DRAFT 2025 General Assembly Legislative Package

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Key Priorities

1. **Automated Traffic Enforcement** – The City of Alexandria supports legislation expanding local authority to implement automated traffic safety enforcement tools in targeted, data-driven locations, including speed cameras, red light cameras, and noise cameras.

2. **Annual Animal Care Provider Inspections** – The City of Alexandria supports legislation which grants localities the authority to conduct annual inspections of animal boarding establishments to ensure that the care, control, or protection of companion animals in these facilities is consistent with law.

3. **Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA)** – The City of Alexandria supports policies and investments that ensure the WMATA system is safe, reliable, and financially sound; and that addressing the future of WMATA funding is done without increasing the funding obligation of Northern Virginia localities.

4. **Skill Games** – The City of Alexandria supports efforts to ensure that any legislation to legalize skill games provides localities the authority to decide their appropriateness for their communities, either through the action of the local governing body or by voter referendum. Such legislation must also establish a comprehensive regulatory framework that safeguards local zoning authority, ensures consumer protections, enforces strict oversight, and grants fair local taxation authority.

5. **Affordable Housing** – The City of Alexandria supports legislation to preserve affordable housing by establishing a right of first refusal for localities during the sale of publicly supported multifamily housing that is at risk of expiring affordability.

6. **School Construction Funding** – The City of Alexandria supports legislation to afford all Virginia localities the authority to, by referendum, levy an additional 1% sales tax in their communities to generate revenue earmarked for school construction and renovation.

7. **Shared Employees** –The City of Alexandria supports a comprehensive study and actionable policy and funding recommendations on the adequate funding of “shared employees,” which better reflects the true cost of compensation for employees supported - either statutorily or practically - through a combination of State and local funds, including employees in our Health Department, General Registrar’s Office, Court Services Unit, Clerk of Circuit Court Office, Commonwealth's Attorney's Office, Sheriff's Department, and public schools.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

8. **Douglass Cemetery Restoration** – The City of Alexandria requests State matching funds to complete the restoration of Alexandria's historic Douglass Cemetery.

LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

RECOGNIZE AND STRENGTHEN STATE PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCALITIES

The City supports **statewide programs and funding to address the need for additional affordable housing in our community and to preserve currently affordable housing stock, including an increase in funding for the Virginia Housing Trust Fund (VHTF),** one of the Commonwealth's most important tools to assist local and regional efforts in crafting housing affordability solutions.

PRESERVE AND EXPAND LOCAL AUTHORITY AND FUNDING FOR LOCALITIES

The City supports legislation and budget items that **protect and expand the stock of affordable housing** in the region and across the Commonwealth **and include new developments of assisted living facilities** in the Virginia Affordable Housing Code.

The City supports additional **local tools and authority that facilitate a housing economy** in Alexandria, and across Virginia, **that helps provide the necessary range of price points, safe and sustainable housing options**, and the associated services to meet the needs of a thriving city, and a thriving Commonwealth.

The City supports legislation to provide localities with the authority to **enforce the provisions of the Virginia Residential Landlord and Tenant Act** related to health and safety of tenants; and authority related to **rent stabilization and tenant protections from algorithmic and collusive practices and price-gouging**.

The City Supports **a budget amendment to repeal Item 3-5.05** in the Appropriations Act which requires **excess fees collected by circuit court clerks to be apportioned** two-thirds to the Commonwealth and one-third to localities in contravention of current sections of the Code.

The City supports legislation to provide localities with the express authority to **regulate the use of gas-powered leaf blowers** and to create **incentive programs to encourage the adoption of energy efficient technologies, machinery, and appliances**.

The City supports efforts to **protect existing multimodal transportation funding** and to ensure that transportation projects in Northern Virginia continue to receive appropriate funding after decades of underfunding by the state.

The City supports efforts to **modernize the local tax structure**. Short of comprehensive tax reform, the City is supportive of opportunities for additional local

revenue authority to increase funding for critical local needs, including transit, transportation, school construction and renovation, and other significant capital needs.

PROTECT AND SUPPORT VULNERABLE AND UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

The City supports legislation and budget items that **prevent evictions and protect individuals and families who are precariously housed and facing housing challenges**, including legislation to: reinstate the 14-day pay or quit notice; require full fee disclosure and transparency and require any fee increases to coincide with the term of a lease; establish a minimum amount owed for an eviction filing, and establish a right to counsel for eviction proceedings.

ENHANCE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT, HEALTH, AND SAFETY

The City supports **increased State funding for gun violence intervention programs**, including the Virginia Firearm Violence Intervention and Prevention Fund and the Operation Ceasefire Grant Program.

The City supports legislation that **makes it easier for law enforcement agencies to recruit, hire, and retain officers**, including recruiting and hiring non-citizens who have been in the country for five years and are on the path to citizenship.

The City supports efforts to **reform our campaign finance system**, including efforts to enhance disclosure, restrict personal use of campaign funds, limit campaign contributions, and enforce regular auditing.

IMPROVE RESILIENCE, PROMOTE ENERGY EFFICIENCY, AND ENCOURAGE CLEAN ENERGY INVESTMENT

The City supports efforts to **ensure Virginia's participation in the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative**, protect the Virginia Clean Economy Act (VCEA), and other legislation which has made advances in the areas of combatting climate change, promoting energy efficiency and encouraging clean energy investment.

The City supports efforts to ensure that **current funding sources for flood resilience and energy efficiency projects are, at minimum, maintained and any funding that is removed is replaced**, dollar for dollar, by a dedicated funding source.

LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES

The City supports **State investment in clean energy and energy efficiency**, including funding for a State E-Bike rebate program and funding for the existing state electric vehicle rebate program to complement the federal rebate program.

RECOGNIZE AND STRENGTHEN STATE PARTNERSHIP WITH LOCALITIES

The City supports…

- the preservation of existing state aid to localities.
- the full funding of all state funding commitments to localities and opposes efforts to shift the costs of shared services to localities.
- legislation and funding that fully fund K-12 education and acknowledge the true cost of K-12 education funding.
- efforts to ensure that our schools are safe and in good condition, free of environmental health and other hazards.
- legislation and appropriations that fund or remove unfunded mandates from our local government, provide additional revenue or revenue authority to support core municipal operations and services, and support the City's facility needs and plans.
- the Commonwealth's partnership in efforts to attract and retain small and local businesses throughout our City and to cultivate economic development opportunities in our community.
- partnerships with the state that support and fund compensation, healthcare, and mental health care for the childcare workforce.

PRESERVE AND EXPAND LOCAL AUTHORITY AND FUNDING FOR LOCALITIES

The City supports…

- additional local tools for affordable housing that safeguard local authority to plan, zone, and enforce land use regulations, without restricting local zoning authority or the zoning process.
- legislation to protect and expand accessibility Transit Ridership Incentive Program (TRIP) funding in support of low- and no-fare public transit programs.

ENHANCE PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT, HEALTH, AND SAFETY

LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES

The City Supports…

- efforts to mitigate inland flooding and funding opportunities to improve and modernize infrastructure to adequately address inland flooding.
- State funded quality school lunches to be offered at no cost to students.
- legislative protections for diversity, equity, and inclusion programs in universities, governments, businesses, and non-profits.
- efforts to achieve equity in our health system, expand access to reproductive health services and information.
- efforts to simplify access to contraception and eliminate cost barriers.
- legislation that promotes the mental and physical well-being of every resident in our community, provides a system of support for residents with behavioral health needs, and comprehensive crisis mental health care specifically for youth/adolescents.
- efforts in the General Assembly to identify and maintain adequate resources to respond to the emergent needs of residents experiencing a mental health emergency, including increasing the number of psychiatric beds available in the Commonwealth.
- efforts to separate access to behavioral health services, care, and support from the criminal justice system.
- legislation and budget items necessary to ensure all residents have access to resources shown to prevent early death and disability and promote resilience.
- a Constitutional amendment to automatically restore the voting rights of people convicted of felonies when they return to society, and legislation and funding to ensure access to voting for all Virginia citizens.
- legislation to ensure immigrants, refugees, and their families can fully participate in the economic, civic, social, and cultural life of our city and our Commonwealth.
- legislation to protect vulnerable road users, including bicyclists and pedestrians, and help us achieve our Vision Zero goals.
- legislation and budget priorities that ensure Alexandria has safe, reliable and frequent mobility choices regardless of resources or ability and provide a wide variety of safe, connected, multimodal transportation options in our city that enable access to daily activities in our community and our region.

LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES

- common sense gun safety legislation, especially efforts that focus on youth access to firearms.
- efforts to ensure that marijuana legalization efforts include protections for children and youth.
- legislation to enhance building safety in the Commonwealth, particularly in high-rise buildings.
- efforts to make membership on public bodies more accessible to residents.
- legislation to enhance the ability to enforce local human rights ordinances.

PROTECT AND SUPPORT VULNERABLE AND UNDERSERVED POPULATIONS

The City Supports…

- a Constitutional amendment that provides every individual the fundamental right to reproductive freedom that cannot be denied, burdened, or otherwise infringed upon by the Commonwealth.
- legislation and funding that supports quality care and helps City staff protect the most vulnerable members of our community, including children, older adults, survivors of domestic and sexual violence, individuals in behavioral health crisis, and those of differing abilities.
- efforts to protect and support transgender and non-binary students in our schools and reinforce school boards in their efforts to allow LGBTQ+ students freedom of expression and ensure their safety.
- a Constitutional amendment that protects marriage equality and repeals the ban on same-sex marriage.
- efforts to increase access to and affordability of high-quality early childhood education and childcare, invest in Pre-K programs, encourage flexibility and creativity in the delivery of Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI) programs in our community, and ensure VPI policies and systems promote, rather than limit, parental choice.
- efforts to encourage and incentivize family-friendly workplace policies in businesses throughout the Commonwealth, including the need for paid family leave for all workers.
- efforts to protect vulnerable residents who may be precariously housed or living in affordable or subsidized housing in our community.

LEGISLATIVE PRINCIPLES

- increased state funding for core Area on Aging Services in response to the growing older adult population.
- efforts to invest in maternal and child health, especially in addressing BIPOC maternal health disparities and disproportionate pregnancy outcomes, and in expanding and diversifying the perinatal workforce.
- legislation to enact a state prevailing wage and protect workers from wage theft.
- Increasing the monthly SNAP benefit to $50 for all recipients.
- legislation that reforms our criminal justice system, so it operates fairly and equitably for all members of our community.
- legislation that assists in the deployment of universal, affordable access to broadband technology, in both unserved and underserved areas, and efforts to ensure a fair and open Internet.

IMPROVE RESILIENCE, PROMOTE ENERGY EFFICIENCY, AND ENCOURAGE CLEAN ENERGY INVESTMENT

The City Supports…

- legislation and the funding necessary to plan for and mitigate urban and inland flooding that is often the result of climate-triggered historic rain events.
- legislation that assists in our efforts to expand our tree canopy, attain clean air and clean waterways, and increase recycling in the Commonwealth.
- efforts at the General Assembly to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the Commonwealth 50% by 2030, including efforts to decarbonize the statewide electricity supply, give communities choice over their electricity supply, and other policy strategies included in the City's Environmental Action Plan 2040.