

City of Alexandria 2022 Statement of Legislative Principles

“The City of Alexandria is committed to making our city a historic, inclusive city of kindness with distinct, vibrant and safe neighborhoods, a well-managed, government, flourishing arts, culture and recreation, a strong economy, thriving children and youth, active and secure older adults, environmental sustainability, healthy residents of all ages, and multimodal transportation.”

– City of Alexandria Vision Statement, Adopted Jan. 28, 2017

This vision for our City drives and directs the work of City Council and City staff and is the foundation for the efforts that will make this vision of Alexandria a reality in our community. The work of City staff at the General Assembly each legislative session is key to ensuring that City staff and City Council have the legal framework, authority and funding necessary to achieve this vision for our community.

As we work to **create and maintain distinct and vibrant neighborhoods** throughout Alexandria, the City of Alexandria:

- supports legislation that affords localities the authority necessary to encourage smart, appropriate development in our community, preserve the diverse, mixed-income character of our neighborhoods, and protect the historic fabric of our City.

As we work to **be an inclusive city of kindness**, the City of Alexandria:

- supports legislation that safeguards and expands the protection of the most basic human rights of all residents, workers and visitors in our City and our Commonwealth and opposes legislation that attempts to restrict these same basic rights;
- supports legislation to ensure Alexandria is a livable community for all, with affordable housing, a living wage, and workforce protections available to all Alexandrians;
- supports legislation to ensure immigrants, refugees, and their families can fully participate in the economic, civic, social, and cultural life of our city and our Commonwealth;
- **opposes legislation that would require local law enforcement officials to enforce federal immigration laws unless the federal law requires such enforcement. (Human Rights Commission)**

As we work to **provide a well-managed government** for our residents, businesses and visitors, the City of Alexandria:

- supports legislation and appropriations that fund or remove unfunded mandates from our local government, provide additional revenue or revenue authority in order to support core municipal operations and services, and support the City’s facility needs and plans;
- supports the preservation of existing state aid to localities, requests the full funding of all state funding commitments to localities, and opposes efforts to shift the costs of shared services to localities;
- supports legislation that affords localities flexibility and additional authority in the areas of hiring and procurement, so localities can provide services efficiently and in a fiscally responsible manner while also encouraging hiring local workers and the involvement of local businesses in municipal projects and services;
- supports legislation that enhances the ability of localities to take full advantage of renewable energy sources and remove barriers to the deployment of these renewable energy sources;

- supports efforts to make membership on public bodies more accessible to residents by expanding allowances for electronic participation in meetings of public bodies.

As we work to ***create a safe and resilient city*** for every resident, worker and visitor in Alexandria, the City of Alexandria:

- supports legislation and funding that helps our well-trained, highly respected staff protect the most vulnerable members of our community, including children, youth, older adults, survivors of domestic **and sexual** violence, individuals in behavioral health crisis, and those of differing abilities; **(Commission on Women)**
- supports legislation that reforms our criminal justice system so it operates fairly and equitably for all members of our community;
- **supports legislation to enhance positive police/community relations; (Human Rights Commission)**
- **supports legislation and funding to enhance pre-trial services in communities as part of our responsibility to those being served, and protected, by our criminal justice system; (Mayor Wilson)**
- supports common sense gun safety legislation;
- supports efforts to ensure that prisons and detention facilities are operated as part of the pursuit of justice rather than the pursuit of profit;
- supports legislation that would strengthen local efforts to reduce unsafe cut-through traffic **in our residential neighborhoods.**

As we work to ***achieve a community with flourishing arts, culture and recreation opportunities***, the City of Alexandria:

- supports funding for the preservation and interpretation of historic sites, with an ongoing focus on the preservation, maintenance, interpretation and operation of historic sites related to the history of slavery and civil rights in our community and throughout the Commonwealth.

As we work to ***create a strong economy in our community*** that benefits every resident, business and worker in our city, the City of Alexandria:

- supports efforts to encourage and incentivize family-friendly workplace policies in businesses throughout the Commonwealth, **including the need for paid family leave for all workers; (Councilwoman Jackson)**
- supports legislation to enact a state prevailing wage and protect workers from wage theft;
- supports legislation to modernize Virginia's alcoholic beverage laws in order to ensure our small, local businesses can be competitive in the region, including making temporary provisions permanent;
- supports efforts to increase efficiency and minimize the impact of the distribution and delivery of alcoholic beverages on our neighborhoods;
- **supports efforts to minimize the health, safety, environmental, and social impacts of products and packaging, as an opportunity for both job creation and environmental stewardship; (T&ES)**
- supports legislation that assists in the deployment of universal, affordable access to broadband technology and efforts to ensure a fair and open Internet.

As we work to ***ensure children and youth in our community are thriving***, the City of Alexandria:

- supports legislation and budget priorities that fully fund K-12 education and acknowledge the true cost of K-12 education in education funding. ;
- supports efforts to ensure that our schools are safe and in good condition, free of environmental health and other hazards;
- supports legislation and budget priorities that invest in Pre-K programs, reduce the local match for the Virginia Preschool Initiative (VPI), and encourage flexibility and creativity in the delivery of VPI programs in our community;
- supports efforts to increase accessibility and affordability of high-quality early childhood education and childcare;
- **supports efforts to provide comprehensive crisis mental health care specifically for youth/adolescents; (Social Services Advisory Board)**
- supports legislation to protect vulnerable youth in our community, especially those youth, and their families, who are served by both our child welfare and juvenile justice systems.

As we work to ***create an environmentally sustainable city***, Commonwealth, nation and world, the City of Alexandria:

- supports legislation and funding to plan for and mitigate urban and inland flooding that is often the result of climate change-triggered historic rain events;
- supports legislation that assists in our efforts to protect and expand our tree canopy and attain clean air and clean waterways;
- supports legislation to increase recycling in the Commonwealth, **including extended producer responsibility** and container deposit laws to reduce beverage container litter; **(T&ES)**
- supports efforts at the General Assembly to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the Commonwealth 50% by 2030, including efforts to decarbonize the statewide electricity supply, give communities choice over their electricity supply, and other policy strategies included in the City's Environmental Action Plan 2040.

As we work to ***sustain and enhance the health of our residents***, the City of Alexandria:

- supports legislation and funding that reduces inequities in our health system, increases access to healthcare for all residents, and provides a system of support for residents with behavioral health needs;
- supports legislation that promotes mental and physical well-being for every resident in our community;
- **supports efforts to separate access to behavioral health services, care, and support from the criminal justice system; (Racial Justice Alexandria)**
- **supports efforts to ensure Medicaid recipients have access to dental care by increasing reimbursement rates for dental services; (Public Health Advisory Commission)**
- supports efforts in the General Assembly to identify and maintain adequate resources to respond to the emergent needs of residents experiencing a mental health emergency, including increasing the number of psychiatric beds available in the Commonwealth.

As we work to ***support a wide variety of safe, connected, multimodal transportation options in our city*** that enable access to daily activities in our community and our region, the City of Alexandria:

- supports legislation and budget priorities that ensure Alexandria has safe, reliable and frequent mobility choices regardless of resources or ability;

- supports efforts in the General Assembly that protect vulnerable road users, including bicyclists and pedestrians, and help us achieve our Vision Zero goal to eliminate all traffic deaths and serious injuries in our community by 2028;
- supports legislation to reform Virginia's negligence laws to more fairly compensate those injured in accidents, especially vulnerable road users.

As we work to act deliberately, thoughtfully and thoroughly to ***end racial injustices and structural inequities in our community*** and across the Commonwealth, the City of Alexandria:

- supports efforts to ensure that race and social equity is incorporated and centered in all planning , including assessing the potential impacts of policy, budget and regulatory outcomes on racial and ethnic subgroups compared to their share of the population;
- supports legislation that establishes and sustains structures and systems to advance race and social equity in our community and across the Commonwealth;
- supports efforts to align and implement policy efforts designed to advance race and social equity goals, including: **investment in stronger, safer communities through quality affordable housing, living wage employment, public transportation, education and healthcare that includes voluntary, harm reduction and patient-driven, community-based mental health and substance abuse treatment; investment in community-based transformative violence prevention and intervention strategies, that offer support for criminalized populations; and legislation to ensure access to services, care and support is separate and distinct from the criminal justice system. (Racial Justice Alexandria)**
- supports accountability mechanisms on the State level related to the progression and transparency of work to advance race and social equity.