ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA

County Board Agenda Item
Meeting of March 13, 2010

DATE: March 4, 2010

SUBJECT: Request to advertise for a public hearing on proposed amendments to the County's Motor Vehicle Code, Chapter 14.2, Article 1 of the Arlington County Code.

C. M. RECOMMENDATION:

Ratify the advertisement of a public hearing to be held on March 25th, to consider proposed amendments to the County's Motor Vehicle Code, Chapter 14.2, Article 1 of the Arlington County Code to establish parking meter fees for tour buses and fines for parking inappropriately in tour bus zones.

ISSUES: How to best accommodate tour bus parking as part of our comprehensive curb space management plan.

SUMMARY: With the growth of Arlington's tourist industry, and the tour bus sector in particular, it is important that Arlington address the parking needs of tour buses, create a definition of tour bus, and require that tour buses pay for the spaces in which they park. Historically tour buses have been either parking for free in tour bus zones or have parked at regular parking metered spaces, usually taking three spaces at a time. The proposed ordinance would enable the County to charge a $3 per hour parking fee for tour buses in the tour bus zones, and charge fines for parking inappropriately in tour bus zones. The proposed amendment will create new fees that could generate $90,000-$100,000 annually in meter revenue. In FY 2011 however the revenue will be used to offset the one-time cost of purchasing new multi-space parking meters.

BACKGROUND: There are currently six (6) areas in Arlington County signed for tour bus only parking. These areas can accommodate approximately 36 tour buses. The areas are located on South Hayes Street adjacent to the Fashion Centre at Pentagon City, on South Four Mile Run Drive near the Village at Shirlington, on 18th Street South in Crystal City (the 200 and 300 blocks), and in Ballston on North Quincy and North Randolph Streets. These parking spaces, which are not currently metered, are generally very well used by tour buses. It is likely that additional tour bus zones will be needed in the future.

Arlington County actively supports tour bus visitation, specifically targeting three (3) growth areas: overnight groups (generating Transient Occupancy, Sales and Meals Taxes); sightseeing

County Manager: BMD MMA

County Attorney: M SAM

Staff: Sarah Stott, Department of Environmental Services, Emily Cassell, Arlington Economic Development

18. B.

day trips highlighting local shopping, dining, attractions and arts (generating Sales and Meals Taxes); and group dining/boxed meal services (generating Sales and Meals Taxes). Randall Travel Marketing research conducted for Arlington County in 2005 and 2007 shows that overnight group tours comprised 4.5% of the County's lodging market mix. These groups generated approximately $476,000 in Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) in 2005, and over $536,000 in 2007. Although there is no Arlington-specific data on spending by tour bus visitors, research by the American Bus Association (ABA) estimates that just one motorcoach spending one night at a typical destination generates as much as $11,660 for that local economy in meals, lodging, and other spending.

Based on research from Randall Travel Marketing and the ABA, as well as input from the Arlington Economic Development Commission Tourism Committee, the Arlington Convention and Visitors Service (ACVS) was restructured in April 2009 to focus on expanding Arlington's tour bus business in the three (3) areas outlined above. ACVS now works closely with its Arlington hotel partners to attract overnight groups for off-peak periods including July through August, December through February, and weekends throughout the year. Additionally, ACVS is helping tour operators develop day-trip itineraries featuring shopping, dining, theater and/or attractions in key urban villages (specifically Ballston, Clarendon, Crystal City, Pentagon City, Rosslyn and Shirlington). And finally, ACVS is actively promoting Arlington restaurants that offer group dining and/or boxed meal services. Conservative estimates for 2010 show that if each week the County had just two additional overnight bus groups, one sightseeing day trip, one dining group and one boxed catering order, it would result in over $1 million in new visitor spending for the year, generating over $37,000 in combined TOT, Sales and Meals Tax revenues.

As this relates to parking, tour bus parking zones are needed for both overnight parking and for short-term parking. Some zones are needed just for overnight, some just for short-term parking and some for 24/7. Overnight spaces have been requested by Arlington hotels that do not have surface parking. Short-term tour bus spaces (a maximum of two or three hours) are required near major Arlington tourist destinations such as the Fashion Centre at Pentagon City, the Kettler Capitals Iceplex/Ballston Common Mall, and the Village at Shirlington. (Note: Major historic attractions such as Arlington National Cemetery, the Marine Corps War Memorial, the Air Force Memorial and the Pentagon Memorial offer limited tour bus parking). The County currently has overnight tour bus parking zones on South Four Mile Run Drive, on Randolph Street in Ballston and on 18th Street South in Crystal City. The County has short-term parking zones on South Four Mile Run Drive, on Hayes Street in Pentagon City, on Randolph and Quincy Streets in Ballston and on 18th Street South in Crystal City. (see Attachment 2 for maps of the current tour bus zones)

The Parking and Curb Space Management Element of the Master Transportation Plan directs the establishment of a tour and event bus parking plan (implementation action 1g), and the establishment of fees for semi-public and private bus service (implementation action 2h). The changes in the County Code proposed here will contribute to the implementation of these actions.

DISCUSSION: Section 14.2-40 of the County Code authorizes the County Manager to designate areas as parking meter zones. At this time it is appropriate to designate the tour bus

parking zones as parking meter zones, install parking meters, and establish the meter rate. The current locations signed for tour bus only parking were reviewed in late 2009 and continue to be deemed appropriate for tour buses. Hotels and bus operators have requested additional tour bus parking locations, which staff is considering. There are also locations where tour buses would like to park but that are inappropriate for tour buses either for safety or operations reasons.

Tour buses come in a variety of lengths, thus making striped spaces of consistent lengths inappropriate. This is especially true for long tour bus parking zones, such as the zone on South Hayes Street.

Tour bus parking zone meter hours will be determined based on the adjacent land use or destination. Some zones are appropriate for operating 24 hours a day seven days a week (as opposed to regular meter hours which are generally in place Monday though Saturday from 8 am to 6 pm). When tour bus groups stay at any of Arlington's 15 hotels without on-site bus parking, the buses need to park overnight on the street. This demand should be monitored and, when possible, served with tour bus parking zones. Eight (8) of the currently signed tour bus spaces allow overnight parking. A three-hour time period is often the most appropriate duration for dining and shopping visits.

The County is proposing charging tour buses for parking for several reasons. These parking spaces have value, and most of them are in high demand parking areas. By charging the tour buses, the County is able to capture the revenue that the spaces would have generated if the spaces were assigned to general purpose metered parking. Without charging it is also more difficult for the police to enforce the turnover of the spaces. The revenue will also contribute to the cost of managing the spaces.

The table below compares Arlington's proposed rates to the surrounding tourist areas of Alexandria and Washington D.C.

Location	Rate(s)	Type/Area
Arlington	$3 per hr (nighttime would average $30 for 10 hours)	On-street (currently daytime parking in 6 areas & overnight parking in 3 areas)
Alexandria	$10 for temporary layover, $35 for nighttime. Limited free on-street parking	George Washington Masonic Memorial parking lot 400 block N Union Street
Washington D.C.	$30 - $50 at night. Free for on-street parking yet trip permit is required ($50)	Private off-street garages

A fine of $60 is proposed for buses that park in tour bus zones without payment. This fine is $20 higher than most of the other non-moving violation fines, but is considered appropriate in order to deter non-payment of the typical meter fee of about $30 for overnight parking. A fine of $50 is proposed for non-tour bus vehicles that park in tour bus zones. This fine amount is the same as

that advertised for public comment and adoption as part of the FY 2011 budget for similar non-moving violations per County Code section 14.2-7.1.

AED and DES staff have discussed Arlington's tour bus situation with most Arlington hotels, over 60 tour bus operators at ABA Marketplace 2010, as well as senior management at the Kettler Capitals Iceplex, the Ballston Public Parking Garage, and the Fashion Centre at Pentagon City. The tour bus operators were most interested in being able to obtain accurate and current information on tour bus parking options. Staff is working on updating the County website on tour bus information and revising the tour bus parking signs. The Iceplex, Ballston Garage, and Fashion Centre staff felt comfortable with the County charging the buses for on-street parking and appreciated that Arlington County was giving attention to the parking needs of the tour bus industry. They felt the increased signage for the tour bus parking zones and increased marketing of the tour bus parking would cause an increase in tour bus business to the County.

FISCAL IMPACT: The installation of meters and the establishment of parking meter fees for tour buses is expected to generate approximately $90,000 in revenue per year. In FY 2011, the one-time cost for purchasing and installing nine (9) new multi-space meters and the installation of the necessary signs is approximately $77,000, with annual maintenance and operating costs for the nine (9) meters are estimated at approximately $13,000. For FY 2011 it is estimated that there will be no net revenue available due to the one-time start up costs of the multi-space meters and associated maintenance. If adopted, the revenue and expense will be appropriated as part of the FY 2011 budget. In FY 2012 however, it is projected the County will receive up to $100,000 in new fee supporting revenue to offset General Fund expenditures.

It is anticipated that better managed tour bus parking will facilitate continued growth in Arlington's overnight group visitation, sightseeing day trips and group dining/boxed meal services. Beyond the $600,000-plus in tax revenues the County currently receives from tour bus groups, a relatively small amount of new business in 2010 could result in over $1 million in visitor spending with over $37,000 in tax revenues.

AN ORDINANCE TO AMEND, REENACT AND RECODIFY CHAPTER 14.2 ARTICLE 1 (MOTOR VEHICLE CODE) OF THE CODE OF ARLINGTON COUNTY, VIRGINIA, RELATING TO TOUR BUS PARKING FEES AND FINES.

I. BE IT ORDAINED by the County Board of Arlington County, Virginia that Chapter 14.2 Article 1 (Motor Vehicle Code) of the Arlington County Code is amended, reenacted and recodified, to read in pertinent part, as follows:

Chapter 14.2

MOTOR VEHICLES AND TRAFFIC

* * *

Article 1. Motor Vehicle Code

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DIVISION 1.

GENERALLY

§ 14.2-7.1. Fines for nonmoving violations.

Each law enforcement officer or other employee charged with the duty of enforcing violations shall attach to each vehicle whose operator is in violation of Sections 14.2-1, 14.2-2, 14.2-3, 14.2-3.1, 14.2-32, 14.2-33, 14.2-34, 14.2-38, 14.2-38.1, 14.2-40, 14.2-41, 14.2-42, 14.2-43, 14.2-44, 14.2-45, 14.2-85, 14.2-87, 14.2-96 and 14.2-106 of the County Code, a notice to the operator thereof that such vehicle has been parked in violation of one (1) or more of these Sections.

* * *

(21) Fifty dollars ($50.00) for parking or placing any automobile, truck, trailer or other vehicle not defined as a tour bus in a tour bus parking zone.

(22) Sixty dollars ($60.00) for tour buses that exceed the time line on a meter in a tour bus zone.

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Subdivision D.

Parking Meter Zones

§ 14.2-39. Definitions.

The following words and phrases, when used in this Subdivision, shall have the meaning ascribed to them in this Section:

* * *

Tour Bus shall mean any motor carriers that conform to the State of Virginia definitions of "charter bus", "contract bus carrier", "contract passenger" and "sightseeing carrier", and have a seating capacity in excess of 25 passengers, and undertake to transport people for compensation for the purpose of long-distance group travel or local sightseeing. This definition shall not include school buses or motor vehicles operated on regular schedules and/or regular routes and/or charge individual or separate fares for such transportation.

(9-1-59; 7-3-67; Ord. No. 89-30, 11-21-89; Ord. No. 92-33, 7-11-92)

* * *

§ 14.2-44. Parking time limits; when parking meters operative.

* * *

(b) Parking or standing a vehicle during the hours of meter operation in a designated space or area in a parking meter zone shall be lawful upon the deposit of coin or coins of the United States of America or upon the use of a credit card or other acceptable form of payment or upon the proper designation of time on an in-vehicle parking regulator at the following maximum rates:

(1) *Thirty (30) minute parking meter zone:* One dollar ($1.00) for each hour parked.

(2) *One (1) hour parking meter zone:* One dollar ($1.00) for each hour parked.

(3) *Two (2) hour parking meter zone:* One dollar ($1.00) for each hour parked.

(4) *Four (4) hour parking meter zone:* One dollar ($1.00) for each hour parked.

(5) *Over four (4) hour meter zone:* Seventy-five cents ($0.75) for each hour parked.

(6) *Tour bus parking zone:* Three dollars ($3.00) for each hour parked.

(c) Said parking meters, except those in tour bus parking zones, shall be operated in said parking meter zones every day between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. except Sundays and holidays; provided, however, that the County Manager or his designee may provide for different hours of meter operation in such parking meter zones whenever he determines that traffic conditions in any particular zone required such change; in which case the County Manager shall cause a tag, showing the hours of meter operation, to be affixed to each meter in the zone affected by such change and he shall have other appropriate signs erected showing the hours of legal parking in such zone. Upon the affixing of such tag and erection of such signs, the hours of meter operation shall be that indicated on such tags and signs.
(7-9-69; 6-3-72; 3-17-80; Ord. No. 83-12, 7-1-83; Ord. No. 88-10, 5-21-88; Ord. No. 89-30, 11-21-89; Ord. No. 92-33, 7-11-92; Ord. No. 98-4, 6-1-98; Ord. No. 99-7, 4-10-99; Ord. No. 07-06, 4-21-07, effective 7-01-07)

§ 14.2-45. Parking beyond legal parking time; parking when signal indicates overparking; parking across lines; depositing slugs.

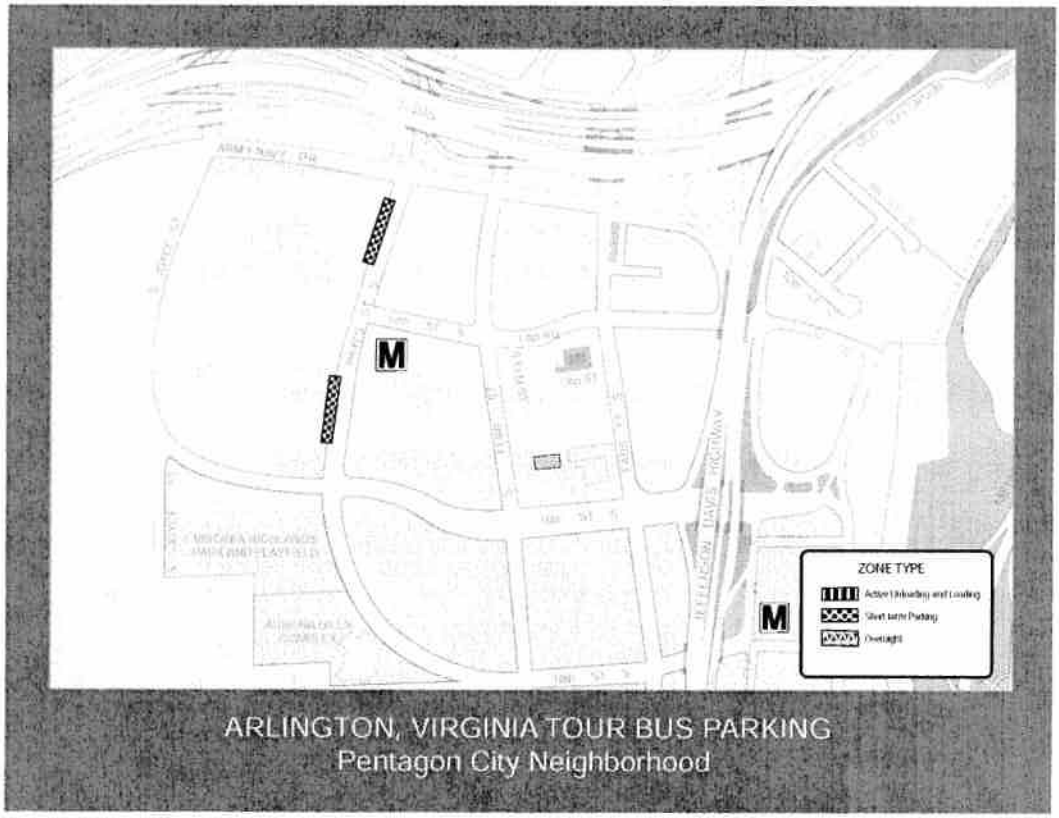
It shall be unlawful and a violation of the provisions of this Subdivision for any person to:

(a) Cause, allow, permit, or suffer any vehicle registered in the name of or operated by such person to be parked overtime or beyond the period of legal parking time established for any parking meter zone or tour bus parking zone to deposit in any parking meter any coin, credit card, or other acceptable form of payment, or to designate a balance of parking time on an in-vehicle parking regulator for the purpose of parking beyond the maximum legal parking time for the particular parking meter zone.

* * *

(9-1-59; Ord. No. 92-33, 7-11-92; Ord. No. 92-34, 7-11-92; Ord. No. 92-42, 8-8-92)

II. The remaining sections and subsections of Chapter 14.2 of the Code of Arlington County, Virginia not amended hereby shall remain in effect as previously enacted.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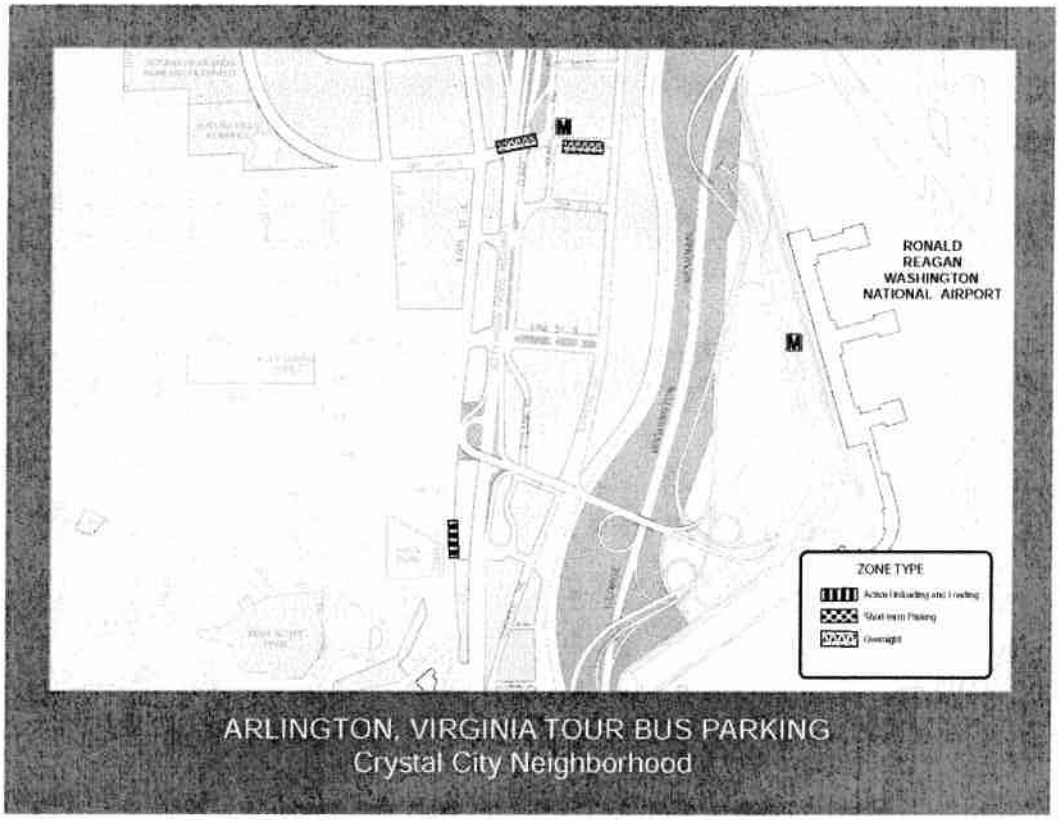
ZONE TYPE
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA TOUR BUS PARKING
Pentagon City Neighborhood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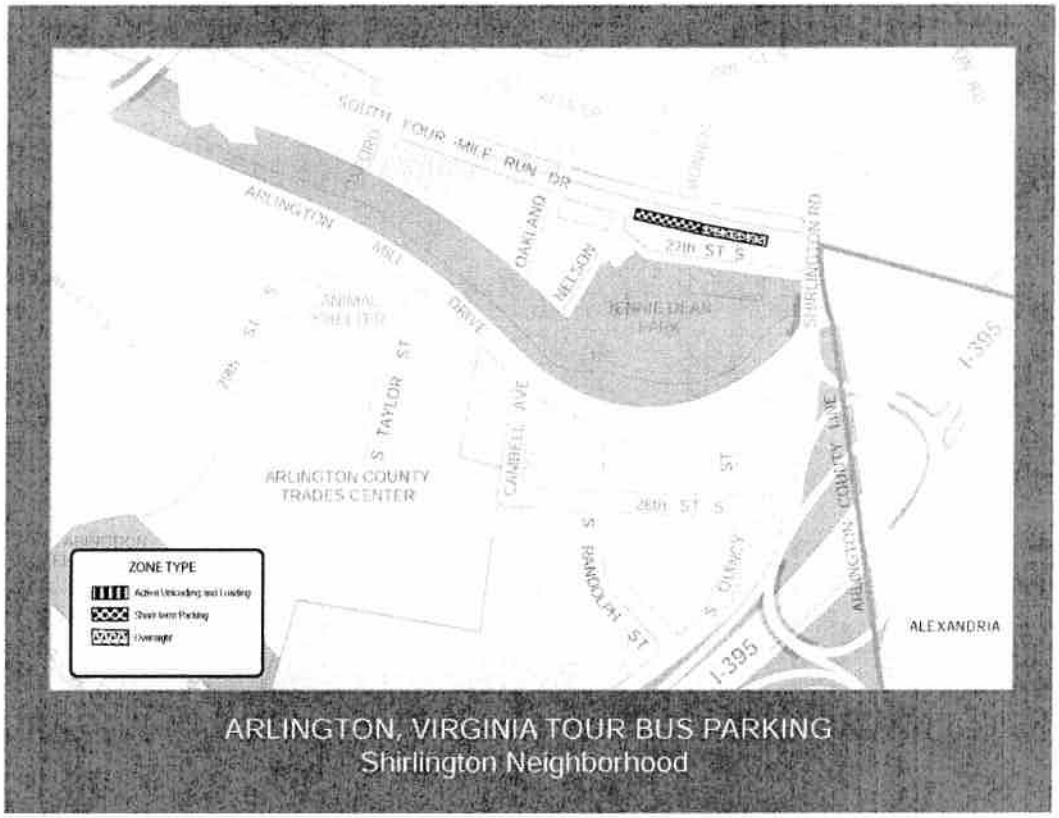
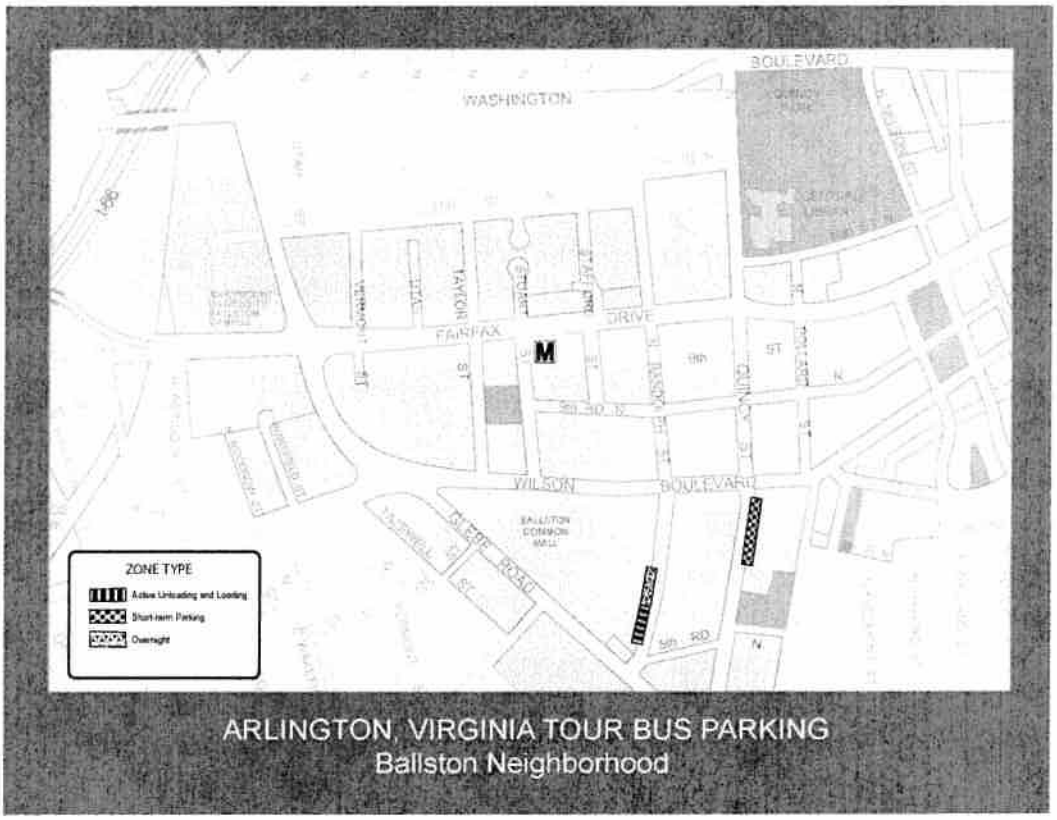
ZONE TYPE
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA TOUR BUS PARKING
Crystal City Neighborhood



ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA TOUR BUS PARKING
Shirlington Neighborhood



ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA TOUR BUS PARKING
Ballston Neighborhood