

8
4-23-22

Public Comments for Ana Lino - Spanish
Apr 23, 2022

Hola Buenos Días, Alcalde, Vice Alcalde y miembros del concejo,

Me llamo Ana Lino y he vivido en Arlandria Chirilagua por más de 15 años . Me ha gustado la ciudad y la vecindad por muchas razones, pero estoy preocupada porque donde estamos viviendo actualmente - nuestra vivienda no es segura.

En Chirilagua , muy pronto veremos mucho desarrollo - unos buenos y otros no muy buenos y eso me preocupa porque toda vivienda nueva que tiene que ver aquí debería de ser para las familias que ganan menos de 50 mil - para que no seamos desplazados

Necesitamos que la ciudad priorice y ponga más fondos para crear más vivienda para familias de bajos ingresos.

Las propuestas que están en la mesa sobre vivienda, son ideales para ayudarnos. Y pedimos que la ciudad apruebe esas propuestas.

Pero también la ciudad tiene que pensar en el futuro y en la creación de vivienda nueva y cómo pueden preservar nuestra vecindad y posiblemente invertir en cooperativas también .

Muchas gracias

Public Comments for Ana Lino - English
Apr 23, 2022

Good Morning Mayor, Vice Mayor and city council members,

My name is Ana Lino and I have been living in Arlandria Chirilagua for more than 15 years. I have enjoyed living in the city and my neighborhood, for many reasons. But I am concerned because where we are currently living - our housing is not secure.

In Chirilagua, very soon we will be seeing many developments - some good and some not too good and that is why I worry because I believe that any new housing here should be for families that earn less than \$50,000 a year - so we will not be displaced.

We need the city to prioritize and place continued funding to create deeply committed affordable housing for families of low income.

The proposals that are currently on the table regarding housing, are ideal and can support us as a community and we ask the city to approve them.

But we also want the city to take into consideration of our futures to create new housing but also preserve our neighborhood by supporting cooperative housing

Thank you

8
4-23-22

Public Comments for Wilfredo Diaz - English
Apr 23, 2022

My name is Wilfredo Diaz, I have lived in the West End of Alexandria for 7 years.

I appreciate every one of the council members who have met with our community and to those that plan on it in the near future. I appreciate you all for listening to us on the current conditions we are living in.

It is necessary that you all as leaders listen to our needs, in order to improve our current housing conditions , regardless of race, language, income or status.

For the first time I feel that the Mayor and City Councils are actually working to improve the lives of those living in the city.

We hope you all can support the current budget housing proposals that will allow the city to invest in deeply committed affordable housing - such as families like myself - who earn very little. We also have to consider how the city will think of the future and how to create and support cooperatives in our communities.

We hope you will consider my ask and thank you for allowing me to speak.

Public Comments for Wilfredo Diaz - Spanish
Apr 23, 2022

Mi nombre es Wilfredo Diaz, He vivido en el West End de Alexandria por 7 años

Les agradezco a todos los concejales que se han reunido con nuestra comunidad y a los que estén interesados en reunirse con nosotros en el futuro. Agradezco que ustedes nos hayan escuchado sobre las condiciones en las cuales estamos viviendo.

Es necesario que, como líderes nos escuchen para mejorar las condiciones en las cuales estamos viviendo , a pesar de nuestra raza, idioma, ingreso y status.

Por primera vez siento que el alcalde y nuestros concejales en verdad están trabajando para mejorar las vidas de los que estamos en la ciudad.

Esperamos que ustedes puedan apoyar las propuestas que permitan que la ciudad invierta en más vivienda a bajo costo para familias como las mías - que ganan poco. También tenemos que pensar en nuestro futuro en cómo la ciudad puede apoyar en crear cooperativas en nuestras comunidades.

Espero que escuchen nuestros pedidos, y gracias por darme la oportunidad en permitirme hablar

8
4-23-22

04/22/2022

Mayor Wilson, Vice Mayor Jackson and other members of Council,

I am writing in support of **equity and environmental justice issues in the FY23 budget**, and specifically to ask that you support these add/delete proposals

- **DASH Service extension proposals**, particularly for Line 30 serving the Duke Street and South Van Dorn Street corridors, as described in Budget memo #96.
- **A Complete Streets proposal to add a Civil Engineer position** to enable more expeditious delivery of infrastructure projects, such as the King-Callahan-Russell access to transit project initiated in 2015, as described in Budget memos #08, #15 and #55

Equity is a central tenet of the Alexandria Transit Vision (ATV) plan. Designing the DASH Bus network with an equity lens means allocating service to higher density areas and funding service increases for residents in those higher density areas. Equity benefits include a

- 320% increase for residents of color that are served by frequent, all-day service, from 22% to 70%.
- 250% increase in the percentage of low-income residents, from 29% to 73%
- 244% increase for all residents, from 27% to 66%.

The Alexandria Transit Company Board recently recommended five prioritized service increases as the next most important steps towards delivering these equity benefits; three of those five recommendations are the subject of FY23 add/delete proposals, thanks to Council members Aguirre and McPike, and co-sponsors Chapman, Gaskins and Bagley.

I ask that you support funding all three DASH service increases, but particularly the Line 30 increase, serving the residents in the Duke Street and South Van Dorn Street corridors. The proposed Line 30 service increase will provide the highest equity impact and is the #1 service increase recommended by the Alexandria Transit Company Board.

Please also support the proposed Civil Engineer position to accelerate delivery of infrastructure projects such as the King-Callahan-Russell access to transit project initiated in 2015, and numerous other projects to improve safe access, not only to transit, but to schools, parks and other destinations.

Please demonstrate your commitment to equity and environmental justice by investing in DASH service increases and accelerating delivery of safe streets infrastructure.

Sincerely,

/s/

Jim Durham
622 Fort Williams Pkwy
Alexandria, VA 22304

CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov

From: Larisa Zehr <larisa@justice4all.org>
Sent: Friday, April 22, 2022 3:02 PM
To: CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov; Justin Wilson
Cc: Amy Jackson; Canek Aguirre; John Chapman; Sarah Bagley; Alyia Gaskins; Kirk McPike; Jim Parajon
Subject: [EXTERNAL]4/22/2022: Docket #8: Written Comment on Preliminary Add/Delete Proposals
Attachments: 2022.04.22 Letter to City Council.pdf

Some people who received this message don't often get email from larisa@justice4all.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Dear Mayor, Vice-Mayor, and City Council Members,

I hope this finds you well. Please find attached a letter from Legal Aid Justice Center, with reference to the FY 2023 City Council Preliminary Add/Delete Proposals to the Alexandria City Budget, Docket #8 in tomorrow's City Council meeting.

Please note that we provide this written comment only (no need to include us on the list for oral comment). Please feel free to reach out with any questions or concerns. Thank you very much for your time and consideration of this letter.

Warm regards,
Larisa Zehr

Larisa Zehr (she/her/ella)
Attorney, Skadden Legal Fellow
Legal Aid Justice Center
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LEGAL AID JUSTICE CENTER

Friday, April 22, 2022

Via email:

Mayor Justin M. Wilson
301 King Street, Room 3200
Alexandria, VA 22314
justin.wilson@alexandriava.gov

Re: FY 2023 City Council Preliminary Add/Delete Proposals to Alexandria City Budget

Dear Mayor, Vice-Mayor, and City Council Members,

The Legal Aid Justice Center¹ writes in support of Tenant and Workers United members, who are part of the low-income immigrant community in Alexandria. We support TWU's budget priorities for affordable housing, as expressed in their March 2, 2022 letter to Council. We urge you to listen to what our low-income neighbors and TWU have consistently expressed to City Council: deeply affordable housing² is the greatest need in Alexandria, and the budget should respond to this need.

In this budget cycle, Alexandria has unique opportunities to dedicate significant funding to deeply affordable housing. A budget is a moral document; it reveals the City's priorities and values. The City values deeply affordable housing.³ Here, it must act on those values by taking each opportunity to ensure long-term, stable, and affordable housing for its most vulnerable residents. In that light, the City should approve these two budget proposals: **Dedicated Affordable Housing +\$1,848,166 (Budget Question 50); Affordable Housing Units at 40% AMI +\$1,500,000 (Budget Question 45).**

The pandemic continues to have a much greater impact on low income people, communities of color, and immigrant families.⁴ One of the City's central priorities for the budget is to help

¹ The Legal Aid Justice Center (LAJC) is a non-profit organization that provides free civil legal assistance and advocacy on behalf of low-income individuals and families across Virginia. We partner with communities and clients to achieve racial, social, and economic justice by dismantling systems that create and perpetuate poverty.

² By deeply affordable housing, we refer to housing affordable for families earning 40% Area Median Income (AMI), or less. According to the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Area Median Income Calculations, in 2021 this was approximately \$51,600 per year for a family of four in Alexandria.

³ See, e.g., Arlandria Chirilagua Small Area Plan, Dec. 2021, <https://media.alexandriava.gov/content/planning/ArlandriaChirilaguaSAPEnglishCurrent.pdf> at p. 7, 11; <https://www.alexandriava.gov/budget-memos/fy-23-budget-qa-045-please-provide-the-affordable-housing-project-pipeline-information>.

⁴ https://news.vcu.edu/article/Racial_and_ethnic_minorities_experience_disproportionate_economic; <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/coronavirus/2021/03/08/covid-19-disparities-by-race-and-ethnicity-in-virginia/>. In their 2021 study, the Community Foundation of Northern Virginia found that the severe housing cost burden is disproportionately worse for racial and ethnic minorities and for immigrant families. https://www.cfnova.org/images/communityreports/InsightRegion_UnequalBurden_Copyright2021.pdf at p. 9. These statistics are pre-pandemic; the COVID-19 pandemic has only exacerbated these disparities.

Alexandrians equitably recover from the pandemic.⁵ Under the Fair Housing Act and the City's racial equity commitments, the City must take meaningful action to address disparate impacts in housing needs and opportunities.⁶ For families earning below 40% Area Median Income, there are almost no options for affordable housing.⁷ Ensuring long-term, deeply affordable housing is not only the City's duty, it is also the only way out of the housing and mass displacement crisis.

Fortunately, in this budget cycle, the City has significant opportunities to respond to this need, by increasing its allocation of general revenue and American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funds for affordable housing. Dedicated City funding for affordable housing is vital in Virginia. Virginia Commonwealth law limits Alexandria's local powers with respect to inclusionary zoning,⁸ but when dedicating City funding, the City has more options to generate and preserve affordable, stable, high-quality housing.

First, ARPA funds are designated for this exact use: to build an equitable recovery through investments for long-term opportunity.⁹ Using ARPA funds for affordable housing development and preservation is essential to pandemic recovery: as stated in the federal guidance for use of ARPA funds, "a comprehensive response to the widespread housing challenges underscored by the pandemic will require the production of additional affordable homes, and targeted affordable housing development is a cost-effective and proportional response to this need."¹⁰ Many cities are dedicating their ARPA funds to affordable housing projects.¹¹ Finally, unlike most federal funding for housing, these funds do not have immigration-related restrictions, making them uniquely well-suited to address the disproportionate housing insecurity impacting the immigrant community.¹²

Second, it is time for Alexandria to restore the full penny for affordable housing from the general revenue funds. When this dedication was made in 2006, it was for a penny. It was reduced because of the recession in 2010 and 2011, but now that the City is in a healthy financial position, it should be restored to its intended levels.¹³ Currently, over 60% of this dedicated fund is used for debt service, with the remainder split between affordable housing staffing and projects. If the City chooses to dedicate a penny, it could designate that full additional amount of

⁵ City of Alexandria Resolution No. 3030, Nov. 9, 2021.

⁶ <https://www.alexandriava.gov/uploadedFiles/manager/equity/ALLAlexandriaResolution2974.pdf>;
https://www.hud.gov/sites/dfiles/FHEO/images/Frequently_Asked_Questions_7_14-21.pdf.

⁷ <https://media.alexandriava.gov/docs-archives/dchs/webboxes/eocneedsassessmentreport2019=v2.pdf>. Amazon has made funding commitments in area housing, but a minimal amount serves this community;
<https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2022/04/11/amazon-affordable-housing-fund-arlington/>.

⁸ <https://alexandria.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=4712772&GUID=BB1B8CFB-F0C4-46F3-9CF4-5EF3F21A36C3&FullText=1>: See linked document at p. 7-8.

⁹ <https://home.treasury.gov/policy-issues/coronavirus/assistance-for-state-local-and-tribal-governments/state-and-local-fiscal-recovery-funds>.

¹⁰ <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/FR-2022-01-27/pdf/2022-00292.pdf> at p. 4366.

¹¹ <https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/how-are-cities-planning-use-state-and-local-fiscal-recovery-funds-their-housing-needs>; https://nlihc.org/sites/default/files/ARPA_State-Local-Housing.pdf.

¹² <https://www.cbpp.org/research/state-budget-and-tax/priorities-for-spending-the-american-rescue-plans-state-and-local>.

¹³ <https://media.alexandriava.gov/archives/fymemos/FY-2017/91251/archive.html>.

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\$1,848,166 to affordable housing projects.¹⁴ This would open important opportunities to create and preserve more affordable housing.

The pandemic has exposed deep inequalities in our housing system. As some Alexandria residents enjoy increasing real estate values, its communities of color, many of whom are essential workers, struggle to recover. With this funding, the City can begin to fulfill its duty to its most vulnerable residents. An equitable budget that truly accounts for the disparities caused by the pandemic and the community's housing needs should do nothing less.

Sincerely,



Larisa Zehr
Attorney, Skadden Legal Fellow, Legal Aid Justice Center
larisa@justice4all.org

CC: Amy Jackson, Vice Mayor (Amy.Jackson@alexandriava.gov)
Canek Aguirre, Councilmember (Canek.Aguirre@alexandriava.gov)
John Chapman, Councilmember (John.Taylor.Chapman@alexandriava.gov)
Sarah R. Bagley, Councilmember (Sarah.Bagley@alexandriava.gov)
Alyia Gaskins, Councilmember (Alyia.Gaskins@alexandriava.gov)
R. Kirk McPike, Councilmember (Kirk.McPike@alexandriava.gov)
James F. Parajon, City Manager (jim.parajon@alexandriava.gov)

¹⁴ <https://www.alexandriava.gov/budget-memos/fy-23-budget-qa-050-what-is-the-fiscal-impact-of-increasing-the-amount-of-property-tax>.

Public Comments for Ingris Moran

Apr 23, 2022



Good Morning Mayor and City Council members,

My name is Ingris Moran, Lead Community Organizer of Tenants and Workers United. I am here to talk about the current budget proposals, regarding policing in Alexandria.

The pandemic has brought upon our working class families many crises , financially, physically, mentally and emotionally. As an organization we have been trying to pursue resources that are beneficial to youth and families of color such as restorative justice, mental health and other immediate services that relate to the housing crisis.

Every year we have seen our police department budget increase, but the department has been well funded and yet it still has been struggling to fill up officer positions, But yet we see again, the city proposing \$800,000 to add more policing. The police department needs to redistribute their current money to ensure they cover their needs.

We need more money for basic services like food pantries, eviction prevention services, rental assistance , mental health and other immediate services. Let's remind ourselves that the ARPA funds will only be temporary and the impact of the pandemic will be longstanding , therefore we have to be smart with the city's budget and funds

We really do hope you as our leaders uphold the 2022 priorities that Council has adopted. We remind you that your priorities are shown not just by statements but into actions

We hope you take into consideration our thoughts

Thank you .

Public Comments for Elsa Riveros

Apr 23, 2022



Good Morning Mayor and City Council Members,

My name is Elsa Riveros, Community Organizer of Tenants and Workers United. I am here to emphasize the great need for deeply committed affordable housing for our working class families in the city who earn less than \$50,000 dollars a year. Living in the city has become too expensive to live in. But regardless of that - our members are continuing to live here because they love this city and so do their children.

We have had the opportunity to meet with almost all of you to express the need for housing and how you, as city leaders, can find innovative solutions to the ongoing housing crisis for our Black and Brown families.

As leaders, you are undergoing an important process, and we remind you, that the budget is a clear expression of the values and priorities of the City. On behalf of the families we work with, we are in support of the city:

- Increasing the dedicated revenue for affordable housing to a full penny
- Increasing affordable housing funding by \$1.5 million dollars

We need the City to continue to increase investments on housing , not only workforce housing, but for deeply committed affordable housing - to those families who are earning 40%AMI and below. Those are the families that are threatened to be displaced.

We speak to you as leaders, to seek more funding to:

- Prioritize the creation of affordable new housing units at the 40%AMI
- Find innovative ways to preserve our families across the city, such as the creation of cooperative housing, as we have found cooperative to be sustainable and affordable

As the city is working towards an equitable and inclusive city for all Alexandrians, outside the budget process, we recommend that the city proactively provides residents with interpretation services for community members who may not speak English. It is vital to be inclusive and is a proactive measure to all residents when it comes to any city led community meeting and engagement. thank you

City Council Meeting Sat April 23, 2022

Docket Number 8

Hello I am Carolyn Griffin, Producing Artistic Director of MetroStage. I am speaking today to ask for your support for the budget proposal submitted that would provide contingency funding for MetroStage's construction of its new theatre at 915 N. Fairfax St.

I would like to thank Vice Mayor Jackson, Councilwoman Gaskins, and Councilman McPike for co-sponsoring this proposal for contingency funding that would support the construction of the new theatre.

I have worked for MetroStage for over 36 years offering professional theatre productions for the residents of this City. I am very proud that MetroStage was designated the Arts Anchor by the Old Town North Small Area Plan, which was approved by City Council. The design for the new theatre has been completed by Alexandria architect Skip Maginniss, and the theatre has mounted a Capital Campaign for the build out for the interior of the new theatre.

The original cost estimate was \$1.5M, and it has now risen to \$2.6M as a result of the pandemic, trade wars, supply chain delays, etc. \$600,000 has been raised at this time with checks ranging from \$25 to \$100,000. This is a grassroots effort, but it also needs larger donations as well to meet the increasing construction costs. Our Donor Wall in the new theatre should not only be a Who's Who in Alexandria, but also reflect the support from the City.

This is a 'shovel ready' project. It meets many of the criteria that the City has defined as priorities like business restoration post-pandemic, and the ability to attract more arts related businesses to the Arts District. It is recognized as an arts institution that has been committed to diversity on stage and in its audience since its founding.

This contingency funding from the City would be most appreciated. It would incentivize others to give, and it would move us closer to our end goal of completing the construction of the theatre and reopening our stage to our productions and our theatre to the community, thereby proving to be both an economic engine in this city, a community asset, and a cultural force.

Respectfully Submitted: Carolyn Griffin

From: Steve Walz <steve.walz@verizon.net>
Sent: Friday, April 22, 2022 7:11 PM
To: CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Comment on April 23, 2022 City Council Meeting Docket Item 8

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Dear Councilmembers,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. I am Steve Walz, of 304 East Glebe Road, Alexandria, VA 22305. While not speaking for them, I am a member of the Energy and Climate Change Task Force (ECCTF) that is currently considering needed updates to the City's Climate Action Plan. I have previously served on the Environmental Policy Commission, and am a member of the Alexandria hub of the Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions.

I am supporting, and ask the Council to adopt, the Add/Delete Item, Climate Change Initiatives +\$2,000,000 (Budget Question 106).

The City Council declared a Climate Emergency in 2019 recognizing the effects that climate change has, and will continue to have, on the City's residents, business, visitors, and City operations. The City has been making significant investments in adapting to the negative consequences of climate change such as increased flooding from storms, both upland stormwater management system improvements and coastal/waterfront improvements. However, it has made limited financial investments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions that will reduce the future effects of climate change and help meet the City's greenhouse gas emission reduction goals. Additionally, expanding energy efficiency for businesses and households in Alexandria will help make our city a more affordable place to live and more competitive place to do business.

This Add/Delete item will begin to provide such investment. It also recognizes the direct nexus between greenhouse gas emissions from vehicles and climate change through its use of funds generated from the personal property tax on vehicles.

The Add/Delete item also directs staff to develop a plan for the funding that prioritizes sustainability solutions in the EAP. Staff will prioritize growing programs that proactively encourage participation in weatherization and energy efficiency solutions in existing structures as well as reducing transportation related emissions. Staff has been working with the ECCTF, as well as managing a contractor assessing climate emission mitigation actions, to identify needed actions and is well positioned to continue this work and provide timely direction for use of the funds.

Steve Walz

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