

City of Alexandria, Virginia
FY 2027 Proposed Operating Budget & CIP
Budget Questions & Answers

March 25, 2026

Question:

Provide a list of initiatives being considered that are specific to the West End and/or would benefit businesses in the West End.

Response:

The FY2027 proposed budget includes resources for five new initiatives identified as catalysts in [ALX Forward: A Strategic Framework for Economic Growth](#). Three of the five initiatives support attracting new businesses to the West End; encouraging existing West End businesses to add jobs or investment; or driving customers to independent West End restaurants and retailers.

The specific initiatives are:

Lease Incentives for Arts, Entertainment, and Innovation Uses

This initiative would provide targeted lease incentives to attract arts, entertainment, and innovation-oriented tenants to activate underutilized commercial spaces. Given the availability of larger-format commercial space and redevelopment activity in parts of the West End, this initiative may be particularly relevant for attracting new destination-oriented uses to those corridors.

Alexandria Investment Fund – Small Business/High-Growth Set-Aside

This initiative would dedicate a portion of the Alexandria Investment Fund to support small businesses and high-growth firms making capital investments, expanding operations, or relocating in Alexandria. West End businesses and businesses seeking to locate in the West End would be eligible for consideration under this program.

ALX Open Rewards

This initiative would encourage consumer spending at Alexandria’s independent restaurants and retailers through incentive-based promotional campaigns. Participating businesses across the city, including those located in the West End, are eligible to participate and benefit from increased customer traffic and a portion of funding received could be used towards a targeted campaign to boost participation in the West End (via higher rewards and targeted social media promotion).

Marketing and Outreach

Specific marketing and outreach plans will be developed as part of program implementation. However, anticipated outreach strategies may include:

- Direct engagement with businesses and property owners located in the West End
- Coordination with business associations and commercial property owners in West End corridors
- Targeted digital and social media campaigns highlighting participating businesses
- Promotion through existing City and economic development communication channels
- Engagement with small business resource partners serving entrepreneurs in the West End

These efforts would be intended to ensure that West End businesses are aware of and able to participate in applicable programs.

Evaluation

Program performance will be evaluated using measures such as:

- Number of businesses participating in each initiative
- Commercial space activation and new tenant attraction
- Business expansion or investment supported through incentive programs
- Consumer participation in promotional campaigns
- Geographic distribution of participating businesses and program outcomes

Tracking participation geographically will help the City assess the extent to which West End businesses are benefiting from these initiatives.