



Alexandria Transportation Commission  
301 King Street Alexandria, VA 22314

**alexandriava.gov**

**703.746.4025**

Honorable Mayor Wilson and Members of City Council  
City Hall  
301 King Street  
Alexandria, VA 22314

April 19, 2023

Re: **FY 2024 Budget Feedback**

Dear Mayor Wilson and Members of City Council:

At its September meeting, the Transportation Commission received an update from staff on the FY24 budget process and the City Manager's letter to Boards and Commissions to provide feedback on priority budget options that will help the City further **smart, equitable, and green** programs in FY24, while maintaining and attracting employees.

Transportation Commission provided a letter of feedback on the proposed budget in October 2023, and expressed the following priorities to the City Manager:

- 1) Supporting safety and bicycle and pedestrian travel through funding for the Complete Streets and Vision Zero program
- 2) Funding for a comprehensive review of the trail system and maintaining the trail system in a state of good repair
- 3) Fully funding the Alexandria Transit Vision Plan
- 4) Funding projects to support the Energy and Climate Change Action Plan including increasing vehicle electrification.

After reviewing the City Manager's proposed budget in March, the Transportation Commission feels that it is a "status quo" budget when it comes to transportation and has the following the specific areas of concern:

- The Manager's budget does not invest further in Complete Streets and Vision Zero to achieve established City goals. While staff work diligently to implement what is possible with existing staffing and capital investment levels, the only new capital investment in this area is through

external grants, and not through enhanced commitments of local dollars to this critical community need.

- The Transit Vision Plan implementation requires more transit service (coverage and frequency), and the Manager’s budget does not provide this. The increased funding for DASH simply replaces lost grant funding and funds higher operating costs to keep the service levels stable but does not expand service.
- The Manager’s budget does not invest proactively in the trail system state of good repair. Overlooking this part of our transportation system threatens the existing use of these routes as viable commute alternatives to driving, and makes truly multimodal lifestyles less realistic, especially in the West End.
- Finally, the Manager’s proposed budget does not do enough to support the draft Energy and Climate Change Action Plan, which outlines critical needs with respect to greenhouse gas reduction and City resiliency. Without a more aggressive investment in electrification of transportation and the shift to non-auto modes, the City jeopardizes the ability to achieve the goals of the Environmental Action Plan 2040 and the directives of the City’s own declaration of Climate Emergency.
  - One particular area that the Transportation Commission is concerned about is the ability to transition the DASH bus fleet to fully electric buses if the grants being pursued for this effort are not awarded. Commissioners have concerns that continuing to invest in purchasing non-electric buses will delay the transition significantly and be at odds with achieving the City’s climate goals in a timely manner.

The Transportation Commission is concerned that this proposed budget fails to follow through in the creation of a more accessible, connected, convenient, equitable, safe, and sustainable community as established in the Alexandria Mobility Plan. The Commission requests that Council consider incorporating strategic increases in funding in each of these areas to better represent the urgency embodied in Council’s past commitments and the lived experience in Alexandria today.

We thank you for your consideration of these priority areas to help the City advance its strategic goals.

Sincerely,

*Oscar Gonzalez*

Oscar Gonzalez (Apr 21, 2023 17:46 EDT)

Oscar Gonzalez

Chair, Alexandria Transportation Commission

cc: Alexandria Transportation Commission  
Tarrence Moorer, Interim Director, T&ES  
Hillary Orr, Deputy Director, T&ES  
Christopher Ziemann, Chief of Transportation Planning Division, T&ES  
Megan Oleynik, Urban Planner, T&ES