



Nov 3, 2025

RE: FY2027 Environmental Budget Priorities

To City Manager Jim Parajon,

Thank you for allowing us to participate in the Fiscal Year 2027 budget process. We recognize that FY27 will be a challenging fiscal year due to economic uncertainty and impact of reduced federal funding. We have outlined below our highest environmental budget priorities considering the limited resources in FY27. We have separated our budget priorities into two categories: net new budget items and existing budget items.

New Budget Priorities:

Community Choice Aggregation Consultant: Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) is a program that allows local governments to pool their electricity customers to purchase power in bulk on their behalf, often aiming for cleaner energy sources and more stable rates. We believe this would be the most effective way for Alexandria to green its grid. The EPC recently heard from Montgomery County staff, who have been working to start up a CCA and anticipates reduced electric rates for residents as a result. Switching to CCA is a long process but amongst the first steps is a feasibility study by a consultant. We recommend adding a line item to FY27 budget to engage a consultant to evaluate Community Choice Aggregation for Alexandria. This interest is in line with interest from City Council Members, including Councilman Elhoubi, who have asked about CCA in recent council meetings.

[Add \$125k to FY27 Office of Climate Action Budget]

Existing Budget Priorities:

Eco-City Alexandria: Maintain budget for all budget items related to Eco-City Alexandria goals and targets in the Environmental Action Plan (EAP) and Energy and Climate Change Action Plan (ECCAP). At a minimum, this requires maintaining the FY26 budget for the Office of Climate Action in FY27. It is essential that Eco-City Alexandria and OCA maintain their budget to fill the gap created by reduced federal funding for environmental initiatives. Beyond that, many City Departments support Eco-City Alexandria – P&Z, T&ES, Housing, DGS, Health, RPCA, and beyond. We are keen to see that collaboration and climate action continue City-wide.

[Maintain FY26 budget of \$1.7M in FY27 City Manager's Office budget for the Office of Climate Action]

DASH: In a time of economic uncertainty and rising costs, it is essential we continue to maintain budget for DASH. Reliable and frequent public transportation can serve as a lifeline for our most vulnerable communities. DASH was funded at \$32M in FY25 and \$34M in FY26. We strongly encourage the City of Alexandria to prioritize maintaining DASH service levels. If budget allows, we encourage the City to consider increasing services. We also encourage DASH to continue searching for grants to expand its electric fleet.

[Maintain at least \$34M for DASH services in FY27 Transit Services Operating Budget]



Environmental Policy Commission

[Maintain funding to address increases in costs related to state of good repair needs of DASH bus fleet in the FY26-FY35 CIP]

City Hall Renovation: Ensure that any updates to the CIP does not reduce budget for sustainable features of City Hall, Market Square Plaza, and Parking Garage Renovation project. More broadly, it is important that DGS continue receiving funding to keep facilities in a state of good repair.

[Continue to allocate funding towards the \$120M estimated construction costs in the FY26-FY35 CIP]

Waterfront Flood Mitigation Project: Flooding continues to be an environmental concern in Alexandria with potential to impact vulnerable communities. Ensure that any updates to the CIP do not reduce funding for the Waterfront Flood Mitigation Project, as well as the broader Flood Action Alexandria infrastructure projects across the City.

[Maintain the \$40M estimated construction costs in the FY26-FY35 CIP]

Stormwater Management: Stormwater management and flood prevention is a high priority for the EPC, as flooding continues to be an environmental concern in Alexandria. Ensure that appropriate level of FY27 funding is allocated to stormwater management projects in the CIP, including:

- Capacity improvements to Commonwealth Ave, E. Glebe Road, and Ashby Street
- Storm Sewer system spot improvement projects
- Inspection, cleaning, and repair of existing stormwater infrastructure

[Continue to allocate funding towards the \$112M estimated construction costs in FY26-FY35 the CIP]

Additional Considerations:

Affordable Housing: Although we do not have any direct mention of affordable housing in this budget priorities letter, we do think it should remain a priority of the City of Alexandria. To that end, we requested through the City Lobbyist that the City of Alexandria advocate for increasing the Virginia Housing Trust Fund (VHTF) to \$150M annually.

Heat Resilience: Where possible, maintain funding for existing activities that mitigate heat islands (e.g., natural plantings/trees, park water/shade features, funding for City Arborists).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Marta Schantz".

Marta Schantz, Chair
Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission

Copied Distribution: Mayor Gaskins, Vice Mayor Bagley, and Members of City Council

Sources:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/budget/fy-2026-approved-operating-and-cip-budget-documents>
https://www.alexandriava.gov/sites/default/files/2025-06/section_15_-_cip_overview.pdf