

## WNA Community Poll Results

The ***What's Next Alexandria*** Community Poll, hosted by ACTion Alexandria in partnership with the City of Alexandria, was open from September 20 through October 25, 2012. 1558 community members responded to the poll online; 81 community members submitted printed copies of the poll that were available in community locations. Additional summary and discussion of the results will take place at the November 15 Community Dialogue. All materials will be posted to [alexandriava.gov/whatsnext](http://alexandriava.gov/whatsnext). Please note: Individual responses to the "Other" category for each question have been collected in the document "Poll Written Comments Verbatim" to be posted online at [alexandriava.gov/whatsnext](http://alexandriava.gov/whatsnext).

### 1. What is your connection to Alexandria? [Select all that apply, and/or fill in "other"]

I live here	1515	
I work here	515	
I own a business here	177	
Other	62	
Total		
<i>Individual responses to the "Other" category for each question have been collected in the document "Poll Written Comments Verbatim" that will be posted at <a href="http://www.alexandriava.gov/whatsnext">www.alexandriava.gov/whatsnext</a></i>		

### 2. What is your age range?

Younger than 18	2	0.1%
18-25	28	1.7%
26-35	314	19.1%
36-45	352	21.5%
46-55	358	21.8%
56-65	363	22.1%
66-75	182	11.1%
76 or older	41	2.5%
Total	1640	

### 3. What methods do you use to get information about the City? [Select all that apply]

City of Alexandria Website or eNews alert	1309	22.1%
Comcast Channel 70 – Alexandria's Government Access Channel	147	2.5%
Social media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)	574	9.7%
Newspaper (online or print)	1196	20.2%
Radio or TV news	686	11.6%
Word of mouth, friends, neighbors, etc.	1200	20.3%
Attending meetings (City Council, Boards/Commissions,	652	11.0%
Other	151	2.5%
None	8	0.1%
Total	5923	

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**4. How do you participate in the public decision making process? [Select all that apply]**

Attending City sponsored community meeting(s) on planning	526	11.1%
Attending civic, neighborhood, homeowners or tenants	623	13.1%
Through the local PTA	182	3.8%
Through local nonprofit organization(s)	377	7.9%
Through neighborhood-organized projects or activities	408	8.6%
Providing comments to the City about a proposed public action,	426	9.0%
Serving on an official board, commission, advisory group or	307	6.5%
Serving as an officer or board member for a civic, homeowner or	166	3.5%
Testifying at public hearing(s)	246	5.2%
Voting in elections	1273	26.8%
I do not participate in the public decision making process	154	3.2%
Other	65	1.4%
Total	4753	

**5. Would you increase your participation in the public decision making process if you had different participation options available?**

No, I would not increase my participation	224	13.9%
Yes, I would increase my participation	648	40.1%
I'm not sure	743	46.0%
Total	1615	

**6. The City often holds community meetings to solicit public feedback and create a community dialogue as part of the decision making process. Which of the following community meeting characteristics would make you most likely to attend (by importance)?**

	Important	Somewhat important	Not important	Total	% Important	% Somewhat important	% Not important
Childcare	223	208	1005	1436	15.5%	14.5%	70.0%
Convenient time (of day or evening) and/or day (week or weekend)	1205	262	74	1541	78.2%	17.0%	4.8%
Refreshments	70	215	1156	1441	4.9%	14.9%	80.2%
Translation services	77	89	1260	1426	5.4%	6.2%	88.4%
Transportation available or transit accessible	203	236	994	1433	14.2%	16.5%	69.4%
It is clear how my input will be used	1068	390	69	1527	69.9%	25.5%	4.5%
Ground rules for participation	827	571	99	1497	55.2%	38.1%	6.6%
Ample opportunity for public input	939	492	69	1500	62.6%	32.8%	4.6%
Interactive, hands-on work	429	669	340	1438	29.8%	46.5%	23.6%
Small group discussions	393	659	408	1460	26.9%	45.1%	27.9%

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**7. If you don't typically attend City-held community meetings, tell us why. [Select all that apply]**

The meeting topics are not relevant to me	198	9.7%
I do not have time. I'm too busy with my career, family or other	698	34.4%
I participate in other ways (City website, social media, local civic	292	14.4%
I'm confident my neighbors will represent my interests	75	3.7%
I'm satisfied with how things are going	153	7.5%
I am not aware of any community meetings	359	17.7%
Other	256	12.6%
Total	2031	

**8. What do you think are the most important ways to engage the community in public decision making?**

	Important	Somewhat important	Not important	total	% Important	% Somewhat important	Not important
Provide opportunities to explore issues through dialogue and deliberation, such as in small groups	706	642	162	1510	46.8%	42.5%	10.7%
Provide opportunities for everyone to express their positions to a larger group, such as at City public hearings or on comment boards	816	617	78	1511	54.0%	40.8%	5.2%
Learn from national/local experts and the experiences of other communities facing similar issues	814	589	101	1504	54.1%	39.2%	6.7%
Offer the option of "virtual" participation via the web, both during and after public hearings, seminars, or other events	939	464	118	1521	61.7%	30.5%	7.8%
Use statistically valid surveys to determine what issues are important to the community	875	548	94	1517	57.7%	36.1%	6.2%
Invite the community early on in the planning process to identify the issues and opportunities that are important to them	1265	265	18	1548	81.7%	17.1%	1.2%
Make it easy to monitor a process through communication methods people already use like social media and email so they can participate in the way they choose	1162	328	42	1532	75.8%	21.4%	2.7%

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**9. As the City works to improve the public participation process, please indicate the level of importance you place on each of the following:**

	<b>Important</b>	<b>Somewhat important</b>	<b>Not important</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>% Important</b>	<b>% Somewhat important</b>	<b>Not important</b>
Acknowledge all points of view	1046	442	61	1549	67.5%	28.5%	3.9%
Allow the public to have input on the public engagement approach and planning process	1099	406	30	1535	71.6%	26.4%	2.0%
Establish common elements to all planning processes and plan documents	878	541	91	1510	58.1%	35.8%	6.0%
Engage participants in more “hands-on” activities to actively build plans	540	746	219	1505	35.9%	49.6%	14.6%
Ensure that decision-makers receive the public’s input verbatim and unfiltered	1013	434	93	1540	65.8%	28.2%	6.0%
Keep the community informed about trends shaping the future	1241	289	23	1553	79.9%	18.6%	1.5%
Provide a broad range of options for public participation so anyone can be involved	1144	357	32	1533	74.6%	23.3%	2.1%
Reach out to all segments of the community through community surveys	958	492	79	1529	62.7%	32.2%	5.2%
Make it clear throughout the planning process how community input is shaping plan recommendations	1192	313	31	1536	77.6%	20.4%	2.0%

**10. As we explore what's next for Alexandria, what are the key topics you think we should discuss as a community? [Select the 7 topics most important to you. You may provide additional comments in the space below]**

Affordable housing	687	6.2%
Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) enrollment trends, budget,	949	8.5%
Arts (role in economic development and quality of life)	445	4.0%
Community diversity	372	3.3%
Development and redevelopment	1095	9.8%
Environmental quality	841	7.5%
Finances/budget (tax revenue, costs to provide City services and	948	8.5%
Healthy communities	564	5.1%
High quality architecture and public spaces	522	4.7%
Infrastructure maintenance and construction	864	7.7%

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Neighborhood preservation	604	5.4%
Non-auto travel (transit, biking, walking)	665	6.0%
Open space, trails, recreation	826	7.4%
Traffic management	998	8.9%
Trends impacting the city's future – demographics, retail and	699	6.3%
Other	87	0.8%
Total	11166	