

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 24, 2001

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: PHILIP SUNDERLAND, CITY MANAGER *PS*

SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 24 : MENTAL HEALTH/MENTAL
RETARDATION/SUBSTANCE ABUSE FY 2002 PROPOSED BUDGET
FUNDING (COUNCILMAN EUILLE'S AND COUNCILWOMAN
WOODSON'S REQUESTS)

This memorandum is in response to Councilman Euille's and Councilwoman Woodson's requests regarding the Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation/Substance Abuse's FY 2002 Proposed funding. Councilman Euille requested information on the potential high level risk resulting from inadequate funding in light of the State's reduction/elimination of funding for various programs and the Department's non-recommended supplemental funding requests. Councilwoman Woodson requested information regarding the Department's psycho-social services and how the City's level of support compares locally and nationally.

The City supports a wide range of activities and services aimed at children. These are provided by City departments, the public school system or contractors. These activities include the early intervention program for infants with developmental problems, early intervention for high risk children, day care, special recreation programs, teenage pregnancy prevention, dispute resolution and more. As the result of coordination efforts among the departments, for example, there are mental health and substance abuse services offered within the public schools. Several agencies work together to serve children identified under the Comprehensive Services Act. The Youth Policy Commission has reviewed the range of services available within the City aimed at assisting youth. A summary of its review is contained in its report to City Council last year. It is not possible within the budget time period to compare the Alexandria effort against other localities and nationally, although it is the judgement of staff that Alexandria has more services than many communities its size.

The Community Services Board has identified a set of initiatives through its self study and needs assessment process which have been presented to the City Manager and City Council, and were discussed with Council during a work session last spring. The Board may, in accordance with its approved plan of services, seek funding from granting agencies or foundations for those initiatives not funded by the City. Given the current situation with the State budget, it is unlikely that the state will fund any of these new initiatives. At the same time, however, state budget initiatives will not, it appears, have a detrimental effect on the Department of Mental Health/Mental

Retardation/Substance Abuse in FY 2002. Based on current information, in the areas of mental health, mental retardation and substance abuse the City will see state reductions that it can absorb with the planned FY 2002 City budget. However, State aid also is dependent on the growth of state tax revenues, which a slowing economy could impact thereby causing additional budget reductions beyond the original projections.

Although supplementals in the amount of \$958,872 were not recommended in the FY 2002 Proposed Budget for the Department of Mental Health/Mental Retardation/Substance Abuse, it should be noted that the department's General Fund budget has increased by \$899,009, or 9.9 percent, over the FY 2001 Approved General Fund budget. As was the case with many other supplementals in other departments, budget resource limitations made the funding of many supplementals not possible in FY 2002.

cc: Mark Jinks, Assistant City Manager
Valerie Moore, Budget/Management Analyst
William Claiborn, Director, MH/MR/SA