourage the publication of the names of violators. These no-notice inspections can send a powerful signal to others to adhere to any standard for which they are obligated to follow. In addition, a random quality control check of the latest enforcement inspection will also ensure that inspectors are consistent and unwavering in their inspections. After a year, voluntary compliance to standards will increase dramatically.

**Question #5:** How would you ensure that future development/redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of life of the neighborhoods?

**Answer:** If we make sure that our Master Plan reflects the best efforts of our citizens and our civic leaders, then honoring that plan and holding developers responsible for following it will have a remarkable effect on preserving the fabric of our community. In addition, the current habit of routinely issuing Special Use Permits (SUP) must stop. They should only be used under unusual circumstances and not to by-pass or neuter the Master Plan or Zoning Ordinance. In addition, I would make sure neighborhood groups and civic associations are involved in reviewing development proposals BEFORE public support by the Mayor and Council is made of a development project. The current process, used by the mayor, of reaching a decision first and then using public forums to act out citizen participation is dishonorable.

## A. Andrew Anderson

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**Question #1:** How do you intend to approach a comprehensive traffic plan for Alexandria which would address the problems created by existing and future developments?

**Answer:** I would approach a comprehensive traffic plan by initiating and framing the following ideas for discussion:

1. Inception of limiting the number of cars allowed within City limits (residents only).
2. Traffic patterns that staggers high volume traffic through the City at peak hours.
3. Establish additional HOV/FAST Lanes through high volume corridors.
4. Introduce light rail/rapid transit at key distribution points to all areas of the City.
5. Introduce Federal and State traffic reduction programs at the local level for incentives (compressed schedules, tax incentives to name a few) on tele-commuting and shift (off-hour) work schedules.

Of course any of these ideas will have to be coordinated with our regional neighbors, and socialized and advocated for at the COG and other transportation organizations and committees.

**Question #2:** Describe your position on the creation and preservation of open space in the face of redevelopment and how would you specifically propose to achieve these goals.

**Answer:** My position on open space is simple. We need open space. I would achieve these goals by ensuring the present and future ordinances of the city take into account open space requirements when properties and lots are being considered for developed or redeveloped. This would mean a tighter enforcement to ensure that open space requirements are adhered to and protected. Create incentives to ensure that open space is a key feature in the development or re-development plans.

**Question #3:** What specific measurements would you take to improve the quality of the Alexandria Public School system?

## **A. Andrew Anderson (cont'd)**

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**Answer:** The measurements which ensure quality of the APS are improve teaching techniques that are reflected in standard testing scores, reducing class sizes to be in tune with teaching techniques, centering back on academic fundamentals, and re-creating a safe and knowledge based learning environment.

**Question #4:** How would you plan to better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards (i.e., Small Area Plans, SUP enforcement, Washington Street Guidelines).

**Answer:** The best way to enforce adherence is to accelerate the fine/penalty phase of enforcement. This is rather strict but at some point enforcement needs to move towards a penalty phase. This will have to be balanced with what zoning guidelines and standards are violated.

**Question #5:** How would you ensure that future development/redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of life of the neighborhoods?

**Answer:** I would ensure that the planning commission, community participation and other boards and commission as well as city government agencies work with developers in reviewing the zoning guidelines and standards prior to discussing future development/redevelopment requirements. I would also re-vamp the planning commission to include a more participatory deliberation between developers, communities being impacted and city agencies.

## Ross Bell

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**Question #1:** How do you intend to approach a comprehensive traffic plan for Alexandria which would address the problems created by existing and future developments?

**Answer:** It is important to understand that Alexandria must abide its Master Plan. As we come upon the renewal or redesign of the master plan, it is important that the New Council enter into good faith negotiations with the communities developing their neighborhoods. Once a new plan is established we must adhere to the plan. Currently, we have seen a City Council advancing development at the expense of the master plan created by the community. In doing so the City has created a domino effect. Once one a Special Use Permit is approved that changes the original zoning (excluding a driveways or additions to a home), the zoning around is forced to change as well. The Carlyle project is one example. I believe that developers want stability as much as citizens want a City Council that understands Quality of Life is just as, if not more, important than unreigned ever changing development. The new Master Plan will begin with the basics--Traffic, Open Space (once defined), and City Services (schools, sewers, etc.) The new plan will determine the traffic flows and the amount of zoning they can handle at maximize capacity. Then the plan will develop zoning around an established Open Space Plan, finally we will zone based on services needed- schools, sewers etc.

However, we must immediately try to look for alternative ways to solve the traffic problem. In my election for the House of Delegates in 1999, I proposed a telecommuter tax credit that would be used as an incentive to reduce traffic, clean the air, and allow people more time flexibility. I am happy to report that the Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission, of which I serve, passed the idea in a resolution overwhelmingly. Immediately following the election, I was proud to see City Council include the resolution in the legislative package for Richmond. In Richmond the idea spread further, Governor Gilmore included the telecommuter tax credit as part of his transportation budget and the credit proposal was passed by the legislature. On the federal level, Congressman Frank Wolf has begun pushing legislation to relief traffic through telecommuting, based on the telecommuter tax credit I proposed at Earth Day '99. You will hear that all is fine in Alexandria, that our transportation problems are there because we like to drive or that development brings services, but I question whether heated bus stops and perimeter parking around Alexandria will reduce traffic, or trap us. It is important to think outside the conventional box when addressing Alexandria's transportation needs, not boxing us in. In this regard, I challenge any council member that believes development should be championed at the expense of the master plan, and I further challenge any member to demonstrate where our public schools have benefited from the increased growth. We need a Special Use Permit to change the current zoning of our Council and rezone it with better values.

**Question #2:** Describe your position on the creation and preservation of open space in the face of redevelopment and how would you specifically propose to achieve these goals.

## Ross Bell (cont'd)

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**Answer:** Easy -- Open Space must be defined in two ways: natural and recreational. As we redevelop, it is important that parks be created where warehouses once stood. Our Waterfront has prime property to advance our open space needs in Old Town, however as long as the City Council allows developers to define open space as a rooftop and the City believes sidewalks with trees is open space, we will not see true open space. The new Master Plan must include a specific plan to address and preserve existing and future opens space. Currently, the City Council has Special Use Permitted us out. As we discuss open space in this election do not be fooled in believing Council members that cite the 60 acres at Cameron Station as valuable open space. Ask how those 60 acres are used, most is a pond that can offset flooding in the Holmes Run flood plain, and in that regards shouldn't the current Council count the Potomac River and Four Mile Run, then ask if it is open space for the public not just the community, and finally ask if they are counting the median strips. The truth is your current Council has demonstrated what they believe is Open Space- Prime Taxable Real Estate.

**Question #3:** What specific measurements would you take to improve the quality of the Alexandria Public School system?

**Answer:** I want to immediately reevaluate what programs the school district is involved with and find out the reason that the public school system is not adequately attended by all Alexandrians. I find it appalling that the City pays more per pupil than any other jurisdiction in the metro, if not regional area, yet I see people moving from Alexandria rather than sending their kids to public school, I see more private school buses in Old Towne than public. We are comparable to Montgomery County financially, yet their public schools are a source of pride. I have supported the idea of choice among public schools and still do. But I think we need to ensure that the taxes we pay for our children's education is used to educate all of our children, not just a few. That our resources are not so thin that not all children are benefited. We must see that the administrator is not out weighing the teachers. And that the teacher is the highest valued resource in the system, not the administrator.

**Question #4:** How would you plan to better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards (i.e., Small Area Plans, SUP enforcement, Washington Street Guidelines).

**Answer:** Strict community involvement.. Strict citizen commission involvement. (Currently the Environmental Policy Commission has no approval or disapproval status-- I would move to pit city commissions in the approval process-- Open Space after all is an environmental issue.) To this end, it is time that civic groups are no longer on the defensive of City Council actions, but on the offensive. A Council member must realize that they have a civic responsibility to represent the community, not instruct it. Currently, our Council feels the need to tell us how we should feel about traffic, development, education and open space, yet at the same time civic association after civic association feels assaulted by this current Council. Why doe s member of the City Council feel it is appropriate to side on an issue before it has been clearly vented with all those involved? I will never tell a civic association that they are wrong in their views, I may not agree all the time, but I will never advocate against any civic association.

**Question #5:** How would you ensure that future development/redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of life of the neighborhoods?

**Answer:** Explained in the first question response

## Bill Cleveland

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**Question #1:** How do you intend to approach a comprehensive traffic plan for Alexandria which would address the problems created by existing and future developments?

**Answer:** A new Master Plan that, once developed, is strictly adhered to is the key to the traffic issue. I believe the days of a piece-meal, after-the-fact approach to traffic planning must end. Beginning in 2001, I want to see the grassroots development of a new Master Plan with a heavy emphasis on traffic management plans. I expect that it will take three years to develop a thorough, comprehensive plan that is based on accurate numbers and takes into account the City-wide impact of traffic flows.

**Question #2:** Describe your position on the creation and preservation of open space in the face of redevelopment and how would you specifically propose to achieve these goals.

**Answer:** I am aware of intense public concern regarding the definition, creation, and preservation of open space in Alexandria. I look forward to receiving a report from the Committee on Open Space regarding public views and suggestions on these issues.

**Question #3:** What specific measurements would you take to improve the quality of the Alexandria Public School system?

**Answer:** I was a co-sponsor of the initiative to elect Alexandria's School Board and a proponent of the new West End elementary school scheduled to open later this year. I believe that the City Council should work closely with the School Board to ensure a constant flow of ideas and information on what works in improving the quality of Alexandria's public school system. Tutoring and mentoring are a one-on-one approach that I believe makes a difference in the lives and success of students. I was a proponent of the Alexandria tutoring program and am a Co-ordinator of the Untouchables, a mentoring program for at-risk youth in Alexandria.

## **Bill Cleveland (cont'd)**

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**Question #4:** How would you plan to better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards (i.e., Small Area Plans, SUP enforcement, Washington Street Guidelines).

**Answer:** My pact with the people of Alexandria has been to insist on adherence to the zoning guidelines and standards that exist. I am willing to consider exceptions only when a majority of the citizens express a desire a desire to change those guidelines and standards.

**Question #5:** How would you ensure that future development/redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of life of the neighborhoods?

**Answer:** My priority is the development of a new Master Plan, including small area plans and a comprehensive traffic plan. This cannot be a perfunctory exercise; therefore, I expect that it will take three years to develop – with intensive input from Alexandria's neighborhoods. Once finished, the plan will represent a compact between the people and businesses of Alexandria and their Government.

Until such time as the new Master Plan is finished, I will continue to insist on adherence to the guidelines and standards that exist and will continue to demand open, public involvement in development and redevelopment plans. An example of my record on this point was my insistence on delaying Council approval of the planned development of the Old Colony Inn site and the Metro "Kiss and Ride" lot to await a process for citizen involvement. Following my intervention on the Old Colony Inn site, I was very supportive of the establishment of the Washington Street Task Force.

## Claire Eberwein

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Party affiliation: Republican

**Question #1:** How do you intend to approach a comprehensive traffic plan for Alexandria which would address the problems created by existing and future developments?

**Answer:** The ever-worsening traffic throughout our city and region threatens the very quality of life which drew many of us to Alexandria. The problem must be confronted on all fronts. The City Council must work more closely with regional authorities and with the state of Virginia to identify solutions and multiyear funding sources to address the congestion impacting our city. Given the balance of power in state government, the city must be able to work closely with other regional leaders, especially those who may have more influence in determining how transportation funds are divided up within Virginia.

Existing traffic choke points must be aggressively studied with solutions identified and funded. Traffic light timing and synchronization must be continually reevaluated for changes in traffic flow, especially when the existing flow has been changed by adjacent development. Road improvements, such as straightening the Monroe Street Bridge, need implementation to speed the flow of through traffic. New development and redevelopment should be required to construct most of the proffered traffic improvements prior to substantial buildout of the project.

Additionally, concentrating on increasing the use of mass transit to lessen the amount of "through" traffic in Alexandria is critical. This includes working vigorously to establish a metro stop in Potomac Yards, constructing another access to the Eisenhower Valley from the Beltway and increasing the availability of commuter parking at the Eisenhower Valley metro station. It also includes encouraging telecommuting and working with the Chamber of Commerce to inform businesses of any new state programs which offer tax incentives for telecommuting.

Finally, we must begin to address a seachange in the philosophy that the city must work primarily for the convenience of the automobile. In a city as dense and built out as ours, we must seriously examine how many cars we can handle. 10,000 new townhouses means 20,000 new cars.

**Question #2:** Describe your position on the creation and preservation of open space in the face of redevelopment and how would you specifically propose to achieve these goals.

## Claire Eberwein (cont'd)

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**Answer:** Required setbacks, visual screening where appropriate, pedestrian friendly streetscapes, and public plazas need to be provided by both the city and developers, in a better coordinated effort. At my campaign kickoff in early January, I proposed the establishment of an open space trust fund to create pocket parks and other green spaces, providing small urban oases for the enjoyment of Alexandrians. Without raising taxes, various funding sources could be used for both the purchase and maintenance of undeveloped parcels, such as a percentage of the fees or cost of new development or the voluntary designation by citizens of part of their current property tax monies into the fund. Strategically placed pocket parks with shade trees and park benches can provide the type of neighborhood amenities that we can be proud of.

**Question #3:** What specific measurements would you take to improve the quality of the Alexandria Public School system?

**Answer:** As a member of the Alexandria School Board for the past 6 years, I have been instrumental in putting the programs in place that are now bearing fruit, as evidenced by rising test scores for all of our students and across our district. Some of these programs, such as the primary initiative, prevention of social promotion, mandatory summer school, tutoring and mentor programs, and differentiated resources, are nationally recognized. We need to ensure that such programs continue to receive adequate funding and that the growing facility/capital needs of the system are actively incorporated into the city's long range planning process.

**Question #4:** How would you plan to better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards (i.e., Small Area Plans, SUP enforcement, Washington Street Guidelines).

**Question #5:** How would you ensure that future development/redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of life of the neighborhoods?

**Answer to both questions::** Alexandria must wisely manage both redevelopment and its remaining undeveloped land. For too long, City Council has waited for the plans to be placed on the table and then relied on citizens to critique them. It's time for a proactive Council that will seek out beneficial projects in keeping with the existing small area plans, zoning guidelines and standards, and who will work to find the developers willing to build them. Traffic, density and quality of development should be planned BEFORE the project is finalized, avoiding pitting developers and citizens against one another. Commercial development, an important source of tax revenue, must be sited in areas with public transit and access to major transportation corridors. The social and neighborhood, as well as the economic impacts of development, must be considered carefully. The next Council will review the city's master plan and, among other things, the balance of commercial and residential in the mixed use development category needs careful review.

## Bill Euille

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Party affiliation: Democrat

**Question #1:** How do you intend to approach a comprehensive traffic plan for Alexandria which would address the problems created by existing and future developments?

**Answer:** In order to better address Alexandria's existing and future developments, it is now incumbent upon us that a City wide Comprehensive Traffic/Parking Task Force be created (to include citizen representatives) to study current congestion modes, street patterns, traffic flow, signage and lights, in an effort to move traffic fluidly throughout the City, reduce travel time and pollution, and resolve neighborhood parking limitations. The City must commit financial and manpower resources to this most pressing quality of life issue.

Encumbered within this study would be concepts such as tele-commuting, encouraged use of public transportation, and more accessible public parking garages at key entry points within the City. We must accomplish this immediately with the services of outside experts in the traffic planning area.

**Question #2:** Describe your position on the creation and preservation of open space in the face of redevelopment and how would you specifically propose to achieve these goals.

**Answer:** Preservation of open space (City-wide) is critical to our well being. I support the process underway by the Planning Commission's sub-committee on "Open Space" and I eagerly await their report and recommendations to the City Council.

As a citizen member of the newly formed group - "1000 Friends of Alexandria" to advocate for open space, I would also support identifying "funds" to purchase land in an effort to protect it from future/planned development, particularly around already high dense neighborhoods. My vision would also include enhanced streetscape, public art, landscaping, and park benches throughout much of the City.

## **Bill Euille (cont'd)**

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**Question #3:** What specific measurements would you take to improve the quality of the Alexandria Public School system?

**Answer:** As a former member of the school board ('74-'84), I will continue to expand joint collaboration and meetings between the City Council and School Board in "Partnership" in improving the quality of our school system to include the following;

- Commitment that Education is one of our highest priorities
- Full Funding of the systems Operating Budget
- Expanded Capital Improvements of Facilities
- Better Teacher and Principal Salaries
- More Parental Involvement
- Encourage the redistribution of funds to early child intervention and after-school programs
- Encourage teachers to "demand" the best from the students and to "challenge them" at all times

**Question #4:** How would you plan to better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards (i.e., Small Area Plans, SUP enforcement, Washington Street Guidelines).

**Answer:** Increase funding for increased staffing in the Planning and Code Enforcement Departments to ensure that they carefully enforce ordinances already on the books and to increase communications and collaboration with community civic organizations. Further, stick to the already agreed upon guidelines.

**Question #5:** How would you ensure that future development/redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of life of the neighborhoods?

**Answer:** First and foremost, I will encourage my Council colleagues to spend more time, along with staff, citizens, etc., on "visioning", in an effort to better plan our City for future growth. Moreover, our Planning Department must be "pro-active" in collaboration with the Small Area Plans in planning our future, as opposed to being "re-active" to proposed development plans, which may not be the best "use".

I would also advocate for creation of a "special community development fund " to assist neighborhood civic associations in helping to vision and plan for growth, development and redevelopment. An example of proper planning/visioning would be what happens at the "Pepco Power Plant" in your neighborhood when it is no longer in service or sold in the near future.

# Andrew H. Macdonald

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**Question #1:** How do you intend to approach a comprehensive traffic plan for Alexandria which would address the problems created by existing and future developments?

**Answer:** A comprehensive transportation plan should do more than identify how much worse the problems are getting: it should propose realistic ways to reduce congestion and improve air and water quality using as a standard baseline, an acceptable level of parking, air pollution, mass transit use, and traffic flow. Our problems stem from the failure of other jurisdictions to control sprawl and the city's push to build high-density housing and attract new commercial development in places like Potomac Yards, Eisenhower Avenue, Cameron Station and even Washington Street before considering how such growth will affect the city's roads and neighborhoods.

At the moment, traffic congestion is generally considered to be unavoidable consequence of economic growth. I believe that the cumulative impact of all these activities, including the proposed expansion of the Woodrow Wilson Bridge, on the carrying capacity of neighborhood streets and important thoroughfares like the George Washington Memorial Parkway, Route 1, and Duke Street must be carefully considered before we approve new developments. We must also develop the tools for predicting how such activities will affect the city as a whole.

We must make it easier for residents, and the 80,000 people who work in Alexandria, to use mass transit options and bikes to get to and from work. The City Council must develop economic incentives that encourage less car use, telecommuting, and staggered work schedules. We should make every effort to purchase natural gas or electric buses and develop a transparent way to measure the effectiveness of our efforts. New developments should not be approved until we have developed a comprehensive city-wide plan that integrates all these activities, community impacts and solutions, and the funding to implement such a plan has been obtained.

**Question #2:** Describe your position on the creation and preservation of open space in the face of redevelopment and how would you specifically propose to achieve these goals.

**Answer:** There is not enough useful open space -- for recreation, resource protection, historic, neighborhoods -- in Alexandria where it is most needed. We must be more proactive about purchasing more land, identifying all the opportunities for preserving what remains (including private lands), and making sure that developers set aside more than just street corners. A long-range land-use plan should be developed using a geographical information system.

An open space policy should establish a land preservation trust fund - similar, for example, to that which is supposed to provide money for affordable housing; (2) provide greater financial incentives to homeowners who preserve their open space (easements); (3) strengthen the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Act land preservation requirements; (4) reduce zoning densities prior to redevelopment; (5) provide a more consistent level of funding for the maintenance and protection of public parks; and (6) recognize that the Potomac River is one of our city's most important open spaces.

## Andrew H. Macdonald (cont'd)

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**Question #3:** What specific measurements would you take to improve the quality of the Alexandria Public School system?

**Answer:** Alexandria's public schools consume a great deal of the city's budget, yet there is a general feeling among many residents that we are not using those resources very effectively. I believe that to improve their quality generally we must:

(1) make sure that we are not duplicating services (city and school system); (2) raise salaries for qualified teachers that have been accredited by a national board and/or have taken advanced courses; (3) allow each school to be more autonomous; (4) reduce the size of middle schools; (5) make sure that developers are paying for the infrastructure costs associated with building new schools; (6) provide qualified teaching aides; (7) develop more and better after-school programs; (8) do more to get the city's businesses more involved in education programs generally; (9) elect a city council that will work more closely with the school board.

**Question #4:** How would you plan to better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards (i.e., Small Area Plans, SUP enforcement, Washington Street Guidelines).

**Answer:** The problem is not that there are no quality of life standards for developers to follow, but that City Council has not been willing to adhere to existing planning guidelines, to implement the recommendations of several "quality of life" summits and ensure that such development will not harm local neighborhoods. The burden of protecting the city has been left largely to residents. The City Council and the planning staff must focus more on the planning process itself.

I would recommend that city staff be required to prepare a "community impact statement" that is easily readable and has been reviewed by the relevant civic groups early in the planning process. Furthermore, the city's zoning laws must support the goals of the master plan (etc). The "special use permit", or SUP, should not enable developers to circumvent basic planning guidelines -- it should be a way for the community and city to apply even more rigorous review and much higher standards. No project should be approved until a comprehensive community-based review has taken place and a real community consensus has emerged.

**Question #5:** How would you ensure that future development/redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of life of the neighborhoods?

**Answer:** The last several Councils have failed to adequately protect our city's unique natural and cultural wealth. Recent developments like Cameron Station (now 2500 homes, too little open space, expense of buying land for school) and Potomac Yards (too little open space, no real traffic plan) were approved on the basis of one thing alone: an expanded tax base. This is clearly not a responsible way to run any city. We need to begin by asking a different set of questions: How will this development protect and enhance our quality of life? Do we have the infrastructure -- say sewers, schools, neighborhood libraries like the Burke Branch -- to support such development? Are we preserving enough open space? Do we know what the environmental, school, traffic impacts will be? How will we pay for all these new services? Should we reduce the zoning density in some areas?

Each development proposal should be rated in terms of its quality of life impact and the City should present citizens and businesses with an annual quality of life scorecard so we can measure our progress.

## Judy McVay

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**Question #1:** How do you intend to approach a comprehensive traffic plan for Alexandria which would address the problems created by existing and future developments?

**Answer:** The city needs to instruct Transportation and Environmental Services to do an *objective city-wide traffic study* taking into consideration all the planned development around the city; i.e., Potomac Yard and Eisenhower Valley, particularly with the aspect of the Patent and Trademark Office coming to Carlyle and the congestion already existing on Duke Street. This has not been done for many years and yet enormous changes in the City have increased traffic from development. Traffic planning should be done *before* approval of development. In order for a traffic study to have any legitimacy, the city, rather than the developer, should conduct it. This has not been the policy of our present city government.

**Question #2:** Describe your position on the creation and preservation of open space in the face of redevelopment and how would you specifically propose to achieve these goals.

**Answer:** A decision by the present City Council was made to allow developers to count as open space, streets, alleys, balconies, and rooftop gardens. This decision has had a profoundly negative effect on our city. You can see the effect all over town. I would work to see that this decision is abolished. Median strips should not be considered linear parks. Rooftop gardens should not be considered open space. Open space should be space that is actually green and at an elevation that allows it to be seen from ground level. When large developments are planned, open space should be put aside for a school. This was not done in Potomac Yard and the lack of that action will put a strain on the existing nearby schools. Open space should, once again, be viewed as an asset to our city not a regulation problem to be overcome.

**Question #3:** What specific measurements would you take to improve the quality of the Alexandria Public School system?

## **Judy McVay (cont'd)**

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**Answer:** Since we have an elected School Board, the City Council's role is to appropriate funds. To that end, we must assure that the schools are funded to the extent necessary to assure that their physical plants are safely maintained and that there are funds for all the necessary equipment to enable our children to get the best possible education. Our children should not be attending school in trailers. The City Council should *never* approve dense development of an area without requiring the developer to set aside enough land in a convenient location for a school. Sadly, this was not a requirement of the developer of Potomac Yard.

**Question #4:** How would you plan to better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards (i.e., Small Area Plans, SUP enforcement, Washington Street Guidelines).

**Answer:** When existing standards or guidelines are not followed, the offending party should be made to correct the problem and fined for each offense. These standards and guidelines have been ignored in the past by developers without any penalty to the offender. If standards are ignored, they become no more than a recommendation rather than a requirement. This seems to be the way in which things are presently operating. Additionally, any penalty must be stiff enough to discourage anyone from ignoring the standards.

**Question #5:** How would you ensure that future development/redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of life of the neighborhoods?

**Answer:** A *meaningful* review of the Master Plan and the Small Area Plans should be undertaken to determine what, if any, changes should be made. However, these changes should not increase densities. Rather changes should maintain and establish open space at reasonable levels. Neighborhoods should be engaged in the dialogue with any developer. Neighborhood opinions should be given *significant* consideration. The best people to decide whether a project is going to fit into the "fabric of the community" are the people who are going to have to deal with the consequences of that particular project. Special Use Permits (SUPs) should only be granted when there is going to be a significant benefit to the neighborhood from the development. Remember, the key word in Special Use Permit is "Special". A developer should not assume that an SUP will be granted automatically without it being incumbent upon him to offer a consequential and agreeable proffer to the neighborhood. In residential developments, adequate parking for both residents and guests should be provided. This was not the case at Cameron Station. These sorts of developmental mistakes diminish the quality of life of the residents of our city and should not be tolerated.

## Matthew Natale

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**Question #1:** How do you intend to approach a comprehensive traffic plan for Alexandria which would address the problems created by existing and future developments?

**Question #2:** Describe your position on the creation and preservation of open space in the face of redevelopment and how would you specifically propose to achieve these goals.

**Question #4:** How would you plan to better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards (i.e., Small Area Plans, SUP enforcement, Washington Street Guidelines).

**Answer to all 3 questions:**

How should we deal with traffic? How should we handle open space issues? Or adhere to zoning requirements? Or guarantee development blends with - and not bulldoze - neighborhoods.

The answer to these questions is to create a NEW MASTER PLAN, which addresses the real concerns of citizens (like the ones in your questions) and not haphazard development. In building this NEW MASTER PLAN, I will bring citizens, civic associations, elected officials and business together to reach an understanding on how the City will develop itself in the next century.

This "CITIZENS" MASTER PLAN will be complete only when each small area plan effectively addresses citizen concern about traffic, open space, and preserving the character of existing neighborhoods. Once such a MASTER PLAN has been created, zoning guidelines must be adhered to vigorously.

Together we can find the answers by bringing citizens, civic groups, business and elected officials together as partners in building this NEW MASTER PLAN.

## **Matthew Natale (cont'd)**

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For your information, as a beginning in preserving the integrity of our city and neighborhoods, I will oppose the PTO development and 12-lane Wilson Bridge. Please ask all candidates for an unequivocal "yes" or "no" on PTO since Citizens will need four City Council votes to halt such scorched-earth development projects.

Regarding the consequences of haphazard development, I would like to add one of my concerns to your list. After botching development and traffic issues, some City Council incumbents now want you to bail them out by paying higher taxes - higher fees for city services such as garbage collection, calling an ambulance and recreation facilities and even a City Income Tax.

**Question #3:** What specific measurements would you take to improve the quality of the Alexandria Public School system?

**Answer:** On the matter of education, I will respect the policy-making role of the elected School Board. I support the right of parents to review the questions asked of their children in the Standard of Learning (SOL) tests. I will work to enact an annual week-long "Back to School Tax Vacation." Parents would receive an offset against their property tax equal to the sales tax incurred for basic school purchases. Parents not yet owning a primary residence could "cash in" their offset after they purchase one.

**Question #5:** How would you ensure that future development/redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of life of the neighborhoods?

**Answer:** A final thought on development. Like Yogi Berra said, "It's deja vu all over again." 30 years ago, Parkfairfax, where I serve as Vice President of's Board of Directors, was threatened by scorched-earth development. A developer purchased the land (134 acres) and 285 historic buildings. He wanted to bulldoze the property and build some of the ugliest apartment high-rises known to humankind. How did we handle this development threat? We organized politically and helped to toss out the incumbent City Council, replacing them with members who swiftly acted to protect our homes.

I suggest you do the same on May 2.

# Del Pepper

Answers not provided in soft copy.



# Paul Smedberg

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**Question #1:** How do you intend to approach a comprehensive traffic plan for Alexandria which would address the problems created by existing and future developments?

**Answer:** This is a difficult question and it is a question of great concern to many of Alexandria's residents. I believe we must first work with our regional neighbors to address this difficult problem. If we want to be successful in dealing with traffic issues in Alexandria we must be an active and involved partner on regional transportation boards, such as the Washington Metropolitan Transportation Coordinating Council. This is important because a high percentage of our traffic does not originate or terminate in Alexandria. It is clear Alexandria must do everything it can to promote a regional transportation plan that encourages mass transit and not simply new road projects. It is imperative that we also work with state and federal agencies in an attempt to secure sufficient funding and to retain a proper balance between mass transit projects and road projects.

I am excited about the possibility of working with the city's new Transportation Director. I would support the idea of a city sponsored Transportation Summit modeled after the successful 'Environmental Quality Of Life Summit' giving our new Transportation Director and citizens the opportunity to discuss transportation and traffic issues. I want to make the Braddock Street Metro more pedestrian and neighborhood friendly. I would support and encourage mass transit enhancements within our borders with particular attention given to the DASH bus system. I also believe the city should continue to explore the possibility of building a metro station or light rail system in the Potomac Yard development

**Question #2:** Describe your position on the creation and preservation of open space in the face of redevelopment and how would you specifically propose to achieve these goals.

**Answer:** I believe the city needs to be creative when looking for opportunities to create open space. One suggestion recently has been the formation of a land bank, which would enable the city to acquire open space through donation or acquisition. The new council should direct staff to examine ways to finance acquisition of open space using federal or state grants. We should also look at private grants as part of a comprehensive program. We should be prepared to allocate local tax dollars if necessary.

I am encourage by the Planning Commission's effort to redefining open space as part of the city's zoning code and the Council should adopt their recommendations as a first step

## Paul Smedberg (cont'd)

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toward preserving open space. I would work with the Parks & Recreation Commission to make our existing parks more welcoming.

**Question #3:** What specific measurements would you take to improve the quality of the Alexandria Public School system?

**Answer:** I believe the most important thing a member of City Council can do is work positively and constructively with the elected School Board to improve and strengthen our education system. I respect the School Board's policy-making authority and understand and recognize the Council's responsibility of providing adequate funding to our schools. The quality of Alexandria's public school system is a direct reflection of our commitment to providing a sound education to all of our children. I will seek to assist the school system by supporting it in innovative ways, such as encouraging our senior citizens to volunteer as reading and math tutors.

**Question #4:** How would you plan to better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards (i.e., Small Area Plans, SUP enforcement, Washington Street Guidelines)?

**Answer:** I believe the Planning and Zoning Department should be encouraged to place a high priority on actual planning, code enforcement, and neighborhood association consultations and less emphasis on administrative duties. Ideally, I would like to see the Planning Department and City Manager appoint a neighborhood association liaison. As a first point of contact, this representative would in effect represent the citizens in the Planning Department and would interact with appropriate city staff to strictly enforce codes, guidelines, and respond to citizens' complaints. I also believe pro-active Planning Department initiatives would naturally lead to easier code enforcement as properties are developed or redeveloped.

**Question #5:** How would you ensure that future development/redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of life of the neighborhoods?

**Answer:** : I believe this question is one of the most important the city will have to answer in the next three years particularly as the Master Plan nears its renewal date. The Master Plan is **our** guiding document about development and redevelopment in Alexandria. We put our goals as a community in the Master Plan and I will expect the City Manager and staff uphold the spirit of that plan. It is my opinion; the most important parts of the Master Plan are the small area plans. As a Council member I would place a great deal of importance and attention on the formulation of the small area plans. I would encourage and actively solicit citizen involvement in this process. Involving citizens in this process is the only way to determine how each neighborhood defines quality of life issues and in doing so we can begin to build consensus about potential development / redevelopment opportunities.

# David G. Speck

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**Question #1:** How do you intend to approach a comprehensive traffic plan for Alexandria which would address the problems created by existing and future developments?

**Answer** Here are some facts:

- In the Washington Metropolitan area, there are 95 automobiles for every 100 registered drivers. \*
- 90% of the population 16+ years have drivers licenses. \*
- 9 out of every 10 people take at least one trip a day, 81% of those trips are by automobile, and 70% of those trips are for non-job or non-work-related reasons. \*
- During the past decade, although Alexandria's population has been relatively flat, the surrounding area has grown dramatically.

The effect of these factors and the circumstances in Alexandria are equally significant:

- A great deal of traffic "flows through" Alexandria.
- One person—the driver, occupies the overwhelming majority of automobiles that are using our streets, especially during rush hours.
- Mass transit and pooling are grossly underutilized.

\*Source: Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

We are a society and community that still wants to be able to get in one's car, and go where and when one wants to. Consequently, traffic congestion is worsening. What can we do about it?

One essential approach is to ensure that all new development (large and small) builds in strong **incentives for employees to use mass transit and pooling, and disincentives for those who do not**. We also need to go back to existing commercial developments and identify opportunities for increasing mass transit among those employees, and we need to evaluate what the City can do to **increase the use of METRO where employment locations are not within easy walking distance**.

I have suggested that in the near future, the City **call a summit of the major employers, business and community leaders, City and WMATA officials, and other interested persons to meet and discuss what significant changes can be made to increase pooling and mass transit**.

We also need to **increase our efforts in traffic calming and traffic enforcement**. Last year, at my suggestion, the Council initiated an effort to invite everyone in the community to transmit their concerns about traffic in their neighborhoods. This gave us an opportunity to **develop a more comprehensive view of traffic problems** other than just reacting to a specific complaint.

As a result, the City has begun to take the following specific actions:

- Systematically evaluate speed limits (with an eye toward lowering some of them).
- Change signage to make it more noticeable.

## David G. Speck (cont'd)

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- Increase police patrols and acquire the newest speed enforcement technology.
- Acquire more "smart signs" (the mobile signs that tell drivers how fast they are going), and some unique new applications for red light monitoring. I have been a major proponent of the red light camera initiative that can photograph cars running red lights and send a citation to the owner. Our new transportation director is in the process of developing a comprehensive traffic plan taking into consideration citizens' input.

**Question #2:** Describe your position on the creation and preservation of open space in the face of redevelopment and how would you specifically propose to achieve these goals.

**Answer: Open space is critical because once you lose it, you don't get it back.** We have made some significant commitments to active and passive open space on the big projects. And, if you drew a one-mile radius around the City, we have a combination of federal and regional parkland, available to all, mostly at no cost, that is as extensive as any city I know of. However, I believe that the most significant concerns for most neighborhoods are the smaller open space opportunities (e.g., the "pocket parks" on a residential block), and not cramming as much development, residential or commercial, on every parcel.

To acquire such parcels, and to enable the City to avail itself of other land acquisition opportunities, I have proposed that the city develop a "**land bank**" program modeled on those used in the New England area. Essentially, it works like this: Purchasers of property—residential or commercial—contribute a percentage of their purchase price (I am recommending 1%) into a **Land Preservation Trust Fund**. The funds that accumulate will be used for the purpose of acquiring, retaining, and maintaining open space. In 1998, a total of about \$1 billion of real estate was purchased in our City; at 1% that would have created a capital pool of \$10 million for the trust fund. The year 1998 was exceptionally good for real estate; I do not have 1999 data yet, but the concept of the program is that it is ongoing and capital can accumulate. This idea will not be easy to implement, for the following reasons:

1. It will require General Assembly approval.
2. It raises concerns about
  - the use of "dedicated" revenue;
  - how decisions will be made as to what is purchased;
  - whether it will hurt real estate sales; and
  - whether we have created a new tax.

Nevertheless, the situation is clear: Our land is finite, our revenues are strained, and we need to create a mechanism that gives us an opportunity to retain open space. I expect this to be a topic of discussion during the budget process over the next few months.

**Question #3:** What specific measurements would you take to improve the quality of the Alexandria Public School system?

**Answer:** With an elected School Board, the Council has less of a direct role in the quality of the schools. Our primary role is financial, and the trap we can easily fall into is to assume that money is the answer. Money is an answer. The Council's most important responsibility is to manage our financial situation in such a manner that we can continue funding the increased education expenses. For the school system, that translates to operating and capital expenses, especially capital expenses—renovation and expansion of existing facilities and new facilities. **The schools' capital demands cannot be delayed.** Yet the City's revenues are strained by many demands. Not everything we want to do can be funded, and although the City continues to run well and look good, the financial underpinnings are precarious, as they are for most cities in Virginia. Our resources are finite but our expenses are not. We need to look for new revenues that do not depend on real estate taxes.

## David G. Speck (cont'd)

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The City is about to embark on a new effort to reduce the demand on tax revenues for meeting capital projects. Almost 2 years ago, I initiated a discussion about the idea of **creating a development office under the aegis of the City**. Under such a plan, the City (like colleges and hospitals and nonprofit schools and organizations) would rely in part on financial support from individuals, corporations, and philanthropic organizations to underwrite the development of capital projects. The Council agreed that the City should implement this idea, and we are finalizing the details of how to begin.

Only about 14 percent of Alexandria residents have school-age children. Yet we must all recognize that **our educational system is the ultimate economic development priority**, and we need to consider how we can contribute to making it better, regardless of whether we are using it directly. I wish the energy in this room tonight could be channeled to our schools as much as it is to land use matters. **If all the neighborhood organizations that are gathered here tonight decided to "adopt" a school, can you imagine what benefits that could bring to the children, their families, and the teachers?**

**Question #4:** How would you plan to better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards (i.e., Small Area Plans, SUP enforcement, Washington Street Guidelines).

**Answer:** Zoning "guidelines" are just that—a guide to residents and landowners alike for what is allowed by right and by permit. Ten years ago the City undertook a comprehensive revision of the master plan, downzoning and rezoning, and developing small area plans. The process included unprecedented community involvement. However, according to our demographic statistics, about half of the City's population turns over every 5 years. This probably means that a lot of you who are reading this tonight were not around when the Small Area Plans were being discussed and debated.

One way that this manifests itself is in the disconnect between what is allowed and what current residents want with regard to the specific application being requested. The devil is in the details, and everyone needs to know more about the specifics of each development before it is built. There will always be disagreements, and often the small projects engender more emotion than the big ones. Over the next few months, you will be hearing more discussion by the Council about this because of such initiatives as the Washington Street Task Force and similar efforts elsewhere in our City. **I believe we on Council must make clearer what we want, not just what we allow. We need to demonstrate that we have a coherent vision for our City's future.**

**Question #5:** How would you ensure that future development/redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of life of the neighborhoods?

**Answer:** All development and redevelopment should have a "livability" factor. **Livability does not happen by accident, and I have discussed with the new City Manager that in our analysis and review of project applications, their impact on quality of life for the city and the neighborhood should be weighted equally with the other criteria we use.** The City already requires developments to evaluate their potential impact in terms of infrastructure, crime, the environment, design, and other factors. I would like to have us add a specific measure for the more intangible considerations that impact livability: public art, landscaping that invites and attracts, pedestrian access and pathways, retail opportunities, people traffic that extends beyond the workday, and other similar issues. What matters to neighbors is how a project integrates itself into a community rather than just its appearance as a nice building that is "plopped" down on a site.

Alexandrians have a strong tradition of expressing their opinions about almost everything. Contrary to what you may be hearing about City Council, all projects get a full airing, and no one who wants to speak on any matter is ever denied that opportunity. We always welcome constructive debate. I hope that over the next six weeks, as we discuss the future of the City, any disagreements will be about issues, not personalities; that ideas, not people, are "attacked;" and that the result is a City Council and community that moves forward to meet the needs of Alexandria for now and the future.



# Van Van Fleet

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**Question #1:** How do you intend to approach a comprehensive traffic plan for Alexandria which would address the problems created by existing and future developments?

**Answer:** To provide a measure of immediate relief from worsening traffic congestion, I would propose that we empower our police department and city planners to create a short-term plan to increase the flow of traffic on city streets during the peak morning and afternoon rush hours. Some options could include, but would not be limited to, providing the Alexandria Police Department with the resources they would need to provide traffic officers, designated non-sworn personnel, or traffic monitors at key intersections to wave traffic through at a much faster pace. This system works very well on Capitol Hill in Washington where one rarely experiences the kind of traffic logjam we see here every day. Traffic monitors would also go a long way towards discouraging individual vehicles from being caught in the "box" which is but one of the reasons our streets turn into parking lots during certain times of the day.

For the long-term, I would propose that we employ the services of the best transportation and traffic experts available in drafting a more far-reaching plan to mitigate the traffic congestion problem. I would also propose that the citizens be an integral part of the process, because it is they who experience this nightmare on a daily basis and is they who can provide personal testimonies to aid the experts in crafting such a plan. The new plan will have to consider directional traffic flow, parking, the location of stop signs, the location and time sequencing of signals, the restriction of trucks on our roads during peak hours as they do in Europe, and police involvement in assisting in the flow of traffic and the ticketing of violators blocking traffic, as they do in New York and other cities. I think its time we consider some "radical" changes to our current traffic situation such as turning both Patrick and Henry into one way streets from 7-9:30 AM (North) in the morning and from 4-7 PM (South) in the evening, as is successfully being done on Rock Creek Parkway now. In addition, I would recommend looking at a similar solution on both sides of Washington Street during the same hours. This will create a high volume of traffic on our North/South routes. If we do not take action today, the additional 2,200 houses and 650 room hotel in Potomac Yard – due to be constructed in the near time-frame - will dump an additional 5,000 people onto Route 1 and the Parkway tomorrow ..... with dire consequences.

**Question #2:** Describe your position on the creation and preservation of open space in the face of redevelopment and how would you specifically propose to achieve these goals.

**Answer:** Concurrent with addressing and assessing the infrastructure needs that have been generated by past and current development projects, I would propose that we develop a NEW PLAN to address all future developments and redevelopments for the entire city of Alexandria for the next six years. This will involve significant citizen involvement. In the development of the NEW PLAN we must employ the services of planning experts and environmentalists who are committed to do what is best for the city and not what is best for the developers. In our planning, we must preserve and create as much open space as possible. We should consider establishing an open space percentage allocation on all future developments and redevelopments.

**Question #3:** What specific measurements would you take to improve the quality of the Alexandria Public School system?

**Answer:** We need to improve the quality of education our children are receiving. I would propose the school system conduct an exhaustive audit to determine the number of dollars actually going to the classroom, and the money that is funding administrative costs. In most educational bureaucratic structures, the overhead seems to receive the preponderance of the budget. By eliminating overhead, it will be possible to employ additional teachers and even more importantly, teacher assistants, who can absorb significant administrative work loads, leaving teachers to do the jobs they were hired to do ... teach. We also need to reduce the teacher/pupil ratio. Ask most teachers what they would most benefit from to increase their efficiency in the classroom, and most will say a teacher's aide. Teachers should be paid adequately and incentivized. I would also work to develop a Teacher-Parent Partnership for Better Education and would encourage businesses to contribute to and join that partnership. The future of Alexandria is with our children, and we must all work to ensure that they have the best possible education. The goal should be to make the Alexandria Schools the model for the region.

**Question #4:** How would you plan to better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards (i.e., Small Area Plans, SUP enforcement, Washington Street Guidelines).

**Answer:** In developing the NEW PLAN, I would propose incorporating a proviso that would only allow SUP changes under highly unusual circumstances. There should be very compelling reasons to warrant the approval of a SUP. If there is significant opposition to a future SUP, then the matter should be settled in the most democratic way possible - through a referendum of the people. This is our city. We finance the local government and our voices should not only be listened to ..... they should be seriously considered in the decision-making process that ultimately affects our quality of life. If we can create a comprehensive NEW PLAN that strictly supports the enhancement of our quality of life, then it would simply eliminate the need for any real changes to the existing zoning guidelines. Washington Street is a very special street - the gateway to Alexandria. The Washington Street Guidelines need to be adhered to if we want everyone who visits "Old Town" to view Alexandria in a proper historical light.

**Question #5:** How would you ensure that future development/redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of life of the neighborhoods?

**Answer:** I think this answer was covered in some detail in Question 2. To recap, I would propose the involvement of the citizens most affected by any decision impacting the quality of life of their neighborhoods. The voters and taxpayers of Alexandria have been ignored for far too long in the government decision-making process. Our City Council must do more than simply listen to people who attend official hearings and meetings and then go off and do whatever they choose to do. Our political leaders must take our comments into serious consideration when making decisions affecting all of us. And it will be incumbent on each citizen to become involved in all future developments/redevelopments. They are and must be permitted to be the conscience of the development process and must insure that the quality of life is not adversely affected in their neighborhoods. They should initiate their involvement in the formulation of the NEW PLAN with its Small Area Plans, and follow the process all the way to fruition.

## Lois L. Walker

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Party affiliation: Democrat

**Question #1:** How do you intend to approach a comprehensive traffic plan for Alexandria which would address the problems created by existing and future developments?

**Answer:** I have been working as a Metro board member and a Council member to have an Urban Transit Study completed. This kind of study will give us the information that we need to comprehensively plan for our needs for the next decade. I believe that widening roads alone will not solve our traffic problems - - we need to create a bold plan that includes parking lots/garages on the edges of our city and the removal of barriers to pedestrian crossings and transit use.

**Question #2:** Describe your position on the creation and preservation of open space in the face of redevelopment and how would you specifically propose to achieve these goals.

**Answer:** We need an asset management program - - a program that takes care of the open space and parkland that we now own. We need the resources to make sure that all of our parks are well maintained and useful for the majority of our population. We need a land use plan that can give us guidance for open space acquisition. And we need to have a funding plan that can enable us to move quickly to acquire spaces in our land use plan that are threatened.

**Question #3:** What specific measurements would you take to improve the quality of the Alexandria Public School system?

**Answer:** The body responsible for, and knowledgeable about, specific improvements for the school system is the elected School Board. However, City Council has developed a Youth Policy Program, that works with all groups in the City. The goal of this program is to make sure that all children are ready for school and that all children are ready to graduate - - taking their places in the job

## **Lois L. Walker (cont'd)**

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market or advanced education - - ready to become functioning members of our society. I believe that all that live in Alexandria should take responsibility as "parents" to our children. We all have roles to play in making sure that Alexandria has a quality education system.

**Question #4:** How would you plan to better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards (i.e., Small Area Plans, SUP enforcement, Washington Street Guidelines).

**Answer:** I chair the Washington Street Task Force, which is meeting every two weeks until May to develop ways to define goals for Washington Street. We believe that these goals may include more objective terms that can give both residents and business owners tools to use. Each building on Washington Street already must meet the standards of the Alexandria Planning Department, the National Park Service, the Board of Architectural Review, the Planning Commission and the City Council. Many citizens seem to be suspicious of the appointed and elected bodies in Alexandria, but I hope that all of us can reach an agreement that allows us to work together on all projects such as this. I also believe that increased citizen participation in the planning process will help resolve issues before they reach a crisis level.

**Question #5:** How would you ensure that future development/redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of life of the neighborhoods?

**Answer:** We must always ensure that any new development or redevelopment enhances the entire City - not just adjoining neighborhoods. Our Master Plan does not address streetscapes, bike trails and pedestrian pathways. It does not tie transportation and land use together. We need to do a lot of advance planning - being proactive and not reactive. We cannot wait for a builder to arrive on our doorstep with blueprints -- - we need to search for builders who give us the urban environment that continues to make living in Alexandria such a wonderful way of life.

## Doug Wood

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Party affiliation: Republican

**Question #1:** How do you intend to approach a comprehensive traffic plan for Alexandria which would address the problems created by existing and future developments?

**Answer:** My plan to address the traffic problems created by existing and future development is to 1st identify the problem areas, such as PTO at King Street, Washington street at rush hour in the AM and in the PM. Then to have the developer pay for independent traffic studies to identify solution and to have citizen input.

One solution might be to have Washington Street be four lanes north from 6AM to 9AM and then four lane south from 4PM to 6PM, something similar to Canal Road in Washington DC. Another idea might be to ask employers who do business in Alexandria to compensate their employees who use Metro, or car pool. For every traffic problems, I believe there is a solution.

**Question #2:** Describe your position on the creation and preservation of open space in the face of redevelopment and how would you specifically propose to achieve these goals.

**Answer:** Open space is one of my priorities; the developer will have to account for every inch required. The use of SUP process is the key and as a member of City Council, I will enforce the requirements and will not let the developers get away with what they have done in the past (requesting variance based on their bottom line). If developers want to build here, open space will be the cost of doing business.

**Question #3:** What specific measurements would you take to improve the quality of the Alexandria Public School system?

## **Doug Wood (cont'd)**

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**Answer:** Schools within Alexandria must reach beyond the minimum standards. I will support the City school board in assuring that every student gets an education that is above the standard. If that means more money than I would vote for it. If that means smaller class size, I will support the school board in hiring more qualified teachers.

**Question #4:** How would you plan to better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards (i.e., Small Area Plans, SUP enforcement, Washington Street Guidelines).

**Answer:** To better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards I would increase the size of the Planning and zoning enforcement staff, and to pay for this increase in staff, I would increase fines.

**Question #5:** How would you ensure that future development/redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of life of the neighborhoods?

**Answer:** To ensure that future development and redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of Life of the neighborhoods, I will insure that each project meets the planning & zoning guidelines and standards.

I would like the city to form an SUP citizen task force. This task force would be made up of citizens appointed by Civic Associations from around Alexandria. The purpose of this group would be to give the developer and the citizen an opportunity to discuss concerns by both groups, before planning and zoning or City Council takes a look at the request. This added step in the planning process could help for both the developer and the citizens in the long run.

# Joyce Woodson

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Party affiliation: Democrat

**Question #1:** How do you intend to approach a comprehensive traffic plan for Alexandria which would address the problems created by existing and future developments?

**Answer:** Traffic has increased tremendously in recent years. The cause is due partly to a greater number of jobs in Alexandria and to the use of our streets by commuters who live outside the city. Unfortunately, much of our problem is also due to thousands of densely developed new housing units (with at least two cars per unit). This traffic crisis is a result of our relative prosperity, the value of land, and the attractiveness of living in Alexandria.

It's been nearly 10 years since the city re-timed its traffic signals and it's time to do so again. I will require developers to pay for city-sponsored traffic studies as a primary consideration of new developments. In many cases, the city has and is relying on studies that are several years old and do not accurately reflect increases in neighborhood traffic over the past several years.

I favor allowing parking at all times on both sides of Route 1 through the Inner City for residents. I will have police crack down on violators of HOV restrictions and trucks violating center lane restrictions on Route 1. To the extent that issues related to the transportation of hazardous materials are introduced anywhere in the City, those discussions will include problems on Route 1.

**Question #2:** Describe your position on the creation and preservation of open space in the face of redevelopment and how would you specifically propose to achieve these goals.

**Answer:** Alexandria has the least amount of open space per capita than any county or city in Virginia. New developments are often approved that allow builders to provide less open space than is called for in the city's master plan, or allow builders to count balconies, rooftops, sidewalks and roads as open space. I am not inclined to support any development plan, in which the developer proposes to decrease the amount of open space required by Alexandria's city code.

Alexandria has been selling small parcels of land for development. I recommend that this land be used as community parks, or, if too small, sold with the proceeds used to buy other available land to be used as open space. While I favor the development of an open space trust fund like the existing Housing Trust Fund (HTF), I do not favor using HTF monies to pay for open space. This pits two worthy and required community needs against each other and is counter to my efforts to achieve affordable housing and a higher quality of life for all Alexandrians.

## Joyce Woodson (cont'd)

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**Question #3:** What specific measurements would you take to improve the quality of the Alexandria Public School system?

**Answer:** First, City Council and School Board's must improve their working relationship. The monthly city/schools meeting with the Mayor/Vice-Mayor and Chair/Vice-Chair of School Board appears to be ineffective. Council must demonstrate greater respect for the School Board as a body. Secondly, Council must place our children as a higher priority in their deliberations over school issues. There is a clear lack of long-range planning for School System facilities. More thought, planning and cooperation by city agencies and school staff is necessary for big-ticket items such as school expansion and construction of new schools.

There is a pervasive lack of respect for citizen input. All of our elected bodies are not listening to and communicate poorly with the public. There appears to be a lack of real concern for students who are at risk from poverty, mental health problems, or language barriers. Little attention is paid to parents unless they speak with strident voices in political action committees. I will work to ensure that the education of our children is a higher priority in Council. I believe a community is measured in part by the success of its children. We are failing on that standard.

The redistricting plan only reduces overcrowding in some schools and leaves some schools under-enrolled. Other schools, including the new school, will be overcrowded on opening day. The School Board has been advised that it needs to look at building another new elementary school or adding onto existing schools in the next budget cycle. I would move to deed more acreage in Potomac Yard now to the school system for a new school.

**Question #4:** How would you plan to better enforce adherence to existing zoning guidelines and standards (i.e., Small Area Plans, SUP enforcement, Washington Street Guidelines).

**Answer:** The City's Planning and Zoning Office has only two inspectors to police thousands of properties. It is a common practice for city officials to rely on citizen-initiated enforcement, but this leads to haphazard enforcement. I suggest the city consider hiring another inspector, to enable one inspector to be on duty in the evening hours, when many Special Use Permit conditions are specially applicable. I would have the City's zoning office provide copies of all enforcement actions, (citations issued), to the press weekly so to be published routinely like health code violations. I would continue the use of annual reviews in most SUPs.

**Question #5:** How would you ensure that future development/redevelopment fits into the fabric of the community without sacrificing the quality of life of the neighborhoods?

**Answer** I would adhere to the existing small area plans. If a developer wants to make changes to a particular plan, then the established process should be followed. Too often, Council has ignored the process and allowed substantial changes to the master plan during the development process.