



**2011 and Forward
Administration Plan of Action and Priority List**

I. INTRODUCTION

This paper is presented to constituents as a general outline of the next year's activity for the Administration. It is neither exhaustive nor meant to limit the initiatives and issues we will face as a community. However, it is important to set out a plan of action, and, we think, equally important to give detail sufficient enough to elicit additional input from the community.

It is important to note the first item of address for the Administration is to have a proper and well-equipped team to take on the challenges of this economy and picture of shrinking revenue against recurring expenses. The need to plan for providing and prioritizing basic services becomes more critical in this economy.

Federal and State resources and the opportunity to leverage those resources are less readily available to cities in America today, and smart cities must address planning in different ways—including but not limited to austerity measures. Austerity cannot be the only approach, and solutions must be sought and implemented by discovering and following best practices, including “bridge” measures. These “bridges,” however, should neither focus or rely too heavily—if at all—on one-time revenue sourcing matched against recurring liabilities, nor can bridges rely on subsidization of one bundle of city services by another. While these issues and the reliance created by them are common to American cities, the practices must be changed—even while we are in the midst of hard times—and, perhaps, because of the hard times.

This office operates under the assumption local businesses and entrepreneurs possess many of the answers to our woes on a local and national level, and therefore our citizens should be used in the solution-making processes of local government. This office knows for Alexandria to be truly competitive in the 21st century, first and foremost, we must continue to improve and modernize our infrastructure: roads, sidewalks, lighting, drainage systems, broadband roll-out, fire stations, parks and recreation, and housing, among others. Infrastructure reinvestment really is, more now than ever, “king.”

This office subscribes to a municipal philosophy holding that targeted, evidence-based funding of our ailing American infrastructure allows the private sector to do what it does best: create sustainable, meaningful employment and betterment of the quality of Louisiana—and, indeed, American—life. Infrastructure—both physical and human—is the key to success for nations, states, and smaller units of government. It is the platform upon which successful, capacity-adding private growth and industry occurs.

In order to accomplish this philosophy, we need the best personnel, managers, and directors. Accordingly, 2011 will bring about changes in the executive-level staff. In addition, streamlining services and service provision will have to continue despite the operational thresholds being approached now. As a result, continued, stepped-up program auditing will occur in 2011 to ensure we maximize what we do at the City.

The Alexandria City budget will require further shaving. Capital priorities will need to make sense, “look” forward, and be set in a clearly-defined priority. Capital priorities are the subject of additional announcements in a later section.

II. Ethics Compliance and Adherence to Rulemaking

Employees of the City will be held to more rigorous ethical oversight by top staff. While there is no implication there is something wrong and no inference should be drawn, we must adhere to rules strictly. The rules can be complicated and there is even legal debate about whether our City Charter requires stricter application than current state law to the extent not preempted by state law. City officials, officers and employees can enjoy no privilege, rebate, reduced rate or any other thing of value, directly or indirectly solicited or received, from any person, firm or corporation doing business with the city.

Top staff will be held to an even higher standard, and all city officers, officials, and employees should adhere to the City Charter on purchase ordering, travel authorizations, and appointive and other processes.

This office will draw a line every time the Charter or laws are breached by official activity. Our elected officials take an oath of office. This office is duty-bound, by that oath, to take a clear position on violations of the City Charter.

III. Alexandria Policing

Confronting and reducing crime requires difficult decisions, bold action, and challenging many of our preconceived notions and practices. It requires us to confront some hard truths, not only about the efficacy of law enforcement practices, but also about the responsibilities of parents; the role of teachers, schools, churches, and the courts; and the effectiveness of neighborhood watch groups and other community organizations.

We must confront and fully recognize the underlying causes of crime: decaying neighborhoods, irresponsible or absent parents, poverty, unemployment, and a culture in which crime is not only acceptable but considered a rite of passage. Recently, a summit was held in the City confirming our direction. Flowing from that direction is, hopefully, a model pilot program. With the help of a noted criminologist, we are working a very specific plan.

This office will put in place an executive officer and several other team members to compose a strike force responsible for working directly with neighborhood associations and community leaders, including ministers and ministerial alliances—as well as law enforcement and other cities, townships

and villages—on implementation of “SafeGrowth” strategies. This implementation specifically includes the following:

Phase I- the establishment of a community “voice” flowing from the larger, community crime commission and from the “SafeGrowth” pilot project being launched in District 1. This Project should include a separate base of operations from the traditional police department and allow for partnering with other community assets and stakeholders. Weed and Seed assets as well as Safe Streets or other programs may be used to enhance grant opportunities but should not be a proxy for establishing a unique, individually-tailored program.

It is recommended that the Neighborhood and Community Affairs officer be familiar with law enforcement but not be “in” law enforcement. This position requires “street credibility” and real familiarity with the City, City affairs, and all areas of the City.

Phase II- the data collection ordered by Executive Order JMR 2009-2 will be used to create neighborhood profiles. These profiles will be the responsibility of this office, and the Neighborhoods officer should work with top executive staff and the Chief of Police to house data in both a secure and publicly-accessible fashion.

Phase III- task force information, and then crime commission initial issues, will come together to confirm or modify this initial action plan. The task force work and crime commission will be asked to move forward in 2011 with completion of all phases. This officer is directly responsible for this activity.

Phase IV- unique community plans and contracts/compacts will be formed with neighborhoods. From them, unique strategic plans will start to work together for the larger, city-wide plans. Alexandria City Council members will play key roles in this community planning aspect. In conjunction with the Chief of Police, the Commission shall review task force policy, and consider the following matters:

- Focus groups with victims of prioritized crimes.
- Interviews with members of the City Council to determine their district needs.
- Identification of the special needs for domestic and drug-driven crime.
- Citizen neighborhood leadership groups and related special police academies for those neighborhood leaders.
- Study of offender reentry programs and other initiatives with the Rapides Parish Sheriff to increase coordination between agencies.

- Recommendations regarding a unified, metro drug task force with the Rapides Parish Sheriff, Rapides District Attorney, City of Pineville and others.

Phase V- an executive strategy will be approved by the mayor and budget items will be submitted to the Council with initial findings of fact.

Phase VI- outcomes assessments will continue into the future, monitoring successes and failures.

IV. Leadership from the Community

As has been this Administration’s practice, leadership will continue to flow from the community “up” and not by government fiat “down.” A smart community—a smart Alexandria—must allow its best and brightest in the business and entrepreneurial realms to guide policy making. Too often, there is an overweening reliance on “big game hunting” and too little reliance on existing business and capacity—the backbone of any successful community. *SmartAlex* is therefore designed to harness local know-how and familiarity with our community to propel us forward.

As previously promised, this office has forwarded the *SmartAlex* plan to a prospective chairperson for consideration and formulation of a team of key leaders and other support members. This “think tank”-style group will operate outside of government, in our community. In conjunction with *Diversity in Action*, *SmartAlex* is designed to address streamlining local government activities, increase accountability, use best practices, make government services pay for themselves (when possible) while eliminating duplicative, wasteful programs, and promote local patronage and use of services, products, and community resources. The latter component would extend to promotion of a “Buy Alexandria-Pineville” program as well as promote local, mid-market companies and, when possible, utilization of products and services of other regional firms.

Like S.P.A.R.C., it will be one of the most innovative programs of its kind—in the country. The following are the nonexclusive particulars this office is asking the group to consider. The group is free to scrap issues, add new ones, or modify existing ones.

1) How the City can help our “big boxes,” big box areas (e.g., the Alexandria Mall), and national stores and franchises. These entities employ many citizens and are appreciated by us. We know local businesses often spend more revenue on local labor, but big national employers by nature employ more local people and, in some sectors, can supply better wages and benefits, while, in other sectors, local employers do. Thus, it is of no benefit to have a “buy local” plan that excludes our larger partnering employers or unfairly alters competition.

- ***What are ways retail dollars generated can be increasingly circulated locally? What would reasonably incent such promotable activity, e.g., use of local banking institutions, acquiring local professional services, buying services from local providers and contributing to local charities and NGOs?***

- *How can these entities become more integrated in the fabric of our community?*
 - *How can we supply better infrastructure to these areas?*
- 2) *In conjunction (not contradiction) with (1), how the City can promote a “Buy Local” campaign.*
- *What are the ways we can educate our citizens about what is available locally? What are homegrown, inexpensive marketing strategies we can universally employ?*
 - *What are ways we can cooperatively use traditional marketing techniques, media, and firms to “help” everyone along, especially in these economic times?*
 - *How can we provide better infrastructure?*
- 3) *How we can promote and buy locally-made, Louisiana-made and American-made products while avoiding harm to local vendors, retailers, and wholesalers (who turn over their dollars as a local business but who might sell foreign products). From clothing retailers to automobile dealers, these locally-owned, managed and investing businesses are part of the “buy local” initiative while at times selling products not made locally but needed and desired by our consumers. However, we want to promote locally created and other products that help us all.*
- 4) *How we can find the best efficiencies in all of City utilities, including how to avoid adherence to addicting subsidy arrangements.*
- *What will universal utility rate reform entail?*
 - *How do we demonstrate to City Council members the need to commit to decisive political address of this sticky problem?*
- 5) *How we can find large economy of scale efficiencies in utilities (e.g., self sufficient or generation additions to current capacity).*

Today, Alexandria is moving at an intense pace, establishing itself as an innovator in public policy, infrastructure investment, smart growth, workforce development, public-private partnerships, and urban renewal. The S.P.A.R.C. initiative is vital to the City, and it will work only if assumptions upon which it is based materialize: moving the plan quickly, moving the plan as a package instead of a series of small projects, moving the plan in concert with collaborators (viz., G.A.E.D.A.), and moving the plan along with the other identified capacity needs within and without the city of Alexandria. Our historic 2006 transition team, with detailed information from Mayor Randolph, compiled and released critical advice, and only one year after the first election, we launched the largest infrastructure investment project in the history of the City, S.P.A.R.C. (or Special Planned Activity Redevelopment Corridors). While S.P.A.R.C. is about making major, catalytic investments in public infrastructure—

investments that will not only transform neighborhoods and commercial districts but will also enhance property values, create jobs, and assert Alexandria's competitiveness as a center of industry and progress—the importance of quality, affordable, stable utility costs is paramount. Stability here affects business investment and the quality of life in every home.

Importantly, S.P.A.R.C. was created and launched *without the need for new or additional taxes and without increasing our overall tax burden*, and because of its unique and innovative approach, this Administration has used S.P.A.R.C. to leverage millions of dollars in outside, competitive funding.

This office also formed C.U.R.E. to address some very specific infrastructure concerns and also to guide officials through critical litigation with the City's principal energy provider. C.U.R.E. made several recommendations over the years, including its affirmation of what we loosely outlined as Alexandria's "Choice" or energy independence-“self-sufficiency” plan.

“I know people think commissions are used to shield officials from doing their jobs. I hope the model commissions we have formed shattered that cynicism. I believe in using community-up planning, but through qualified, best practice-minded civic leaders and citizens. You do not need only people considered the champions of industry or “blue ribbon” groups. You need smart, engaged, and careful thinkers to vet good research and practice. C.U.R.E. and our Chief Selection Committee showed the best of this world.

“Now, with *SmartAlex* we intend to take our transition team work (hatched privately), its implementation by this administration over four years (worked publicly) with our accountability (formerly transition) team's assessment of that work, and again turn over massive information to private citizens for input (hatched privately). *SmartAlex* will become the umbrella for all our activity: *Diversity in Action*, *SPARC*, *CURE*, and *Policing Initiatives*.

“C.U.R.E. is the most important policy group we have at this time. Its decisions will influence—one way or another—the City's policy-makers in what will surely be the most economically significant and, potentially, remedial of measures since the LEPA agreements and decision to build D.G. Hunter Electric Generating Station. To say this office has confidence in its members is a gross understatement.

“If we can create now a unified initiative to tie together all our addresses of longstanding issues, launch it privately, and then listen to the findings and act on them, we will be ahead of the game and other cities.” —*Jacques Roy*, October 2010

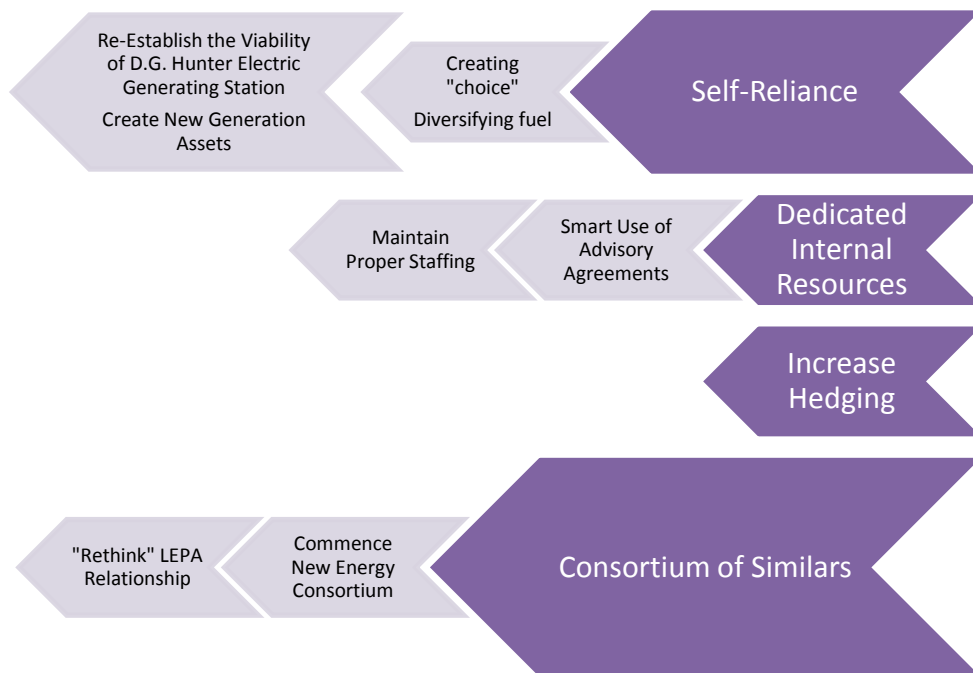
The CURE Challenge

The challenge for C.U.R.E. is also to launch reform without new taxes. This is a commitment of the Mayor and charge to the Commission, which is composed of citizens just like you and who live, work, and play right here.

Tandem Initiatives

The use of these initiatives together is purposeful. Along with *SmartAlex*, we will present these policies to C.U.R.E. to make its own, unfettered recommendations on Alexandria's next steps, including gathering its own evidence and testimony from stakeholders. C.U.R.E. is encouraged to address the issues presented here with detail sufficient to allow the Alexandria City Council and citizens a full opportunity to direct the next thirty years of utility development.

The principal goals of the Commission should at minimum focus on these overarching themes:



In this model, self-sufficiency is gained through achieving some degree of self-reliance,¹ followed by continued dedication to using well our best assets,

¹ Self-reliance does not imply self-containment. Partnering with others is critical to the proposed model's stability and long term sustainability. Alexandria cannot achieve these goals in a bubble; rather, the achievement of "dynamicism" in the market occurs after each of the overarching themes is put in place, and the model assumes the cooperation and ability of the City to create a consortium of similarly interested venturers. Rodemacher II's changes to economic viability necessitate rethinking some of the assumptions undergirding the self-reliance model.

resources, and having depth in our (vertical) internal staff and its (horizontal) advisory personnel. These commitments should pay dividends in terms of increasing hedge opportunities.

Finally, these new approaches are expected to place the city of Alexandria in a position of aid toward other municipalities in the region. Extending this relationship to cities and markets of similar needs, Alexandria would be positioned to create joint action agency relationships to further local reliance and cooperation in an ever-changing, expensive energy market. This “consortium of similars” would focus on regional needs and asset utilization different from the current LEPA relationship. In the current relationship, Alexandria is a large contributor with de minimus returns on investment. In current LEPA discussions, Alexandria would make gigantic contributions to refitting Rodemacher II (LEPA’s asset) for a fraction of a return, saddling Alexandrians with yet another set of decades of providing benefits to smaller, unconnected communities for little or no return.²

- *What are the ways in which the Commission on Utility Reform and Equity (C.U.R.E.) can help SmartAlex address larger costs associated with running local businesses?*
 - *How can local businesses aid in addressing the question of rebating litigation proceeds?*
- 6) *How SPARC and other capital plans can incorporate grant opportunities with the City to provide the private world with needed large scale infrastructure as well as other support programming (e.g., tenant improvement aid through CDBG funds, Brownfield remediation, transportation and drainage fixes).*
 - 7) *How the community can come to better understand and then utilize the Central Louisiana Business Incubator and the Entrepreneurial League System, our numerous foundations, other grant-providing activity centers, and other contributors committed to transforming us into a knowledge-based community.*
 - 8) *How we can establish a better, more coordinated and rapid response to economic risks, losses, and opportunities.*
 - 9) *How the business community can provide guidance to the civil service system and public employment complement to streamline, better coordinate responses to private needs, and work smarter and better.*

² Indeed, the better model of partnering comes closer to home: with a Cleco Corporation–City of Alexandria partnership, numerous models of mutual benefit are available.

10) How we can work with community and traditional policing to aid local business and economic development.

These are the ten principles of *SmartAlex* so far. We are asking for community support. Be a *SmartAlex*.

V. SOME SPECIFIC DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The city of Alexandria is committed to bringing to fruition several economic development projects of city-wide significance in the near term. These include:

- The Downtown Hotels Initiative (DHI)³
- The Startek/Jakes Building reuse⁴
- Incubator Programming
- Commercial Hodges Stockyard Partnering⁵
- DG Hunter and Generating Capacity Upgrades
- Cleantech Solutions

VI. OPERATIONAL CONCERNS

The City will use considerable resources to address the following issues:

- Longstanding civil service reform efforts.
- Additional resourcing and commitment to launch the District 1 Police Pilot Project.
- Conducting a building services assessment and inventory of existing city infrastructure needs.
- The Alexandria pension, retirement and other employee funds as the subject of local, statewide and national discussion.
- An Information Systems assessment, and
- Completion of Lose and Associates' work on a Comprehensive Inventory, Management and Identification of Recreation Needs and Assets for purposes of implementing a Recreation Department within Community Services.

³ See *2011: Emerging Trends in Real Estate*, the Urban Land Institute and PricewaterhouseCoopers (“[F]ull-service center-city hotels remain the top choice for opportunity investors. Suburban office gets the cold shoulder in surveys.”) Despite this finding and the equity in place for our local initiative, institutional debt remains aloof to tertiary market deals.

⁴ The 2010 announced closure evaporated 330 jobs overnight; however, 2011 may bring new opportunities for the Jakes Building. This remains a new priority to make up for our regional stakeholders.

⁵ See again *2011: Emerging Trends in Real Estate*, the Urban Land Institute (“Apartments easily outrank all other property sectors: favorable demographics and the housing bust should increase renter demand, and some interviewees forecast rent spikes by 2012 in some infill markets where development activity has ground to a halt. . . . Core players also like warehouses and infill grocery-anchored retail.”) As a reminder, the commercial side of development must be prioritized for 2011, but it should be noted the assumptions underlying the Administration’s hard-fought and, initially, Council-opposed stockyard residential and commercial mixed use model was borne out by the Urban Land Institute.

VII. CAPITAL PROGRAM PRIORTIES

The City must change the way its capital program is administered. We will offer a priority structure for adoption by executive order to create efficiencies and remove politics from the process. Right now, projects are pushed by consultant need in some cases instead of City planning. A priority system might look similar to the following model:

PRIORITY ONE (I)

Priority I (P-I) would focus on SPARC projects as primary projects and then address drainage and transportation projects of high need and city-wide, multi-district application. These projects would include Tangent Rail, Chatlin Lake, Hudson Boulevard, and Project ABC needs.

We should consider \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 in contingency in this category, per annum.

We are compiling a final list from the city planning on these projects as rated by need and best planning practice.

Best planning practices according to the American Society of Civil Engineers (ASCE) is defined in its “Principles for Infrastructure Stimulus Investment.” The ASCE believes that all projects supported by an economic stimulus investment must meet the following fundamental criteria:

- *Projects must create and sustain employment increases;*
- *Investments must provide long term benefits to the public (such as congestion relief);*
- *Long term maintenance and upkeep needs of all infrastructure projects— existing and new—must be taken into account; and*
- *To ensure accountability and transparency auditing programs should be able to establish measurable stated outcomes.*

In order to ensure the above criteria are met, the following principles will guide SPARC and Priority I selection decisions:

- *The project should deliver measurable improvements in public health, safety and quality of life;*
- *The project should provide substantial, broad-based economic benefit;*
- *The project should be designed and built in a sustainable and cost-effective manner, and proper consideration must be given to life-cycle costs; and*
- *The project should have a significant environmental benefit such as area restoration, improved air quality through reduced congestion and better watershed management through eliminating vulnerabilities in a system.*

While funds in P-I may move around as they come in or out “of the money,” this Priority should exhaust itself before considering Priority II, and P-I is the category in which P-IIs move as P-Is are completed or de-prioritized.

P-IIs, however, should be funded and prioritized simultaneously with P-Is since P-IIs “in the money” may be of high value as economic development and not otherwise on a P-I track.

PRIORITY TWO (II)

Projects in this category would be prioritized as P-Is but are not because of one or more of the following reasons:

- *The project is awaiting a funding piece.*
- *The project is a high value economic development project, but is not strictly speaking a project meeting P-I requirements.*
- *The project does not involve public safety, drainage, or high ASCE ratings.*
- *The project can be independently phased in different priorities.*
- *The project is a “stand alone” phase completing already-finished other phases which were of greater import.*

PRIORITY THREE (III)

All remaining priority PROJECTS shall be grouped here, and these may “jump” into P-I or P-II status generally in order, but not necessarily, depending on funding availability or grant opportunities. These projects may be categorized and listed in the capital budget, but may not be actively worked. P-IIIs shall be reviewed, however, at least twice yearly for priority assessment along with P-Is and P-IIs to ensure proper oversight and movement.

PRIORITY Indeterminate (P-ind)

All remaining PROJECTS shall be grouped as P-ind and may be in the budget, or may be included on a master needs list. These projects are neither scheduled for regular review nor given priority but are instead a list of requested projects which have survived initial vetting to be considered for later because there is agreed-upon efficacy and need on some level.

VIII. CONCLUSIONS

The workload is significant, but we must maintain this pace to compete. We hope you will join us and help push us forward, as an Alexandria United in Purpose.