

## Budget Comments received after the City Manager's Proposed Budget

### New Comments on Top

**March 15, 2022**

Dear Mayor Wilson and Members of Alexandria's City Council:

As a member of Alexandria's Children, Youth and Families Collaborative Commission, I am writing on my own behalf to recommend that the City Council continue to support the needs of the City of Alexandria's young people.

By approving the Children and Youth Community Plan, you have demonstrated your commitment to children, youth and families. Thank you so much for prioritizing young people in your American Rescue Plan funding allocation, and for creating new staffing positions to provide more mental, physical and social-emotional health support to children and youth. I also want to acknowledge your leadership in building positive relationships between the Alexandria Police Department and our city's youth; such collaboration is vital to support student well-being and positive mental health.

I'd like to recommend that the following priorities be considered to further benefit Alexandria's young people: maintaining and increasing mental health and social-emotional well-being through increased funding for school- and community- based mental health providers; supplying resources and continued funding for staffing the Teen Wellness Center and for providing culturally competent sexual health services and education; and allocating funding for continued efforts to achieve digital equity throughout our city. Finally, please provide support and funding for data monitoring, collection, and evaluation to ensure that the initiatives designed to improve the quality of life for our city's children and youth are as effective and efficient as possible.

Thank you, again, for adopting the Children and Youth Community plan and for all of your efforts to make implementation of this plan financially possible.

**March 14, 2022**

Please provide a rough estimate of the cost of providing city services each to a single-family home, duplex and multifamily unit.

**March 14, 2022**

What would be the capital cost savings and operational cost savings for acquiring electric cargo bicycles which allow certain city staff (i.e. parking enforcement, maintenance crews) to replace motor vehicle trips during their duties?

**March 14, 2022**

What would be the capital cost savings, operational cost savings (i.e. gasoline, insurance) and carbon emissions savings generated by prohibiting all city departments from acquiring SUVs?

**March 6, 2022**

Alexandria Police Department does not utilize body cameras. I have spoken with PD leadership, and they indicated that they would like body cameras but do not have the money for them. Does your budget address this concern?

**March 5, 2022**

Alexandria City Council,

The Alexandria Soccer Association (ASA) wishes to provide comments on the City's proposed 2023 CIP budget. ASA and the City of Alexandria, alongside RPCA & ACPS, have collaborated to support the Alexandria community since 1970. Together, we have served 100,000+ participants over the past 50 years, providing high quality sporting experiences and programming at public fields, courts, community centers, schools and parks.

This partnership currently provides 6,000 annual individual participants with active and physically healthy experiences. Together we engage community members, promote cultural competency, and provide meaningful opportunities for children and families through public space and programming.

However, we have come to a crossroads. The allocation and inventory of available space no longer meets the core needs of Alexandria's children interested in playing sports and recreating. With fields going offline (ie. Minnie Howard), projects delayed (ie. Boothe, Hensley, and Patrick Henry) and investments removed (ie. turf at Simpson diamond) ASA is operating at a 300-hour deficit per season of weeknight and weekend space needed to deliver the quality programming our members seek. With the current proposed 2022-2032 CIP ASA projects a 450 hour per season deficit in 2030. Fellow youth and adult recreational programs are also challenged with capacity issues for fields and courts that meet minimum play standards.

In reviewing the budget ASA appreciates that several capital improvement initiatives are proposed to increase the current capacity.

- Lights at Hammond Middle School turf field (RPCA)
- Turf and lights at the newly proposed George Washington middle school turf field (ACPS & RPCA)
- Improvements to the Four Mile Soccer rectangular field (RPCA)
- Investment in added gym space at the new Macarthur school (RPCA)

However, this overall plan demonstrates that the City is not investing nearly the amount necessary to meet community demands for indoor and outdoor space. ASA has shared data with City staff that outlines the needs of the community. Further we have proposed a partnership with the City to help meet these demands through the high impact investments listed below.

- Lights and turf at Simpson soccer fields
- Construction of a fieldhouse community center at Hammond for year-round play
- Turf and lights at the Braddock fields

We believe these high impact projects, alongside the currently planned investments, will address the community need in a satisfactory way for indoor and outdoor space for the next twenty years. We stand ready to partner with the City and any other interested party to invest in these facilities and maximize their community benefit once constructed.

#### **March 5, 2022**

As a member of the CYFCC, I recommend the following priorities in tandem with our goals for youth and families of Alexandria: Data and Accountability Infrastructure and Staff Support: Funding for data infrastructure and staff to improve city-wide efforts to collect data, monitor, and evaluate initiatives affecting children, youth, and families. Maintaining and Increasing Mental Health and Social-Emotional Wellbeing Supports: Increased funding for additional community and school-based mental health providers to be deployed to targeted schools and communities. Funding to support monitoring and evaluation of these programs as they pertain to child and family wellbeing and safety. Resources and Continued Funding for Staffing the Teen Wellness Center and other health centers that provide culturally competent sexual health services and education. Follow-on Funds to continue efforts to bridge digital equity through implementing the digital equity plan, as prescribed in the unified planning process, and continuing to employ a broadband strategist and policy analyst focused on addressing this issue. Thank you for your continued support.

#### **February 18, 2022**

Since Council stipulated more than two years ago that Alexandria is facing a climate emergency, and reiterated our goal of cutting our greenhouse gas emissions in half eight years from now, what percentage reduction in community-wide greenhouse gas emissions will the proposed FY2023 budget and Capital Improvement Program enable us to achieve over the next 1-3 years?

**February 15, 2022**

First, I hope the new city manager changes the budget format. Organizing it by some ethereal objective does not ever help me find what I am looking for. Also, should not be organized alphabetically since one must often wade through dozens of little things to get to the big ones. On taxes and fees, the new city manager should know that the average homeowner saw their taxes and mandatory fees raised by 4.6% annually on average during the 2010s. So, don't let anyone tell you that tax rates tell the whole story or that the city has been fiscally responsible on behalf of taxpayers.