



Message from the City Manager

Vola Lawson, City Manager

I am pleased to present my *1995 Annual Report* to the Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council and to the citizens of Alexandria. This report highlights the major accomplishments of City government during Fiscal Year 1995, and explores a series of issues that are expected to occupy the attention of City Council and City staff during the coming year. A central issue relates to current proposals to reduce federal and State grant funds to local governments and their impact is discussed in the Revenue Outlook section, which begins on the next page.

During the past year, the City has maintained quality public services for a growing population despite no significant growth in our single largest revenue source - the real estate tax base. Strong fiscal management remains a hallmark of Alexandria's City government, and has enabled the City to respond to priority needs, including public safety, public education, and modernization of heavily used recreation and library facilities. Alexandria is among an elite group of only 14 cities in America to hold triple-A bond ratings from both of Wall Street's major credit rating agencies.

During the past year, the City has made significant progress in a number of areas:

- Serious crime in the City fell to a 25-year low during 1994, and continued to decline during the first six months of 1995. Led by Police Chief Samarra, our Police Officers have done an outstanding job. City Council's approval of added funding for the Police Department made it possible to assign 21 additional Police Officers to street duty beginning this summer.
- Alexandria's Community Policing and Domestic Violence Intervention programs were selected as national models by Attorney General Janet Reno. Innovative programs such as the Residential Police Officer Program, the Community Police Officer Program, and the Bicycle Patrol, have been instrumental in the success of our crime prevention efforts.
- Working with the U.S. Army, the City is preparing for the closing of Cameron Station in late September and conversion of the 165-acre military base to private development and public use, including 63 acres for park and recreation uses.
- As recommended by City Council's Ad Hoc Task Force on Information and Communication Technology, the City opened an E-mail address on CapAccess (CityMail@alexandriava.gov) and is working to establish a [City presence on the Internet](#).

- In September, City Council and the Library Board reopened the downtown Barrett Library on Queen Street. The \$3.7 million modernization project includes a two-story addition that expands the library's capacity by 50% to 150,000 volumes and adds state-of-the-art computer connections to the Internet. City Council also authorized nearly \$11 million for a new Central Library that will open in 1999.

These and other accomplishments discussed in this Annual Report are the product of the vision, hard work, and dedicated efforts by our Mayor and Members of City Council and our City employees, who take enormous pride in serving our citizens and in working to see that Alexandria continues to be one of America's most livable cities.

Sincerely

/s/ Vola Lawson

City Manager Vola Lawson was selected as the outstanding public administrator in Virginia in 1988 by the Virginia Chapters of the American Society for Public Administration. In 1993, she was inducted into the Virginia Women's Hall of Fame. The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) presented its national Program Excellence Award to Mrs. Lawson and to the City in 1989 for the City's Community Shelter/Substance Abuse Services Center and again in 1993 for the City's innovative Community Policing Program.

Mrs. Lawson serves as President of the Alexandria Transit Company, which operates the City's DASH bus system. She also serves on the Alexandria Economic Development and Tourism Board, the Board of Directors of the Alexandria Bar Foundation, and the National Council of the American Society for Public Administration. Mrs. Lawson has received numerous community leadership awards, including the Alexandria Chamber of Commerce's George Washington Leadership Award, the Distinguished Service Award from the Alexandria Olympic Boys and Girls Club, the Elizabeth Ann Campagna Award from the Campagna Center, the Urban League's Northern Virginia Community Service Award, and the Alexandria Commission on Women Award for Outstanding Achievement in Housing.