

## **Rethinking and Refreshing Alexandria’s Citizen Corps Council**

### **Summary and Rationale**

Alexandria’s Citizen Corps Council was formed in December 2003. FEMA’s Individual and Community Preparedness Division administers the Citizen Corps program nationally. According to FEMA, **“Citizen Corps’ mission is to strengthen the collaboration between government and community leaders from all sectors to encourage citizens’ preparedness through education, training, and volunteer service to make communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to all hazards and all threats.”**

Alexandria’s City Corps Council continues to perform in this mission, but over the past 20 years, hazards and threats have evolved, as have the abilities and methods to prepare for, mitigate, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters. It is therefore appropriate to rethink how CCC may better serve the City of Alexandria and its residents in enhancing emergency preparedness.

This proposal is intended to enhance the effectiveness of emergency management actions, while preserving the two essential elements of the functions, powers, and duties in the City’s original enacting legislation: a) Community Preparedness and Resilience and b) Unified Emergency Services. In light of the second element, it is worthwhile to reconsider the membership of CCC as well as developing closer collaboration and alliances with other organizations, including City departments and boards, and external entities.

We additionally propose that the CCC be renamed “Commission on Emergency Preparedness and Resilience (CEPR)”, selecting a name that more accurately conveys the updated role that CCC has served in providing and shall continue to have in the City. Noting Arlington County has twice renamed its Citizen Corps program. The current name is CARRT—Community Advancing Resilience and Readiness Together—and the group advises the County Manager.

### **Recommended Revision to Code of General Ordinances**

CCC asks the City Council members to present the following recommended revision to the code to the full council for approval and adoption. The first section identifies the proposed voting and non-voting membership and the second section on functions, powers and duties, streamlining and condensing two clauses from the original code to a single clause.

Alexandria's Code of General Ordinances, Title 2 Chapter 4  
ARTICLE T Commission on Emergency Preparedness and Resilience (CEPR)

**Sec. 2-4-150 Creation, composition, organization and term.**

- (a) The Citizen Corps Council was initially established on December 8, 2003, by ordinance and designated as a standing committee.
- (b) Since then, hazards and threats have evolved, as have the abilities and methods to prepare for, mitigate, respond to, and recover from emergencies and disasters affecting members of the community.
- (c) To reflect better the transformed state of affairs, membership of the "Citizen Corps Council" is hereby reconstituted and the committee is renamed as "Commission on Emergency Preparedness and Resilience (CEPR)".
- (d) The fifteen members of the committee shall be appointed by the City Council as follows:
  - (1) A representative of the Alexandria business community;
  - (2) A representative of Alexandria civic associations;
  - (3) A representative for residents with disabilities/access and functional needs;
  - (4) A representative for non-English speaking residents;
  - (5) A member of the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) program;
  - (6) A representative or member of the Medical Reserve Corps (MRC);
  - (7) A representative or member of the Alexandria Radio Club (ARC);
  - (8) A representative or member of the Alexandria Animal Welfare League or its Community Animal Response Team;
  - (9) A representative from the Police Department's Community Relations Unit or Volunteer Office;
  - (10) A representative from the Fire Department's Community Risk Reduction programs;
  - (11) A representative from the Sheriff's Office Community and Safety programs;
  - (12) A representative from Volunteer Alexandria; and
  - (13) A representative of the American Red Cross.
  - (14) 2 Citizen representatives
- (e) Ex officio (non-voting) members shall be:
  - (1) Two members of City Council, appointed by the mayor;
  - (2) A representative of the Local Emergency Planning Committee;
  - (3) A representative of the Emergency Medical Services Council;
  - (4) A representative of the Public Health Advisory Commission;
  - (5) A representative of the Commission on Persons with Disabilities;
  - (6) A representative of the Environmental Policy Commission

- (f) The members of the committee shall be appointed in the manner prescribed in title 2, chapter 4, article (a) of this code. The members shall serve for a term of three years, and such terms shall be staggered. (Ord. No. 4382, 3/12/05, Sec. 1; Ord. No. 5167, 11/17/18, Sec. 1)

**Sec. 2-4-151 Functions, powers, and duties; staff assistance.**

- (a) The functions, powers, and duties of the committee shall be to advise and support the city and the city council as to:
- (1) strengthen the collaboration between government and community leaders from all sectors to encourage citizens' preparedness through education, training, and volunteer service to make communities safer, stronger, and better prepared to respond to all hazards and all threats.
  - (2) enhance emergency preparedness and resilience in Alexandria
  - (3) evaluating, catalyzing, empowering, and ensuring the whole of the community— individuals and households, institutions, businesses and other organizations, and local government— prepare for, respond to, and be able to recover from natural, technological, and human-caused emergencies;
  - (4) working collaboratively on delivering unified emergency services that will provide essential support where needed in the city when emergencies occur;
  - (5) to do all things necessary or convenient to carry out the responsibilities expressly given in this subsection; and
  - (6) Such Other tasks may be requested by the city council.
- (b) Except as expressly provided in this article, the committee may adopt rules and regulations in regard to procedure and other matters for the conduct of its business, so long as the same are not inconsistent with the city code, including, but not limited to, the establishment of sub-committees through which it may carry on its functions, duties and purpose.
- (c) Subject to the availability of funds and staff, the city manager is authorized to provide, through the Fire Department, Office of Emergency Management, and other departments, such staff or other assistance to the council as requested. (Ord. No. 4382, 3/12/05, Sec. 1)