

Dear Mayor Silberberg and Members of Council,

The Alexandria Archaeological Commission would like to comment on the City's draft Strategic Plan for 2017 -- 2022, which scheduled to be raised at the Council meeting of January 24, 2017. Because the latest draft was only posted to the website on the 17th, we did not have an opportunity to review it earlier. While the draft offers a far reaching vision for Alexandria, we find that the important role of historical and archaeological resources (from our museums to our evolving waterfront) is largely absent as a major contributing cultural element and economic driver in the plan. It also omits reference to The Waterfront History Plan among the existing City plans and policies. I am forwarding an annotated copy for your consideration, with some specific, modest and minimal suggestions to enhance the plan to include a few vital points:

1) Previous city strategic plans have treated historic preservation as a cornerstone in our goals and objectives for diverse and vibrant neighborhoods, to include the City's the archaeological code requirements. Our neighborhood identities are deeply rooted in special local and national history. We urge that such references be preserved and have noted places where it can be inserted again.

2) Alexandria's tourism is driven in a large part by our historical resources, and this will be increasingly true as we craft our waterfront in the coming years. Creating and implementing historical interpretation, based on the Waterfront History Plan you have already approved, is a core aspect of any major city strategic plan over the next several years -- as it will be major contributing factor to any economically sustainable waterfront as a source of visitor traffic and revenue. Furthermore, the discoveries along the waterfront, such as the ship and warehouse will be joined by a series of yet uncovered artifacts, all of which must be included in urgent practical planning for display as part of that interpretation of our maritime heritage. For these reasons, we ask that the Waterfront History Plan be included on the list of existing plans and policies, and that specific reference be made to waterfront interpretive planning and implementation.

3) OHA and Archaeology rely on grants for major, and growing, portions of their budget, and it is important that any strategic plan and planning documents include provision for history and archaeology as granting-making institutions require such specific documentation. The recent grants for the Reeder House and the ship conservation are excellent examples. For these reasons, we suggest the inclusion of references to historical resources, educational outreach, and life-long learning and have noted various places and appropriate language.

4) Our existing historic fabric and resources across the city, such as our museums and archaeological sites, require maintenance and enhancement, not to mention the fabric the city has recently acquired, such as the Reeder House. The plan overlooks provisions for studying, evaluating and preserving this fabric, which is central to our cultural identity and education. We have suggested some language for insertion.

Thank you for your support and interest.

Elizabeth C. McCall

Chair, Alexandria Archaeological Commission

Distinctive and Vibrant Neighborhoods Unique Identity (order has changed)

In 2022, Alexandria marks its history while respecting and honoring its values its history, honors its diverse communities, and respects its distinct, vibrant and walkable neighborhoods. The City has a small-town feel and is committed to sustaining a high quality of life in its urban, suburban and commercial areas. Alexandria is committed to historic and archaeological preservation and interpretation. Alexandria has complementary and varied architecture, and a beautifully built environment, and numerous museums interpreting its history. The City ensures that new development and infill are compatible with the character of Alexandria's neighborhoods, natural environment, and historic resources and archaeological sites.

Key Indicators to Achieve by 2022:

- ☑ Maintain the percentage percent of residents satisfied with the city's historic preservation at or above 2016's 83%.
- ☑ Maintain the percentage percent of residents with a positive view of the overall quality of new development in Alexandria at or above 2016's 64%.
- ☑ Maintain the percentage of residents with a positive view of their neighborhood as a place to live at or above 2016's 83%.
- ☑ Percent satisfied with cultural/arts/music activities (moved to flourishing arts, culture, and recreation)

Action Items (through FY 2018):

- ☑ Construct Interim Fitzgerald Square
- ☑ Design the Waterfront Flood Mitigation with early utility construction
- ☑ Award a design build contract for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Project
- ☑ Digitize historic documents that illustrate changes to City's urban landscape
- ☑ Commemorate and interpret Alexandria's role in WWI
- ☑ Continue preservation of the historic ship and other artifacts from Alexandria's waterfront
- ☑ Begin planning for the historic interpretation of our unique maritime heritage along the waterfront, including the exhibition of the ship, warehouse, and other artifacts.
- ☑ Complete Old Town North Small Area Plan
- ☑ Conduct update of North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan
- ☑ Begin Mt. Vernon Avenue planning study
- ☑ Provide support for the formation of a Business Improvement District in Old Town

Supporting City Plans, Documents and Policies:

- ☑ ~~Aging~~ Aging Master Plan
- ☑ Alexandria Citywide Arts and Culture Plan
- ☑ Alexandria Library Five-Year Plan
- ☑ Alexandria Master Plan (land use master plan, includes all small area plans)
- ☑ Alexandria Park Plan
- ☑ Chesapeake Bay Total Maximum Daily Load Action Plan
- ☑ Dog Parks Master Plan
- ☑ Energy and Climate Change Action Plan
- ☑ Environmental Action Plan 2030 (including Eco-City Alexandria)
- ☑ Fort Ward Management Plan
- ☑ Housing Master Plan

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[Open Space Plan](#)

Supporting City Plans, Documents and Policies (continued):

[Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Plan](#)

[Public Art Implementation Plan and Policy](#)

[Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities Needs Assessment](#)

[Urban Forestry Master Plan](#)

[Waterfront History Plan](#)

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Inclusive City (order has changed)

In 2022, Alexandria is a caring, kind, compassionate, fair, just and equitable city that supports an affordable and livable community for all. As an inclusive city, there is no place for intolerance in the community. Further, the City is committed to and values our diversity. Alexandria provides high-quality social services to eligible residents to reduce poverty and increase self-sufficiency. The city is welcoming to people in all stages of life and is known as an age-friendly community. The city has closed the broadband gap by providing ensuring quality access to all residents.

Key Indicators to Achieve by 2022:

- Reduce the percentage of income spent on housing costs for households making \$100,000 or less low- and moderate-income households considered to be housing cost burdened from 2015's 67%.
- Increase the percentage of residents who do not perceive barriers to living in Alexandria based on age, gender, race, national origin, religion, disability, or sexual orientation from 2016's 80%.
- Reduce the percentage of residents living in poverty rate from 2014's 9.6%.
- Maintain the unemployment rate below the regional, state and federal unemployment rates.
- Reduce homelessness from 224 persons in 2016 to 173.

Action Items (through FY 2018):

- Support non-profits and ARHA to provide committed affordable housing
- Provide housing relocation support to Beauregard residents impacted by redevelopment
- Develop tools and strategies to create and maintain deeply subsidized committed affordable units
- Conduct Fair Housing Testing and Training
- Secure committed affordable housing through the development process
- Launch an equity and implicit bias initiative
- Create Title VI plan (to prevent discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin) for the City
- Create a comprehensive one stop workforce development shop
- Implement strategies to execute federal, state, and local goals toward functionally ending chronic homelessness by the end of 2017
- Identify and support homeless youth and transitional age youth (18-24) in Alexandria by implementing best practices developed by The Department of Housing and Urban Development and partnering with The Alexandria City Public Schools and Health Department

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[Recognize and celebrate the City's diversity through expanded outreach and programming.](#)

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- Add language courses for English Language Learners at the Barrett and Duncan Library branches
- Conduct Route 1 South Planning Study

Supporting City Plans, Documents and Policies:

- Aging Master Plan I
- Alexandria City Public Schools Strategic Plan
- Alexandria Library Five-Year Plan

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Supporting City Plans, Documents and Policies (continued):

- Alexandria Master Plan (land use master plan, includes all small area plans)
- Children and Youth Master Plan
- City Council's Statement on Inclusiveness
- Early Care and Education Common Agenda
- Housing Master Plan
- Long Range Education Facilities Plan
- Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness

Well-Managed Government (order has changed)

In 2022, Alexandria's government provides ethical, effective and efficient services that are responsive to the community and focused on improving quality of life. Major policy decisions are considered by City Council and are reflective of community engagement. City government is accountable, transparent, and backed by quality and responsive staff. Public facilities are maintained in a state of good repair so they can effectively support municipal operations and services.

Key Indicators to Achieve by 2022:

- Bond rating Maintain that City government receives the highest bond ratings of AAA/Aaa by two rating agencies.
- Increase the percentage of residents who approve of the overall quality of City government services from 2016's 77%.
- Increase the percentage of residents who approve of the overall customer service provided by City government employees from 2016's 69%.
- Increase percentage of residents who approve of the value of services received for taxes paid in Alexandria from 2016's 52%.
- Increase the percentage of City-owned building square footage that is rated in Grade C/Average or better according to the Facility Condition Index (FCI) rating from 2016's 56%.
- Overall employee satisfaction

Action Items (through FY 2018):

- Expand the customer account and payment portal
- Seek financing opportunities for complex public infrastructure projects (e.g. PY Metro Station, Storm water Infrastructure)
- Successfully update the five-year financial planning model for FY 2018-2022
- Develop a City mobile application
- Establish a single point of contact for all non-emergency government services (such as a 311 number)

[Establish a new cable franchise agreement through an open process](#)

[Implement Stormwater Utility](#)

[Begin implementation of the Sanitary Sewer Long Term Control Plan](#)

[Begin study of conditions and special maintenance requirements of City-owned museums and historic structures, including the newly acquired Reeder House.](#)

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Supporting City Plans, Documents and Policies:

[Alexandria Library Five-Year Plan](#)

[Alexandria Master Plan \(land use master plan, includes all small area plans\)](#)

[Alexandria Park Plan](#)

[Combined Sewer System Long Term Control Plan](#)

[Sanitary Sewer Master Plan](#)

[Solid Waste Management Plan](#)

[What's Next Alexandria Civic Engagement Policy](#)

Flourishing Arts, Culture and Recreation

In 2022, Alexandria has a network of accessible parks and public open spaces that define neighborhoods and provide connections to local and regional open space systems and trails. Alexandria's parks will be a combination of active and passive open spaces and are intended to integrate historical interpretive elements and public art. The design of these spaces will create and enhance active public gathering places for neighborhood performances, concerts, and cultural activities. [Museums offer exhibitions, programming and events that enrich the community by providing insight into the city's past.](#) Arts, culture and recreation activities are available and accessible to residents of all ages and to those with disabilities.

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Key Indicators to Achieve by 2022:

[Maintain the percentage of residents satisfied with opportunities to attend arts, culture, and music activities at or above 2016's 74%. \(moved from the theme formerly entitled "Unique Identity"\)](#)

[Maintain the 2015 rate of 7.3 acres of open space per 1,000 residents.](#)

[Increase the percentage of Alexandria households participating in recreation programs from 2016's 52%.](#)

Action Items (through FY 2018):

[Update the Open Space Master Plan with new policies and goals](#)

[Construct Interim Fitzgerald Square](#)

[Evaluate alternative uses for Cameron Run Regional Park](#)

[Construct Hensley Park renovation](#)

[Implement playground improvements at Simpson Park](#)

[Commemorate and interpret Alexandria's role in WWI](#)

[Increase community programming at the City Libraries](#)

[Continue preservation of the historic ship and other artifacts from Alexandria's waterfront](#)

[Begin planning for the historic interpretation of our unique maritime heritage along the waterfront, including the exhibition of the ship, warehouse, and other artifacts.](#)

Supporting City Plans, Documents and Policies:

[Aging Master Plan](#)

[Alexandria Citywide Arts and Culture Plan](#)

- [Alexandria Master Plan \(land use master plan, includes all small area plans\)](#)
- [Athletic Field Master Plan](#)
- [Chinquapin Park Recreation Center and Aquatics Facility Feasibility Study](#)
- [Environmental Action Plan 2030 \(including Eco-City Alexandria\)](#)
- [Fort Ward Management Plan](#)
- [Four Mile Run Restoration Project](#)
- [12](#)
- [Natural Resources Management Plan](#)
- [Open Space Plan](#)
- [Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Plan](#)
- [Public Art Implementation Plan and Policy](#)
- [Waterfront History Plan](#)

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Strong Economy Economically Vibrant (order changed)

In 2022, Alexandria is a business destination and center of innovation. Alexandria's business community is diverse, inclusive and robust. Mixed-use development is oriented around transit hubs and activity centers. Small businesses are supported and flourish, and the historic district and museums attracts visitors that contribute to the tax base.

Key Indicators to Achieve by 2022:

- [Local GDP Increase the local gross domestic product from \\$11.1 billion in 2015 to \\$12.3 billion.](#)
- [Reduce the office vacancy rate from 15.6% in 2015 to 12.4%.](#)
- [Increase the number of jobs in Alexandria from 106,238 in 2015 to 113,850.](#)
- [Increase the participation in museum visitation, programming and events by 5% per year.](#)

Action Items (through FY 2018):

- [Implement a new land based management and permit system](#)
- [Update North Potomac Yard Small Area Plan](#)
- [Implement small business zoning and permit process improvements](#)
- [Complete Old Town North Small Area Plan](#)
- [Launch new tourism advertising campaign](#)
- [Continue marketing campaign for Season Two of Mercy Street on PBS](#)
- [Conduct cross-marketing campaign leveraging opening of MGM](#)
- [Provide support for the formation of a Business Improvement District in Old Town](#)
- [Implement Economic Sustainability 2.0 Work Group](#)
- [Create initiatives to support growth of the retail sector in Alexandria](#)
- [Conduct office competitiveness study to identify the ideal office tenant for Alexandria](#)
- [Award a design build contract for the Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Project](#)
- [Begin planning for the historic interpretation of our unique maritime heritage along the waterfront, including the exhibition of the ship, warehouse, and other artifacts.](#)
- [Begin study of conditions and special maintenance requirements of City-owned museums and historic structures, including the newly acquired Reeder House.](#)

Supporting City Plans, Documents and Policies:

- [Alexandria Citywide Arts and Culture Plan](#)

- [Alexandria Master Plan \(land use master plan, includes all small area plans\)](#)
- [Combined Sewer System Long Term Control Plan](#)
- [Environmental Action Plan 2030 \(including Eco-City Alexandria\)](#)
- [Green Building Policy](#)
- [Housing Master Plan](#)
- [Potomac Yard Metrorail Station Plan](#)
- [Public Art Implementation Plan and Policy](#)
- [Transportation Management Plan](#)
- [Transportation Master Plan](#)
- [Waterfront History Plan](#)

Thriving Children and Youth Youth and Children Thrive (order changed)

In 2022, Alexandria ensures the basic needs of all children and youth are met. Early childhood education and care, K-12 education, and before-and-after school activities are available, of high quality, and accessible to all children and youth. City government proudly collaborates with and supports Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS).

Key Indicators to Achieve by 2022:

- [Percent of kindergarteners with a pre-school experience Increase the percentage of students who participate in early childhood programs the year prior to entering ACPS kindergarten classrooms from 76% in 2016 to 83%.](#)
- [Reduce the percentage percent of youth who self-report current alcohol use from 2014's 26%.](#)
- [Increase the on-time high school graduation rate from 82% in 2016 to 92%.](#)
- [Increase the percentage percent of youth who self-report engaging in daily physical activity, lasting 60 minutes or more from 13% in 2014 to 16%.](#)
- [Increase the percentage percent of children and youth who report having three or more non-parent adults who provide support from 2016's 42%.](#)
- [Reduce the teen pregnancy rate from 23 per 1,000 in 2014 to 10 per 1,000.](#)
- [Reduce the City's infant mortality rate from 5.1 per 1,000 live births in 2014 to 3.1 per 1,000 live births.](#)

Action Items (through FY 2018):

- [Implement 1,000 Books Before Kindergarten initiative](#)
- [Offer new workshops and collections focused on STREAM subjects \(science, technology, reading, engineering and math\)](#)
- [Develop a response team by June, 2017 to enhance the City response to youth who run-away from home and to victims of human trafficking](#)
- [Partner with Northern Virginia Family Services to double the amount of gang intervention prevention services to children deemed at risk of gang involvement](#)
- [Restore the Teen Wellness Center to full capacity \(2 full time nurse practitioners\)](#)
- [Continue recreation program marketing efforts to enhance programs and enrollment](#)
- [Hire an intake diversion specialist to increase juvenile diversion rates and decrease juvenile crime and recidivism](#)
- [Implement Simpson Park Playground Improvements](#)
- [Maintain collaboration between ACPS and the City's museums to foster educational programming and an understanding of the City's past.](#)

Supporting City Plans, Documents and Policies:

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- [☐ Alexandria City Public Schools Strategic Plan](#)
- [☐ Alexandria Citywide Arts and Culture Plan](#)
- [☐ Alexandria Community Health Improvement Plan](#)
- [☐ Alexandria Health Profile I Report](#)
- [☐ Alexandria Library Five-Year Plan](#)
- [☐ Athletic Field Master Plan](#)
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- [☐ Children and Youth Master Plan](#)

Supporting City Plans, Documents and Policies (continued):

- [☐ Chinguapin Park Recreation Center and Aquatics Facility Feasibility Study](#)
- [☐ Complete Streets](#)
- [☐ Developmental Assets Report](#)
- [☐ Early Care and Education Common Agenda](#)
- [☐ 2015 Recreation Parks and Cultural Activities Needs Assessment](#)
- [☐ Long Range Education Facilities Plan](#)
- [☐ Open Space Plan](#)
- [☐ Public Art Implementation Plan and Policy](#)
- [☐ Strategic Plan to Prevent and End Homelessness](#)
- [☐ Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System Report](#)