

For Immediate Release: November 1, 2023

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City of Alexandria Reaches Settlement with Potomac Riverkeeper Network

Alexandria, Va. –

The City of Alexandria, in partnership with the Potomac Riverkeeper Network (PRKN), has reached a settlement to remediate the remnants of coal tar contamination that occurred as part of the operation of the Alexandria Town Gas manufacturing gas plant from the late 1800s through the mid-1900s, located near the corner of North Lee Street and Oronoco Street.

This settlement has been incorporated into a proposed consent decree that the parties filed in federal court on November 1, 2023. It is consistent with the commitment the City made more than 20 years ago to fully remediate the legacy contamination. In 2000, the City entered the site into the Voluntary Remediation Program (VRP) overseen by Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (VDEQ) and has made significant progress toward remediating the site through the ongoing implementation measures developed in coordination with VDEQ.

To date, the City has spent over \$12 million in [remedial efforts](#) since entering the site into the VRP, including the removal of hundreds of gallons of coal tar from the soil and groundwater, installation of a groundwater treatment system, repairs to the storm sewer, and remediation of contaminated sediments where the storm sewer on Oronoco Street discharges into the Potomac River. The City's Capital Improvement Plan currently has \$11.8 million programmed to continue to address the remaining coal tar contamination.

This settlement has four primary components: (1) an upland remediation program to expedite ongoing efforts to remove coal tar from the soil and groundwater; (2) upgrades to the storm sewer pipe to keep any potentially coal tar-contaminated groundwater from entering the pipe and flowing to the Potomac River; (3) sediment testing and, if necessary, remediation in the vicinity of the Robinson Terminal North pier near the storm sewer outfall at the end of Oronoco Street; and (4) the City providing \$300,000 to the Virginia Department of Wildlife Resources to fund a project to add over 20,000 freshwater mussels to the Potomac River. Freshwater mussels act as natural filters, removing pollutants and toxins from waterways.

This settlement is a continuation of the work and the unwavering commitment the City pursues to provide a safe, clean, and healthy environment for our residents, visitors, and future generations.

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About the City of Alexandria

Founded in 1749, the City of Alexandria is a full-service, independent, city in Virginia with a AAA/aaa credit rating and a national reputation for progressive and responsible government. With a fast-paced business environment and walkable neighborhoods, Alexandria is a world-class destination where businesses and nonprofits choose to call home. Alexandria's ample office space and urban amenities offer room to grow – a value unmatched in the region. Located minutes from the nation's capital, Alexandria's old-world charm and cutting-edge innovation are the perfect mix for attracting a diverse community, talented workforce, and enthusiastic visitors.