



City of Alexandria

Personnel Subcommittee

May 15, 2025



Summary



1. Approval of Minutes
2. Review of April Meeting
3. Overview of Existing Forms
4. Revised Form and Output
5. Collection of Broader Feedback - Proposal
6. Conclusion and Next Steps



Review of April Subcommittee Feedback

- Approval of minutes
- Alternative rating approaches beyond Likert scales
- Evaluation form to facilitate performance discussions
- Increased specificity in competencies

Recap



Current Evaluation Form

Using the City Manager's evaluation as an example, the current form consists of 31 questions with rankings and narratives, and one generalized area to capture comments. Each member of Council completes a form, the group of which are compiled by the Mayor and used to communicate results.

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3. Are the City's customers (residents, businesses, or otherwise) satisfied with City services?

Rating: _____

Comments: _____

4. Has the City faced unnecessary controversy?

Rating: _____

Comments: _____

5. Does the Manager understand and comply with the overall policies, laws, and philosophy of the City? Do the Manager's efforts lead to successful accomplishment of goals and objectives?

Rating: _____

Existing Forms



Key Changes

- **Comparative Ranking, Not Numeric Scoring**
 - Council ranks competencies by importance and strength, enabling clear focus on alignment and priorities rather than arbitrary scores.
- **Strategic Priority Integration**
 - Direct, structured reflection on the City's four Council priorities—making evaluation both mission-driven and forward-focused.
- **Streamlined & Executable Format**
 - Online form reduces burden on Council and supports thoughtful input within 30 minutes per appointee.
- **Action-Oriented Output**
 - Visualization of rankings + narrative summaries support goal-setting, development, and targeted Council conversation.

Revised Forms



Proposed Process Redesign

Step 1: Appointee completes online self-evaluation

- Self-evaluation focuses on Council Priorities

Step 2: Personnel Subcommittee receives self-evaluation

- Distributes to Council

Step 3: Council completes online evaluation

- Two-part evaluation addresses competencies and Council priorities

Step 4: Personnel Subcommittee receives Council evaluations

- Provides scores to HR for report generation
- Synthesizes Council feedback

Revised Forms



Proposed Form Redesign

ASKS:
*Are we
directing this
employee's
finite
bandwidth
where it's
needed most?*

1. Rank the following competencies in terms of which you believe are most important to the role:

Note: the most important strength should be highest on the list

Strategic Leadership and Planning	
Community Services	
Operational Management	
Communications and Community Engagement	
Culture and Ethics	

Two vertical arrows are positioned to the right of the competency list. The left arrow points upwards, indicating the direction of increasing importance. The right arrow points downwards, indicating the direction of decreasing importance.

Revised Forms



Proposed Form Redesign

- **FIRST:** Rank the competencies
 - By importance for the role
 - By strength of the employee
- **THEN:** Provide performance feedback based on Council priorities
- Let's take a look

- Self evaluation is **streamlined** for Council review
 - Captures feedback in four priority areas
 - Requests professional development goals

Revised Forms



Proposed Competencies and Practice Areas

- Specific to the City
- Example – Strategic Planning
 - **Previous:** Developing a plan of action that brings the community together, provides clarity of purpose and priorities, and guides the organization's actions in achieving its goals and objectives.
 - **Updated:** 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.

Revised Forms

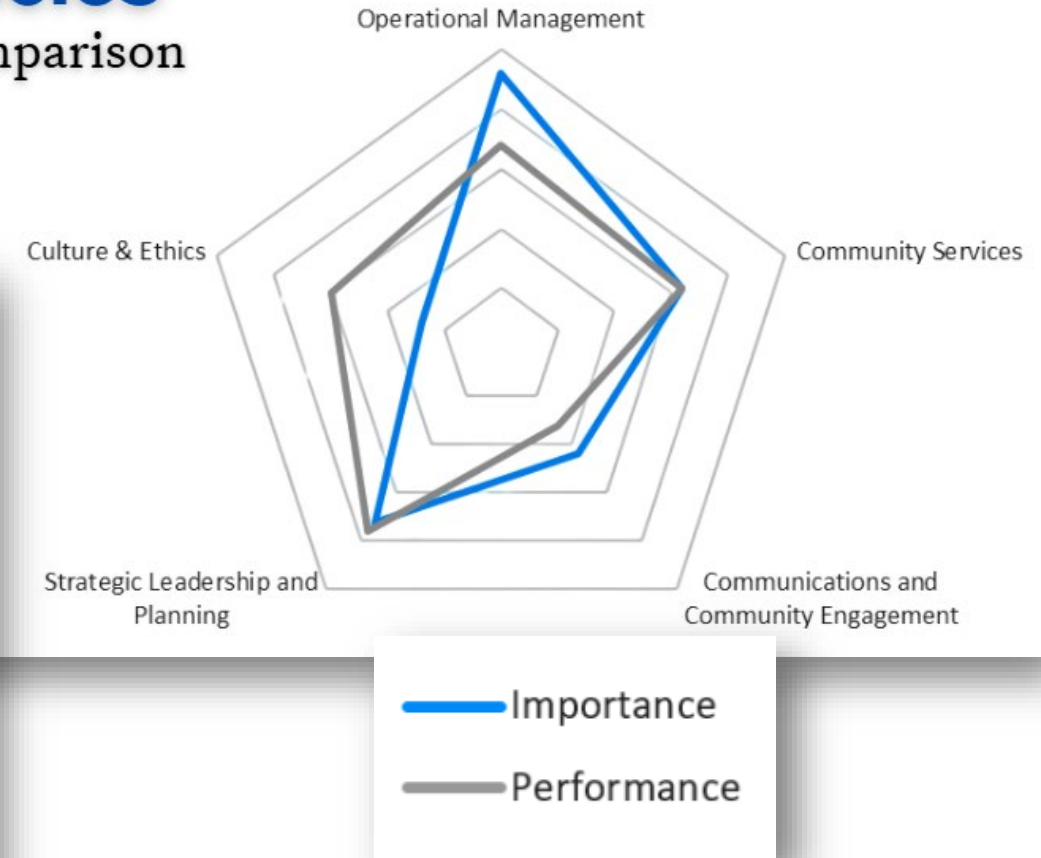
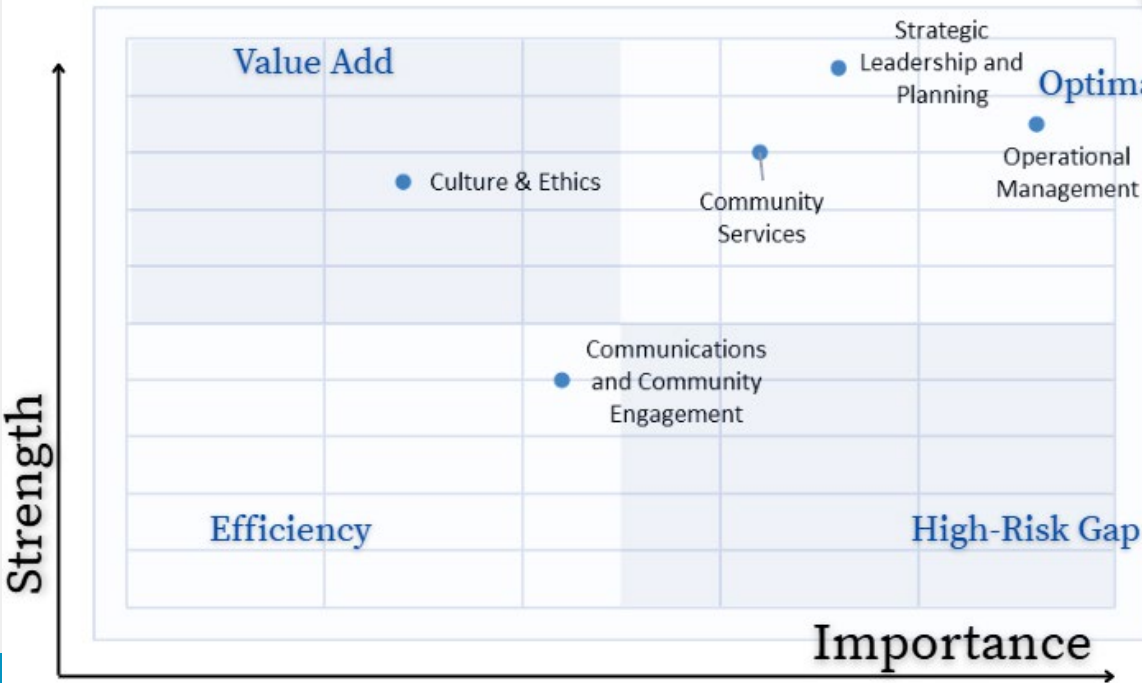
See [draft](#)



Rank-Then-Review

Competencies Comparison

Competencies Comparison



Averaging Council's priority rankings and strengths ratings provides a clear overview of where adjustments in focus are most valuable

Proposed Output



Rank-Then-Review

Competencies

Priority for Position

Operational Management	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Community Services	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Communications and Community Engagement	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Strategic Leadership and Planning	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Culture & Ethics	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Competencies

Strengths Assessment

Operational Management	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Community Services	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Communications and Community Engagement	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Strategic Leadership and Planning	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Culture & Ethics	●	●	●	●	●	●	●

Here, ranked priorities and strength evaluations are displayed with representation of each Council member's assessment. This allows the appointee to see where feedback is universal versus specific.

Proposed Output



Narrative – Sample Feedback

*"I'm pleased to see that **hiring timelines have improved**—especially for some of our hardest-to-fill roles. I'd like to see us do more to reach underrepresented communities in our recruitment efforts."*

"The City's presence at **career fairs** is much stronger this year, and that visibility matters. I'd like us to build on this by creating a more structured way to track how each department is doing on retention."

*"I remain concerned about **turnover in public safety**. We need a more robust plan to address burnout and give those employees a reason to stay."*

"The **staff appreciation events** are a big win. I've heard a lot of positive feedback from employees. But we also need to look at how we help people grow in their careers—clearer **internal career pathways** would help with retention."

*"**Communication around benefits** has improved, which I appreciate. But I think we still need more **transparency around how salary adjustments** are determined and communicated."*

"I want to acknowledge the City's **investment in staff mental health**—that's an area where we've made real progress. I'd also like to see us hold the line on **flexible and hybrid work options** where possible."

*"I've noticed that the City Manager has taken Council's feedback seriously and responded proactively. Going forward, I'd like to see retention strategies that more clearly tie to our **DEI goals**."*

Example



Narrative – Sample Reporting

Council members consistently acknowledged **progress in improving hiring efficiency, employee recognition, and the visibility of City recruitment efforts**. Several members emphasized the importance of targeted retention strategies—particularly for high-turnover areas like public safety—and asked for **more clarity on tracking retention data and pay equity**. Multiple comments pointed to opportunities to strengthen the connection between employee retention and broader **DEI, wellness, and flexibility** initiatives. Overall, the feedback reflects appreciation for foundational progress, with encouragement to deepen strategic alignment across departments and employee segments.

Example



Professional Development Feedback

“Tap into local jurisdictional networks including COG and information pathways”

“Pursue training opportunities related to AI and cybersecurity in government”

“Develop relationships with and visit international cities leading the way in green infrastructure and practices, such as Copenhagen or Singapore”

“Take 2 weeks vacation, appoint any DCM as acting”

“Attend ICMA conference”

Example



360 Feedback - Proposal

A Balanced Approach

Purpose of 360 Feedback

- Build a more complete picture of executive leadership
- Celebrate what's working
- Identify leadership opportunities from those closest to the work
- Add context—not scores—to the formal evaluation
- **Recommendation:** conduct 360 and review at midyear for opportunity to assess performance

Broad Feedback



360 Feedback - Proposal

A Balanced Approach

Step	Description
1. Input Collection	Direct reports complete a short structured survey with three prompts: – What’s working well? – Where could leadership improve? – Any other feedback for continued growth?
2. Review & Synthesis	Personnel Subcommittee aggregates responses into a summary—no quotes, no attribution—and identifies key themes.
3. Appointee Review	Summary is shared with the appointee. They may provide written context, clarifications, or action steps.
4. Shared with Council	Council receives the 360 feedback summary ahead of midyear discussion.

Broad Feedback

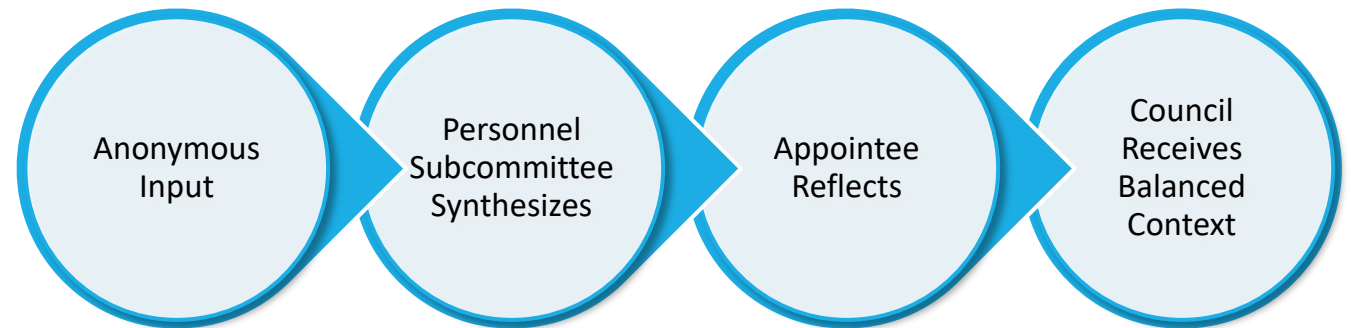


360 Feedback - Proposal

A Balanced Approach

	Pros	Cons	Risk
Anonymous	Candid, honest insight	May feel vague or one-sided	Perceived as a complaints box
Identified	Actionable, can be clarified	May be overly cautious or filtered	Can feel like going over a manager's head

Proposal:



Broad Feedback



360 Feedback - Proposal

A Balanced Approach

Sample Raw Feedback

Opportunities	<p>"I wish they'd follow up more consistently when they say they'll get back to you."</p> <p>"It would be great to see them initiate more informal check-ins with department heads."</p>
Challenges	<p>"Their communication sometimes feels indirect—it's hard to know where we actually stand."</p> <p>"They sometimes defer decisions too long, which slows down progress on cross-departmental projects."</p>
Strengths	<p>"They've been very visible lately—showing up to staff events has made a real difference."</p> <p>"They're calm under pressure, even when the rest of us are scrambling."</p> <p>I really appreciate that they give credit to departments in Council briefings."</p>

Sample Synthesized Feedback

- Staff appreciate the appointee's visible presence and public recognition of departmental efforts.
- Leadership style under pressure is described as calm, which contributes to team stability.
- Several team members noted opportunities to increase clarity and directness in communication.
- Follow-through on commitments and timely communication were mentioned as areas for growth.
- Some feedback emphasized the need for more timely decision-making and informal leadership engagement across departments.

Broad Feedback



Discussion



Questions



Next Steps

June

- Finalize Process
- Discuss Midyear
- Share Forms with Appointees
- Prepare (Docket) and schedule FY 2025 Performance Evaluations

July

- Confirm ongoing subcommittee efforts
- Discuss public transparency in performance evaluations

Recommendations