

Environmental Policy Commission's 2023 Legislative Agenda to address the City's Strategic Priorities including equity, environmental justice, civility, transparency, respect and service.

Alexandrians feel the impacts of the climate crisis every day, with serious health effects and high energy bills to our most vulnerable, heat stress suffered by our essential workers, as well as the financial burden from floods caused from all-too-often, extreme weather events.

Therefore, to create an equitable, safe and resilient City we support legislative or executive actions that will reduce or enable better and more equitable management of these impacts from the climate crisis, so we do not add to further damage to future generations. By reducing as fast as possible the use of fossil fuels to produce electricity or heat our homes, we can reduce or eliminate these impacts.

First, we must protect our past gains. The EPC urges the City to support efforts to protect Virginia's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas initiative (RGGI), our path to 100% renewable energy generation via the Virginia Clean Economy Act (VCEA), and our path to net-zero carbon emissions from the transportation sector per Virginia's Energy policy and the Clean Car Standards adopted in 2021.

Second, we must make take immediate steps to stop adding to our burden by make buildings more energy efficient and setting a short timeline to **net zero building codes**. The District of Columbia has already set a net zero requirement for all new buildings above 50,000 square feet and Alexandria must maintain its high ECO-City standards so we keep our buildings competitive in future markets. This will make residences and businesses more comfortable and healthier, while reducing the energy burden on those who can least afford it. Use of backup batteries will also make our buildings more resilient during power outages caused by extreme weather events. Therefore, we urge the City to support:

1. **Stretch codes.** Legislation to either allow localities to adopt "**stretch codes**" or more energy efficiency codes or to create a Work Group of major stakeholders including developers, environmental groups and other stakeholders to create a faster time line to adopt and implement the International Energy Conservation Code without weakening amendments. [While other states immediately adopt the new IECC code without exceptions, Virginia allows multiple, weakening exceptions, delays its adoption by 3 years, and gives a veto to any party participant.]

Third, we must take a variety of steps to retrofit existing buildings to reduce their energy usage and increase their resiliency as well. Therefore, we urge the City to support:

2. **Benchmarking of Energy and Water usage.** Legislation to allow localities to require building owners to **benchmark** energy and water usage using a free third party data software such as the EPA's Energy Star Portfolio Manager to help the building owners and the City determine where to provide incentives to increase energy efficiency and reduce flooding impacts.
3. **Shared/Community Bulk Energy Purchases or Peak Shaving of Loads.** Legislation that allows any community resident, commercial or business owner to choose 100% renewable energy by banding with others to bulk purchase their energy instead of relying on a public utility. Community solar could achieve this **IF** utilities cannot charge excessive administrative fees, or by permitting community choice aggregation, or district energy for behind the meter sharing and shaving peak loads amongst various owners in development districts.

Lastly, to reduce single occupancy vehicle traffic we urge the City to support the need to provide a variety of good, efficient, multimodal alternatives.

- 4. Ebike, or scooter incentives.** To complement the new federal Inflation Reduction Act and Infrastructure Law, legislation to provide direct incentives for zero-carbon transportation methods other than autos to discourage single occupancy vehicle transportation.

If a situation arises given the current political situation, we continue to support green banks, and any other incentives that would reduce carbon emission levels in the City. Without legislation to support some or most of the above numbers items, we feel the City will struggle financially to ensure an equitable, safe, healthy and resilient community or meet its EAP2040 targets.