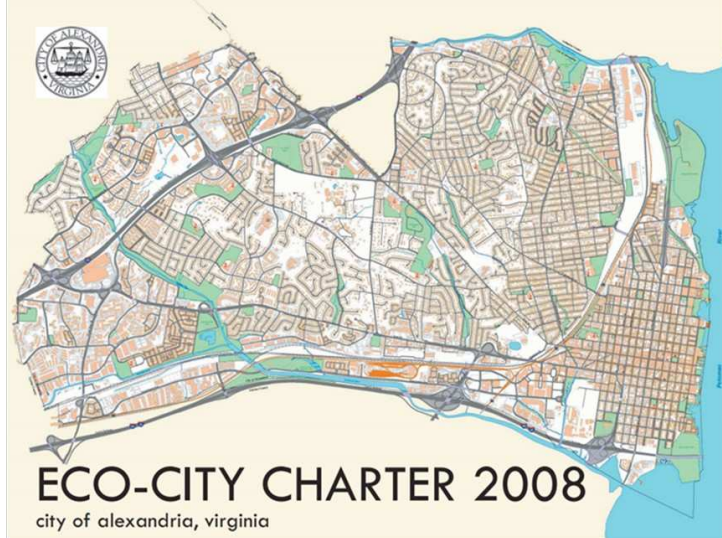
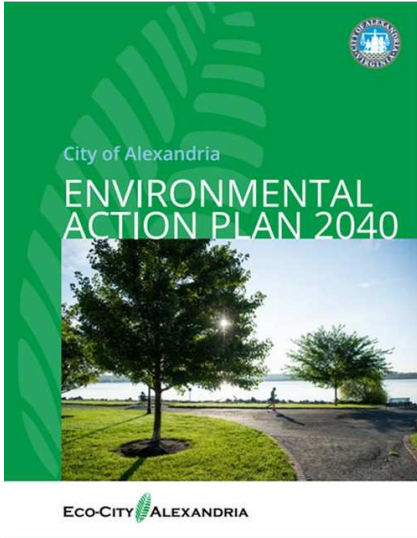




Environmental Policy Commission



FY2021 EPC ANNUAL REPORT

JULY 1, 2021 - JUNE 30, 2022

JUNE 27, 2022

1. Introduction

The Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission (EPC) was established under Chapter 4, Article M, of the City Code to “advise and make recommendations to the City Council and, when appropriate, to the Planning Commission and City Manager”. This report provides a summary of EPC activities during Fiscal Year 2022.

2. Who We Are

The Alexandria City Council established the EPC in 1970 to advise and make recommendations to the City Council and, where appropriate, to the Planning Commission and City Manager, on matters relating to the following:

- Climate change and environmental sustainability
- Air quality;
- Land use;
- Noise pollution and abatement;
- Pesticides, herbicides and contaminants;
- Solid waste;
- Water quality and supply;
- Other matters referred to the EPC by the City and citizens; and
- Other topics relating to the conservation and protection of Alexandria’s environment.

The EPC, when fully appointed consists of 13 members, including five members from the field of environmental sciences, five citizen-at-large members, one member from the field of urban planning, one member with experience in Federal or state environmental statues/regulations, and one representative from the Alexandria business community. The EPC regularly works with other organizations to further the environmental goals of the City.

The following is a list of Commissioners who served on the EPC during FY2022.

Michael Bahleda ¹	Christine Maietta ¹
Eldon Boes	Amber Myers ¹
Edith Cecchini (Secretary)	Michael Olex (Vice-Chair)
Alexander Clark	Brendan Owens
Cynthia Elliott ²	William Pugh ¹
Oleksandr Faryga ²	Marta Schantz
Nicole Heckman ²	
Kathie Hoekstra (Chair)	
Jennifer Debias	

Notes: ¹Term ended in FY22; ²Term began in FY22

During this fiscal year, the commission met virtually once a month during July through March and held hybrid meetings during April through June due to the COVID-19 pandemic. All meetings were open to the public, agendas and documents considered during the meetings as well as minutes of the meetings and videos were posted to the EPC page on the City website:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/EnvironmentalPolicyCommission.html>

<http://alexandriava.gov/EnvironmentalPolicyCommission> Throughout the year, the staff of the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES), Office of Environmental Quality supported the EPC. The EPC wishes to express its thanks for the support and guidance provided by City leadership and staff.

3. EPC Annual Retreat

The EPC held its annual retreat in May 2022. The focus was on three main topics including:

1. A discussion about current EPC specialty areas and recommended changes;
2. A discussion and selection of EPC focus areas for next year as well as areas where EPC members felt they needed more information & understanding; and
3. The selection of projects/programs/extra staff to recommend to Council and Manager for the \$1.85 million reserved climate crisis/EJ fund.

4. EPC Activities and Accomplishments

The following are some of the major activities and accomplishments of the commission during FY2022:

In August, the EPC sent a letter to City Council expressing support for the proposed plastic bag ordinance. This ordinance was approved by Council and became effective as of January 1, 2022¹.

In September, the EPC approved the commission's by-laws which adds climate change as an explicit part of its mandates².

In October, the commission prepared a list of legislative priorities and sent it to the City Legislative Director for possible inclusion in the City's legislative list for 2022³.

In November, the commission sent a letter to the City Manager expressing specific budget recommendations for sustainability initiatives/projects for FY2023⁴.

In February, the commission joined the Planning Commission and Transportation Commission in sending a joint letter from all three to City Council regarding the climate crisis and recommended some critical actions for the City⁵.

In March, the commission sent a follow-up letter to Council after holding one-on-one meetings with all members of Council following the joint letter sent in February to memorialize specific actions requested of Council.⁶

In April, the commission reviewed a presentation from a Philadelphia developer who has built hundreds of affordable, net-zero housing units since 2015. The EPC then received a presentation for the redevelopment of the PRGS site from Hilco.

In May, the EPC wrote a letter to the Federal Transit Administration in support of the City grant application under the Low or No-emission Vehicles and Buses program⁷.

In June, the EPC sent a letter to the Planning Commission (PC) urging the PC to:

- (i) require the developer to provide adequate information to meet the carbon neutral targets identified in the Old Town North Small Area Plan;
- (ii) commit the developer to producing their Coordinated Sustainability Strategy (CSS) with specific, measurable, time bound details to which they can be held accountable; and
- (iii) evaluate their proposals to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030⁸.

Also in June, the commission sent a letter to the City Council and Manager detailing which programs/projects or added staff the EPC recommended for funding paid for by the \$1.85MM climate/EJ fund⁹.

Members of the Commission also participated in the following City commissions, committees, and advisory groups in the capacity of voting members:

- Potomac Yard Metro Station Implementation Group
- Waterfront Commission
- Transportation Commission
- Eisenhower West Small Area Plan Advisory Group
- ECCAP Task Force
- Open Space Advisory Committee

6. EPC Correspondences

All EPC correspondences are posted on the EPC webpage:

www.alexandriava.gov/environmentalpolicycommission

1. Letter to Council supporting Alexandria plastic bag ordinance, August 12, 2021
2. EPC By-Laws, approved by the commission on September 20, 2021
3. Kathie Hoekstra, email to Sarah Taylor, Legislative Director, EPC legislative priorities for 2022, October 25, 2021.
4. Letter to City Manager Mark Jinks regarding FY2023 budget, November 1, 2021
5. Joint Letter from the Planning, Transportation and Environmental Policy Commissions to City Council regarding climate emergency, February 2, 2022
6. Letter to City Council regarding Next Steps and FY2023 Manager's budget, March 14, 2022
7. Letter of support for low or no emissions Federal Transit Administration grant, May 17, 2022
8. Letter to Planning Commission regarding PRGS CDD and carbon neutrality analysis, June 3, 2022
9. Letter to City Council and Manager on the specific projects/programs/staff recommended for funding from the \$1.85MM reserved climate/EJ fund, June 28, 2022

7. EPC Membership Recruitment and Leadership

During FY22, four members left and three new members joined the commission. At the end of June 2022, the Commission had 11 members out of a maximum of 13 members.

The Commission held its annual elections for FY2023 during its June 27, 2022, monthly meeting. Kathie Hoekstra, Michael Olex and Edith Cecchini were elected unanimously as Chair, Vice Chair and Secretary, respectively.

Kathie Hoekstra