

# FY 2025 Budget Comments Received



New comments on top.

Date Received	Comment
Thursday, March 7, 2024	Please prioritize the working class families in our city in creating our city budget by expanding the guaranteed income program and the expansion of affordable housing for those making 40% AMI or below. Moreover, our fire fighters and other public safety officials along with teachers and staff need access to housing in our city and a variety of other supports that the budget should address so that we can attract and retain their talent.
Thursday, March 7, 2024	As a resident of Alexandria for 20 years and an ACPS parent, I ask you to approve the school board's budget including returning \$20M to the CIP budget for the George Mason project or make appropriate efforts to keep the George Mason project on or near schedule. Public education is the cornerstone of our society and we need to support our students and teachers in the best way possible. Investment in our schools will help our society thrive.
Thursday, March 7, 2024	Please fully fund ACPS! Anything less than the proposed budget is unacceptable. We need to show the amazing teachers at ACPS that we value them and their important work for our community. As a resident and tax payer, this is by far my number one budget priority for the city. Please do the right thing and give our schools the resources they need.
Thursday, March 7, 2024	I ask that the Council please support a low-income rent-voucher program, an expansion of the ARISE guaranteed-income pilot, and for continued support of working-class (40% of area median income) affordable housing. Thank you.
Thursday, March 7, 2024	<p>Mayor Wilson, Members of the Alexandria City Council, and Mr. Parajon,</p> <p>I am writing to you in three capacities--Alexandria resident since 2008, parent of two children in Alexandria City Public Schools, and current Chair of the School Board's Budget Advisory Committee (BAC)--to request that the City fully fund the School Board's approved Operating and CIP budgets.</p> <p>As you all know, our schools are the heartbeat of our community. When they thrive, the community thrives. The City is the largest single source of funding for ACPS and teacher compensation makes up the vast majority of that budget. This makes sense given that teachers are the single most meaningful contributor to students' learning and growth. Without high-quality teachers, our system will suffer, our students will suffer, and our community will suffer.</p> <p>Nationally, teacher vacancy rates are on the rise, and that is no different in the Washington, DC metro region. We must make a sound commitment to recruit and retain high-quality teachers, so that Alexandria can be the best school division in the region.</p> <p>This Council and previous Councils should be commended for their efforts to ensure that our teacher compensation remains highly competitive. But it is not enough to rest on our laurels. As we look around at other jurisdictions, we see that many are proposing additional investments in FY2025 to improve teacher compensation through additional step increases, market rate adjustments, and in many cases, both. If we don't continue to invest, we risk losing more educators to our neighbors. We need to be proactive, not reactive.</p> <p>I understand that to meet, or even come close, to the School Board's approved budgets will require either cuts to services in the City or increasing residential property taxes. Neither action should be taken lightly.</p> <p>And yet, our investments reflect our values. I value high expectations and healthy, welcoming environments for our students, knowing that education is the most important factor in helping individuals find economic opportunity and mobility. As a property owner, I am asking you to consider a moderate tax increase to be able to invest in the future of our youth and the future of our City.</p> <p>Further, in my role as Chair, I join my BAC colleagues in requesting that the City maintain the Division's previous CIP plan for George Mason and Cora Kelly. We believe that to meet the City's Green Building Policy and prepare for the Sanse and Naja affordable housing development in Arlandria, it is important that the City provides the investment necessary to deliver on the projects as planned. School modernization is critical to both meet the needs of the Division's growth, and provide environments that are more conducive to learning.</p> <p>BAC does not traditionally advocate for specific budget requests; rather, we generally provide advice to the School Board about improvements to the budget process and communication with the public. This time is different. As a body, we believe that it is critical to make the community aware of the opportunities and challenges confronting the Division, and ensure that we are prioritizing actions that improve the wellbeing of our community. We stand with other community members in asking the Council to approve this additional request so that we can keep our schools and our community thriving.</p> <p>Thank you for your service,            Ryan Reyna            ACPS Parent            Chair, Alexandria City School Board' Budget Advisory Committee</p>
Thursday, March 7, 2024	I understand the budget proposal recommends cutting Line 104 DASH bus service. I am writing in opposition to this. As a regular Line 104 rider this seems to fly in the face of everything the city says it wants to do, specifically get more cars off the road and more people to take mass transit. We specifically moved to where we live to be on the bus line for commuting and getting to the airport and Del Ray. Taking the bus from 30 minutes (already decreased from the pre-Covid 20 minute interval) to an hour will result in less usage and more people driving during rush hour. This seems counterproductive and short sighted. When the city says it want public transportation and non-car transportation for all parts of the city this must not be true if you are willing to cut the only already limited service the Line 104 neighborhood gets. You also tout connecting to metro way and the old town circulator to residents but that will no longer be an option. Again, this seems very short-sighted.
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	Hello, I'd ask that you implement a few items. Please allocate \$10 million for the creation and implementation of a locally funded voucher program to support families who earn 40% of the area median income (AMI) and below Very importantly, please expand and invest \$10 million to expand the guaranteed income pilot program (ARISE). This is a great program that the Mayor has championed. Also, please consider continuing to fund the approved pipeline projects that will provide units at 40% AMI and below.
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	<p>Dear Mayor Wilson, City Council Members, and City Manager Parajon,</p> <p>I am writing to express my strong support for fully funding our public schools and approving the school board's proposed budget request. As an Alexandria resident and a parent of two children in ACPS, I believe that investing in education is essential for the well-being and future success of our children and our city as a whole.</p> <p>It is crucial that our schools have the resources they need to provide quality education, support our teachers, and meet the diverse needs of our students. By fully funding the proposed ACPS budget, we can ensure that our children receive the education they deserve and that our community continues to thrive. Without fully funding the School Board's budget request, our teachers will fall behind our surrounding school districts and we risk more teacher and staff vacancies.</p> <p>I urge you to prioritize education funding. Investing in our children's education is an investment in the future prosperity of our city.</p> <p>Julia Sylva</p>

Date Received	Comment
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	<p>Hello! My name is Emma Reese, and I am a member of the Miracle League Board. In a few days, the Head of our Board, Mac Slover, will be sending a letter to the Council asking for \$280,000 to be included in the 2025 budget to resurface the Miracle Field. For those of you who don't know, the Miracle League is an organization dedicated to allowing players with disabilities to play baseball. The Miracle Field is one of the main tools that we use to make that possible; the surface material of the field allows it to be utilized by wheelchairs or walkers. The turf provides a safe landing spot to fall when our players are unsteady on our feet. Most of all, the Miracle Field provides a place where players of all abilities feel welcome, and have the chance to feel accomplished, confident, and proud. The Miracle Field is now over ten years old, which means that the surface of the field is beginning to break down. I ask that the Council please consider adding the Miracle Field to the budget.</p> <p>Thank you so much, Emma Reese</p>
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	<p>Por FAVOR POR NUESTRA COMUNIDAD AYUDENLOS A MANTENERLOS EN EL MISMO LUGAR SIN TENER QUE PAGAR UN ALTO COSTO DE RENTA!! NUESTROS HIJOS AN CRECIDO EN UN LUGAR DONDE NO QUIEREN QUE NOS MUDEMOS, DONDE SU INFANCIA LES GUSTA PORQUE TIENEN TODO CERCA..</p>
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	<p>I am writing today to ask you to fully fund the ACPS Budget that includes the School Board's additions to the Superintendent's Budget. I have three children in ACPS (grades 10, 6, and kindergarten) and if we don't have teachers then we all fail. I am terrified of loosing even more teachers, support staff, and principals to neighboring districts. All three of my children's schools started this year with a brand new principal. And sadly I feel lucky that for the most part all three have teachers for all of their classes (for the most part because when a teacher is out on extended medical leave, there is sometimes not even a sub to fill in). I can barely afford to live in this City but I support a tax increase to pay our teachers/school staff the salaries they deserve. I believe the Superintendent and City Council can find ways to cut costs elsewhere if a tax increase is not feasible. Please fully fund our schools as requested by our School Board!!</p> <p>Thanks, Kristin</p>
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	<p>Dear Members of the City Council,</p> <p>I'm here to express my strong support for fully funding our public schools and approving the superintendent's proposed budget. As a member of this community and a parent of an elementary school student who attends George Mason, I believe that investing in education is essential for the well-being and future success of our children and our city as a whole.</p> <p>It is crucial that our schools have the resources they need to provide quality education, support our teachers, and meet the diverse needs of our students. By fully funding the proposed ACPS budget, we can ensure that our children receive the education they deserve and that our community continues to thrive.</p> <p>My son has had wonderful teachers during his elementary school experience. I want to ensure his teachers and all the caring educators in the Alexandria public school system are valued to the extent that they continue to grow their career here in our hometown.</p> <p>I am very concerned about teacher shortages, inadequate salaries, overcrowding in classrooms, and the negative ripple effects of these circumstances that are felt throughout our community.</p> <p>I am very concerned that our local government is not recognizing the urgency of the problems our school system is going through, and the vital importance of fully funding the recommended budget.</p> <p>Based on the resources in our community and the compassionate, progressive focus of our city, we should have the best school system in the area. That is not our current status and it won't happen if we don't invest more financially. This is a critical time.</p> <p>I urge you to prioritize education funding. Investing in our children's education is an investment in the future prosperity of our city.</p> <p>Thank you for considering my views on this important matter.</p> <p>Best,  Michaela Muttom North Ridge neighborhood resident</p>
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	<p>Dear Members of the City Council,</p> <p>I am an ACPS parent and a resident of Alexandria City for the last 24 years who cares deeply about the pressing need for increased staffing and competitive salaries within our public schools to ensure that our students receive the highest quality education in the region.</p> <p>I'm among many in the community who are invested in the success and well-being of our students. However, it has become increasingly evident that our schools are facing challenges in attracting and retaining qualified staff due to inadequate compensation and staffing levels.</p> <p>In addition to being an ACPS parent, I am also a high school ESOL teacher in FCPS, so I know firsthand what it takes to be an effective teacher in today's world. I am incredibly grateful to the numerous ACPS teachers who have provided my children with an excellent education, and if it takes raising taxes to compensate them fairly, I'm all for it. I don't want ACPS to lose more teachers, and I believe we are heading into a crisis situation.</p> <p>I also would like to request an outside audit of ACPS central office to be sure that funds are being utilized properly and efficiently. If there is waste, we need to address that.</p> <p>To provide our students with the educational experience they deserve, it is essential that we prioritize investments in staffing and salary competitiveness. The budget the school board recently approved, and which is up for your consideration, does so. By adequately staffing our schools and offering competitive salaries, we can attract and retain talented educators who are dedicated to nurturing the academic growth of our students.</p> <p>I urge you to allocate resources towards increasing staffing levels and ensuring that our teachers and support staff receive competitive salaries. If you do so, you will not only be helping our students, but you will be ensuring that our city continues to thrive. Our children are our future, so let's give them the best education possible. This should be the city's top priority.</p> <p>Thank you. Patrice Gotsch</p>

Date Received	Comment
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	<p>Hello City Council,</p> <p>I am writing as a concerned parent, requesting that you fully fund ACPS per the additional budget requests added by the School Board. I have two children in ACPS, one in 4th grade so I've seen a LOT of transitions. I have seen firsthand the teacher turnover in my son's school. Teachers are working exceptionally hard already and the thought of losing more to burnout and/or frustration is disheartening.</p> <p>The Alexandria PTAC has organized excellent information highlighting how ACPS students have more complex needs due to immigration and Free Lunch demographics. My sons' school is one of the Free Lunch sites; dedicated teachers are engaging families, running additional programs on shoestring budgets, and wearing multiple hats as they navigate serving high-need families. Additionally, fully-funding ACPS will increase school capacity. As the city council increases affordable housing, families come with it and there is a need for school capacity.</p> <p>Thank you for hearing my concerns as a parent in the community. We want our public school to succeed - we have seen many families in our community choose to move out of Alexandria and the schools are cited as a reason. Please help make ACPS an attractive school program. I see parent boosters working SO hard to promote programs and wish we could see that enthusiasm at the City Council level, too.</p> <p>Katie Niersbach</p>
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	<p>Please fully fund the budget as requested by the School Board (not the Superintendent). This extra funding is crucial for increased teacher pay and for key construction projects like the George Mason Elementary School project. We have been underfunding our schools for years. It is time to give ACPS what it needs to succeed.</p>
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	<p>What does it take for a teacher to feel cared for and supported by their district? I feel supported by my Principal through her words and deeds, by the parents of the students I teach through their cards and kind remarks, by my colleagues at my school by the times they step in to help, and by my students who work hard every day, but what would it be like to feel supported by my district and my city?</p> <p>I did not grow up in Alexandria, but I married into a family that has close ties to the city. In fact, my daughters go to the same elementary school that their grandmother went to, and I think that is really special. People in Alexandria have connections, and teachers in Alexandria have connections. We want to work here, we want to see the kids here learn and thrive. I think the opportunities in this city are far beyond what we've even begun to see from our kids and it takes dedicated, veteran teachers, to make that happen. However, I can not continue to work in a district that doesn't see the potential in me, the way I see the potential in it.</p> <p>I started working in ACPS when I was newly pregnant with my second child because I looked to a future of having the same Winter, Spring, and Summer breaks, I wanted to know a lot about the schools my kids would attend, and I wanted to be a part of the community on multiple levels.</p> <p>At the time I left DCPS, I would have had 3 months of fully paid maternity leave, as I did with my first child. Unfortunately, ACPS does not have such parental leave and I was left only with my 1 year's worth of sick &amp; personal leave and whatever donations I could collect from my new colleagues. It was really hard to make it work, but we did it because we continued to look to the future. Had I been paying attention, it was the first indication that my district and my city don't care about me, as a mother.</p> <p>The next time I knew the district didn't care about teachers was when, amid a pandemic, they froze our pay in the form of not giving us a step increase. Now I know budgets were tight at the time, however as the economy recovered and we started getting end-of-year bonuses, I thought that instead of those, they might think of restoring our steps to be on par with those newly-hired employees as a better, more lasting incentive for folks to stay. But all we get is talk from the Chief Financial Officer about open markets and moving to another district for higher pay (what kind of retention strategy is that by the way?) in a job where we have zero negotiating power when it comes to our salary.</p> <p>So here we are at another crossroads where the district and city can show that they care about teachers and the students of this city. The school board has approved an increase in pay and additional employees in several key roles to help support teachers and all the work that they do. The school board and the city have to start working together. The finger-pointing and the blame only serve to protect the status quo and do nothing to make those of us doing the hard work every day of teaching children, feel supported. As a resident of the city, I am willing to fund my own pay increase through an increase in taxes and I think it comes down to who the City Council is here to serve. Are you here to serve our public school students, with over 50% of whom qualify for free and reduced lunch? Or are you here to protect the homeowners of \$1mil+ homes?</p> <p>I challenge each one of you to go sub in a school for a week and tell me that teachers don't deserve all of this and more. Tell me that we don't need more personnel, that we don't need more support, that we don't need additional funding to make our schools wonderful places for students to learn and grow. Yes, our school-aged population might be small, but it is the future of our city, and if we don't start investing in it now, we are going to have to pay for it later.</p> <p>Please fully fund ACPS and fully fund our future.</p>
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	<p>Subject: Urgent Call for Action: Addressing the Affordable Housing Crisis in Alexandria</p> <p>Dear City Staff and City Council Members,</p> <p>As you work diligently on the development of the Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budget and the Fiscal Year 2025–2034 Capital Improvement Program (CIP), I urge you to prioritize addressing the critical affordable housing crisis that our community is facing. The lack of affordable housing not only threatens the well-being of individuals and families but also undermines the fundamental principle of human dignity.</p> <p>Every citizen, regardless of socioeconomic status, deserves access to safe, stable, and affordable housing. Housing is not merely a commodity; it is a basic human need and a fundamental right. It is essential for individuals to be able to work, live, worship, and build a life within our community. Our city must not be seen as an exclusive club for the elite but rather as a place where all residents are valued and welcomed.</p> <p>As a citizen of Alexandria and a descendant of the Parker, Dogan, and Bentley families, whose ancestors were enslaved and freedmen contributing to this community since the late 1700s, I am deeply committed to advocating for equitable access to housing for all. The legacy of my ancestors, who endured unimaginable hardships, inspires me to stand up for justice and equality in our city.</p> <p>I urge you to prioritize funding and resources towards affordable housing initiatives in the upcoming budget and capital improvement program. This includes investing in the preservation and development of affordable housing units, expanding rental assistance programs, and implementing policies to prevent displacement and gentrification in our neighborhoods.</p> <p>By taking bold and decisive action to address the affordable housing crisis, we can uphold the dignity of every individual in our community and ensure that Alexandria remains a place where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. I stand ready to support your efforts and collaborate towards creating a more just and equitable city for all.</p> <p>Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Christian Bentley</p>
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	<p>Please make fully-funding the ACPS budget a priority. Teachers are truly front line workers for our city and they are terribly overworked and underfunded right now. The superintendent's budget does not adequately recognize the acute needs of our schools. I am hopeful that City Council will better see the importance of prioritizing schools. ACPS students have more complex needs than neighboring jurisdictions, yet our per pupil spending is lower or only slightly higher than neighboring jurisdictions. 36.2% of ACPS students are English Language Learners (ELL) and 54.4% of our students qualify for free and reduced lunch.* My son has benefitted greatly from the diversity of his fellow ACPS students, but there is a cost to serving a truly diverse constituency. I recognize the difficult position that Council finds itself in with an eroding real estate tax base, but please recognize that schools are in crisis now, and that making educational services a priority will reduce costs in other areas. Education is truly an investment in the city, and one that is desperately needed right now.</p>

Date Received	Comment
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	I write to urge the City Council to consider some of the additions in the School Board approved budget. For too long the City has pushed aside the concerns of the school population over bigger projects that might have a long term benefit, but have resulted in immediate concerns. I have lived in Alexandria since 1998 and not once - ever - have people bragged about the school system. We have always been the city that sends its students to private schools and those who do use the public school system are bad parents or are poor. Now I live in the West End and send my daughter to William Ramsay and each day see the impact of the neglect of the West End has on the students. For example, as proposed by the city, all of the schools on the West End will lose an AAS teacher while the richer, whiter schools will maintain two teacher for advanced academic students. The school board included keeping two teacher for all elementary schools. How can the City Council preach equity when removing support for thriving students who may not be rich or white? And I write that as a comfortably upper middle class white woman who has seen first hand how the families of her child's classmates are dismissed. Our teachers deserve more money. Our students deserved well paid, well respected teachers. Our city deserves a city council that supports this even if it means a slight increase in overall taxes.
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	Many of the Old Town roads need to be re-paved, especially S. Washington Street and King street.
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	Please help fund our schools appropriately. I have dedicated all 15 years of my career to public education and it is failing! It's failing its employees and more importantly, it's failing our children. I have never been a proponent for private school, but if I had the money, both of my children would be taken out of ACPS and placed in a private school that has small class sizes, evidence and research based curriculums in place, low teacher turnover, and updated facilities.
Wednesday, March 6, 2024	As you develop the budget for FY2025, it is imperative to include a focus on affordable housing and other measures that assist our lower income neighbors to remain part of the vital fabric of our city. If we become a city of wealthy white people, we will lose the character that makes Alexandria unique and vibrant. Please to everything in your power through the budget to prevent this outcome. Thank you.
Tuesday, March 5, 2024	Good afternoon,  I'm writing to urge the council to fully fund ACPS. Having been on the receiving end of not getting a cost of living increase myself, I know first hand how hard that can be living in this area. Everything around me has increased, my taxes, my food, insurance, medications, everything I need to live a healthy life. Yet, my wages have been considered not worthy of increase despite all of these things. No one should have to experience that.  If the City Council's priorities are to focus on Community Connections, Employee Attraction & Retention, Eliminating Community Disparities and Economic Strength, fully funding the schools are a key part of all of those. Schools are a key tool for building communities and eliminating disparities with quality teachers who are invested.  The idea that teachers don't care enough if the money isn't adequate isn't a realistic reason in the current times we are living. Many people are living in student debt, medical debt, credit card debt. Even our school system has student lunch debt, words that shouldn't even exist in general much less in a city as expensive as ours. How does this city think we are going to grow economically if our students aren't being given all the tools we need?  Thank you,
Tuesday, March 5, 2024	Please fully fund the ACPS budget approved by the School Board, which provides a competitive salary package for our teachers. If City Council adopts the ACPS budget proposed by the City Manager, Alexandria will be the only NOVA jurisdiction not offering an additional market rate adjustment for the FY25 school year. We have an extremely competitive marketplace teachers and given our complex student demographics, we must offer top-tier salaries and benefits to attract high quality educators. I support an increase in my property tax rate to make this happen.  Thank you very much, Maureen McNulty
Tuesday, March 5, 2024	I'm concerned about the disruption and displacement that will be imminent in my community and for my neighbors if the City does not take action. I urge the City to prioritize working class families and invest in anti-displacement measures in the 2025 budget by:  1) allocating \$10 million for the creation and implementation of a locally funded voucher program to support families who earn 40% of the area median income (AMI) and below;  2) investing \$10 million to expand the guaranteed income pilot program (ARISE) continuing to fund the approved pipeline projects that will provide units at 40% AMI and below.  Much of the federal funding that once supported the most impacted city residents is about to end. I urge the City to act to preserve my community and protect our most vulnerable families.
Monday, March 4, 2024	I am writing over concerns that there is 0 budget for tree planting and maintenance. In addition, it appears funding has been removed for hourly park clean up work. The parks on the WestEnd (Booth and Brenman) get a lot of use and unfortunately, park users choose not to use the trash cans and throw trash everywhere. There is a rat problem at Boothe currently (right where the children play, in fact). Please tell me how this will be addressed.
Monday, March 4, 2024	I am a longtime City resident and Tree Steward volunteer.  Asking that funding for City tree planting, invasive plant removal and related activities be adequately and transparently funded. And that vacant land resources staff positions be filled expeditiously. This is critically important in service of City quality of life and climate change mitigation goals. Thank you.
Monday, March 4, 2024	There should be a budget for employee wellbeing. Employee morale is not at its highest and there are things that can be done to ensure that employees feel appreciated as the true public servant that we are. For example, have a budget to do employee events during the work day. Have employees meet the mayor, some of us do live here and have never spoke or met the mayor. Alexandria is not what it used to, crimes and the rent is high. Which indirectly means that parents are working two jobs and kids are raising themselves and with no supervision, they're doing anything and everything to get money. If you can control the rent that would be great because working a full time job, it is hard to make the rent.
Saturday, March 2, 2024	Please do not reduce the DASH bus services on line 104. Many people in my neighborhood, including my family, rely on it to get to work, the metro and school. Please keep it running twice per hour during peak times. Thank you.
Saturday, March 2, 2024	Cutting service to DASH104 is unacceptable. As it is the bus, which is heavily used by commuters & students in the neighborhood, was already reduced during covid to only twice an hour. Reducing services even more world render this service all but useless. Imagine scheduling your commute with a bus that services your community once an hour. Miss it & your whole day is an hour behind. Alexandria wishes to create a eco-friendly city and reducing bus services is not in line with that vision. It might behoove the city to look into making the 104 the school bus for GW students along this route in this time of limited school bus drivers.

Date Received	Comment
Friday, March 1, 2024	<p>I am writing because I see that the 2025 budget proposal would reduce service on DASH line 104 to once per hour during weekday peaks. The City Manager's Message suggests that this service reduction would save \$180,000, less than .02% of a proposed budget of more than \$911 million. Please reconsider this decision.</p> <p>I currently ride DASH line 104 to work and home from work three days per week. In addition, my children ride DASH line 104 to George Washington Middle School and home on each school day.</p> <p>For school commuters: Dozens of children from our neighborhood ride DASH line 104 to and from school at GWMS every day due to its reliability. This has led ACPS to reduce bus service to our neighborhood and allocate its bus resources elsewhere. Reducing service on the DASH line is likely to increase transportation costs for ACPS, further reducing school bus reliability in our neighborhood. In addition, the availability of the DASH line helps my children participate in after school activities that do not always finish in time for the late school bus. This change undermines the message, which we've tried to instill in our kids, that public transportation is for everyone.</p> <p>For Metro commuters: This line was already reduced from 3x per hour to 2x per hour during the recent reorganization. This meant that the longest potential wait times from Metro connections at Pentagon and Braddock Road increased from 20 to 30 minutes, which was largely a manageable change. Reducing the DASH schedule to once per hour increases potential wait times to 60 minutes. This is likely to drive riders away from the line. It makes more sense to eliminate Line 104 altogether than to institute a service change that will make it very hard for riders to rely on it as a connection from their Metro commutes.</p> <p>Environmental impacts: If riders stop using the buses, that means more cars driving on the road and parking in the neighborhood. According to Alexandria's Environmental Action Plan 2020, 36% of Alexandria's 2015 GHG inventory came from transportation. The Plan states a goal of reducing GHG emissions by 50% by 2030 and by 80-100% by 2050, with most reductions coming from the business and residential communities. It also states a goal of reducing vehicle miles traveled by 1% per year and increasing transit by 15% over 2018. The Environmental Action Plan also states that a mid-term action, targeting FY 2028, is to spend \$1,000,000 to \$5,000,000 to encourage people who work in Alexandria to use sustainable transportation options. What impact will this change have on these goals?</p> <p>Alternatives: If DASH service must be reduced, DASH should consider changes to Line 103 instead of Line 104. Part of Line 103 (West Glebe, Valley, Martha Custis) is also serviced by Metrobus 10B, and areas between Russell Road and Mount Vernon Avenue can also be served by the Metrobus 10 lines. Line 103 riders may therefore have more alternative routes available in the system than Line 104 riders. DASH could also consider bringing back the 3/4 Loop so that Line 103 and Line 104 riders share the burden of a reduced schedule, instead of having Line 104 bear that entire burden.</p>
Thursday, February 29, 2024	<p>I have 3 kids who will and are attending George Mason Elementary. Realistic plans for renovating or rebuilding the school are not a nice to have. They are a requirement. All we ask is for a realistic plan that sets our students up for success. Cutting \$20M right before the project is set to start with no explanation of what is getting cut is simply unacceptable. Our students need a facility they can thrive in. Not a half baked plan to nowhere. Fully fund the GM renovation project. We simply cannot afford our GM students to be left behind the rest of Alexandria students.</p>
Thursday, February 29, 2024	<p>We have beautiful schools, with great teachers and school administrators, however, our logistics of getting kids to these nice schools remains wanting. In addition to spending on school budgets, which are critical, how about the city creates a budget for competitive compensation and training for school bus drivers? This would not require a large amount, yet it would be spending with high impact. The school bus situation (and correct incentives to get enough drivers and buses) in Alexandria needs more attention and financial support.</p> <p>Many thanks, Jozsef</p>
Thursday, February 29, 2024	<p>Is it true that the City will no longer include a budget for tree planting and maintenance? "Tree &amp; Shrub Capital Maintenance" as a line item is gone.</p> <p>This cannot possibly be correct.</p> <p>I have watched as our city trees are butchered by contract tree trimmers, cut down for "development," and swallowed by invasive vines. Park trees are rarely pruned, and few new trees are planted as old ones die due to age and poor maintenance.</p> <p>I have also watched as city arborists leave in frustration due to lack of support by leadership with no one filling the two vacancies.</p> <p>So much for "Eco City"!</p>
Wednesday, February 28, 2024	<p>RE: CIP / DGS / Energy Management Program The Energy Management program plays a vital role in achieving the city's climate action goals. 1. What is the scope of the \$367,000 reduction in project funding? 2. What scope is "pushed from FY 2025 – FY 2028 to FY 2029 – FY 2034"? 3. What else is meant by "Project scope reduced in coming years"?</p>
Wednesday, February 28, 2024	<p>Arlington County has proposed a 4.75% pay increase for county employees for FY2025. If the City of Alexandria cares about retaining talented employees, a 2% pay increase is not enough to be competitive with neighboring Arlington County. Please consider investing more of the budget in City employee compensation.</p>
Wednesday, February 28, 2024	<p>Dear Council members and staff,</p> <p>I am writing with concern regarding the ACPS CIP budget, specifically around the messaging. The City's press release touted that the ACPS CIP budget would be fully funded at \$87m. However, the request for \$87m came from the Superintendent. The School Board (who is actually in charge of ACPS) requested \$107m.</p> <p>If you can't fund the \$107m because of other priorities — fine! Just tell the voters what those priorities are and why those priorities are more important than education. What is unacceptable is to pretend like the School Board's budget of \$107m just doesn't exist.</p> <p>I will be watching the work session tonight. Budgets are tough. Forthright communication with voters should be easy.</p> <p>Regards, Emily Turner</p>
Wednesday, February 28, 2024	<p>I urge you to please fully fund acps budget requests. There is arguably no more important component of a city's budget. Specifically the CIP cuts are egregious and have truly monumental impacts to thousands of residents. School quality and experience arguably touches every aspect of the life in our city. This is simply not the place to cut.</p>
Wednesday, February 28, 2024	<p>I'm really interested and excited to see a "Clean Team" proposal in the budget to help mitigate litter at the source. I've been urging the city to do more on litter and to try to stop it before it occurs so this is great to see.</p> <p>I saw it described as "delivering robust litter mitigation solutions within targeted public realms and areas experiencing heightened pedestrian activity." Can you expand on what that means and what that would look like in operation?</p>

Date Received	Comment
Wednesday, February 28, 2024	<p>Hello. Thank you for your time and your devotion to our city. I am writing in regards to the CIP funding and specifically the George Mason rebuild. We have 2 kids, one a fifth grader at George Mason and the other a Freshman at Minnie Howard / ACHS. We have lived first across the street from and now around the corner from George Mason for 16 years. This is the 10th and final year that we will have a child at George Mason. There has been talk of tearing down and rebuilding George Mason for that entire time. We have also seen the population of GM drop by almost 50% from one daughter's class vs the other, related I gather to an unfortunate combination of redistricting and the pandemic colliding. GM is complicated. The geographic divide between the populations that attend the school do make it difficult to truly integrate the population, especially outside of the school day. The desired to be a truly integrated community is there. The school community spends a lot of effort to support each other through gift and gift card drives, busing to all school events, and the food pantry, for examples. I don't know how you would minimize the impact of the geographic divide. If you could, it would be great. But, the school has very good leadership now. I just ask that you make smart decisions regarding GM. The overcrowding at the middle school is a big problem and I don't hear anyone talking about building another middle school. Is there anything that could be done at GM to relieve middle school overcrowding. Has the data come in regarding the success of the K-8 schools? I think first and foremost I would ask you to make smart decisions regarding GM (don't short change green building to save money, don't take away the small amount of field space in this neighborhood). If you have to postpone the rebuild to do what is smart, please still make a firm timeline and put a stop to this decade long period of uncertainty in this community. There are a lot of people here at GM now who are supportive of the public schools, and I think you will find the community to be patient and supportive if things are done in a smart way. Thank you for hearing our concerns.</p>
Wednesday, February 28, 2024	<p>Dear Mr. Parajon, Mr. Mayor, and Members of the Alexandria City Council,</p> <p>I am writing to ask you to please do whatever you can to fully fund the approved Alexandria City School Board FY25 CIP Budget amount of \$107,657,700 in the City of Alexandria FY25 Budget.</p> <p>I recognize that the budget process is a difficult one, and I do not pretend to fully understand its complexities. However, I trust that our School Board knows best what our district needs for its students and community after listening to their constituents during their own budget process. Their ask of \$87,000,000 for the rebuild of George Mason Elementary actually remains unchanged from what was approved by the city in FY24 for the 10 year plan, and that is because it takes into account all of the priorities for the school district and the city. Without the full funding, something has to give, and I can guarantee that if you put this back in the hands of the School Board, the city priorities will not take precedence.</p> <p>The rebuild was addressing the capacity issues that plague our schools by adding space in order to house more students. It was also addressing the city requirements for Green Building design and taking into account the only green space and playing fields that exist in the North Ridge community. And not the least of the issues being addressed with the rebuild was to replace a school that had long outlived its expiration date.</p> <p>As a mother of three children who attend George Mason Elementary in 5th grade, 3rd grade, and Kindergarten, I know very well the challenges that our students and educators face daily at a school that has been neglected for years due to the expectation that the rebuild would happen imminently. Covid set the rebuild back, understandably, but now we are faced again with the uncertainty of what this rebuild will actually look like for our George Mason community and the greater ACPS community.</p> <p>Education is the building block of a community and the investments we make in our schools pay for themselves. Please do not shortchange our schools, students, and educators by not funding their needs. Please fully fund the approved Alexandria City School Board FY25 CIP Budget amount of \$107,657,700.</p> <p>Thank you,          Suzie O'Brien</p>
Tuesday, February 27, 2024	<p>Mayor Wilson, Council Members, and City Staff -</p> <p>Thank you for all the support you have provided to ALIVE! over the years, and especially for the very significant financial assistance you've made available for ALIVE!'s Food Program since the beginning of the pandemic. You have made it possible for ALIVE! to feed many more families and individuals in need in Alexandria than was the case before the pandemic. Also, as you know, ALIVE! now is providing more nutritious food in more locations, and the relatively new food hubs allow clients to select food that is appealing to and appropriate for them.</p> <p>In your development of the FY 2025 budget, I ask that you recognize that ALIVE!'s Food Program will not be able to continue to serve low income Alexandrians at the same level without continued substantial support from the City and do what you can to provide that support again in 2025. While it is the case that the economy is improving in a number of ways, the related benefits are not available to all. Food prices remain high, and those in need rely on the City and ALIVE! to offer assistance with this most basic need.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration of this request.</p> <p>Ellen Brown          ALIVE! Board Member and          25 year volunteer</p>
Monday, February 26, 2024	<p>I urge you to fully fund the ACPS requested budget. At this critical time in learning loss recovery from Covid, attracting and retaining high quality teachers, increase in special education needs and English Language services not to mention increased violence and drug challenges-- our schools need our resources. Strong, competitive, nurturing schools are THE BACKBONE of a city's future. Sacrifices must be made elsewhere. I urge you to fully fund ACPS's requested budget.</p>
Monday, February 26, 2024	<p>Covid really revealed the precarious nature of the lives of many low income Alexandrians. Unfortunately the level of need has not returned to pre-Covid levels. As an ALIVE! board member and volunteer, I have seen the difficulties faced by many of our neighbors. It is vitally important that the City of Alexandria continue to assist those struggling with food insecurity and who are on the verge of homelessness by supporting such efforts as ALIVE!'s food and family assistance programs.</p>
Saturday, February 24, 2024	<p>Encouraging support for ALIVE! Know you are all aware of the depth with which this org has responded to pandemic and continuing since. Thank you.</p>
Thursday, February 22, 2024	<p>Please approve the salary re-assessment requests that have been approved by DCHS. We are grossly underpaid in comparison to other jurisdictions.</p> <p>Please consider additional funding support for youth mental health needs.</p>
Wednesday, February 21, 2024	<p>I serve as a board member and volunteer with ALIVE! Helping on the Last Saturday food distributions. We give out so many bags of food and it seems that the line just never goes down! I love watching the faces of the families that are grateful for food but also sad to see so many in line. Sometimes we run out of food and it is heartbreaking to see folks wait for so long and then not receive. Please continue and increase funding to ALIVE! To help them continue to feed the hungry people in your and my city! Use ALIVE! As your hands and feet to get this work done with the hundreds of faithful volunteers in the city. The funding is crucial as the need continues to rise. Thanks for considering.</p>
Saturday, February 10, 2024	<p>I am concerned about the lack of affordable housing in the city, and the poor condition of low rent housing. As a city, we lose color and vibrancy if we do not remain inclusive (affordable) for all Americans.</p> <p>sincerely,          charleen smith-riedel</p>

Date Received	Comment
Friday, February 9, 2024	<p>Mr. James F. Parajon City Manager Alexandria City Hall 301 King Street Alexandria, Virginia 22314</p> <p>Cc: Mayor Justin Wilson Vice Mayor Amy Jackson Members of the Alexandria City Council</p> <p>Dear Mr. Parajon,</p> <p>Thank you for your service to our community and for all of the hard work you are doing to prepare this year's City budget. As you finalize the FY2025 budget proposal for City Council review, the George Mason Elementary School (GMES) PTA respectfully asks that you fully fund Alexandria City Public Schools' (ACPS) Capital Improvements Program (CIP) request of \$107,657,700 with the full \$87,000,000 of that amount going to the GMES modernization project.</p> <p>George Mason Elementary School – built 85 years ago in 1939 – is the next of the City public schools to undergo a full modernization after a decade of discussion, preliminary planning, and delays. Our modernization is therefore the most sizable project in the CIP budget this year and must be fully funded in order to achieve ACPS and City priorities, including capacity and square footage requirements, public amenities and open space needs, and compliance with the City's stormwater mandates and Green Building Policy.</p> <p>Fully funding the ACPS request ensures that our GMES project can proceed as planned without compromising the funding needs of other ACPS capital projects this year and in the years to come.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration of this important request.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>The George Mason Elementary School PTA</p>
Tuesday, January 23, 2024	<p>"Eco-City Alexandria is a strategic effort to achieve sustainability. We seek to create an environmentally, economically and socially healthy city where people can live, work and play for decades to come." IS ALEXANDRIA REALLY AN ECO-CITY AS PROMOTED?</p> <p>If so, it would follow that you would please fully fund or as fully as possible fund:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) City Office of Climate Action</li> <li>2) ACPS - sufficient funding to implement City green building and climate policies while meeting other student, facility, and teacher compensation needs.</li> <li>3) WMATA and DASH - so as to continue important sustainable and equitable transportation services in our community. This is tied closely to climate and housing goals.</li> <li>4) Affordable housing - that will help educators, public service workers, restaurant workers and others to be able to live where they work. But also using space wisely so as to balance livability and sustainability of what makes Alexandria attractive against those housing needs.</li> </ol> <p>I am a constituent and also a member of Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions - Alexandria Hub.</p> <p>Thank you for all you do for Eco-Alexandria.</p>
Wednesday, December 20, 2023	<p>Dear City Council,</p> <p>I strongly ask that you increase librarian compensation in Alexandria. These libraries are fantastic resources for our kids, our oldest loves them and they are enriching to see as a parent. My child would do nothing but ask for more library time and continues to love it. The librarians have been nothing but fantastic, kind, generous, and warm. We should be increasing their pay considerably and it should be a top priority rather than below industry, and local, averages.</p>
Friday, December 15, 2023	<p>Salaries have fallen 16-20%, and we are losing librarians and staff! I support fair pay for Alexandria Library staff.</p>
Thursday, December 14, 2023	<p>As a committed fan of our libraries, I am writing to urge sufficient funding to ensure that our librarians and other library staff are paid competitive wages. They bring much value to our community. Let us honor that with compensation packages on par with those of neighboring jurisdictions.</p>

Date Received	Comment
Thursday, December 14, 2023	<p>I would like the steps restored for Alexandria City Public School teachers. This is approximately \$3M. I know that both the school budget and city funds this project. Our teachers would make up to \$18K more in neighboring school districts. They are leaving day-by-day. A fifth grade teacher left, a third grade teacher left at my sons' school, Naomi L. Brooks. There are parents who speak at the School Board meetings about staffing vacancies for core subjects in middle school and high school and my the budget book for ACPS reduces my son's fifth grade class next year to only two teachers. These are the students who had kindergarten and first grade in the pandemic virtually and need additional social emotional learning support. Our teachers deserve better compensation. Collective bargaining has yet to be enacted and I fear that before it is enacted, we will continue to see teachers and admin staff leave for Arlington, DCPS, Fairfax County, Loudoun County, Prince William, Fall Church City.</p> <p>I would also like librarians at city of Alexandria libraries paid a competitive wage. Libraries are the hub of our community. We go to the Duncan Library each week to get books and movies and my boys to to the Barrett Library for programming such as the older elementary Dungeons and Dragons. Our library staff should be compensated fairly. In this city of progressive values, we must pay our staff wages that allow them to live in the communities they work. Librarians are community helpers and first line social workers for people of all different walks of life. The library is the hub of the community. My children started out attending Kids Rock Story Hour and Baby Storytelling. They progressed to reading programs, reading to dogs, Legos and Dungeons and Dragons. We went to many a Groovy Nate or Rainbow Rock Band aka our "kiddie Coachella". Now my boys gather with their classmates to play D&amp;D, a program started by our Campagna Kids after care director in response to playgrounds and parks being closed. When she wanted to get kids off screens and interacting, she started this and when libraries and schools reopened, she continued this FREE program. My sons have formed lifelong friendships with their D&amp;D friends from all different ACPS schools. Our librarians and libraries provide this program and they deserve a wage that is competitive to other jurisdictions. The provide so much more than books. They create community.</p>
Tuesday, December 12, 2023	<p>Hello, we are a 119 unit condominium and 40 townhome development. This is just one example of the population growth in Old Town North. The nearest glass recycling location is at the South end of Royal Street. Requesting the City consider placing a glass recycling dumpster somewhere in Old Town North. Thank you. Michael Spatz Venue Condominium Board President</p>
Tuesday, December 12, 2023	<p>I am writing to support an increase in salaries for our library staff. Beatley Central is the one I use most. The staff do their best and you can tell they are intensely service-oriented. It's sad to see the level of turnover as they have to support themselves and their families, something better done working elsewhere. We've unintentionally turned into a training pipeline entry point for other library systems.</p> <p>That's stupid and unnecessary. Let's give our library staff a competitive salary so the good people will stay.</p>
Monday, December 11, 2023	<p>I'd like to send my support for the City's Libraries, in particular Duncan Library. The staff there are all very helpful and have created programming that builds community connections. It is one of the places I can interact with people of all ages and get to know my neighbors better. I value having a branch so close to me and I think it is important to compensate the staff with a fair wages when considering the budget. Thank you.</p>
Monday, December 11, 2023	<p>I am writing today to plead with the City of Alexandria to increase the wages for our Librarians and Library Staff. As a member of Burke Branch Friends, I find it shameful that Alexandria Library can not retain qualified staff in big part to substandard salaries. This needs to change as our Library system is a huge asset to our community.</p> <p>Please make this happen, Jean McKean</p>
Sunday, December 10, 2023	<p>Hello,</p> <p>Please prioritize pay increases for our city library staff while working on the 2025 Operating Budget! Duncan library plays an important role in our family life, and we recognize the hard work and dedication that its staff bring to work each day. We hope that the city will recognize their efforts and phenomenal contribution to our community with a pay increase.</p> <p>Thank you, Tonia Gregory</p>
Friday, December 8, 2023	<p>I am writing to express my concern for the Alexandria library staff salaries. My family and I visit one of the Alexandria area libraries basically every day and are always greeted with welcoming smiles at each location. We mainly visit the Duncan Library and have loved taking advantage of all of the classes and offerings that the location offers. It is an invaluable asset to our community and it would have have huge negative impact if there were further disruptions in staffing and services due to changeover.</p> <p>I support fair pay for our library staff.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
Friday, December 8, 2023	<p>re: Increasing Public Library Funding</p> <p>Dear City Council and Staff,</p> <p>Public libraries are the backbones of our communities. They provide crucial educational services, programs, and, of course, books. They level the playing field by allowing everyone access to the internet (crucial for career opportunities and job applications for the unsheltered or computer illiterate); provide spaces for community events and lectures; support and access to tools, training, and broader city resources. Public libraries are one of the greatest services a city can provide. Free and open to all, it is one of the most wonderful American public services. I love our libraries. I love being able to check out books, whether in person or via the Libby app. I love going to random lectures that the library hosts. I love asking for help from the librarians and always getting an attentive response.</p> <p>I was disappointed and horrified as an Alexandria resident to learn that Alexandria Library staff salaries have fallen behind by 16-20%, compared to our neighbors. This is understandably resulting in staff turnover and service disruption. Our taxes should go to promoting and maintaining our libraries *and their staff*. Librarians should be able to live and work in Alexandria on a decent and fair paycheck. That is not happening currently. Rather than spend more of the budget on police or other such entities, we should be ensuring our libraries and librarians--the true pillars of our community--are maintained and strengthened.</p> <p>Libraries do so much good, but they would be hollow buildings without the librarians making them an educational center, a community resource, a home for so many of us. Please increase the library funding in Alexanria's 2025 budget. The librarians deserve a fair wage, and Alexandria deserves a stellar library system.</p> <p>Sincerely, Michele Trichler</p>
Friday, December 8, 2023	<p>Support our local librarians! Libraries are vital to the community and librarians should be paid accordingly!</p>
Thursday, December 7, 2023	<p>I would like to recommend continued funding for the Office of Climate Action, funding to maintain green building standards, find funding to water trees you plant, and do not remove 65+ year old trees already existing in parks (Simpsons Baseball Fields) to build new bleachers.</p>
Thursday, December 7, 2023	<p>support sustainable tree canopy</p>
Thursday, December 7, 2023	<p>Increased salaries Alexandria library staff to stay competitive.</p>



Date Received	Comment
Wednesday, December 6, 2023	First of all, thank you for your hard work in preparing a city budget. It's a big job and I know there are always tough decisions to make. That said, I hope you will consider making library services a priority in this year's budget allocations. I hear from my local branch we are falling behind in salaries, leading to turnover. The library services are a great benefit to our communities. Thank you for your consideration.
Wednesday, December 6, 2023	<p>Dear City Manager, Mayor and Council,</p> <p>In the FY 2025 budget, please prioritize funding for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- DASH and WMATA - these well-run services are essential for Alexandria's workers, businesses, residents, and City climate change, equity &amp; mobility goals. My family has one car, and we are regular DASH users. Please maintain existing service levels and enable improvements where needed.</li> <li>- City Office of Climate Action - addressing climate change now will save the City money later. Please ensure its full funding and programs.</li> <li>- ACPS capital needs, energy and climate resilience, staff compensation - we need to fund school rebuilds (George Mason, Cora Kelly, other capacity needs), and climate resilience. The City's Green Building Policy is at risk without adequate funding. These energy and climate resilience improvements to ACPS facilities will save operating funds and money overall. The district also needs good compensation for teachers and staff.</li> <li>- Affordable housing programs - please ensure these are funded.</li> </ul> <p>Thank you,</p> <p>Bill Pugh 1200 N Quaker Ln Alexandria, VA 22302</p>
Wednesday, December 6, 2023	please pay teachers, social workers, and librarians more.
Wednesday, December 6, 2023	<p>As you begin to make the hard decisions about what does or does not get funded in the '24, I strongly encourage you to make fair pay for Alexandria's library staff not just a priority - but a reality.</p> <p>We are losing our hard-working and dedicated staff to libraries around AVA that pay higher salaries. As a result, positions go unfilled, programs and services the public expects get short-changed or cancelled and staff is overworked and burning out.</p> <p>Please do your part to fund Alexandria library salaries commensurate with what Arlington, Fairfax and D.C. is paying. We need to equitably support all our City's public servants.</p> <p>Patti Reilly Incoming Chair Friends of Duncan Library</p>
Wednesday, December 6, 2023	<p>Salaries have decreased for librarians and library staff--we need them paid a fair and equitable wage. Libraries are critical to citizens of all ages in the community providing a huge variety of resources.</p> <p>Please strongly consider increasing salaries in the coming city budget.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>
Wednesday, December 6, 2023	Hello! It has been brought to my attention that salaries for librarians in Alexandria are approximately 16-20% below the neighboring jurisdictions, resulting in high turnover rates. This is unacceptable! Our librarians work hard to make the library a welcoming environment that is accessible to everyone in our community. Please make room in the budget to increase librarian pay!! Duncan Library is counting on you!
Wednesday, December 6, 2023	<p>Dear Council Members and City Manager,</p> <p>It is my current understanding that Alexandria Library staff are not paid commensurate with other local jurisdictions.</p> <p>You may wish to enlighten me whether this is absolutely the case, but if so, it is a concern, and I would urge bringing library staff up to local standards in the new budget.</p> <p>Thank you for all your essential work, Alan</p>
Wednesday, December 6, 2023	There is no better time to support the amazing professionals that populate our public library system.
Wednesday, December 6, 2023	<p>I'm writing to urge your full budget support for Alexandria's public libraries. As you know, our librarians' salaries have fallen behind nearby cities and counties, contributing to staff turnover.</p> <p>My husband and I regularly visit the Duncan Library. It's invaluable to people like us who read a lot. I love seeing the toddlers and other children attending read-aloud sessions with their parents--and teens doing their homework--and people of all ages being tutored in this safe and congenial space.</p> <p>Our libraries are essential and lively multi-service sites and deserve full funding from the City budget.</p> <p>Thank you, Nancy Kelly</p>
Wednesday, December 6, 2023	Please support the ADC resolution's request that pay adjustments be made to the Alexandria Library Staff across all staffing positions reflecting the current market levels in the DMV, ensure full staffing at all library locations, and extend collective bargaining rights to the Library Staff.
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>Please continue to fund these important initiatives for the City's climate change and equity goals:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Fully fund the City Office of Climate Action;</li> <li>2) Provide sufficient funding to ACPS for it to implement City green building and climate policies while meeting other student and facility needs;</li> <li>3) Fund WMATA and DASH needs to continue important sustainable and equitable transportation services in our community; and</li> <li>4) Continue to fund important City affordable housing programs.</li> </ol>

Date Received	Comment
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	Please review the salaries of the Alexandria Public Library staff - pay rates have fallen 15-20%. The librarians do so much for our community and I see firsthand how they welcome neighbors and create fantastic gathering opportunities. Librarians are passionate about their work, like teachers, and go above and beyond. Please ensure that they are compensated for the immense impact they have on Alexandria. Losing staff hurts the community we are building. Thank you.
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	Just to let you all know how much I value my library and to urge you to support fair pay for library staff.
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	Please increase pay for library staff! Our libraries have become important community spaces. If we lose our library staff due to a lack of competitive compensation we will lose everything libraries can and do offer.  Thank you Nathan Lefler
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	Please increase librarian salaries ASAP. We have learned what happens when we don't pay the people we value in our community what they are worth - they go to neighboring districts. Please do not make the same mistake twice. Libraries are one of the critical hubs of our community and have smart, creative and hard-working staff that deserve to be paid what they are worth. Please increase their pay so we can keep this amazing talent in Alexandria.  Thank you, Megan
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	Our public library system is a major support for many elements of this community. It is underfunded and its staff significantly underpaid. I hope the new budget will provide (much) better for the Alexandria Library system.
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	I wish to request your urgent consideration of increasing the budget for all Alexandria City libraries so that employee staff salaries are compensated appropriately compared to neighboring jurisdictions. Of all City resources that I personally use, the libraries are number one on my list. Not only because of my use, but because of the nations attack on literature. Do not allow such an important resource to degrade simply because high tech influences are in the forefront. Thank you
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	Please include increased pay for our library staff in the next city budget planning process!
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	One of Alexandria's greatest assets is our libraries. And library staff is what makes our libraries so special. At a community event this summer a member of Library staff did children's time in Pat Miller Square, entertaining children while parents took part in the community event. This is just one example of our library staff going beyond the call. I am particularly concerned that library staff is paid significantly less than other jurisdictions. As a result, we are losing qualified staff, which is stressing staff who remain. As the city manager and council develop the city budget, I request they make library funding a priority.  Our libraries serve tens of thousands of patrons a month, meeting a litany of needs. I have heard that families come from other jurisdictions to utilize our library programming, and then they patronize local businesses either before or after the event.  I hope that city staff and members of the council understand our library system is both an economic development driver and a community resource, and as a result, provide them the funding for staff and for resources to meet the need they address.
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	Hi,  I understand that the city is facing shortfalls. However I would ask that you look to prioritize salary increases in line with inflation and in line with neighbouring jurisdictions for library workers. We are struggling to hold on to our library workers in Alexandria and libraries provide such a critical service for our youth and community.
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	Hi, I'm a regular user of our public library system—I've checked out more than 50 books this year at Duncan Branch alone—and I hope you'll include significant raises for all library staff in the next city budget. The neighborhood library system is a big part of why my family chose to buy a house in Alexandria this year instead of moving to a cheaper area in Maryland, and the staff who make the system as amazing as it is deserve monetary recognition for their hard work.
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	As a 20-year resident of Alexandria (who always votes), I have relied on the city libraries for all kinds of services. I borrow books from and volunteer at the Duncan Library; I participate in book discussions and other activities such as the "Fix-it Days" at Barrett Library. I also belong to a long-standing Knitting group there; we have donated hundreds of our handmade items to charitable organizations in Alexandria. The group is organized and run by a city librarian. I am always saddened to hear that our librarians' salaries are not commensurate with neighboring library systems'. I have observed that our librarians work as hard and are as generous with their talents as any other librarians. Please recognize the important role these city employees consistently play in the lives of us ordinary citizens and budget for their well-deserved raises. Thank heaven for our librarians!
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	I believe that the City's budget needs to fully fund ACPS capital needs, which include meeting the City's Green Building Policy, as well as other important student capacity and instructional needs. The budget needs to also fully fund the Office of Climate Action and provide funding for DASH and WMATA.
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	I have just learned of salary cuts in our library system. We value our libraries so much for our children and education. Please take this into consideration for the new budget. Thank you so much
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	hello,  I'm writing because I value my library and support fair pay for library staff. Alexandria Library staff salaries have fallen behind by 16-20%, compared to neighboring jurisdictions. We're seeing an alarming rate of turnover, as staff leave Alexandria for higher salaries in Fairfax County, Arlington and Washington, D.C. This is causing disruptions in the services Alexandria Library can provide.  Please help us retain our valued librarians and keep our library services up and running by factoring in fair salaries for our Alexandria library staff.  Thanks! --Bryanne Reynolds
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	Alexandria's libraries are one of the best benefits for residents, and our libraries are doing a fabulous job of ensuring access to all books and other media, especially at a time when libraries and librarians are being harassed and criticized in various parts of the country. But our librarians are underpaid compared with neighboring jurisdictions and we have seen an alarming turnover of staff. I treasure our libraries and support fair pay for our library staff.  Please consider pay increases for our library staff in the upcoming budget. Thank you.
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	Please support Duncan Library! We rely on their services for ourselves and our grandchildren. Supplementing their education is very important to the community.
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	Libraries - we need them - please increase the pay and any needed staffing - there are many volunteers who raise money - and do things but you can do this - libraries are integral to lowering crime, educating our communities - and now that you have passed the new zoning you should know that you have to support infrastructure and education - so don't hesitate - do the right thing here - esp since you seem to support getting rid of single family housing - you have the responsibility to support the resources needed to round out the effort you have pushed thru.

Date Received	Comment
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>Hi, I'm writing today in support of our public libraries and librarians. Please consider raising the pay of our important staff that has not been increased recently and is lagging behind our neighboring areas, as well as the budgets for these key institutions that faithfully serve the community of Alexandria.</p> <p>Thank you, Charlotte</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>I love Duncan library! Please make room in the budget for salary increases for librarians and staff in the Alexandria library system.</p> <p>Thank you. Nancy Haney</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>Dear Alexandria Councilmembers and staff:</p> <p>As you prepare the city budget, PLEASE prioritize library funding! Briefly - I visit the library about once per week, and am online for information approximately daily. As an Alexandria resident and taxpayer, as well as a volunteer Alexandria school reading mentor, I assure you that it is a critical service as well as foundational investment for the future of Alexandria.</p> <p>Forgive me if I share that I grew up in Pennsylvania, one of 7 children of a steelworker and his wife, neither of whom graduated high school. I absolutely credit my local public library for the inspiration and opportunity which eventually led to my doctoral degree. There are many Alexandrians with much potential in many, many areas who need and are enriched by our public libraries. Please be generous and support and motivate our local talented staff to fully invest themselves in our citizens.</p> <p>Thank you, Elizabeth Talian, Doctor of Occupational Therapy</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>Dear City Council members,</p> <p>PLEASE do not ignore the City's libraries. I understand that staff salaries have fallen significantly compared to other local jurisdictions. My 13yo daughter is an avid reader, and she uses the Duncan library a lot. She will very often while away an afternoon there, browsing and reading, and she borrows a lot of books too. Among other things, libraries are a safe space for our teenagers and a huge gift to the community of free and accessible books to borrow.</p> <p>Yours, Carolyn McKee</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>I am a Senior living very close to the Duncan library for over 25 years. I have no computer or smartphone so only use the public computer here. I have also been in the bookclub here, and I read a lot, so nearly constantly have books checked out. For all these years, the staff has been very patient, generous and helpful. I love this library and I understand the is a lot of staff turnover due to salaries. There is a wonderful group of young people here now and I truly hope you seriously consider doing what is necessary to keep the staff and other library services going strong.</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>Please support the Alexandria libraries. Thank you.</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>My family welcomed our first child this year and we've had the privilege to experience the different baby programs provided by our local libraries. The staff at each library is incredibly professional, passionate about their jobs, and create such a wonderful environment. Our library staff should be appropriately compensated for the amazing work they do (they deserve a raise!) in our communities.</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>The Duncan Library does a fantastic job in instilling the love of reading in our children. From the earliest days, libraries were the source of knowledge and inspiration for all. Right now, libraries are more important than ever in empowering our citizens and defending our democratic future.</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>Please add Library staff to your list of salary increases for government employees. They are an invaluable asset to our community of readers, young and old. We would be remiss if they were not considered as essential as first responders. They are on the front line of the culture wars, making sure that we have materials available to make informed decisions, protecting us and our children from random censorship.</p> <p>And they help make reading so enjoyable!</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>I know there is a possible budget shortfall for next year but please do not take this out on Alexandria's libraries. Our libraries and especially their staff need funding more than ever.</p> <p>I am a volunteer at the Duncan Branch and frequently witness the crucial place our libraries and their staff have in our city whether it is through children's programming, access to computers or a warm place to read.</p> <p>Alexandria Library staff salaries have fallen behind by 16-20%, compared to neighboring jurisdictions. We're seeing an alarming rate of turnover, as staff leave Alexandria for higher salaries in Fairfax County, Arlington and Washington, D.C. This is causing disruptions in the services Alexandria Library can provide.</p> <p>Our library staff deserves to be paid on equal footing with the rest of the area!</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>I understand that we are expecting a budget shortfall this year, which is hard news. I am writing to express my support for the services that support everyone, like schools and libraries, and the people who make it possible to benefit from them. I also support programs like the composting pilot, and efforts to conserve our natural environment. These services support everyone and should be protected from the worst of budget cuts.</p> <p>I acknowledge that I don't have a good sense of what to cut or defer. I thank you for tackling this difficult work.</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>Dear City Council-</p> <p>If you were to walk down Commonwealth Ave around 10am on most week day mornings you would see a line of strollers and children eagerly awaiting the doors to open at Duncan Library. Children, Moms, Dads, Babysitters, Grandmas and Grandpas find comfort, joy, FUN, and even safety inside the walls of our public libraries. These public libraries are the very heart and soul of our community. They deserve fair pay (+ more) for the tireless employees and to the programs they provide to the people of Alexandria. In a time when life is expensive and difficult, the library is a place we can ALL go and escape. My children met life long friends while listening to Ms. Vlnetta singing and hopping to "Sleeping Bunny". The love of books and reading began inside Duncan library. I continue my love of reading thanks to the incredible offerings from the Alexandria Public library system. I urge you to take a minute and think about the importance our public libraries have on our community and give them the financial backing and support they so deserve. Thank you.</p> <p>Jennifer Barksdale</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>Alexandria Library staff salaries have fallen behind by 16-20%, compared to neighboring jurisdictions. This leads to a high rate of turnover, as staff leave Alexandria for higher salaries in Fairfax County, Arlington and Washington, D.C. Librarians are an essential service for a civilized society. Public Libraries are one of the great purveyors of help to the marginalized, the elderly, and to the low income people in our community. They provide connection, access to knowledge and real assistance with everything from filing taxes to applying for jobs. Our library staff need a raise. I know the city budget is tight this year, but they are overdue for a bump in pay.</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>PLEASE support fair pay for library staff in the city of Alexandria. The libraries are an essential part of the city and of endless importance for making our city literate and educated. Our neighborhood libraries are gathering places for people of ALL ages, with wonderful programs of involvement. PLEASE prioritize this request and pay our library staffs fairly so they are not leaving for better paid positions in other jurisdictions.</p>

Date Received	Comment
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>Please support salary increases for Alexandria Library staff, whose pay has fallen behind by 16%-20% in recent years. Low salaries are resulting in an alarming rate of turnover, which strains and limits library services. When staff are constantly called upon to interview and train new employees, it takes away from their engagement with the community and the services they can provide. I was with Alexandria Library leadership who said they were "hemorrhaging" staff. More than half of library staff are part-timers, and it is hard to recruit for (and replace) those positions, though part-timers are essential to the operations of the branches. We appreciate that the City Manager's office conducted a compensation study, but I have concerns that the position descriptions in Alexandria Libraries may have been different from those they were compared to in other library systems. Alexandria Library staff have been made to do more with less, which may not be reflected in a position description. Please release the compensation study results and methodology to the public so that we can have confidence in the City's recommendations for increasing staff pay to fair levels. There was previously a compensation study and no action was taken as a result. Please don't let this happen again — we can no longer delay a living wage. It's becoming harder and harder to afford being a librarian in the City of Alexandria. Thank you for being open to public feedback and for requesting public input on the budget. Fair pay is a many-years-long effort but needs to start now. Thank you.</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>I support fair pay for city librarians.</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>Alexandria is a wonderful place to live because it recognizes that a community is judged not just by its roads, but how it cares and supports its residents. A vibrant public library is part of the foundation of caring for the vitality of a community.</p> <p>It has come to my attention that Alexandria Library staff salaries have fallen behind by 16-20%, compared to neighboring jurisdictions. We're seeing an alarming rate of turnover, as staff leave Alexandria for higher salaries in Fairfax County, Arlington and Washington, D.C. This is causing disruptions in the services Alexandria Library can provide.</p> <p>I encourage that the city council to recognize and address Alexandria Library staff salaries.</p> <p>Respectfully submitted, Robbin Warner</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>Hello,</p> <p>I am a Friend of Duncan Library. This library is an important resource for our community. Please include fair wages for its staff in the upcoming budget.</p> <p>thanks, Barbara Haley</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>I am in favor of raising library staff pay (and other underpaid city employees) even if it means increasing taxes.</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>Libraries and librarians are vital resources for the children of Alexandria. As a mom of two young sons, we find ourselves at library events and programs multiple times a week. The availability of these programs as well as the positivity and educational value brought by the library staff is a key reason my family continues to live in the city of Alexandria and supports the Duncan Library with a donation every year. Please consider increasing the budget to keep library programs and salaries to incentivize the wonderful staff to remain in the Alexandria City library system.</p> <p>Thank you, Liz Connors-Fogle</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>The Duncan Library is our favorite! We hope you'll do all you can to increase the librarians' pay. They are so amazingly helpful.</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>Please ensure that the staff at city libraries are adequately paid in the upcoming budget. Our libraries are amazing community resources that we often take for granted. They are a free and welcome place to learn, grow and gather for all segments of our diverse community. They contribute to equity in so many ways, for children and adults. If Alexandria cannot offer competitive pay, the libraries will not be able to retain staff and maintain the library hours and services that so many Alexandrians rely on, enjoy, and deserve.</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>I am writing to support increasing the salaries of librarians. I wrote before last spring's budget hearings on the same topic. My understanding was there was to be a study about librarian compensation and how it compared to neighboring jurisdictions. Was this study ever done. The problem of losing library staff to neighboring communities continues. I realize that funding is tight, but I think trade-offs need to be considered that would enable higher library salaries.</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>Support Alexandria libraries, PLEASE!!! As a military spouse new to the area, it was the first place I felt welcome and supported with community programs and resources. Please fund this important community resource by increasing the librarian salary for Alexandria, VA. Help these vital employees to continue to provide stellar services to locals like me who greatly appreciate and rely on them. From a young age, Libraries have always been a joy and necessity to me. Please don't let this infrastructure die. Support fair pay for Libraries!!!</p> <p>Sincerely, Joanna Spaethe</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>I understand that our libraries are underfunded and that staff are leaving for neighboring jurisdictions. Please increase funding for them in the Fiscal Year 2025 operating budget. Your libraries provide valuable service for our citizens.</p> <p>Thank you, Beth Roberts</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>Our libraries provide so many resources to our community: safe space, books, music, classes, events and all at no additional cost to Alexandria residents. The beloved librarians make these offerings possible and also provide support and instruction on how to use the resources or find the best ones.</p> <p>Librarians have advanced degrees; a Masters in Library/Information Science. They are learned information experts, many bringing years of experience to Alexandria residents. They deserve competitive salaries, comparable with those of our neighbors of Arlington and Fairfax.</p> <p>Please ensure that our city's budget takes into account librarian salaries and annual increases that will keep our talent within Alexandria.</p> <p>Thank you, Wendy Maines</p>
Tuesday, December 5, 2023	<p>I fully support our public library system, and I think it is critical they are fully funded to hire their staff at competitive wages to continue serving our community effectively.</p>

Date Received	Comment
Monday, December 4, 2023	<p>Hello City of Alexandria! I am reaching out to you to advocate for funding and resources I find to be crucial for our community</p> <p>1) Continue investing in initiatives for climate change! This includes fully funding the City Office of Climate Action, funding for city green infrastructure and climate policies for public locations including ACPS, fund WMATA and DASH to continue sustainable AND equitable transportation services in our community</p> <p>2) Provide funding to reach new heights in equity! This would include funding city affordable housing programs and funding for government grants for impoverished communities and immigrant communities. Alexandria is such a diverse area and our support for those communities must reflect that.</p> <p>3) Continue to offer support and resources for those affected by crises From victims of sexual assault, domestic violence, homelessness, to natural disasters and beyond, Alexandria has a responsibility to fund programs that support its civilians and provide comprehensive information to access those resources.</p>
Monday, December 4, 2023	<p>We *need* to take care of our environment. Please prioritize City Office of Climate Action, ensure *all* City buildings, vehicles and infrastructure are moving towards Zero-Emissions and water conservation goals, and initiatives that remediate environmental damage due to historical social injustices.</p> <p>Also, please expand the incentives for homeowners to improve water and energy conservation: specifically for those of us who have an opportunity to reduce runoff more significantly than just rain barrels and semipermeable surfaces.</p> <p>My property receives substantial rainwater runoff from Quaker Lane stormwater system and the City has so far provided precious little value, advice, support for me. When I complained that the outgoing culvert was in danger of clogging a few years ago after an unusual downpour, you sent a crew to clear it out, but they commented that they didn't even know of the existence of that drainage ditch, so there's essentially no support or maintenance. The stormwater report of 2016 shows where it is, but again, no acknowledgement from the City on what needs to be done to protect and maintain it.</p> <p>Lastly, what are you doing to improve oversight of utility performance here in the City? The number of low-water pressure and watermain break events is... Staggering. So are the number of power outages: I put in battery backup because I could not work from home: in the past 22 months, my system reports 46 power outages, for a total of 18 hours, with the longest outage being 9 hours. Please hold Dominion Energy accountable for better, more reliable service. The cost in work@home productivity and appliance repairs from power interruptions is frankly inexcusable inside the beltway, especially for an area that is so high-tech. Ditto on ISP service options - Comcast only? seriously?</p> <p>And actually, really lastly - sorry to kvetch and complain so much, because I really do appreciate your service and how great Alexandria is. The culture and ambiance of this City is wonderful: we not only have a rich and beautiful architectural history, but you've highlighted the racial reconciliation that is long overdue; and our libraries, parks and community centers are a highlight. I hope our public schools and social services can be bolstered up to reduce crime and the amount of time APD has to spend investigating it.</p>
Monday, December 4, 2023	<p>The schools need to fully comply with the City's Green Building Policy to protect the future for children. It would be unconscionable to want to help children with education, but fail to protect the future they are destined to live in by not supporting and complying with the GBP. The City issued the edict and it is mandatory for the schools to comply. They have already failed to do that at Douglas MacArthur and Minnie Howard since they will not get solar panels for at least a year after they begin operating. And what will you say to the developers who want extra time to comply? Climate action delayed is no different than climate denial - we need a school board that believes in the science and responds accordingly. Now is not the time to back down from the requirement. Work with the new Office of Climate Action to find ways to meet the requirement. We can find the funds. West Virginia just voted to include solar on their schools. WEST VIRGINIA!!!! Is Alexandria going to fall behind West Virginia? And is this how we support our Eco-City designation? How will you justify this to the media and parents when they ask?</p>
Friday, December 1, 2023	<p>Hello City Council,</p> <p>I'm keen to share some commentary on City's FY25 budget, particularly in support of climate action. I respectfully request that the budget:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Fully funds ACPS capital needs, which include meeting the City's Green Building Policy, as well as other important student capacity and instructional needs</li> <li>- Fully funds the Office of Climate Action</li> <li>- Provides funding for DASH and WMATA</li> </ul> <p>Thank you!</p>
Sunday, November 26, 2023	<p>Dear City Leaders, I am proud that my city is making forward slides to address the multiple challenges we have to ensure that we address the climate issues we share with surrounding jurisdictions, the nation, and the world. Thank you for what you have done to date.</p> <p>As a member of the Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions, I am writing to urge you to do two primary things: 1) Fully fund the City Office of Climate Action and 2) Provide sufficient funding to ACPS for it to implement City green building and climate policies while meeting other student needs.</p> <p>Only by keeping the OCA well staffed and central to the city's decision making and implementation processes can we ensure that we continue moving forward in a comprehensive way. In addition, ACPS has a long way to go to catch up with the needed changes to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and make the system climate-ready and a model for the students who will be leading these efforts well into the future.</p> <p>Thank you for the opportunity to provide input.</p> <p>Sincerely, Donna Gold, FACS Alexandria Hub</p>
Sunday, November 26, 2023	<p>Hi budget team,</p> <p>I am eager to advocate for areas of the budget related to climate change. Environmentalism is my number one issue as a voter and resident. Specifically, for this budget, I urge you to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-continue to fully fund the Office for Climate Action</li> <li>-provide needed funding to ACPS so that it can implement the City's Green Building Policy, while modernizing schools and support facilities to meet district needs (these things can go hand in hand!)</li> <li>-and fund development of a comprehensive energy and climate resilience strategy by ACPS to help implement Alexandria's Climate Change Action Plan.</li> </ul> <p>In addition to these, please do everything you can to fund climate change action and engage residents in the process — we are fired up to help!</p> <p>Jamie Biondi</p>
Sunday, November 26, 2023	<p>1) Continue to fully fund the Office of Climate Action</p> <p>2) Provide needed funding to ACPS so that it can implement the City's Green Building Policy, while modernizing schools and support facilities to meet district needs, and</p> <p>3) Fund development of a comprehensive energy and climate resilience strategy by ACPS to help implement Alexandria's Climate Change Action Plan.</p>

Date Received	Comment
Sunday, November 26, 2023	<p data-bbox="373 134 798 155">Please continue to fully fund the Office of Climate Action,</p> <p data-bbox="373 172 1596 232">Provide needed funding to ACPS so that it can implement the City's Green Building Policy, while modernizing schools and support facilities to meet district needs, and Fund development of a comprehensive energy and climate resilience strategy by ACPS to help implement Alexandria's Climate Change Action Plan.</p>
Sunday, November 26, 2023	<p data-bbox="373 240 1969 272">Please continue to fully fund the Office of Climate Action. Alexandria must provide funding to ACPS so it may implement the City's Green Building Policy, while modernizing schools and support facilities to meet district needs. The city must fund development of a comprehensive energy and climate resilience strategy by ACPS to help implement Alexandria's Climate Change Action Plan.</p>