

## **City of Alexandria 2020 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 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 supports legislation that safeguards and expands the protection of the most basic human rights of all residents of, workers in and visitors to our City and our Commonwealth and opposes legislation that attempts to restrict these same basic rights. The City supports legislation to ensure Alexandria is a livable community for all, with affordable housing, a living wage, and workforce protections<sup>1</sup> available to all Alexandrians. The City 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<sup>2</sup>.

As we work to **provide a well-managed government** for our residents, businesses and visitors, the City 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. The City 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. The City 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<sup>3</sup>. The City 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<sup>4</sup>.

As we work to **create a safe and resilient city** for every resident, worker and visitor in the City of Alexandria, the City supports legislation that helps our well-trained staff protect the most

vulnerable members of our community, including children, older adults, victims of domestic violence<sup>5</sup>, individuals in behavioral health crisis, and those of differing abilities. The City supports common sense gun safety legislation, including “red flag” laws, stronger background checks for all gun buyers, and prohibiting the sale of assault weapons and certain ammunition, magazines and accessories. The City supports legislation that reforms our criminal justice system so it operates fairly and equitably for all members of our community, including the decriminalization of marijuana possession and the decriminalization of HIV. The City supports efforts to ensure that prisons and detention facilities are operated as part of the pursuit of justice rather than the pursuit of profit<sup>6</sup>.

As we work to ***achieve a community with flourishing arts, culture and recreation opportunities***, the City supports legislation that would give localities the authority to determine the placement or relocation of Confederate statues and memorials located on city-owned property<sup>7</sup>. The City supports funding for the preservation and interpretation of historic sites; in this 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the arrival of the first slave ship to Virginia, the City specifically supports funding for the preservation, maintenance, interpretation and operation of historic sites related to the history of slavery 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 supports legislation to raise the minimum wage in Virginia and to enact a state prevailing wage<sup>8</sup>. The City supports efforts to encourage and incentivize family-friendly workplace policies in businesses throughout the Commonwealth<sup>9</sup>. The City supports legislation to modernize Virginia’s alcoholic beverage laws to ensure our small, local businesses can be competitive in the region as well as efforts to increase efficiency and minimize the impact of the distribution and delivery of alcoholic beverages on our neighborhoods<sup>10</sup>. The City supports efforts to create new markets for recycling and recyclable materials in the Commonwealth, as an opportunity for both job creation and environmental stewardship<sup>11</sup>. The City supports legislation that assists in the deployment universal, affordable access to broadband technology<sup>12</sup> and efforts to ensure a fair and open Internet<sup>13</sup>.

As we work to ***ensure children and youth in our community are thriving***, the City supports legislation and budget priorities that fully fund K-12 education and acknowledge the true cost of K-12 education in education funding. The City supports efforts to ensure that our schools are safe and in good condition, free of environmental health and other hazards<sup>14</sup>. The City 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. The City supports common sense gun safety legislation, including child access prevention laws to limit child access to guns and reduce suicides and unintentional gun deaths and injuries to children, as well as legislation prohibiting firearms of any kind of school property in the Commonwealth. The City supports legislation to protect vulnerable youth in our community, including legislation to ban conversion therapy practices that endanger LGBTQ youth.

As we work to ***create an environmentally sustainable city***, Commonwealth, nation and world, the City supports legislation that assists in our efforts to expand our tree canopy and attain clean air and clean waterways. The City supports legislation that will allow us to increase recycling rates in our community<sup>15</sup> and reduce the use of plastic bags, single use plastics and Styrofoam<sup>16</sup>. The City 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 supports legislation that promotes mental and physical well-being for every resident in our community. The City supports legislation and funding that reduces inequities in our health system, increases access to healthcare for all residents<sup>17</sup>, and provides a system of support for residents with behavioral health needs. The City supports efforts to identify and implement innovative tools to increase capacity in primary care and behavioral health care in our communities<sup>18</sup>. The City 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. The City supports legislation to tax products with a significant public health impact<sup>19</sup>, including e-cigarettes and vapor products, and increase the tax on tobacco products.

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 supports legislation and budget priorities that ensure Alexandria has safe, reliable and frequent mobility choices regardless of resources or ability. As we work to create a community where various forms of transportation use, and share, our roads safely and efficiently, the City supports legislation that protects vulnerable road users, including bicyclists and pedestrians. The City supports efforts in the General Assembly that help us achieve our Vision Zero goal to eliminate all traffic deaths and serious injuries in our community by 2028<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Request from Councilman Chapman re: natural hair discrimination; request from Human Rights Commission re: incorporation of current “Ban the Box” policies in State law; request from Economic Opportunities Commission re: wage theft/prevaling wage

<sup>2</sup> Requests from Human Rights Commission re: in-state college tuition for students who are not citizens but have been approved under the federal Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA), opposition to legislation to require local law enforcement to enforce federal immigration laws (unless federal law requires such enforcement)

<sup>3</sup> Request from Councilman Chapman re: local hiring preferences for municipal projects

<sup>4</sup> Request from General Services/Energy Manager re: removing additional barriers to distributed solar for municipalities

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- <sup>5</sup> Request from 2018 from APD/DCHS to expand the definition of “family or household member” in Virginia’s domestic violence statute to include a definition of a dating relationship or intimate partner
- <sup>6</sup> Request from Councilman Seifeldein re: opposing private prisons, sunseting/repealing Virginia Corrections Private Management Act
- <sup>7</sup> Multiple requests re: relocation of *Appomattox* statue
- <sup>8</sup> Request from Economic Opportunities Commission re: wage theft/prevaling wage
- <sup>9</sup> Request from Alexandria Commission for Women for incentives for businesses with family friendly business policies, study of “family friendly” private sector policies
- <sup>10</sup> Request from Mayor Wilson re: Planning and Zoning/neighborhood impacts of ABC laws
- <sup>11</sup> Alternative to request from T&ES re: implementing a “Bottle Bill”
- <sup>12</sup> Requests from IT Commission re: broadband deployment, including broadband mapping grants/funding, protection of municipal broadband authority, prioritization of fiber for broadband grant funding, and updating the standard for what is considered “broadband unserved”
- <sup>13</sup> Request from IT Commission re: net neutrality
- <sup>14</sup> Request re: mold testing/reporting/remediation from GW Middle School students via Council
- <sup>15</sup> Request from T&ES for a “Bottle Bill”
- <sup>16</sup> Request from T&ES, Vice Mayor Bennett-Parker, would include statewide/local option ban, tax, fee
- <sup>17</sup> Request from Public Health Advisory Commission (PHAC) re: including an adult dental benefit in Medicaid
- <sup>18</sup> Request from PHAC re: creation of an Associate Physician License or other tools to increase primary care/behavioral health capacity
- <sup>19</sup> Request from PHAC to add a state tax on sweetened beverages
- <sup>20</sup> Requests from T&ES/Alexandrians for Safe Streets, including: allowing bicycles to cross a street with a walk signal at intersections that use leading pedestrian intervals; stop, not just yield, to pedestrians; “safe passing” legislation; “where to ride a bicycle” legislation; automated speed enforcement; distracted driving; increased penalties for careless driving which results in injury to a vulnerable road user.