

From the City Manager



City Manager Vola Lawson

I am pleased to present my 1998 Annual Report to the Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council and to the citizens of Alexandria. This Annual Report highlights the major accomplishments of City government during the fiscal year ending June 30, 1998, and discusses some of the major challenges – the budget outlook and growth, development and transportation – facing the City in the years ahead.

As we enter 1999, the 250th anniversary of Alexandria's founding, this Annual Report also contains a special feature, an illustrated "[Timeline of Alexandria's History](#)," just one of many projects being undertaken in the coming year to mark this important milestone in the City's history.

During FY 1998, the City made progress in a number of important areas:

- The City and its economic development partners – the Economic Development Partnership, Inc., the Alexandria Small Business Development Center, the Alexandria Convention and Visitors Association, Inc., the Potomac West Alliance, and the Eisenhower Avenue Partnership – made significant progress attracting new businesses, helping start-up companies and those already located here to grow, and promoting the City as a good place to do business.
- In the spring, City Council and the Library Board broke ground for the new Charles E. Beatley Central Library on Duke Street, named for former Mayor Beatley. This new state-of-the-art library is scheduled to open in November 1999.
- City Council appropriated \$12.3 million to build a new elementary school at the west end of Cameron Station and approved plans for the development of the 50-acre Ben Brenman Park at Cameron Station's east end, named for the long-time civic activist and West End advocate who died recently.
- Serious crime fell to a 28-year low in 1997, thanks to strong citizen and business support for the Police Department's on-going crime prevention efforts. Our Police Department expanded its community policing program by sending two Police Officers back to school as School Resource Officers at George Washington Middle School and at Francis C. Hammond Middle School. With increased public attention recently on violence in the nation's schools, our Police Department's new SRO program received national media attention as a way to prevent violence.

These accomplishments and many others discussed in this report reflect the vision and commitment of our Mayor and City Council, the participation of our citizens, especially those who serve on City boards and commissions, and the hard work of our employees, who take great pride in serving the citizens of Alexandria.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Vola Lawson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

City Manager Vola Lawson

City Manager Vola Lawson was honored by the American Society for Public Administration (ASPA) with its 1997 National Award for Innovative Leadership and Accomplished Professionalism. The Virginia Chapters of ASPA previously named Mrs. Lawson the outstanding public administrator in Virginia. The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) presented National Program Excellence Awards to Mrs. Lawson and to the City for the City's Community Shelter/Substance Abuse Services Center and for the City's Innovative Community Policing Program. In 1993, Mrs. Lawson was inducted into the Virginia Women's Hall of Fame.

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 and the Board of the Alexandria Bar Foundation.

In 1998, Mrs. Lawson was chosen by the Virginia General Assembly to serve on the Commission on the Condition and Future of Virginia's Cities.

Mrs. Lawson has received numerous community 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, the Alexandria Commission on Women Award for Outstanding Achievement in Housing and the Alexandria-Washington Masonic Lodge's Community Builders Award.



Members of the Alexandria City Employees Choir, including (left to right) Darryl Edwards, Mark Campbell, Rosa Higgs, Sarita Garrett, Loretta Green and Tracie Forte, presented a musical tribute to the Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr., as part of the City's January 1998 commemoration of Dr. King's birthday.