



# *Alexandria Waterfront Commission*

*Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities*

*1108 Jefferson Street*

*Alexandria, Virginia 22314*

April 14, 2026 DRAFT

**To:** Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council

**Subject:** Future Role and Composition of the Waterfront Commission

In our [January 28 letter](#) to you, we indicated that the Waterfront Commission is undertaking a substantive review and evaluation of its functions and potential future value to the City's government and residents. This review has confirmed our belief that the Commission can play a key role in the advising the City on its ongoing management and continued enhancement of the waterfront, which is a crown jewel of Alexandria enjoyed by both residents and visitors, for many years to come. Therefore, we ask that the City Council not sunset the Commission in 2029 or 2030, as recommended by the Subcommittee on Boards and Commissions.

**Future Areas of Focus for the Commission.** Among the many issues for which the Commission can provide advice in the future are –

- How to improve accessibility to the waterfront by residents and visitors from the water, including expanding access for small watercraft (kayaks, canoes, paddleboards);
- Provisions that should be included in the RFP for and future licenses of commercial vessels at the City marina;
- Improvements at the City marina for private slip holders;
- Maintenance of and improvements to the parks along the waterfront, including the broader instillation of public artwork;
- Actions that would lessen potential disruptions associated with the implementation of the waterfront flood mitigation project;
- In collaboration with the National Park Service, identify improvements that can be made to Jones Point Park (including the historic lighthouse), and the NPS-managed land on Dangerfield Island;
- Improvements that should be made to privately-owned and managed waterfront property, such as the Tide Lock Park at Canal Center; and
- Recommendations related to the Robinson Terminal North and Potomac River Generating Site developments.

Sec. 2-4-54 of the City Code sets forth the Commission's current functions as following:

*The functions of the commission shall be to advise city council, the city manager, and appropriate city departments on matters pertaining to:*

- *The use of the Alexandria Waterfront by commercial and private vessels; and*
- *Implementation of the Waterfront Small Area Plan.*

As discussed above, we believe that our Commission can also provide useful input to City management on the continued enhancement of the City’s waterfront and request that the City Council add a third function of the Commission that reflects this role.

- *The city’s stewardship, enhancement, and management of the Alexandria Waterfront.*

We believe it would also be useful to add to the Code the following paragraph, which provides useful context:

*Acting from a broad perspective, the Commission shall consider varied public interests in the development of a forward-looking vision for the Waterfront. As one of the city’s most valued public assets, the Waterfront serves as a shared amenity for all city residents and a draw for visitors, and thus a vital economic driver. By advising on accessibility to the waterfront by watercraft, public artwork and other park enhancements, recreation and events that attract residents and visitors, the Commission helps the city ensure the Waterfront remains a resilient, well managed, and accessible destination that reflects Alexandria’s unique character and serves the collective interests of the entire community.*

**Commission Membership.** We have also reviewed the membership of the Commission, which is currently comprised of representatives of various other City boards and commissions, representatives of other City organizations, and citizens of various parts of the City. We believe that the diverse perspectives the Commission members bring to consideration of the various issues pertaining to the waterfront help strengthen the recommendations we provide City management. At this time, we recommend that the City Council amend the composition of the Commission, as set forth in Sec. 2-4-52 of the City Code, as follows, with the remaining seats remaining as is:

<b>Current</b>	<b>Proposed</b>
Representative from the Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association	Representative of Visit Alexandria
Representative of Old Town Business Association [OTBA ceased operations in 2024]	Representative of a retail store, restaurant, or commercial building east of Washington Street
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ One citizen who resides east of Washington Street and north of King Street</li> <li>▪ One citizen who resides east of Washington Street and north of Pendleton Street</li> </ul>	Two citizens who reside east of Washington Street and north of King Street
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ One citizen who resides east of Washington Street and south of King Street</li> <li>▪ One citizen from Park Planning District I</li> </ul>	Two citizens who reside east of Washington Street and south of King Street
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ One citizen from Park Planning District II</li> <li>▪ One citizen from Park Planning District III</li> <li>▪ One at-large citizen member</li> </ul>	Three citizens who reside west of Washington Street

As we consider the range of background and skills needed to address various issues, we may propose additional changes to the composition of the Commission in the future.

If any member of Council would like to discuss their perspectives on the Waterfront Commission's future role and focus, please let me know. We greatly appreciate your consideration of our requests.

Sincerely,

Louise L. Roseman  
Chair

- c: Waterfront Commission Members  
Jim F. Parajon, City Manager  
Emily Baker, Deputy City Manager  
Alethea Predeoux, Deputy City Manager  
Cheran Ivery, City Attorney  
Benjamin Naidorf, Assistant City Attorney  
Gloria Sitton, City Clerk  
Jack Browand, Staff Liaison, Waterfront Commission