



OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER  
301 King St., Suite 3500  
Alexandria, VA 22314

James F. Parajon  
City Manager

703.746.4300

September 30, 2024

Dear City Board, Committee, and Commission Chairs,

I would like to thank you for bringing your passion, expertise and leadership to one of our City boards, committees and commissions. Your dedicated service helps represent the voices of our community throughout the budget process. Your experience and knowledge are an integral part of the policy development process in our city. As a part of an advisory body, your research and recommendations respond to changing conditions in the City as we continue to grow and strive to meet the expectations of the residents we serve.

The FY 2025 budget and CIP adopted in May were guided by City Council's priorities, and while they evolve to complement our community's needs, they remain grounded in Community Connection, Employee Retention & Attraction, Increased Diverse Housing Opportunities, the Elimination of Community Disparities, and Building Economic Strength.

These targeted investments represent important and emerging issues identified by City Council, many of the boards, committees and commissions, department staff, and our residents. Examples of the FY 2025 budget's investments in these key areas include:

- **Community Connection:** The budget provides increased funding for Library community outreach, City Clerk's Office record management and a BCC stipend program for young Alexandrians. The budget also funds a dedicated shuttle service at the Del Pepper West End Service Center.
- **Employee Attraction and Retention:** Ensuring the City is the "Employer of Choice" by committing funding for collective bargaining agreements for Fire, Police, and Labor and Trades groups, continuing to focus on compensation adjustments for non-collectively bargained City employees, addressing pay competitiveness and retention for direct client facing mental health positions, and conducting cyclical compensation studies on a regular four-year cycle.
- **Housing Opportunities:** Increasing quality housing and its availability at a range of price points by continued commitment to increasing affordable housing with the additional funds for approved, unfunded projects in the affordable housing pipeline. We continue to invest in providing affordable housing and eviction prevention funding.
- **Eliminate Community Disparities:** As a part of the City's commitment to youth education, safety, and wellness the budget provides funds to support increased teacher compensation to strengthen recruitment and retention efforts and additional funding for ACPS' CIP projects, specifically George Mason and Cora Kelly. To support food security in Alexandria, the budget provides funds to hire a Food Security Coordinator and support community-based food hubs. The budget also provides increased funding for senior services and youth safety and resilience.

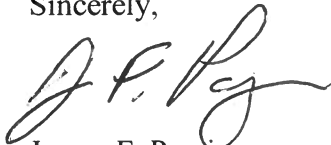
- **Economic Strength:** Continued operational support for Alexandria Economic Development Partnership and Visit Alexandria to focus efforts on attracting catalyst developments that build on the initiative of investing in neighborhood-defining projects, along with increased regional and national marketing support, and funding for an Economic Sustainability Summit.

FY 2026 looks to be a challenging fiscal year as we (1) continue to navigate the financial sustainability of the Capital Improvement Program, (2) address issues through investments in employee compensation, race and equity social initiatives, public safety programs and investment in education (3) maintain and stabilize affordable housing (4) build the City's economic strength through diversification of our tax base and (5) address the need to reduce required borrowing and associated debt service.

*Your valuable knowledge and expertise are essential as we prepare for the challenges ahead. I would appreciate input on the priorities of your board, committee, or commission to help inform my budget priorities and decision making.* Specifically, it would be helpful to know the policy and programmatic areas under your respective purview that are the highest priorities for continued funding in light of limited resources. As was the case in FY 2025, beyond the debt service pressure, I see ongoing budget focus on financial sustainability, investment in our students and school facilities, housing, behavioral health support, ensuring a transparent and open government, and community engagement in FY 2026, as well as focusing on improving the City's competitive position in attracting and retaining employees. Your feedback will assist City staff in developing budget proposals that support the priorities of our community at large.

Please provide feedback to me, coordinated through your staff liaison, by **Friday, November 1, 2024**. There will be additional opportunities to provide input in the budget process through the department for which you provide advice and counsel and at the budget public hearing in March. Thank you in advance for thoughts on your board, committee, or commission's priorities as the City begins the development of the FY 2026 budget.

Sincerely,



James F. Parajon  
City Manager

cc: The Honorable Mayor and Members of City Council  
Morgan Routt, Director, Office of Management & Budget  
Department Heads  
Staff Liaisons to Boards, Committees and Commissions