



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Contact: Anne M. Janeski
Marketing and Communications Manager
Direct – 703 370 3274 ext. 614
anne.janeski@alexandriava.gov

DASH Alexandria Transit Celebrates 25 Years of Keeping Alexandria Moving

Year-Long Activities, Special Promotions Will Mark DASH 25th Anniversary

(Alexandria, VA) – Alexandria Transit Company (ATC) today announced plans to celebrate its 25th anniversary of operating the City’s DASH bus system. Beginning the week of March 9th, DASH will sponsor activities and offer special promotions that will last throughout the year to thank its customers for their loyal support of the bus system over the past twenty-five years and to attract new riders to its service.

When it began operations in 1984 with 17 buses, DASH was known as Alexandria’s “fledgling” bus system. In its first full year of service, DASH carried less than one million passengers. Today, the system operates 64 buses and transports four million passengers a year.

“Over the past twenty-five years, DASH has become a vital and integral part of Alexandria’s transportation network, providing safe, reliable, and affordable service to the thousands of City residents, commuters, seniors, students and visitors who use it every day,” stated Sandy Modell, general manager. “DASH’s reputation for quality service continues to attract new riders. We are thankful for the support we have received over the years from the City, our customers, and the community, in general. We also recognize the work of our DASH employees who provide a great service to our citizens and our community.”

The DASH bus system was born under the leadership of Alexandria Mayor Charles Beatley, who in the early 1980’s, promoted and championed the creation of a local bus system that could be responsive to the City’s growing transportation needs, mitigate traffic impacts, improve neighborhood accessibility and connectivity to businesses, retail establishments, worksites, and to the newly opened Alexandria Metrorail Stations.

In 1983, City Council approved the establishment of the Alexandria Transit Company (ATC), a non-profit public service company to provide these services. City Council, as the sole stockholder, elects a seven member board of directors, which is responsible for the management of the system. Capital costs and the difference between operating expenses and passenger revenues are met by the City and through transit grant programs funded by the Commonwealth of Virginia.

“DASH has played a critical role in preserving the City’s quality of life and keeping Alexandria moving,” stated Alexandria Mayor William D. Euille. “We are a rapidly growing community as more people move into our new residential developments and new companies locate here. As growth continues, the need for high quality transit service will be essential to the City’s overall transportation network. DASH provides a viable transportation alternative that reduces traffic congestion and helps keep the City a great place to live, work, and visit.”

Over the last five years, total DASH ridership has grown by over 21%, to four million riders annually. For fiscal year 2008, total ridership increased 6.3% over the prior year, with an average of 14,000 customers riding DASH each weekday. The transit agency has made significant improvements in service levels and has added a number of new routes in recent years to keep up with the increased demand for service and the growth of new development areas in the City.

The success of the DASH system led to major service expansion well beyond what was initially contemplated when the system first began. This has constrained the present DASH maintenance facility, limiting service expansion capability beyond the current service levels. However, a new DASH maintenance and operating facility is presently under construction. The facility, which is scheduled for completion in late 2009, will allow for further expansion of routes to new development areas and an increase in service levels on the current system to meet the growing transportation needs throughout the City.

The schedule of events for the DASH Anniversary celebration is listed as follows:

Schedule of Events for DASH's Anniversary Week: March 9-13, 2009

Monday, March 9th: DASH Appreciation Day

- Display of artwork in City Hall by Alexandria's fourth graders in DASH buses. The theme: "DASH Around Alexandria."
- Passenger drawing for prizes. To participate in the drawing, visit www.dashbus.com. The drawing will take place on Friday, March 13th.

Tuesday, March 10th: Alexandria City Council Recognition of DASH

DASH 25th Anniversary Reception – 5:30 PM in the Vola Lawson Lobby of City Hall.

- Recognition of winning 4th grade "DASH Around Alexandria" artists
- Speakers include:
 - Mayor Euille (who will bestow the proclamation)
 - Paul Abramson, ATC Chairman
 - Jim Hartmann, City Manager
 - Charles Badger, Acting Director, VDRPT
 - Vola Lawson, Former City Manager
 - State Senator Patsy Ticer (General Assembly Resolution)
 - Congressman Jim Moran (invited)

Wednesday, March 11th : DASH Anniversary Day

- Tokens of appreciation given to customers by DASH drivers, ATC General Manager, Supervisors, and Staff
- DASH Information and Free "Mocha Shots" at the King St. Metro Station 3-6 PM
- Wear your "I LOVE DASH" Button and ride FREE on DASH all day

Thursday, March 12th: DASH Employee Appreciation Day

Friday, March 13th: Drawing for Free Prizes

- Drawing for free DASH Passes and other DASH goodies.

DASH's 25th Anniversary Year: Throughout the year, DASH will offer special promotions and gifts for each month of the year according to a theme for that month:

April:	Commuters Month
May:	Tourism Month
June:	Summer's Here Month
July:	Celebrate the Arts Month
August:	Take It Easy Month
September:	Students Month
October:	Business and Employer Partnership Month / Photo Contest Winner Announced
November:	Why Drive When You Can DASH? Month
December:	Celebrate Alexandria Month