



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

**The Coalition For A Livable Alexandria, Inc.**

Website: <https://livablealexandria.org>

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Alexandria, VA 22314

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# ABOUT US

## Who We Are

The Coalition For A Livable Alexandria, Inc. (the “Coalition” or “CLA”) was incorporated by the Commonwealth of Virginia on July 17, 2023, as a nonprofit corporation organized under section 501(c)(4) of the Internal Revenue Code. We are a City of Alexandria grassroots organization. CLA is not affiliated with any other regional or national civic or social advocacy organization.

## Purpose

The Coalition was founded by a group of community members who recognized the need for a local organization dedicated to the quality of life of all residents of the City of Alexandria, truth and transparency in City government, balanced and informed debate on policy and procedural issues being considered, and ensuring the voice of residents are given equal weight in policy formulation and decisions; all reflecting and in furtherance of the principles of representative democracy.

## Mission

To promote equal opportunities for all residents, foster informed debate and discussion, and facilitate a balanced understanding of policy and procedural issues being considered by the City of Alexandria.

*“Together we can create an Alexandria that works for everyone.”*

## Focus

Quality of life and livability; neighborhood accessibility and mobility; economic opportunity and prosperity; education; health and safety; infrastructure; environment; recreation; sensible density; and overarching concerns throughout the City such as policy or procedural issues.

# MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR



We formed CLA after listening to the voices of exasperated Alexandria residents across the social, political, and demographic spectrum. The response during our first five months was phenomenal, validating a shared frustration among many residents with the direction of the City, lack of transparency, and actual meaningful public engagement in policy formulation and implementation. In August 2023 we launched our first advocacy campaign, challenging plans to fast-track Zoning for Housing/Housing for All, a package of sweeping zoning initiatives favoring external constituencies and developer profitability interests over Alexandria residents with false and misleading promises of making housing more accessible and affordable in the City. CLA is an ardent supporter of affordable housing; however, these proposals, by the City's own admission, hardly move the needle in solving housing affordability. Instead, they remove existing legal protections leaving residents no say in development decisions, while promoting overdevelopment and increased density to what is already the densest jurisdiction in Virginia. Despite majority opposition, the Alexandria City Council unanimously approved the measure. In the past this issue would have ended there; however, CLA galvanized public support for pursuit of a legal challenge. While pursuing a lawsuit challenging this radical change in Alexandria's zoning code will continue to drive CLA throughout 2024, CLA was not founded as a single-issue platform. We will continue to champion the full and open dissemination of all sides of major issues affecting the quality of life, livability, and welfare of residents, posing alternative viewpoints when policymakers offer a singular or biased points of view; and ensure elected and appointed city officials hear and listen to voices of all residents. With your support, we can continue building an independent advocacy coalition for Alexandrians. Together, we can create an Alexandria that works for everyone by fighting for the primacy of residents over outside special interest groups, in policy formulation, and decision making at City Hall.

*Roy R Byrd*

Chair

The Coalition For A Livable Alexandria, Inc.

# FINANCIALS

## Statement of Financial Position

The Coalition For A Livable Alexandria operates as a 501 (c) (4) nonprofit. The Coalition is not affiliated with, nor does it receive funding from, any regional, state, or national organizations. Presently, CLA collects no membership dues; instead, it relies solely on the non-tax-deductible donations of individual supporters.

## Statement of Income & Expenses for July 17, 2023—December 31, 2023

- Income: \$12,338.46
- Expense: 9,479.63
- Ending Balance: 2,858.83

## Description of Expenses

DESCRIPTION	EXPENSES
PayPal	\$ 100.59
Bank Fees	\$ 10.00
CLA Banner	\$ 83.06
ZFH Yard Signs	\$ 2660.38
ZFH Brochures	\$ 960.74
ZFH Stickers	\$ 127.63
Bellwather Research	\$ 3,500.00
AVPro 360 LLC Sound Systems	\$ 1,881.88
A&A Rentals	\$ 155.35
<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>\$ 9,479.63</b>

# GOVERNANCE

## Leadership

**CLA LEADERSHIP**

- Chair: *Roy R Byrd*
- Treasurer: *William L Shen*
- Secretary: (vacant)
- Director: *John Fehrenbach*
- Director: *Yvonne Weight Callahan*
- Director: *Sylvia Alimena*
- Director: (vacant)

## Organization

The Board of Directors is the administrative body of CLA and in accordance with the corporation bylaws consists of not less than five (5) nor more than seven (7) Directors including three (3) Officers—Chair, Treasurer, Secretary. During 2023 the CLA Board maintained the minimum five (5) Directors including two (2) Officers, the Chair and Treasurer, with the remaining Directors alternating as acting Treasurer. Filling existing vacancies and increasing the Board to its full complement of seven (7) will be a priority in 2024.

*“CLA serves to encourage the full an open dissemination of all sides of major issues affecting the welfare of residents of the City of Alexandria with a focus on quality of life and livability.”*

# OPERATIONAL HIGHLIGHTS

## Key Events and Accomplishments



### July 2023

- ✚ CLA launch and activation.

### August 2023

- ✚ In response to public outcry over City plans to fast-track a package of sweeping zoning changes “Zoning for Housing/Housing for All” (ZFH) favoring external constituencies and developer interest over Alexandria residents, CLA initiated its first resident advocacy campaign in opposition to ZFH.
- ✚ CLA holds a press conference and rally outside of Alexandria City Hall, to highlight public concern over the sweeping zoning proposal to radically change Alexandria’s Zoning Code, removing existing protections, leaving residents no legal say in development decisions.

### September–October 2023

- ✚ CLA organized a ZFH community outreach and information operation challenging the transparency and engagement practices of the City, unfounded claims, misrepresentations, biases, reliance on theoretical and unrealistic outcomes, and

access and influence of outside interests in the formulation of the proposed zoning; and encouraging greater public engagement.

#### November 2023

- ✚ CLA commissioned Bellwether Research & Consulting to conduct a survey of registered voters in the city of Alexandria to assess awareness and attitudes on ZFH issues. The results corroborated CLA claims that most Alexandria voters (58%) opposed ZFH legislation, while just 26% favored it.
- ✚ CLA holds a rally in front of City Hall in opposition to ZFH legislation, drawing hundreds of protesters.
- ✚ CLA successfully organizes residents to voice their concerns during ZFH hearings before the Planning Commission and City Council.

#### December 2023

- ✚ CLA pursues legal options to void the ZFH ordinance passed by the City Council despite overwhelming opposition to ZFH from residents.

***“Zoning law is complex and esoteric. Residents often do not understand their rights, and even if they do, they do not have the financial means to exercise them against the city government. CLA is here to ensure they have a voice.”***



# LOOKING AHEAD



CLA will have an advocacy role on neighborhood quality of life and livability; accessibility and mobility; economic opportunity and prosperity; education; health and safety; infrastructure; environment; and overarching concerns throughout the City of Alexandria, Virginia, CLA will continue to promote for the equitable prosperity of all residents, foster informed debate, discussion, and public education, and serve to encourage full and open dissemination of all sides of major issues affecting the welfare of residents.