



CITY OF ALEXANDRIA
ADMINISTRATION
rev. May 2023

Accountability Plan for Key Performance

Alexandria Recreation and Education Program (“AREP”)

OVERALL POLICY STATEMENT

It is the policy of the City of Alexandria (“COA”) to promote the highest quality of life for Alexandria citizens. To do so, the COA’s Administration must promote quality leadership and competent management of public affairs. Accountability is a critical determinant of organizational success. Empowered leaders deliver exceptional results and foster a culture of accountability based in large part on setting clear goals, following key performance measurements, and linking results to opportunities for advancement and consequences. By clarifying roles, setting measurable goals, and establishing transparent review procedures, the Administration can foster a culture of leadership excellence and continuous improvement ensuring executives are held responsible for key performance outcomes.

INTRODUCTION/PHILOSOPHY

It is essential to the maintenance of a democratic society that public business be performed in an open and public manner, and that citizens be advised and aware of the performance of public officials and the deliberations and decisions that go into the making of public policy.

Government business should be open to public scrutiny, while fostering innovation, inclusiveness, and energy. An adopted plan of work and community-based commissions aid in transparency, wide-reaching input, and participation.¹

Alexandria wishes to create a robust use of its public assets for recreational and cultural enjoyment, first and foremost, as a return on tax contribution to its citizens. In either case, Alexandria promotes (i) competitive sports and sportsmanship, (ii) passive enjoyment of tranquil park environments and active use of parks for recreational and health betterment, and (iii) marketing and economic development uses as may from time to time result from organized not-for-profit and for-profit facility and park use.

A well-rounded and diverse parks and recreation department provides many benefits to the community it serves. As discussed in the 1995 National Recreation and Park Association publication, “Park, Recreation, Open Space and Greenway Guidelines,” the four categories of benefits are personal, economic, social and environmental. Each benefit is consequential to the community and has specific rewards.

¹ Based on the 2009 *Lose and Associates Report*, the COA published and has followed its December 23, 2013 executive summary and internal action plan.

- Personal benefits of a comprehensive delivery system include: a full and meaningful life, good health, stress management, self-esteem, positive self-image, a balanced life, achieving full potential, gaining life satisfaction, human development, positive lifestyle choices and improved quality of life.
- Economic benefits include: preventive health care, a productive work force, big economic returns on small investments, business relocation and expansion, reduction in high-cost vandalism and criminal activity, tourism growth and environmental investments that pay for themselves.
- Social benefits include: building strong communities; reducing alienation, loneliness and anti-social behavior; promoting ethnic and cultural harmony; building strong families; increasing opportunity for community involvement, shared management and ownership of resources; and providing a foundation for community pride.
- Environmental benefits include: environmental health, environmental protection and rehabilitation, environmental education, environmental investment, increasing property values and insurance for a continuing healthy environmental future.

AREP and Partnering

The purpose of a Parks and Recreation Policy Plan is to assess the park and recreation needs of the Alexandria community, evaluate the COA's current services, and provide clear and implementable recommendations to deliver the level of service needed to meet the community's needs. A comprehensive Parks and Recreation Policy Plan must place opportunity costs on a continuum and deliver the best results flowing from best practices. Alexandria must use its limited resources to provide exceptional parks, leisure services, programming, walking, jogging and biking trails, and recreation facilities and plans.

Finally, there is the need to augment and create new spaces and built environments, and to provide matching programming along the spheres of Charter-adopted activities: programs of athletics; recreational activities; cultural activities such as libraries, concerts, art museums and exhibits; parks and playgrounds; and other leisure time and cultural activities and functions of the COA.

Long-term sustainability is dependent on prioritized decision-making, identification of core services, and maximized use of resources, as adopted in the Philosophy.

The AREP commission shall address on behalf of the Mayor: (i) Recommendations regarding capital improvements; (ii) Program establishment or enhancement; (iii) Policy establishment or modifications; and (iv) Refereeing community disputes over policymaking.



SPECIFIC POLICIES AND POLICY GUIDANCE FOR YOUTH AND MODERN YOUTH CHALLENGES

At-risk youth face heightened chances of negative community experiences and difficulties in various areas of their lives, including education, employment, and mental health. Factors such as poverty, family instability, and accessing available resources intensify these challenges. Modern, evidence-based programs should address immediate needs and equip young individuals with skills and confidence necessary for long-term success. In addition to formal schooling and athletics, community-driven youth sports, non-school mentoring and education, and programmed recreation are proven contributors to future success.

Several difficult policy considerations require frank community discussion followed by committed implementation. One early adoption strategy is to establish structural rules that legally or programmatically require parent, guardian, mentor, or responsible adult participation alongside youth.

City of Alexandria, Louisiana – AREP

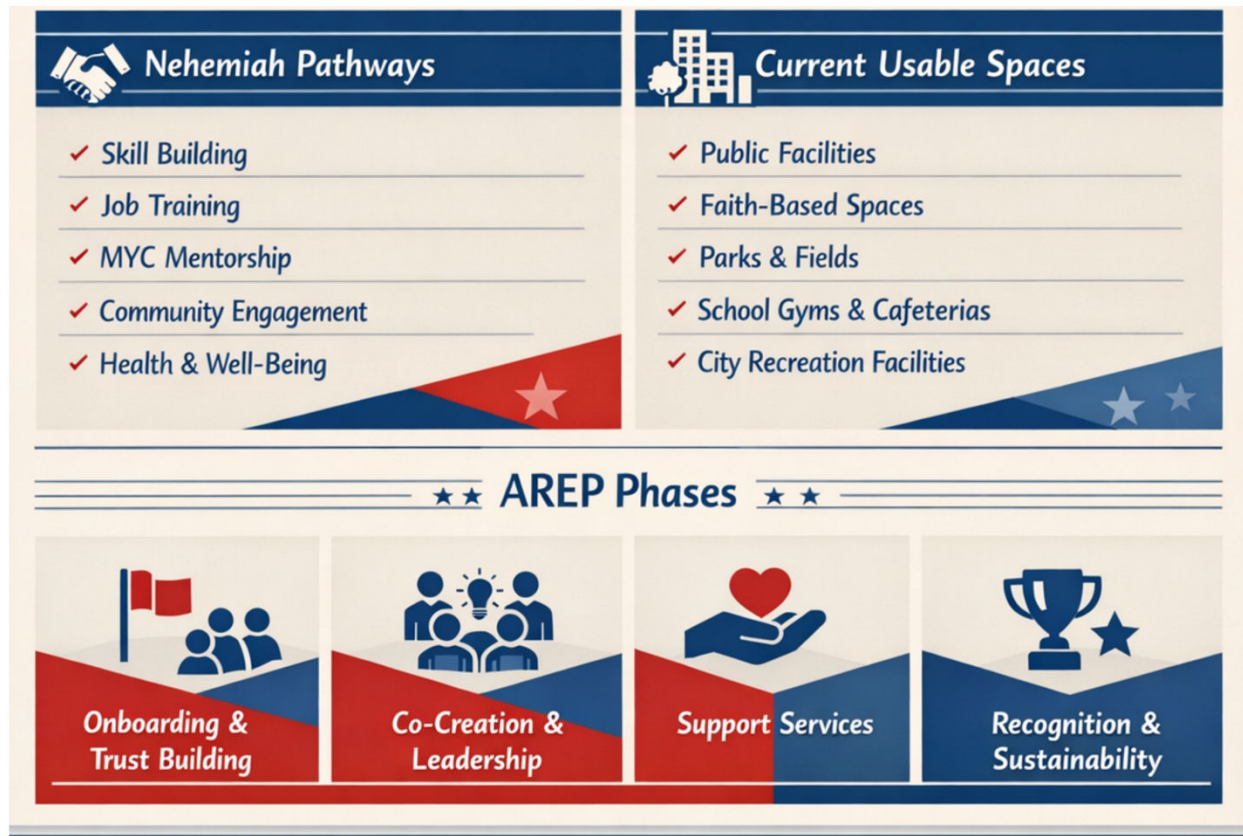
★ Youth Recreation, Family Engagement, and Community Accountability ★ ★ ★

 Purpose	 Core Participation Standards
Support at-risk youth through recreation, mentoring, skill building, and family engagement.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">✓ No Drop-Off Recreation When Required✓ Nominal Buy-In & Sign-Up✓ Co-Signed Behavior Contracts✓ Active Duty Volunteer Rotation✓ Parallel Parent Workshops

- **Addressing “Drop-Off” Recreation:** The COA hosts programming in which children are dropped off to camps or involving unchaperoned use of COA recreation assets. But *certain* programs *may* require adult chaperoning or a parent, adult guardian, or designated responsible adult to remain immediately available for the duration of an activity, particularly when age or program risk warrants that requirement. Coached team events and supervised league activities follow separate participation standards.²
- **Admission “Currency” or “Nominal” Buy-In:** Responsible adult parties may be required to complete a meaningful sign-up process, contribute a nominal fee, or satisfy another participation requirements, even when scholarships or waivers are available. Higher-intensity or higher-cost opportunities, including field trips and sports leagues, may require additional fees, while most offerings should remain free or nominally priced (*i.e.* gauged for buy-in).
- **Co-Signed Behavior Contracts:** Youth and responsible adults will sign a mutual accountability pledge during intake to confirm expectations, participation commitments, and behavior standards. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
- **Active Duty Rotation:** For designated programs, each child will have a parent, guardian, mentor, or responsible adult sign up for at least one volunteer shift per program cycle, such as refereeing, cooking, setup, or event support. **NO EXCEPTIONS.**
- **Parallel Tracking:** When youth participate in activities, parents or responsible adults may be offered aligned workshops on topics such as financial stability, wellness, or family support.
- **Zero Violence Toleration:** COA youth recreation will not “okay” ungovernability, violence, weapons, or disruption causing other participants to lose benefits of the program.

² COA policy is aimed at *parental engagement*. Signing a child in and permission checks indicating knowledge of attendance, by appropriate adults, shall be central to programming policy.

Youth programming challenges may include unavailable parents, guardians, mentors, or responsible adults. We know this reality, and the COA is committed to a separate intake pathway assessing the child's needs and identifying an appropriate guardian, mentor, or responsible party.³



For older youth and young adults, the COA's *Nehemiah* programming is centered on the following areas:

1. **Skill Building:** Recreation programs can teach essential life skills, including teamwork, communication, problem-solving, and leadership, all of which are transferable to education, employment, and civic life.
2. **Job Training:** Recreation organizations can offer internships, work-based learning, and job training opportunities in areas such as sports coaching, facility management, and event planning.
3. **Mentorship through the MYC:** Recreation programs often connect at-risk youth with positive role models who can guide them through personal and professional challenges. This mentorship is more than just guidance; it fosters a sense of belonging and community, encouraging youth to envision a brighter future.
4. **Community Engagement through the MYC:** Volunteer opportunities can help youth build resumes while developing a stronger sense of purpose, responsibility, and connection to their community.
5. **Health and Well-Being:** Participation in recreational activities supports physical and mental health, which can strengthen readiness for educational and employment opportunities.

³ Participation requirements should be applied consistently, with clearly documented alternative pathways *only* when a youth lacks an available responsible adult. As programs build resilience and self-governance, we can revisit some governance strictures that must be initially included. When we do and strictures relax, that means we are **WINNING** and the community is self-policing and connecting.

By promoting partnerships through **REIGNITE**, other capital programming, and the *Nehemiah* initiative (focused on building and making more resilient important relationships among our institutional, cultural, faith-based, and social constructs), programming with these initiatives contributes to the revitalization of the COA.

It is important that community and education stakeholders carefully and thoroughly consider the long-term impacts on all educational “bricks-and-mortar” assets in the community.

Objectives of the Accountability Plan

Each AREP commissioner and team member shall:

- Align executive actions with organizational strategy and goals
 - The alignment measurements require self-directive behaviors—the executive is sought for his or her policymaking skillset, not merely to rubberstamp COA policy
 - This level of leadership requires adeptness at conflict resolution and skills that connect people
- Establish clear performance metrics and benchmarks, published to the Administration as requested but not less than once annually
- Promote transparency and fairness in the aid of performance evaluation
- Encourage proactive leadership and independent decision-making; avoid creating inter-personnel conflicts or turmoil
- Strive for continuous improvement and development

CURRENT USABLE SPACES:

Maximize existing, trusted local infrastructure to host programs that naturally draw families in.

- **Public Facilities:** Use tech labs for joint youth-parent digital literacy, gaming tournaments, and other tech-related fun and serious learning.
- **Faith-Based Spaces:** Partner with neighborhood churches for gym space and trusted outreach.
- **Local Parks & Fields:** Use visible community spaces for weekend family field days and tournaments.
- **School Gyms/Cafeterias:** Utilize familiar, accessible buildings for after-hours workshops and recreation.
- **Current COA Recreation Facility Infrastructure:** These facilities provide various and unique opportunities to increase COA programming and partnered programming for qualified, trusted facilitators and responsible agencies or private organizations. Successful track records and youth-related expertise will be required or can be learned through COA-enhanced certification.
 - Acadian West Sandy Park
 - Alexandria Youth Complex
 - Alexandria Zoological Park
 - Arnie Knobloc Field/Diamond #1
 - Beagle Club
 - Ben Bradford Ballpark
 - Big Island
 - Bolton Avenue Community Center
 - Bringhurst Ball Park
 - Bringhurst Golf Course (the “Brink”)
 - Broadway Resource Center
 - Charles F. Smith Park
 - Cheatham Ballpark

THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA AREP ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN – Key Performance Measures (2023)

- Cheatham Park
- City Park Playground
- City Park Walking Trail
- Compton Park
- Convention Hall
- Deborah Bowman Park
- Downtown Mini Park
- Elliott Street Lots/Old Menard School Park
- Enterprise Park
- Family TREE House
- Farmer’s Market
- Frank O. Hunter Park
- Genealogical Library
- Harmon Park
- Harold Miles Park
- Helen Black Park
- Johnny Downs Recreational Complex
- Lily Grimble Park
- Lincoln Park
- Links
- Martin Community Center
- Mason Street Park
- M.L. King Community Center
- North 16th Street Levee Park
- O’Hearn Mathews Field
- Downtown Amphitheatre
- Sylvester Street Picnic Area and Youth & Teen Center
- Masonic Drive Tennis Courts
- Masonic Sports Courts
- Youth Complex Ballpark

CURRENT PROGRAMMING AND DELIVERABLES”

Current programming and deliverables shall continue to maximize trusted local infrastructure, align youth activities with family engagement, and create clear expectations for participation, accountability, and measurable outcomes.

DIVISION OF COMMUNITY SERVICES 2023 WORK PLAN FOR AREP OVERSIGHT

The Division of Community Services shall reestablish COA assets, ensuring capital project development and programming are restored. The programming and use of assets should accomplish these term goals:

Phase 1: Onboarding and Trust Building

Establish a strong, welcoming connection before programming begins.

- **“Doorstep” Registration:** Meet parents at the door or at a familiar local community asset in the neighborhood to complete paperwork.
- **Intake Incentives:** Provide incentives for “early birds” who complete registration packets.
- **Text-First Communication:** Use texting instead of emails.
- **Welcome Dinners:** Host a casual, free meal instead of a formal meeting.

Phase 2: Co-Creation and Leadership

Shift parents from passive consumers to active program leaders.

THE CITY OF ALEXANDRIA AREP ACCOUNTABILITY PLAN – Key Performance Measures (2023)

- **AREP:** The commission will review recreational programming and support continuous improvement.
- **Stipended Roles:** Hire parents as event chaperones, coaches, or tutors.
- **Skill-Sharing Nights:** Invite parents to teach hobbies, cooking, or crafts.
- **Youth-Led Showcases:** Let youth present projects to drive parental attendance.

Phase 3: Support Services

Remove logistical barriers that prevent parents and responsible adults from participating consistently.

- **Family Transportation:** Coordinate rides or provide bus passes for activities, while preserving the principle that transportation support should be tied to participation expectations, community contribution, or another form of meaningful program buy-in.
- **Dual-Track Programs:** Run adult wellness classes parallel to youth sports.

Phase 4: Recognition and Sustainability

Celebrate family milestones to build long-term community loyalty.

- **Shout-Out Bulletins:** Share visual bulletins or infographics that highlight positive parental involvement and reinforce community norms.
- **Family Milestone Galas:** Celebrate joint youth and parent achievements.
- **Graduation Pathways:** Create ceremony rituals for completing program milestones.
- **Peer Recruitment:** Incentivize active parents to recruit neighborhood families.
- **Alumni Networks:** Keep graduated families connected as lifelong mentors.

Roles and Responsibilities of Leader Partners

- Executives: Own individual and team outcomes, participate in reviews, and act on feedback.
- Executive Staff Inclusion: Set expectations, conduct evaluations, and provide support.
- Community Services: Facilitate review processes, track development plans, and manage programming.
- Senior Chiefs: Facilitate review processes, track development plans, conduct evaluations, and act on underperformance or function obsolescence.
- Division Heads: Facilitate review processes, track development plans, conduct evaluations, and act on underperformance or function obsolescence. Directly report to the Mayor or designees primarily during weekly staff but as needed each day. Act as primary owners of all administrative policy.
- Recreation Director: Provide support to the division leaders and Senior Chiefs. Liaise with others.

Monitoring and Continuous Improvement

This plan is reviewed to ensure relevance and effectiveness. Adjustments are made based on organizational changes, external threats or challenges, and feedback from stakeholders. By maintaining a dynamic approach to executive accountability, the COA ensures resilience, adaptability, and sustained high performance.

Public Awareness

This plan does not directly address (*other policies may*) but assumes executives shall formulate and execute a complete public awareness/media engagement plan.