



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

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MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** JUNE 22, 2016

**TO:** THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

**FROM:** MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

**DOCKET TITLE:**

Consideration of the Update on Progress on the Proposed FY 2017 to FY 2022 City Strategic Plan.

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**RECOMMENDATION:** That City Council (1) review in general the draft vision statement, goals, and indicators and (2) indicate where changes to process and draft content should be considered.

**BACKGROUND:** The Alexandria City Council Strategic Plan was adopted in September 2004 and updated in January 2006 and June 2010. The updated 2010 City Strategic Plan was intended to be in effect until 2015. During this time, the City implemented a performance management system, *Results Alexandria*, to help operationalize the City's Strategic Plan. Starting in February 2016, City Council directed staff to begin the process of engaging with the community to develop the FY 2017 to FY 2022 City Strategic Plan (the "Plan"). The Plan as drafted to date includes similar themes to the previous City strategic plans with improved measures enabling the Plan to be dynamic, measurable, and executable.

The Plan is an opportunity for the City government to engage with members of the community to establish the City's strategic direction and priorities for the coming years. The plan will also be an action oriented document that when completed will incorporate priority initiatives nested within each plan theme area. These initiatives will derive from the City's numerous adopted operational Master Plans, adopted Neighborhood Small Area Plans, as well as from City Council directives and policies. Once adopted, the City Strategic Plan will guide the City Government's direction by informing budget decisions, helping establish departmental work plans, presenting results on the City's website, and annually updating City Council on progress.

At the end of 2015, City Council approved the general outline for a 2016 process to draft the Plan. This memorandum outlines staff's progress on the adopted process including engaging with the community, working with departments, drafting the Plan, and next steps.

**DISCUSSION:** Since the last update to City Council in February 2016, staff began to execute the draft engagement schedule attached. Below is a description of engagement completed to date:

### 1) **February/March: Plan Launch & Visioning**

The planning process kicked off with a communications launch in February 2016, which included a new webpage ([alexandriava.gov/StrategicPlan](http://alexandriava.gov/StrategicPlan) <file:///\\sitschlfilew003\DeptFiles\Pnz\Neighborhood%20Planning\Projects\City%20Strategic%20Plan%202015-16\Communications\Memo%20re%20Planning%20Process.docx>) that serves as the clearinghouse for information on the Plan and related engagement activities. This was paired with a three-week long AlexEngage Topic entitled, “What do you want Alexandria to be like in 2022?” Participants were asked to respond to the following questions:

- What do you love about living/working in Alexandria right now?
- What are your greatest concerns about living/working in Alexandria right now?
- What has changed for the better in Alexandria over the last 5 years?
- What has changed for the worse in Alexandria over the last 5 years?
- What would you like Alexandria to look like in 2022?

The topic was posted from February 29<sup>th</sup>- March 20<sup>th</sup> and received more than 230 responses. The final report can be found on the webpage ([alexandriava.gov/StrategicPlan](http://alexandriava.gov/StrategicPlan)).

While the AlexEngage topic was posted, the City held a community meeting on Monday, March 14<sup>th</sup> at TC Williams High School. The evening focused on kicking off the planning process with a small group activity using the same questions posted on the AlexEngage topic. The last half of the meeting was a larger group activity focused on the previous AlexEngage topic question, “What would you like Alexandria to look like in 2022?” As participants expressed answers to this question, staff transcribed the answers and posted them on large boards, arranging them by themes that would inform future work.

Simultaneously, project staff created an informal group of key staff contacts in each department to provide feedback on the planning process, liaise with relevant Boards and Commissions, and assist at community meetings. Through these contacts, Boards and Commissions were informed about the planning process and asked to assist with disseminating information to their respective networks. Some Boards and Commissions have been asked to fill out a worksheet of information that will be used to draft the Plan.

### 2) **March/April: Refining Vision and Goals**

The key themes identified in the March 14<sup>th</sup> visioning meeting and through the first AlexEngage topic were used as an organizing tool for the Saturday, April 9<sup>th</sup> community meeting at George Washington Middle School. At the meeting, participants broke into small groups based on vision theme to identify words and sentences to describe that theme. Leading each table were key staff from various departments such as Planning & Zoning, Housing, Performance & Accountability, Transportation & Environmental Services, Emergency Communications, Health, and Information Technology.

During the second half of the meeting, participants were able to walk around to each theme station and review, provide feedback, and add content to the theme descriptions. After the meeting, staff used this information to draft theme descriptions that were posted on AlexEngage for feedback from April 19<sup>th</sup> through May 8<sup>th</sup>. Over 50 people responded on AlexEngage. Based on their feedback staff drafted the following:

**Vision Statement:** In 2022, Alexandria is a safe, healthy, economically vibrant, well-managed, inclusive, and green city with multimodal transportation, a unique identity, and where children and youth thrive.

#### **Safe**

In 2022 Alexandria residents and visitors feel comfortable at all hours. If they require help, the response is timely, courteous and professional from well-trained staff. Infrastructure planning efforts consider the safety impact of development. Preventable problems are avoided and the City takes a regional view of planning for safety and emergency response and recovery. The community is prepared for an emergency.

#### **Healthy**

In 2022, Alexandria ensures equal and ready access to opportunities that promote mental and physical well-being and a happy active life. Alexandria is a clean, sustainable community with policies and education that promote environmental vitality and community well-being.

#### **Economically Vibrant**

In 2022, Alexandria is a business destination and center of innovation. Mixed-use development is oriented around transit hubs and activity centers and incorporates the City's natural resources. Alexandria's business community is diverse and resilient.

#### **Well-Managed**

In 2022, Alexandria is a sustainable community with a long term vision focused on quality of life. Major policy decisions go to City Council and are reflective of community engagement. The City government is accountable, transparent, and efficient and is backed by quality, ethical, and responsive staff.

#### **Inclusive**

In 2022, Alexandria is a caring, fair, just, and equitable city that supports an affordable and livable community for all. The City is welcoming to people in all stages of life and provides high quality social services to all eligible Alexandrians. The City has closed the broadband gap by providing quality access to all residents.

### **Green**

In 2022, Alexandria has abundant tree canopy, clean air, and clean waterways. The City conserves energy and works to mitigate carbon emissions, including building and maintaining environmentally-friendly infrastructure and utilizing sources of renewable energy. Residents participate in alternative methods of waste disposal, including recycling and composting, to minimize the City's contributions to landfills.

### **Multimodal Transportation**

In 2022, Alexandria is regionally linked and easy to get around regardless of resources or ability. The City supports a wide variety of connected transportation options that enable access to daily activities. Public transportation has reliable and frequent service that is communicated through useful information.

### **Unique Identity**

In 2022, Alexandria marks its history while respecting and honoring its diverse communities and neighborhoods. The City has a small town feel amid growth, with complementary and varied architecture and an aesthetically beautiful built environment.

### **Children and Youth**

In 2022, Alexandria ensures basic needs are met; childcare, education, and before-and-after school activities are accessible to all and of high quality; and the City proudly collaborates with and supports programs and schools.

Simultaneously, the Office of Performance and Accountability (OPA) presented the results of the National Citizen Survey Alexandria Community Livability Report to City Council on April 12<sup>th</sup>. Many of the responses and themes heard during the community meetings and AlexEngage topics were echoed in the responses to the survey.

## **3) May/June: Indicator Development**

After the AlexEngage topic closed, OPA staff met with all departments and developed a draft set of indicators that were reasonable in number (30-40 total) to best to measure the themes developed by the community. Following that discussion, the draft set of indicators were vetted by the City Manager's Office.

Below is a draft list of indicators determined at the department meetings:

### **Safe**

1. Violent crime incidents per 100,000 population
2. Medical response time
3. Fire response time
4. Community Survey Question: How safe do you feel in your neighborhood?

5. Building safety Insurance Services Office (ISO) rating

### **Healthy**

1. Community Survey Question: Percent of residents who say that, in general, their health is good/very good/excellent
2. Suicide rate per 100,000 population

### **Economically Vibrant**

1. Local GDP
2. Office vacancy rate
3. Number of jobs in Alexandria

### **Well-Managed**

1. Bond rating
2. Community Survey Question: Overall quality of city services
3. Community Survey Question: Overall customer service by Alexandria employees
4. Overall employee satisfaction
5. Community Survey Question: Value of services for taxes paid

### **Inclusive**

1. Percent of income spent on housing costs for households making \$100,000 or less
2. Community Survey Question: Percent of respondents who do not perceive barriers in Alexandria based on age, gender, race, national origin, religion, disability or sexual orientation/gender identity
3. Poverty rate
4. Unemployment rate

### **Green**

1. Percent tree canopy
2. Per capita greenhouse gas emissions
3. Diversion rate
4. Chesapeake Bay water quality goal

### **Multimodal Transportation**

1. Percent of commuters using alternative transportation options
2. Traffic crashes scaled by traffic volume
3. Community Survey Question: Overall ease of getting around
4. Pavement Condition Index

### **Unique Identity**

1. Community Survey Question: Percent of residents satisfied with the City's historic preservation
2. Community Survey Question: Percent with positive view of overall quality of new development in Alexandria
3. Community Survey Question: Percent satisfied with cultural / arts / music activities

### **Children and Youth**

1. Percent of kindergarteners with a pre-school experience
2. Percent of youth who report current alcohol use

3. High school graduation rate
4. Percent of youth who self-report engaging in daily physical activity
5. Percent of children and youth who report having three or more non-parent adults who provide support

#### 4) Next Steps:

##### Indicator Prioritization (June/July)

The community will be given the opportunity to prioritize a set of draft indicators by identifying which are most important for the City to improve. This phase will begin with the City collecting data on the indicators currently proposed and refining indicators if data is unavailable. Next, the City will host a community meeting so that staff can describe and guide participants through the prioritization activity. In the immediate days following the meeting, staff will hold a series of “office hours” throughout the city to promote, answer questions, and assist in completing the activity - community members will be given the choice of either using an online engagement platform or completing the activity on paper.

The activity will ask the community to select the indicators that they most want to improve. In order for the community to successfully complete this exercise, context on the indicator including the current level of performance will be provided. This input will help inform staff to develop targets and provide important information to City Council about the community’s priorities.

Below is a list of potential meeting and office hour locations and general times:

- *Landmark/Van Dorn*, Community Meeting: Location TBD, 7-9 pm
- *Arlandria*, Four Mile Run Farmers Market: Saturday morning
- *Old Town*, ESP Coffee: Weekday morning
- *Del Ray*, Monroe YMCA: Weekday morning
- *Fairlington/Bradlee* Shopping Center Starbucks or Safeway: Weekday morning
- *Beauregard*, 1464 Beauregard Starbucks: Weekday morning
- *Braddock*, Charles Houston Rec Center: Weekday evening
- *Eisenhower West*, Ben Brenman Park: Weekday evening

##### Master Plan and Work Plan Initiatives (August/September)

In order to develop an action plan to achieve the goals and indicators within the City Strategic Plan, initiatives from adopted master plans, neighborhood small area plans, department work plans as well as City Council directives and policies will be included. These initiatives which will be nested under related strategic plan theme areas will represent high priority initiatives and not all initiatives that the City government is undertaking. To achieve this, departments will be asked to discuss and provide

initiatives from adopted master plans, Neighborhood Small Area Plans, as well as their FY 2017 draft work plans that are important to achieve the goals and indicator targets. Informing this discussion is information submitted by Boards and Commissions on their adopted master plans.

#### Final Draft (August/September)

Over the summer, staff will work to finalize a draft. This will include integrating City Council input from the June City Council meeting; quantitative target setting for indicators; and initiatives to achieve the quantitative targets from master plans and department work plans.

Following input from City Council in June, staff will develop a draft for community input. This draft will be posted online for community comment and discussion. Feedback received will be compiled and will inform the final draft document to be presented and discussed with City Council this fall.

#### Consideration of Adoption (September/October)

In September or October, the draft City Strategic Plan will be considered for adoption by City Council.

#### After Adoption:

Once adopted, the City's Strategic Plan will be used to guide decision making during the budget process in the preparation of the multi-departmental annual planning work program, as well as when departmental work programs are created and executed. This includes an annual adoption of key initiatives as part of the budget process focused on achieving the performance set in the goals and indicators. Further, City Council and the community will be informed on an annual basis of progress, successes and challenges in implementation. Staff will also make a public "dashboard" available on the City's website, which will show the City's indicator performance.

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

Attachment 1: Draft Engagement Schedule

Attachment 2: Strategic Plan Crosswalk

Attachment 3: Environmental Policy Commission Letter

Attachment 4: Presentation

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