

Environmental Policy Commission (EPC)
Annual Report
July 2025 – June 2026

Summary of Accomplishments

The mission of the Environmental Policy Commission (EPC), which was established under Chapter 4, Article M, of the City Code includes “advising and making recommendations to the City Council and, when appropriate, to the Planning Commission and City Manager on matters relating to the climate crisis and its effects; clean air; land use; noise pollution; pesticides, herbicides and contaminants; solid waste; water quality and supply; other matters referred to the EPC by the City and citizens; and other topics relating to the conservation and protection of Alexandria’s environment. Within these guidelines, the EPC membership completed the following activities during its 2025/26 year.

EPC Policy and Membership Accomplishments

- Membership remained steady throughout the year as three members left and three new members joined the commission. Quorum was met every meeting. EPC closed out FY26 with one vacant position.
- EPC supported the Updated Green Building Plan that was released in Fall 2025, with a focus on prioritizing energy efficiency performance using Energy Use Intensity as a core performance metric.
- EPC coordinated closely with Office of Housing during the Housing Master Plan update, resulting in the addition of a stand-alone goal addressing sustainability, focusing attention on energy efficiency improvements and weatherization, and green building practices to make homes healthier and more resilient.
- EPC submitted a request to City Council to add a Youth Seat to the Commission, the fourteenth (14th) voting commission seat, as a way of furthering youth involvement.

EPC Member Activities

- Members of the Commission also participated in the following City commissions, committees, and advisory groups in the capacity of voting members:
 - Waterfront Commission
 - Transportation Commission
- EPC held its annual retreat in May 2026. The focus included a discussion from the Office of Climate Action, City of Richmond’s Sustainability Office, and the VA League of Conservation Voters; a discussion with City Council members on environmental priorities and focus areas, and how the EPC can support those initiatives; and an inward look at the EPC, including the mission and vision, four (4) priority areas, and actions for FY27.
- EPC supported selection and celebration of the annual Ellen Pickering Environmental

Excellence Award, which was granted to Russell Bailey for 2026.

- EPC wrote letters of support for city initiatives, projects, plans, and legislative priorities related to housing, climate resilience, buildings, transportation, budget, and community engagement, which are provided below.
- EPC commissioners attended City Council Public Hearings and provided public comments on EPC focus areas and actions from the preceding month.
- The EPC nimbly updated its agenda to call attention to environmental topics of the moment, such as the Potomac sewage spill issue.

Program and/or Legislative Accomplishments

In October and November, the EPC wrote letters to City Council and the City Manager for the EPC's Legislative Priorities and to provide input on Budget priorities for the City in FY 2027:

- The legislative priorities includes support of healthy homes through affordable housing bills and improved climate resiliency with a focus on extreme heat and flood mitigation.
- The budget priorities were focused on continuing to allocate budget to existing programs or initiatives aligned with Eco-City goals and initiatives, such as the Office of Climate Action, DASH services, City Hall renovations, the Waterfront Flood Mitigation Project, and Stormwater Management and flood prevention. EPC also expressed strong support for adding a new budget item for a Community Choice Aggregation consultant.

Goals for 2026-2027

- The EPC's four overarching priorities remain: decarbonizing buildings, decarbonizing transportation, improving resilience against physical climate risks (flood and extreme heat), and focusing on environmental justice.
- For FY27 specifically, the EPC is focusing on City programs and initiatives such as: Community Choice Aggregation and other Utility opportunities, the T&ES Flood Resilience Plan, implementation of the updated Green Building Plan, Stay Cool ALX and other extreme heat efforts, and the Duke Street Land Use Plan.
- The EPC will also continue to provide annual Legislative Priorities and Budget Letters.

Leadership

- Officers for the upcoming year were elected at the June meeting: Ms. Marta Schantz will serve as Chair, Mr. Jordan Eccles as Vice-Chair. Ms. Jennifer Debias was elected as Secretary.

- Mr. Benjamin Cuddy, Ms. Kathie Hoekstra, and Mr. Philip Mobilia resigned. New membership includes Mr. Rick Schneider (November 2025), Mr. Jordan Eccles (February 2026), and Ms. Olu Smoak (May 2026).
- During the course of the year, membership included the following individuals:
 - Dan Beattie
 - Eldon Boes
 - Benjamin Cuddy
 - Jennifer Debias
 - Jordon Eccles
 - Charlie Garlow
 - Kathie Hoekstra
 - David Hole
 - Perrin Krisko
 - Philip Mobilia
 - Marta Schantz
 - Rick Schneider
 - Julia Slayden
 - Olu Smoak
 - Yanique Revers
- Melissa Atwood, Department of Transportation and Environmental Services (T&ES), Environmental Quality section, acted as the staff liaison to the EPC during the course of the 2025/2026 year.

Attachments

1. Legislative Priority Submittal. Healthy and Affordable Homes, September 29, 2025
2. Legislative Priority Submittal. Improved Climate Resiliency (Extreme Heat and Flood Mitigation) and Increased Budget for Related Local Initiatives, September 29, 2025
3. Letter to City Council. Support for Updated Green Building Policy, October 17, 2025
4. Letter to City Manager. FY2027 Environmental Budget Priorities, November 3, 2025
5. Letter to City Council. Youth Membership Seat on Environmental Policy Commission, December 8, 2025
6. Letter to Traffic & Parking Board. Support for Braddock Road Trail Access & Corridor Improvements. December 22, 2025
7. Letter to Alexandria Office of Housing. Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission Comments on Housing 2040 Draft Plan, March 21, 2026. Submitted via engage.alexandriava.gov/housing2040plan and housing2040plan@publicinput.com