

# DRAFT COMPETENCIES AND PRACTICE AREAS

## OVERVIEW OF CHANGES

### CITY MANAGER:

- Enhanced alignment with City Council's FY26 priorities of employee retention, housing, eliminating disparities, and economic strength.
- The City Manager's competencies now emphasize talent attraction and retention, housing affordability, community disparity elimination, and economic development .
- New language also highlights federal and regional engagement and strengthened community engagement.

### CITY ATTORNEY:

- Updated to reflect support for key strategic initiatives and legal mandates in FY26. Competencies now include housing and equity legislation support, labor relations counsel, police oversight, and proactive transparency compliance.
- The City Attorney's role in economic development deals is also recognized, alongside continued focus on cost-effective, ethical, and timely legal service delivery.

### CITY CLERK:

- The records management competencies place greater emphasis on modernization and accessibility, such as implementing digital systems to manage Council records and ensuring public information is easily accessible online.
- Boards and Commissions support now aim for broader community representation in line with Alexandria's diversity and community engagement goals.
- Internally, competencies stress workforce development and retention within the Clerk's office (training staff, fostering an inclusive, service-oriented culture) consistent with the City's employee attraction and retention priority.

### INDEPENDENT POLICING AUDITOR:

- Adjusted to underscore the role's contributions to eliminating community disparities and building public trust in policing.
- The Auditor's competencies more explicitly address identifying and reducing disparities in law enforcement outcomes through data analysis of policing patterns and focusing on fairness in oversight.
- Community engagement expectations have been expanded to include targeted outreach to historically marginalized communities and youth, aligning with Council's equity goals.
- Ongoing commitments to transparency, national best practices in civilian oversight, and ethical independence remain, reinforcing that the Auditor's office must continuously improve and uphold the highest standards as a reform partner to both the community and the Police Department.

## CITY ATTORNEY

### Legal Consultation and Advising

- *Accuracy and Technical Expertise:* Providing legally sound, well-researched, and technically correct advice, grounded in Alexandria's laws and regulatory context. This includes in-depth command of City Code and relevant state frameworks to ensure all counsel is reliable and precise.
- *Objective and Honest Recommendations:* Offering impartial guidance that balances legal risks with the City's strategic goals and Council priorities, while maintaining the highest integrity. The City Attorney communicates candidly about legal options and constraints, even when advice may counter political pressures or preferred approaches.
- *Municipal and Government Law Proficiency:* Demonstrating a deep understanding of municipal law and Virginia statutes (e.g. Dillon Rule constraints, Freedom of Information Act requirements, public employment and labor laws, and authorities for civilian oversight of police) as well as applicable case law. This proficiency enables effective counsel on matters ranging from **land use and housing policy to collective bargaining and public safety** reforms.
- *Proactive Legal Risk Mitigation:* Identifying potential legal risks early and proposing solutions before issues escalate. The City Attorney anticipates areas of concern and advises City leaders preemptively to protect the City's interests and avoid costly disputes.
- *Innovative Legal Problem-Solving:* Crafting creative legal solutions to complex municipal issues, even within the confines of state law limitations. Whether **navigating affordable housing challenges** or new governance initiatives, the City Attorney presents multiple legally viable pathways that help City leadership achieve policy objectives in innovative ways.
- *Specialized Program Support:* Guiding the development and implementation of key City initiatives with targeted legal expertise. This includes supporting affordable housing and tenant protection measures with sound legal, advising on the City's new collective bargaining processes and labor agreements, and ensuring the legal sufficiency of Alexandria's police oversight mechanisms. By embedding in these strategic efforts, the City Attorney helps **advance Council priorities (housing opportunities, economic strength, employee attraction and retention, and eliminating community disparities)** in a lawful, effective manner.

### Legal Representation and Advocacy

- *City Interests Representation:* Zealously advocating for the City's legal interests in judicial proceedings, administrative hearings, negotiations, and intergovernmental forums. The City Attorney represents Alexandria in litigation and regional or state discussions, ensuring the City's position is well-articulated and its rights are protected.
- *Litigation and Legal Strategy:* Formulating and executing robust legal strategies to achieve the best possible outcomes for the City in any dispute. Whether defending the City against lawsuits or pursuing legal action, the City Attorney manages cases with a focus on victory or favorable settlement. Effective litigation management also includes efficient discovery, persuasive argumentation, and prudent use of expert witnesses, as well as supervising outside counsel when specialized expertise is required.

- *Ordinance and Resolution Drafting:* Preparing clear, well-drafted ordinances, resolutions, contracts, and other legal documents that comply with Virginia law and accurately reflect City Council's intent. The City Attorney translates policy into legally sound legislation and agreements. All documents are crafted to withstand legal scrutiny, align with state enabling authority, and be implementable by City staff.
- *Legal Review and Compliance:* Ensuring City actions, programs, and documents adhere to all applicable laws and regulations (City Code, state and federal law, and grant requirements). The City Attorney conducts thorough legal reviews of initiatives, **from land acquisitions and development agreements to social service programs**, to confirm they meet legal standards and contract terms. By enforcing rigorous compliance, the City Attorney safeguards the City's operations against legal challenges and public trust issues.
- *Accurate Legal Risk Assessment:* Providing City officials with clear evaluations of the legal risks, liabilities, and potential consequences associated with any proposed action or policy. These assessments are grounded in research and experience, enabling City Council and management to make informed decisions. The City Attorney quantifies risk (financial, reputational, operational) and advises on risk mitigation or acceptance.

### **Fiscal Responsibility**

- *Budget-Conscious Legal Services:* Managing the City's legal affairs in a manner that is mindful of budget constraints and taxpayer dollars. The City Attorney plans and monitors the Office's budget, seeking ways to minimize costs (for example, by handling more matters in-house when feasible, or by clearly defining the scope when outside counsel is engaged). Cost-effective strategies are pursued without compromising the quality of legal representation.
- *Cost-Effective Task Management:* Assigning and delegating work efficiently across the City Attorney's team. By leveraging the strengths of in-house attorneys and paralegals, and only resorting to outside legal services for highly specialized or overflow cases, the City Attorney ensures that public funds are used wisely. Internal processes (such as legal review pipelines and approval workflows) are continually improved to reduce unnecessary delays or expenses.
- *Standardized Legal Documentation:* Utilizing templates, standardized contracts, and best-practice document models to streamline routine legal work. Where appropriate, the City Attorney's Office employs pre-drafted forms, tailoring them as needed for each situation. Standardization increases efficiency and consistency in the City's legal documents while maintaining thoroughness and legal sufficiency.

### **Culture and Ethics**

- *Legal Education for Staff and Council:* Keeping City Council, the City Manager, department heads, and City staff informed of important developments in municipal law and governance. The City Attorney proactively briefs leadership on changes in laws or regulations. Additionally, the City Attorney leads or oversees training programs for City employees on legal compliance topics, such as Freedom of Information Act procedures, conflict-of-interest and ethics requirements, and the legal aspects of new City initiatives, thereby fostering an informed, compliant organization.
- *Collaborative Team Engagement:* Maintaining strong, trust-based working relationships with City Council, the City Manager, and all department heads so that legal advice is sought

early and integrated into policy development. The City Attorney works as a partner in the leadership team, participating in strategy discussions and problem-solving from the outset. This collaborative approach ensures legal considerations inform projects like interdepartmental MOUs, **public-private partnership negotiations, or human resources policy updates** *before* decisions are finalized.

- *Ethical and Professional Conduct:* Upholding the highest standards of ethics, professionalism, and impartiality in all legal dealings. Ensuring that legal opinions are based on sound law and fact, not politics or personal preference, and that all attorneys in the office adhere to the Virginia State Bar's ethical rules. Any potential conflicts of interest are disclosed and managed. The office fosters an internal culture of honesty, diligence, and respect, which in turn bolsters public trust in the City's legal actions.

### **Responsiveness and Timeliness**

- *Timely Legal Work Completion:* Meeting deadlines and delivering legal work product on time, even under tight schedules. Attorneys prioritize and manage workloads to complete contract reviews, ordinance drafts, and litigation preparations within required timeframes. Ensuring legal work keeps pace with policy urgency.
- *Availability and Accessibility:* Being readily available to City officials and staff when legal guidance is needed, including after hours or during emergencies. The City Attorney (and key deputies) remain on-call for urgent issues. The office also communicates in plain language, making legal advice accessible and understandable to non-lawyers. By maintaining approachability and a customer-service mindset, the City Attorney's Office ensures that City leadership always feels supported and can obtain timely advice to inform decisions.
- *Avoiding Delays in City Operations:* Proactively organizing the legal workflow to prevent bottlenecks that could slow City initiatives. This includes triaging incoming requests, using tracking systems for FOIA responses and contract reviews, and setting internal turnaround targets. For major City projects, the City Attorney coordinates closely with project managers to map out legal steps and align them with project milestones. By anticipating needs and adjusting resources, the City Attorney helps keep City operations and initiatives on schedule, enabling Alexandria's priorities to advance without undue legal delay.

# CITY MANAGER

## Strategic Leadership and Planning

- *Strategic Leadership:* Defining and clearly communicating a compelling vision for Alexandria's future and mobilizing all available resources to achieve that vision through inclusive and transparent leadership. The City Manager ensures that this vision reflects *and balances* the City Council's core priorities. The City Manager leads by example in setting ambitious yet attainable goals and inspires department directors and staff to align their operations with the City's long-term strategic objectives.
- *Strategic Planning:* Developing and executing multi-year strategic plans that unify the community and organization around shared priorities. The City Manager translates the City Council's priorities into concrete citywide objectives and operational plans. Aligns departmental efforts under this framework, ensuring that efforts in **housing, human services, economic development**, etc., collectively advance Council's vision. Applies an **equity lens** and an environmental sustainability lens when crafting and adjusting strategies, evaluating how policies or budget decisions will **impact different communities** (especially those historically underserved) and the environment, and makes adjustments to promote fairness and resilience. Additionally, the City Manager remains agile in planning, updating strategies to respond to emerging challenges such as **shifts in the economy** or new state and federal policies.
- *Policy Facilitation and Implementation:* Working closely with elected officials and stakeholders to turn broad goals into enacted policies and effective programs. This includes engaging neighborhood groups, businesses, non-profits, and regional partners to gather support and input for City initiatives. Once Council adopts a policy or budget initiative, the City Manager leads the implementation, coordinating across departments to ensure execution is timely and on target. The City Manager also advocates for Alexandria's needs beyond the city, influencing regional and state policy discussions in areas like transportation funding, **affordable housing legislation**, or **economic incentives** that align with Alexandria's needs. In all forums, the City Manager represents Alexandria's interests assertively to shape policies and obtain resources that help achieve the City's objectives.

## Community Services

- *Community and Resident Service:* Identifying community needs and ensuring the City provides responsive, **equitable services** that enhance quality of life in all neighborhoods. The City Manager places particular focus on groups and areas highlighted by City Council as priorities: this includes expanding services for youth and their families, support for renters facing housing instability, engagement of seniors aging in place, and outreach to low-income or historically marginalized communities that might not have equal access to government resources. The City Manager ensures that **every segment of Alexandria's diverse population can benefit from City services** and that those services are delivered fairly and respectfully.
- *Service Delivery:* Utilizing modern management practices and continuous improvement to deliver City services efficiently and effectively. The City Manager understands the components of service delivery across all operations and works to optimize these systems. This means breaking down silos between departments, encouraging innovation, and regularly reviewing performance metrics. By continuously refining processes and fostering

interdepartmental collaboration, the City Manager influences how services are delivered so that residents experience a seamless, high-quality response to their needs.

- *Technological Literacy:* Embracing information technology as a key tool for improving services, transparency, and public access. Championing digital initiatives. By integrating technology into service delivery and civic engagement (while ensuring cybersecurity and privacy are managed), the City Manager improves both the efficiency of operations and the **ease with which residents can interact with their government.**

### **Operational Management**

- *Staff Effectiveness:* Taking responsibility for the performance, development, and morale of the City's workforce. The City Manager acts as a leader of leaders, mentoring department heads and modeling the values that should permeate the organization. A major emphasis is on developing leadership at all levels. The City Manager also insists on a culture of continuous feedback and improvement: department directors are expected to coach their teams, recognize excellence, and address performance issues promptly.
- *Financial Management and Budgeting:* Ensuring the City's **long-term financial health** through prudent budgeting, strategic financial planning, and resource stewardship. The City Manager oversees the development of the annual operating budget and capital improvement program with an eye toward sustainability and alignment with community values. This includes making tough choices to balance revenues and expenditures while preserving funding for core services and Council priorities. The City Manager also **monitors economic trends** and potential federal/state funding changes to anticipate impacts on Alexandria's finances. Ensuring the City retains its strong credit rating and ample reserves is paramount, as is transparent communication about budget trade-offs.
- *Human Resources Management and Workforce Engagement:* **Attracting, retaining, and motivating a high-quality, diverse municipal workforce** by championing fair policies and an outstanding work environment. The City Manager works closely with the Human Resources Department to implement modern HR practices that position Alexandria as an employer of choice in the region. The City Manager fosters an organizational culture of inclusivity, recognition, and professional growth. By **investing in employees** and holding managers accountable for good people practices, the City Manager helps **reduce turnover**, increase job satisfaction, and strengthen the overall capacity of the organization to serve the public.

### **Communication and Community Engagement**

- *Community Engagement:* Ensuring meaningful, two-way communication with the community to support informed decision-making and trust in government. The City Manager champions a culture of openness and active listening, where residents have ample opportunities to voice their needs and perspectives.
- *Communication and Information Sharing:* Facilitating a transparent and effective flow of information between **City Council, City staff, and the public.** This competency involves using multiple platforms to share information widely, from official reports and press releases to social media updates and community newsletters. The City Manager insists on communication that is timely, accurate, and accessible. In all communications, honesty and openness are paramount to maintain credibility with the community.

## Culture and Ethics

- *Personal and Professional Integrity:* Being fair, honest, and ethical in all personal conduct and managerial decisions, thereby setting a tone of integrity for the entire organization. The City Manager leads by example, demonstrating consistency between words and actions, and expecting the same of all City staff. In situations of pressure or scrutiny the City Manager adheres to ethical principles and remains forthright. This integrity builds trust not only internally among employees but also with City Council and residents. The City Manager also reinforces ethical standards through formal mechanisms.
- *Equity and Inclusion:* Creating an organizational and community environment that values diversity, promotes inclusion, and advances equity. The City Manager is a visible champion for **equity initiatives**, such as Alexandria's Race and Social Equity policy, and works to incorporate equity considerations into all city operations. This means actively working to **eliminate systemic disparities**. The City Manager supports training for staff on cultural competency and implicit bias, and encourages **hiring and promotion practices** that improve diversity at all levels of the workforce. In the community, the City Manager's commitment to inclusion is seen in policies that aim to **broaden housing affordability**, close opportunity gaps in health and education, and ensure everyone has a voice in City decisions. By weaving equity into the fabric of governance, the City Manager helps ensure Alexandria's progress **benefits all residents**, not just a few.
- *Personal Resiliency and Development:* Maintaining resilience, adaptability, and a commitment to self-improvement in the face of the intense demands of City leadership. The City Manager also pursues ongoing professional development to bring new ideas and skills to Alexandria, through executive education, participation in municipal government associations, or learning from peer cities. By continually learning and showing adaptability, the City Manager demonstrates the nimbleness required to meet evolving challenges. This resiliency sets a tone for the organization that change is navigable and that growth is a continuous process, both for the government and its individual leaders.

## CITY CLERK

### Effective and Orderly Council Support

- *Docket Management*: Preparing, organizing, and managing City Council dockets (agendas) in accordance with all legal requirements and procedural guidelines. The City Clerk ensures that every Council meeting agenda is carefully assembled, coordinating with the City Manager's Office and departments to collect staff reports and supporting documents, numbering and indexing agenda items, and publishing the docket in advance so that Council members and the public know what will be discussed.
- *Meeting Minutes*: Accurately recording and producing the minutes of City Council meetings (and other official meetings as required) in a timely manner. The City Clerk captures the discussions, motions, votes, and outcomes of meetings, creating a clear and permanent record of Council's deliberations and decisions. Given Alexandria's **emphasis on transparency**, minutes are made available online and indexed for public access.
- *Providing Notice*: Ensuring that public notice of Council meetings (and public hearings) is given in full compliance with legal requirements. The City Clerk prepares and disseminates meeting schedules, public hearing notices, and special meeting announcements within mandated timelines so that the community has advance awareness of when and what City Council will be discussing. By effectively providing notice, the Clerk upholds the City's **commitment to open government** and maximizes public participation opportunities.

### Transparent Records Management

- *Access to Public Records*: Serving as the custodian of official City records and facilitating easy, lawful public access to those records. The City Clerk maintains the central repository of City Council's legislative records and implements a records management program that allows quick retrieval of information. The Clerk's office logs requests, coordinates with departments to gather responsive documents, and provides those records to requesters in accordance with FOIA while protecting any confidential or exempt information.
- *Legal Compliance*: Managing City records in strict accordance with applicable laws and regulations, such as the Library of Virginia's record retention schedules, the Virginia Public Records Act, and FOIA. The City Clerk classifies and archives documents properly, making sure that nothing that should be preserved is inadvertently destroyed or lost.
- *Records Integrity*: Safeguarding the integrity, security, and authenticity of City records through best practices and appropriate technology. The City Clerk implements measures such as secure digital storage, backups, and controlled access to original documents to prevent loss, tampering, or unauthorized alterations.

### Governance and Public Engagement

- *Boards and Commissions Management*: Coordinating the administrative processes for City Council's appointed boards, commissions, and committees, and supporting these bodies to function effectively and openly. The City Clerk maintains up-to-date records of all board and commission memberships, terms, and vacancies, and facilitates the recruitment and appointment process in partnership with the City Council. The Clerk's office provides orientation and resources to help them understand their responsibilities, City ethics policies, and meeting procedures.



- *Ethics in Financial Disclosures:* Administering the filing and retention of annual Statements of Economic Interests and other required disclosures by City Council members and designated officials. The City Clerk distributes the necessary forms to the appropriate individuals, provides guidance on how to complete them, and tracks submissions to ensure that everyone meets the deadlines.
- *Public Accessibility and Service:* Acting as a courteous, knowledgeable point of contact for residents and others who interact with City Council's offices or need information on Council actions. The City Clerk's office often serves as the frontline for public inquiries about past Council decisions, upcoming meetings, or how to navigate City government. In line with **Alexandria's customer experience commitment**, the Clerk strives to make every interaction positive and productive. The office also remains attuned to accessibility: ensuring that those with disabilities can access meetings and records (through ADA-compliant websites, sign language interpreters at meetings when requested, etc.) and that language is not a barrier (coordinating with the City's translation services for key documents or notices), thereby **eliminating disparities in access**.

### **Culture and Ethics**

- *Staff Effectiveness:* Providing leadership, mentorship, and support to the employees of the City Clerk's Office to ensure a **high-performing and motivated team**. The City Clerk sets clear expectations and gives staff the training and tools they need to excel in tasks like agenda preparation, records management, and customer service. Regular team meetings, cross-training, and performance evaluations are utilized to keep everyone aligned and improving.
- *Building a Positive Culture:* Fostering a workplace atmosphere within the Clerk's Office that values teamwork, innovation, and pride in public service. The City Clerk encourages open communication and idea-sharing among the staff, so process improvements or potential issues can be discussed freely. The Clerk acknowledges hard work and successes, which **boosts morale**.
- *Professional Growth:* Committing to continuous learning and development for both the City Clerk and the Clerk's Office staff. This competency means staying current on best practices in municipal clerk functions, whether it's new records management technology, legislative process improvements, or changes in election laws or FOIA regulations.

### **Professionalism and Personal Development**

- *Integrity and Ethical Conduct:* Demonstrating the highest level of honesty, impartiality, and ethical behavior in all duties of the City Clerk's Office. The City Clerk must often serve as a neutral facilitator of government processes and thus must conduct these activities without personal bias and with scrupulous fairness.
- *Equity and Inclusion:* Embracing diversity and ensuring that the **principles of equity and inclusion** are reflected in the Clerk's operations and interactions. Treating all citizens with equal respect and attention. Taking proactive steps such as providing key documents in multiple languages or ensuring meeting venues and materials are accessible to individuals with disabilities. By embedding equity considerations, the Clerk's Office supports the City's broader goal of eliminating disparities and ensuring **inclusive access to government**.
- *Resilience and Continuous Learning:* The City Clerk must remain calm, organized, and responsive throughout. When unexpected challenges occur (for example, a sudden need to

pivot to virtual meetings, or a surge in public records requests on a contentious issue), the Clerk adjusts workflows and stays focused on solutions.

# INDEPENDENT POLICING AUDITOR

## Oversight Leadership and Accountability

- *Independent Oversight:* Conducting thorough, impartial investigations into Alexandria Police Department (APD) actions and community complaints, with a commitment to independence and objectivity. The Independent Policing Auditor operates outside of the police chain of command to review serious incidents (such as uses of force, allegations of misconduct, or critical incidents resulting in injury) and complaints lodged by members of the public. This competency involves adhering strictly to facts and evidence during investigations, free from any undue influence, and making determinations or findings based on merit. All oversight activities are approached with a mindset of accountability – the goal is to ensure that any police wrongdoing is identified and addressed, and that **systemic issues are brought to light**.
- *Policy Review and Reform:* Analyzing APD policies, procedures, and training protocols and recommending improvements to enhance fairness, effectiveness, and community trust in law enforcement. The Auditor not only looks at individual incidents but also at patterns or gaps in policies that may contribute to problems.
- *Ethical Decision-Making:* Upholding strong ethical standards and integrity in every aspect of oversight work, from handling confidential information to making difficult recommendations. Making judgment calls guided by a commitment to justice, community values, and professional ethics. When facing pressure (public opinion might demand a certain outcome, or internal pushback might occur on a recommendation), the Auditor adheres to principled conclusions grounded in evidence and ethics.

## Investigative Excellence and Analytical Rigor

- *Case Management and Investigations:* Managing the intake, investigation, and resolution of complaints and critical incidents regarding police conduct in a systematic and timely manner. The Auditor's office creates clear protocols for how a case moves from a complaint to a conclusion and ensures due process and fairness during. Cases are tracked to prevent unnecessary delays, so that findings and any recommended actions can be issued while matters are still timely.
- *Data-Driven Analysis:* Utilizing statistical data and qualitative evidence to **identify trends, disparities, and root causes of issues in policing**. Beyond individual cases, the Independent Policing Auditor systematically reviews data on use-of-force incidents, complaints (by type, outcome, and demographic factors), police stops, arrests, and other relevant metrics. The Auditor then distills these findings into reporting that informs City leadership, the policing Review Board, and the public about how APD is performing and where improvements are needed.
- *Legal and Policy Compliance:* Ensuring that all oversight activities conform to legal standards, City ordinances, and best practices in civilian oversight. The Auditor also benchmarks the office's work against national best practices, often informed by guidance from organizations like NACOLE (National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement).

## Community Trust and Engagement

- *Public Accessibility and Education:* Making the oversight process open and understandable to all Alexandria residents, so **community members feel comfortable coming forward and trust the system to address their concerns**. The Auditor also commits to keeping complainants informed about the status of their cases and providing explanations of outcomes in plain language (within the confidentiality constraints of the law). Additionally, the Auditor engages in public education efforts.
- *Relationship Building:* Proactively building relationships with a broad spectrum of community groups, especially those who historically may have had tense relations with law enforcement or felt unheard. The Independent Policing Auditor regularly attends community meetings, listens to residents, and validates their experiences. Special efforts are made to **reach communities that might be hesitant** to approach government offices: partnering with local nonprofits, faith-based organizations, or advocacy groups to spread awareness of the Auditor's role and to create safe channels for feedback.
- *Civic Outreach and Dialogue:* Facilitating constructive dialogue between the police and the community as part of the oversight mandate. The Independent Policing Auditor, often in concert with the Community Policing Review Board, organizes forums, town halls, or listening sessions where residents can discuss public safety issues directly with oversight officials (and sometimes police leadership in a moderated setting). This approach aligns with Alexandria's broader priority of **eliminating disparities** by actively involving those affected in creating safer, fairer policing outcomes.

## Governance and Advisory Functions

- *Board Guidance and Support:* Serving as a professional resource and liaison to the Independent Community Policing Review Board, enabling it to fulfill its duties effectively. The Auditor provides the Board with factual investigation reports, analyses, and expert advice so that Board members can make informed recommendations or decisions on cases under their purview. Additionally, the Auditor guides the Board on process matters. The Auditor also communicates Board inputs or concerns back to City leadership, essentially bridging the gap between this civilian body and the formal City management/Police Department.
- *Transparency and Public Reporting:* Producing regular reports that inform the public and City officials about the work of the Auditor's Office and the state of police oversight in Alexandria, while balancing necessary confidentiality.
- *Government Collaboration:* Collaborating with City leadership, City Attorney's Office, and APD command staff to ensure **that oversight findings translate into concrete improvements**. After issuing recommendations (whether about disciplining an officer, changing a policy, or instituting new training), the Auditor works with the Police Chief and City Manager to discuss how those recommendations can be achieved, offering clarity or adjustment if there are practical constraints. The Auditor may also coordinate with the City Attorney on any legal questions that arise from a recommendation. When City Council or the City Manager adopt certain oversight recommendations as formal policy directives, the Auditor tracks the progress and provides additional advice as necessary.

## Culture and Ethics

- *Continuous Learning and Training:* Ensuring that the Auditor's Office staff (and the Auditor themselves) remain well-versed in the evolving fields of policing, civil rights, and civilian oversight methodologies. The Independent Policing Auditor prioritizes professional development by attending trainings, obtaining certifications, and participating in oversight networks such as the National Association for Civilian Oversight of Law Enforcement (NACOLE). Lessons learned from other jurisdictions are brought back to improve Alexandria's practices.
- *Cultural Competency and Bias Awareness:* Embedding principles of **diversity, equity, and inclusion** into the Auditor's operations and internal culture. The Auditor's team must be adept at interacting with and understanding people who may not trust authorities or who may have experienced trauma. To that end, the Auditor implements training programs that enhance cultural competency and uncover implicit biases the staff may hold, to ensure those biases do not affect investigations or recommendations. By fostering an office culture that values empathy, respect, and fairness for all cultures and communities, the Auditor's Office leads by example in the City's quest to **eliminate disparities**.
- *Resilience and Professional Integrity:* Maintaining a high level of integrity, impartiality, and emotional resilience, given the challenging nature of oversight work. The Independent Policing Auditor fosters a **supportive work environment** that equips staff with the resources, guidance, and resilience strategies necessary to sustain high-quality oversight work under emotionally demanding and high-pressure conditions. It is essential that the Auditor's Office handles all these pressures without compromising its mission or burning out.