

RESOLUTION NO. 2974

All Alexandria: Committing to Race and Social Equity

WHEREAS, Alexandria's history mirrors our country's past and is built upon a foundation of interpersonal and systemic racism; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria acknowledges that the shoreline of the Potomac River where Alexandria is located today has been a lush and resourceful home for centuries to Indigenous Peoples of the Conoy paramount chiefdom and the nearby Powhatan paramount chiefdom, long before the modern community was founded; and

WHEREAS, Indigenous Peoples are the original victims of physical violence and oppression through forced removal and illegal confiscation of their native lands for the purposes of settlement and colonization by European settlers, which laid the foundation for the dehumanization and systemic discrimination of other human beings of color; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria acknowledges its part in the domestic slave trade, and as a place of refuge for thousands escaping the bondage of forced enslavement during the Civil War, and as a home of Jim Crow, where two known lynchings of African American teenagers Joseph McCoy and Benjamin Thomas in 1897 and 1899 respectively occurred, and a City that resisted peaceful efforts by African Americans to open public facilities to *ALL Alexandrians*; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria has continued to evolve into a diverse community of over 145 nationalities and ethnic backgrounds, this legacy of racial oppression and white supremacy resulted in inequitable practices and policies and created systemic marginalization, particularly of People of Color, that still impacts our community. Alexandria's Indigenous, Black, Latino, Asian, multi-racial, multi-ethnic and immigrant communities continue to experience disparate outcomes across all measures of wellbeing; and

WHEREAS, systemic and institutional racism are the conduit by which other forms of oppression, ableism, ageism, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia take root; and

WHEREAS, people who live, work and visit in Alexandria today continue to experience bias, discrimination, and unequal outcomes and/or treatment in every field and sector including but not limited to government, housing, employment, environment, wealth, healthcare, education, transportation, the legal system; and

WHEREAS, today Alexandria recognizes, acknowledges and is atoning for its past actions and policies that excluded, targeted, or oppressed people due to their color, race, national origin, ancestry, gender, gender identity, age, ethnicity, religion, ability, culture, sexual orientation, ethnicity, language; and

WHEREAS, every Alexandrian must reckon with the City's historical past as well as our explicit and implicit involvement and contributions to the institution of American slavery and the subsequent and deeply rooted racial inequities of today; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria must act deliberately, thoughtfully and thoroughly to end racial injustices and structural inequities by frank examination and fair and just inclusion for *ALL Alexandrians*; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria recognizes that meaningful community involvement, input and investment is both desired and necessary to identify, explore, develop and implement policies, measures, and accountability in the pursuit of fair and equitable outcomes for *ALL Alexandria*; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria recognizes a shared community with the Alexandria City Public Schools and the urgent need to align our movements around race and social equity; and

WHEREAS, community-centered, community-driven strategies and solutions can provide valuable and innovative partnerships and create lasting change; and

WHEREAS, through engaging in holistic restorative justice work, *ALL Alexandria* can begin healing from generations of racial trauma; and

WHEREAS, we seek and embrace a multi-racial, anti-racist, intersectional, intergenerational, community where *ALL Alexandrians* truly thrive; and

WHEREAS, the emerging diversity of our community is our strength and is to be uplifted, while our inclusivity must be genuine and codified for the betterment of *ALL Alexandrians*.

WHEREAS, we recognize ourselves as one interconnected, interdependent human family that celebrates and honors the diversity of *ALL Alexandrians*; and

WHEREAS, we invite our entire community to work in collaboration with the City to achieve this vision for *ALL Alexandria*.

**NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL
OF ALEXANDRIA, VIRGINIA THAT:**

- 1) Ensure that race and social equity is incorporated and centered in all planning, including:
 - a. Center race and equity throughout the forthcoming FY 2022-FY 2027 Strategic Plan and departmental strategic planning processes;
 - b. Establish specific, measurable, attainable, relevant time-based (SMART) goals race and social equity action plans for City departments;
 - c. Incorporate race and social equity into all staff and leadership talent management programs;
 - d. Establish, strengthen and maintain key partnerships with the Alexandria City Public Schools, other public entities serving our community, community-based, non-profit, and faith-based organizations, and businesses in Alexandria to advance racial equity;

2) Implement and sustain structures and systems to advance race and social equity, including:

- a. Adopt and promote practices and policies centered on creating and ensuring racial and social equity through the use of a racial equity tool;
- b. Conduct race and social equity trainings for City Council, City staff and City boards and commissions;
- c. Create authentic community engagement best practices for use in evaluating City actions from creation to implementation;
- d. Maintain membership and active participation in the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) and Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (MWCOG) Racial Equity Work Group and newly established Chief Equity Officers Committee;

3) Align and implement policy efforts designed to advance race and social equity goals, including:

- a. Incorporate greatly expanded language access into more City of Alexandria communications and platforms;
- b. Reduce and eliminate racial and social inequities in the allocation of City resources through the use of a budget equity tool which may entail the adjustment of budgets and funding reallocation;
- c. Present City Council with a Racial and Social Equity Action Plan, consisting of specific policy initiatives to advance the City's racial equity goals, informed by additional community engagement;

4) Ensure accountability mechanisms related to the progression and transparency of work to advance race and social equity, including:

- a. Develop equity data mechanisms, including equity indicators, equity mapping, and dashboards to transparently monitor, share, view and inform policy decisions that purposefully work toward reducing and eliminating disparities;
- b. Develop quarterly listen and learn sessions, under the direction of the Race and Social Equity Officer, to establish ongoing conversation with the community to understand their most pressing issues and to normalize the key concepts of race, social equity and government through collective learning opportunities.

Adopted: January 23, 2021


JUSTIN M. WILSON MAYOR

ATTEST:


Gloria A. Sitton, CMC City Clerk