



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: JANUARY 18, 2017

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

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

DOCKET TITLE:

Public Hearing and Adoption of the Proposed FY 2017 to FY 2022 City Strategic Plan.

ISSUE: Consider and Adopt the Proposed FY 2017 to FY 2022 City Strategic Plan.

RECOMMENDATION: That City Council hold a public hearing and adopt the Proposed FY 2017 to FY 2022 City Strategic Plan.

BACKGROUND: The most recent initial Alexandria City Council Strategic Plan was adopted in September 2004 and updated in January 2006 and June 2010. The 2010 updated City Strategic Plan was intended to be in effect until 2015 and used until a new plan was developed in 2016. The FY 2017 to FY 2022 City Strategic Plan is an opportunity for this City Council to establish the City's strategic direction and priorities for the coming years. Throughout 2016, City staff has worked extensively with the community to draft the new FY 2017 to FY 2022 City Strategic Plan.

This memorandum outlines edits made to the final draft City Strategic Plan after the final phase of community input which closed on December 9, 2016.

DISCUSSION: Since the last presentation to City Council in June 2016, staff has developed the attached proposed FY 2017 to FY 2022 City Strategic Plan (the "Strategic Plan"). This Strategic Plan includes a vision statement, descriptive paragraphs, key indicators, action items, and supporting city plans, documents, and policies.

This plan is the culmination of a year of engagement with the City Council and the community. Over the last year there have been 14 in-person and online engagements opportunities, 919 views of online material, 537 online responses, 159 attendees at community meetings, and three prior City Council meetings, all of which were guided by the City's community engagement approach, *What's Next Alexandria*.

On June 30, 2016 staff provided an update at a City Council meeting where City Council was briefed on progress to-date, provided a draft to comment, and updated on the planned next steps. Since that time, the City Strategic Plan has evolved based on community and City Council input and further refined by staff. Attachment 2 is a marked-up version of the City Strategic Plan showing all changes made since the June 30, 2016 draft plan.

On November 29, 2016, staff provided a memorandum updating the City Council on the current progress and next steps of the City Strategic Plan. Since that time, a preliminary draft of the plan was available online for a three-week public comment period through the online meeting tool AlexEngage. In addition, staff held an open house for residents to discuss key points in the plan and provide feedback in person. All comments, along with the staff responses and how they were incorporated, have been posted on the City's website (url: alexandriava.gov/StrategicPlan).

Online and community meeting participants were asked if the draft content reflects what the City should be working toward through 2022. Sixty-four residents responded to this question. Most, forty-nine, agreed or somewhat agreed with the draft content. Nine disagreed or somewhat disagreed and six were neutral.

Below is a highlighted review of comments and how they were or were not resolved by revisions to the Plan:

Indicators and Targets

Participants noted that some indicators have targets while others do not. Respondents stated that key indicators should be specific and that targets help hold the City accountable to achieve numerical results. Staff agree that in an ideal state all the indicators would have targets. Targets were not set for all indicators for the following reasons: 1) some indicators lacked historical data or other information needed to understand an appropriate target; and 2) certain indicators are minimally influenced by City policy, for example, the poverty rate. The City actively works to mitigate poverty, but the main driver of overall poverty rates is typically the economy. In both cases, the City is continuing to evaluate the data and work with departments to develop actionable targets.

Some participants commented on the set targets. In a few cases respondents felt that the targets were too ambitious, for example, one person felt that the 83% target for satisfaction with historic preservation is too high and that it would hinder development. In many more cases, respondents felt the targets were not ambitious enough.

Other participants requested additional indicators be added to the plan. Staff reviewed the suggested indicators using three questions: 1) does City policy influence the indicator; 2) is the indicator closely related to another indicator already in the plan; and 3) is data readily available.

Plans and Action Items

Frequently, respondents suggested that specific strategies, plans, policies or action items be added to the FY 2022 City Strategic Plan. These include suggestions for the Alexandria City Public Schools, ideas for improved access to swimming pools, and support for the Art League. The majority of these items are already included in the supporting plans, documents and policies

found in each section of the plan. Key action items have been added to each thematic area of the plan; however, to streamline the document and reduce duplication, additional details will remain in the plans, documents and policies.

Accountability

Participants wanted to know how the City would be held accountable for achieving the plan. Accountability is fundamental to the success of the plan. Staff have attempted to increase accountability by including measurable indicators for all themes and are working toward providing indicator data on the City website.

Other participants pointed out that achieving certain key indicator targets may hinder the success of others. For example, meeting the economic key indicators while at the same time lowering emissions and maintaining open space. Staff recognize that while some key indicators are mutually supportive, others require tradeoffs. As actionable decisions are made, those choices and tradeoffs will be discussed and presented to City Council.

Text Edits and Additions

Participants also identified grammatical errors, requested additional language, and/or linguistic changes. Many of these changes were accepted. In some situations, where staff felt that the linguistic changes created repetitive language in the document or that the changes did not represent the overall intent of the community, those changes were not included.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no fiscal impact to the City Strategic Plan document itself, however many of the action items do have a fiscal impact.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Proposed FY 2017 to FY 2022 City Strategic Plan
2. Strategic Plan Amendments since the June 2016 City Council meeting
3. City Council presentation

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