



December 8, 2025

Re: **Youth Membership Seat on Environmental Policy Council**

To: Mayor Gaskins, Vice Mayor Bagel, and City Councilmembers

CC: Melissa Atwood

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor, and City Council,

The Environmental Policy Commission is seeking a code change from Council to add a youth seat to the membership. We ask that this seat be a non-quorum, non-voting member of the EPC.

Since the launch of the Mayor's Youth Forum, the EPC has had the pleasure of welcoming two ACHS student guests at our monthly meetings. They consistently show up, provide updates on their efforts to drive sustainability, and ask passionately for a more formal way to engage.

Climate change is a particularly important issue to today's youth – they are disproportionately vulnerable to climate impacts and will live with the consequences longer, creating a powerful self-interest in demanding urgent action. The EPC is keen to formally have a youth voice on the Commission.

Chapter 4, Article M of the City Code establishes the following EPC composition:

(b) The commission shall consist of 13 members to be appointed by the city council. The composition of the commission shall be as follows: (1) one member with experience in federal or state environmental statutes, regulations and procedures (preferably an attorney); (2) one member from the field of urban planning; (3) five members from the field of environmental sciences (e.g., environmental/sanitary engineering, ecology, geology, botany, hydrology, chemistry); (4) one member from the Alexandria business community; and (5) five citizen-at-large members.

We propose a 14th member be added for youth representation:

(6) one non-voting non-quorum youth member, who shall be a resident of the city between the ages of 16 and 25, possessing an interest in or knowledge of climate action and environmental policy issues.

We understand there is precedent of this type of Youth seat on other Commissions in Alexandria, and respectfully ask for a code change that adds a Youth seat to the EPC.

Please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Thank you,

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

Marta Schantz, Chair
Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission