

CITY ACADEMY
CITY GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE OVERVIEW
MARCH 9, 2023





# How is the City of Alexandria Structured?

Sermaine "Coco" McLean Chief of Staff

## **Council-Manager Form of Government**

- ALE WALE OF ALE OF ALE
- Derived from Progressive, anti-corruption movements of the early 20<sup>th</sup> century
- First established in Staunton, VA in 1908
- Alexandria City Manager position created in 1922
- Roughly 40% of cities throughout the country with more than 2,500 residents have this form of government, including 38 out of 39 cities in Virginia (Richmond being the exception)
- City Manager
  - Serves at Council's pleasure
  - Non-partisan, non-political
  - Professionally educated, trained, & experienced
  - Operates under ICMA Code of Ethics Virginia





## Form of Government

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- Council-Manager form of government
- City Council elected to 3-year term; all atlarge
  - Mayor
    - Presides over Council meetings
    - Ceremonial head of government
    - May vote but may not make motions or veto
    - Represents City
    - Exercises Leadership
    - Undertakes Initiatives
    - Community Voice
  - Vice Mayor selected by Council at Organizational/First Meeting of Council term

The People

Sheriff

Commonwealth's **Attorney** 

**City Council** 

Clerk of the **Circuit Court** 

**Circuit Court** 



**City Attorney** 

City Clerk

**City Manager** 

Independent Policing Auditor/Investigator

**City Departments** 



## **Alexandria City Council**

2022 - 2024





Canek Aguirre
Council Member



Justin M. Wilson Mayor



**Amy Jackson** Vice Mayor



John T. Chapman Council Member



Sarah Bagley Council Member



**Alyia Gaskins**Council Member



R. Kirk McPike
Council Member



## City Council Roles & Responsibilities

- Policy-making and legislative body for City
- Adopts annual budget and sets tax rates
- Establishes land use policies and zoning; authorizes land acquisition, development and "special uses."
- Appoints City Manager, City Attorney, and City Clerk, Independent Policing Auditor
- Appoints members of Boards and Commissions
- Authorizes issuance of bonds

government



# Organization of Annual Council Calendar



- Regular Legislative Meetings
  - Two Legislative Meetings per month
  - First reading and explanation of proposed ordinances
  - Administrative actions: grant authorizations, agreements, etc.
  - Executive Sessions if needed
  - Work sessions on proposals in process of development
  - One Legislative Meeting in December, but none in July and August
- Public Hearing Meetings
  - One public hearing per month, but none in August
  - Primary focus is land use and ordinances
  - July meeting also serves as a backup Legislative Meeting

## City Manager Roles & Responsibilities

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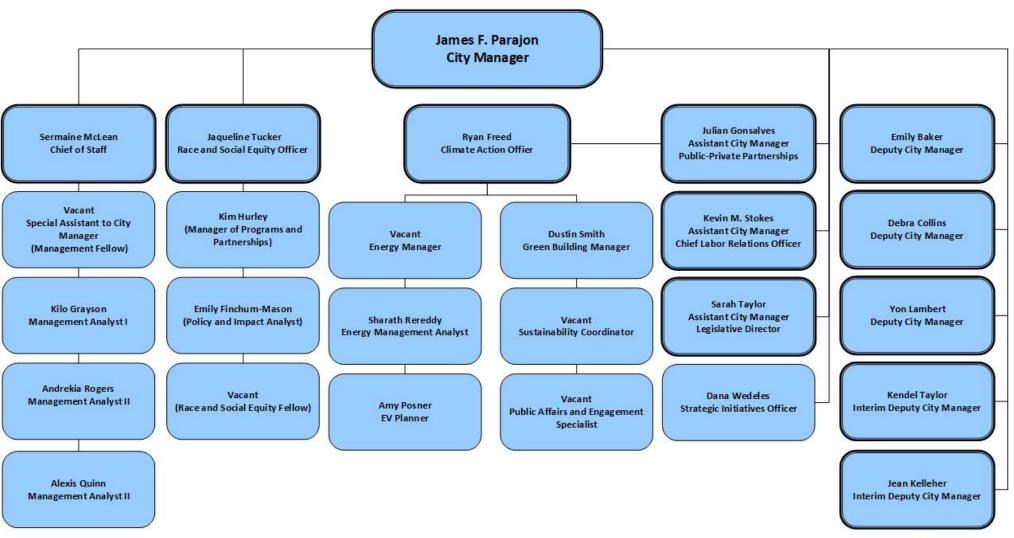
- Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the City
- Responsible for day-to-day operations of City government
- Appoints department heads and City employees
- Establishes docket for Council meetings
- Helps City Council translate vision into actions
- Proposes policies and makes recommendations to Council
- Proposes operating budget, tax rates and 10-year capital improvement program
- Approves Administrative Regulations



James F. Parajon
City Manager

## Office of the City Manager

## **CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE**





## Chief of Staff Roles & Responsibilities

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- Directly reports to the City Manager
- Plans, organizes, manages, directs and oversees the day-to-day operations of the City Manager's Office and staff.
- Represents the City Manager in the community and at professional meetings as required.
- Liaisons with City Council members and manages the legislative meeting process
- Assists in the coordination of activities of the City Manager's Office, with City Departments and with outside agencies.



Sermaine "Coco" McLean
City Manager's City of Staff

## **Our Purpose...**



In City government, our **MISSION** defines what we do for our community, our **VISION** is where we are headed as an organization, and our **VALUES** guide our actions and decisions.

## **Mission:**

Working together to foster a thriving Alexandria.

## **Vision:**

A culture that supports each of us and inspires excellence.

## Values:

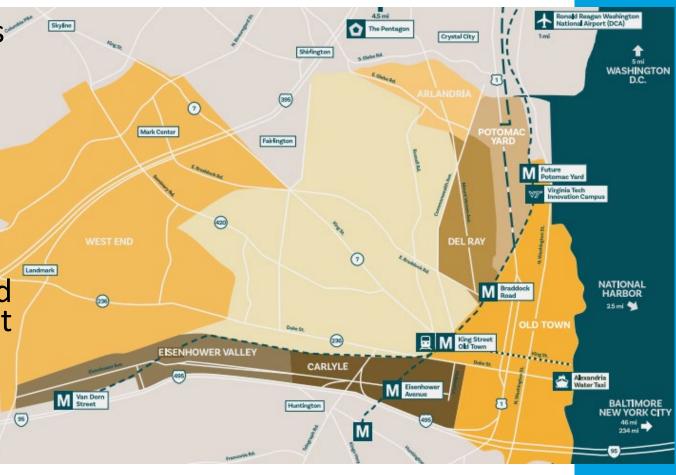
Respect, Integrity, Teamwork and Continuous Improvement



# Independent City

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- There are 41 independent cities in the U.S.
- Virginia's thirty-eight independent cities are not politically part of a county, even though geographically they may be completely surrounded by one.
- An independent city in Virginia may serve as the county seat of an adjacent county, even though the city by definition is not part of that county.
- In 1749 an act was passed to established the City of Alexandria as an independent city.
- The City of Alexandria is 15.2 square miles
- Estimated Population: 160,000
- Over 140 different languages spoken



## Who We Are

- 24 City departments and offices report to City Manager
- Sheriff's Office, Commonwealth's Attorney, & the Clerk of the Circuit Court are elected
- Approximately 2,500 full-time and about 600 part-time/seasonal employees
- City works closely with other City related agencies
  - Alexandria City Public Schools
  - Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority
  - Alexandria Renew Enterprises
  - Alexandria Economic Development Partnership
  - Visit Alexandria
  - DASH (Alexandria Transit Company)
  - Libraries, Health, Courts, Registrar of Voters







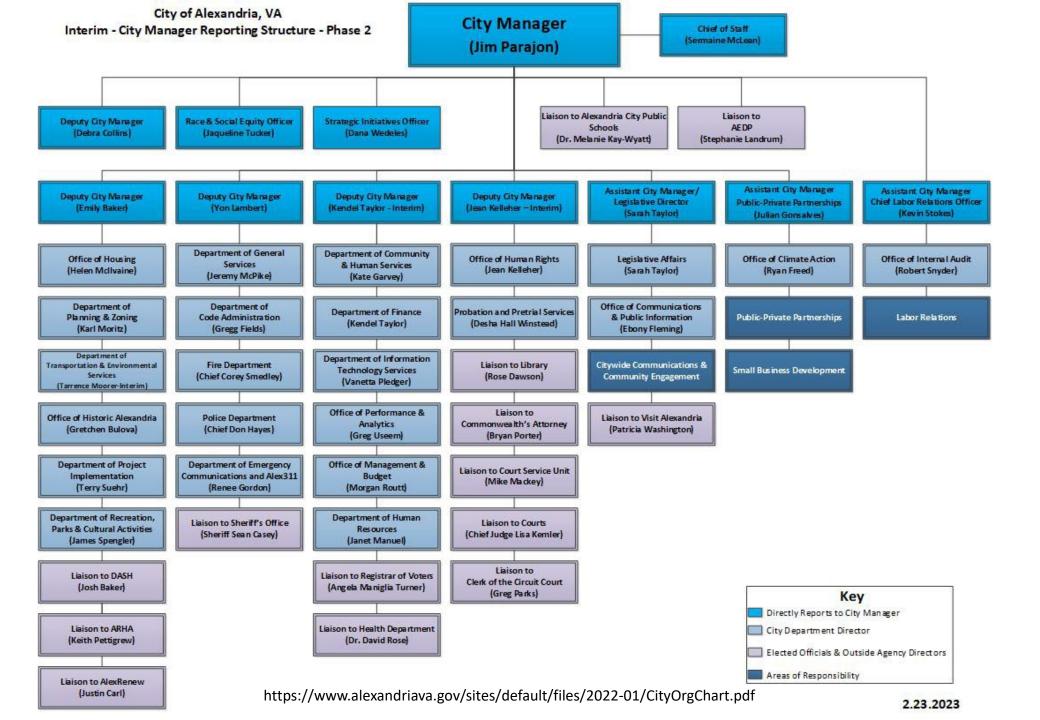
















# 2022 PRIORITIES







## Recover from the COVID-19 Pandemic

Identify the policies, practices and resources needed to ensure a resilient and equitable recovery for all residents and businesses.









## Support Youth and Families

Explore ways to expand academic, social and emotional services and physical support to all youth during out-of-school hours.







## Provide Diverse Housing Opportunities

Reconsider our zoning model and explore other tools to better facilitate an Alexandria housing economy that provides the necessary range of price points, styles of housing and associated services to meet the needs of a thriving city.







## Foster Economic Development

Seek out and consider budgetary, land use, regulatory and other economic development tools to foster sustainable and equitable development, diversify revenue and allow greater investment in our infrastructure.



### Define Our Community Engagement Approach

Use both new and traditional outreach methods to ensure that engagement is efficient, effective and accessible to all stakeholders, creating a clear connection between community input and its effects on policy decision, infrastructure needs and financial considerations.







### Develop a Compensation Philosophy

Establish a new compensation philosophy to ensure we are the preferred workplace of choice and that employees feel valued.

VISIT ALEXANDRIAVA.GOV/COUNCIL FOR MORE INFORMATION



#### FISCAL YEAR APPROVED

## 2023 BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS





\$839.2 MILLION

On May 4, Alexandria City Council adopted an FY 2023 General Fund Operating Budget, which includes no tax rate increase, and an FY 2023 Capital Budget totaling \$563.9M.



MILLION

## COVID-19 Recovery

Funds Alexandria's pandemic recovery and mitigation efforts.



#### Public Schools

Funds the School Board's approved operating budget and ACPS capital improvement program.



MILLION

Funds increased staffing, resources and compensation for Police. Fire and Sheriff.

Public

Safety



MILLION

### Affordable Housing

Investment in affordable housing, including funds from real estate and meals taxes, and ARPA.



S248.8 MILLION

#### Facilities & Infrastructure

Funds capital projects to improve public buildings, community development. storm and sanitary sewers, and more.



S68.6 MILLION

#### Transportation Improvements

Funds future transportation and transit improvements across the City.



MILLION

#### Parks & Recreation

Funds renovations and improvements to City parks, recreation centers, and other public open spaces.



MILLION

#### Climate Change

Funds initiatives that prioritize sustainable solutions identified in the Environmental Action Plan.



57%

#### Race & Social Equity

Funds increased staffing to advance race and social equity initiatives throughout Alexandria.



THOUSAND

#### Community Engagement

Funds positions dedicated to community engagement and focused on building authentic relationships between the City and the Alexandria community.

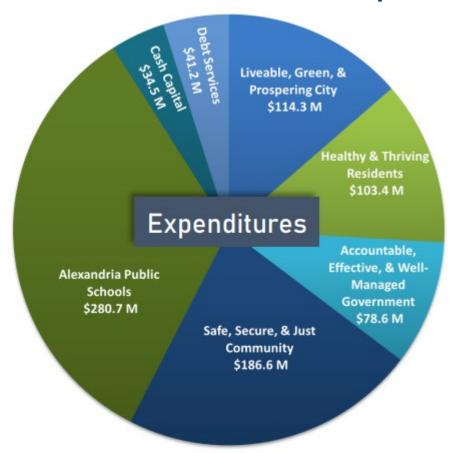


#### Vehicle Tax Relief

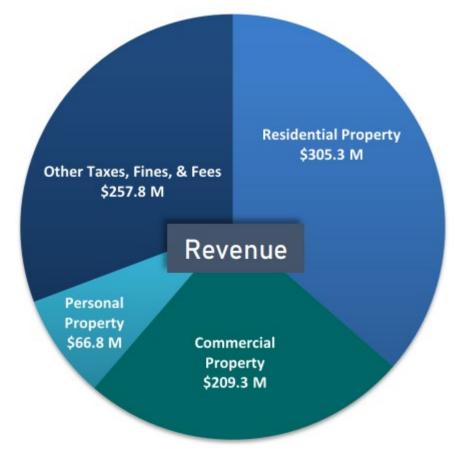
TAX RATIO

Discounts vehicle market value and minimizes taxes for lower-value cars.

# FY 2023 General Fund Budget: \$839.2M





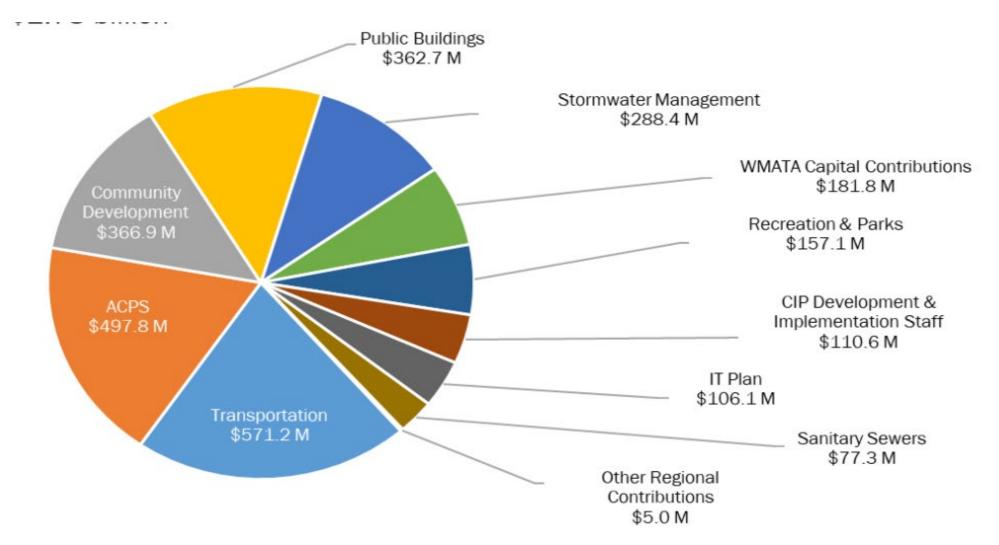


General Fund Revenue (in millions)



# FY 2023 – FY 2032 Capital Improvement Program: \$2.73 Billion









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