

#	Question	Staff Answer
1	Why is the schedule for the zoning changes so aggressive? is there a deadline we must meet?	<p>The City would like to have a comprehensive conversation about these matters. Something we have realized with some of our other planning work (non-Zoning for Housing work) is that some of our processes were too long; we had a lot of meetings, and people were getting tired. The way we were getting things done exhausted people. So we'd like have plenty of opportunities to listen to people's concerns at the beginning and have enough time to analyze, offer findings, and consider changes based on community feedback.</p> <p>Also, Zoning for Housing/Housing for All goes back to 2020. Everyone may not have been aware of it at that time but we did initiate this effort nearly three years ago, with community outreach. Since that time, the City Council has adopted several policies -- Accessory Dwelling Units, Co-Living, and Auxiliary Dwellings policies under the umbrella of Zoning for Housing.</p>
2	Will the city provide quantitative evidence that these zoning changes will accomplish the desired objective?	<p>We are fortunate that there are highly trained internal staff assigned to these Zoning for Housing initiatives to conduct quantitative analyses and we are also involving outside experts to help us with that. We are excited to hear the great ideas and overall input people will have to share and this is a good time to start receiving such information.</p>
3	Are all the upcoming community meetings the same content, so I would want to pick the most convenient one to participate? Or will there be different content/agendas at different meetings so I might want to attend more than one? Thank you.	<p>As the process develops, the spring community engagement opportunities will take place from April to June. That is an opportunity to hear initial comments on the proposed zoning reforms while in their conceptual stage. Since there are three meetings planned in the spring, we will document comments from each meeting to share at the next meeting. Then, with your comments and data gatherine and analysis, we can form preliminary findings during the summer. In the fall, we anticipate coming back to the public with another set of community engagement meetings to receive your feedback on findings, and we will utilize that feedback from those meetings to form draft recommendations for consideration during the public hearing review process later in the year.</p> <p>Additionally, for those of you are daunted by the idea of coming to all three meetings, as stated, we will be documenting what is shared by the community so that is available to reference later. So if you want a summary or a list of what other people said, that will also be available.</p>
4	There are R-2-5 properties where a small home has been torn down and a large SFH is built in its place. The builder could have built a semi-detached home there, but did not. will the city reach out to those developers and ask them why they didn't build a semi-detached when they could have by right?	<p>This is a good idea and there is likely a limited number of those cases, so that we should be able get a sense of how many and more importantly how the decisions were made. Staff will pursue this.</p>
5	Will there be more work done to clarify which specific parcels would be able to use Bonus Height Amendment? This information was very unclear in the last attempt to expand the reach of this option for developers. To what level of granularity will this informaiton be provided and when can we expect that detail?	<p>Yes; we hear you. In our earlier outreach last year, the City presented a map that identifies areas of the City where this would be eligible based on existing allowable bulding heights. This proposed change may not work in all such areas due to other regulatory factors or a property owner's decision not to use it. That said, for those areas where it might be feasible, we are currently identifying possible scenarios and creating illustratives of how it may work in a manner that is in compliance with the regulations and is harmonious to other surrounding development.</p>
6	When you say affordable, what goal do you have for creating deeply affordable housing (30-40% AMI)?	<p>Response being confirmed with Office of Housing and will be posted shortly.</p>
7	As a part of this process will Alexandria be providing recomendations to our State Delegation. For example, creating an incentive program where the State assists with funding for schools and other services for areas where localities boost density around transit areas. Thank you to all of Staff for their hard work.	<p>Each year, starting in the summer and continuing in the fall, the City creates a list of initiatives to take to the Legislature in Richmond. Also, during the fall, we hear from our delegation at City Council legislative meetings on the progress of such legislative activities. We welcome ideas on such matters from the public.</p>

8	<p>Mr Moritz stated that other impacts such as negative impact on school capacity, storm water drainage, parking, commute times, etc. would be considered in evaluating the "toolkit items." Improving these are not listed as goals or decision factors. Would you specify where and how those will be considered?</p>	<p>Yes; our objective for each of these initiatives is to produce an estimate of how many units can be created and where. With that, estimates on the services which would be needed can be generated as well. For current proposed development projects we do that now. For example, if we are talking about increasing a building by a floor, it would need to be approved by the impact that it has on the City such as open space, parking and traffic, water use, parking and traffic.</p>
9	<p>The Seminary neighborhood was a thriving African American Community that the City drove out beginning in 1961 to make way for TC William, now Alexandria High School, and Ft Ward Museum and park. This practice of dismissing historical communities continued through 2018 when the city recinded an agreement with ther remaining 17 households adjacent to the high school stadium by putting in lights. So why should this or any other community trust the city now? If history is prelude</p>	<p>What staff would like to highlight from this question is to affirm in the City's history those and other examples where the City used our power and legal authority in ways that caused harm to the African American community and their families. That is very much a part of our history that we are acknowledging in our program. In terms of Alexandria City High School and the specific problems about lights, in that case, ultimately all parties including the neighbors, came to a settlement agreement. What was a material difference in terms of the lights is that everyone who should have been at the table was there. In terms of historic barriers of the past, people were not invited to the table; they weren't welcome at the table and there were a number of barriers to deliberately exclude them from that table. That was wrong and it is imperative that we recognize that all groups in our City provide value and should always have a place at the table and be heard and their communities respected and supported as we are all part of a larger Alexandrian community.</p>
10	<p>What are the specific goals of Zoning for Housing and what is the plan for specific, measurable, time-bound steps to achieve those goals. Such specific goals should include not merely meeting numbers of affordable housing units, but also address how many persons working in Alexandria have chosen to live in affordable housing, and the impacts of added density on (a) greenhouse gas emissions, (b) school enrollment, (c) road repairs, (d) the reliability of the electric grid, (e) response times for police and firefighter intervention, (f) real estate taxes, (g) housing prices, (g) flooding events, and (h) stormwater runoff.</p>	<p>We have an analytical team looking at units, impacts and metrics that people will find helpful. In each plan we are evaluating the added density. We also evaluate other factors, using specific tools, to guage impacts/improvements relative traffic, roads, parking, school enrollment, water, public safety. We will do this just as it is done for individual projects and as the City undertakes small area plan development and updates to ensure communities will have the infrastructure and services they need to be able to live a high quality life.</p>
11	<p>Follow up on the timeline: The final public hearings will be held over the winter holidays of Thanksgiving, Hanukkah and Christmas. This was explicitly identified as problematic during the Nov 2022 Council meeting. What is being done to ensure residents and staff are able to focus on their families rather than attend City meetings during this time?</p>	<p>We are very sensitive to this question, and we are endeavoring to schedule the public hearings so that they do not impact the timing for holiday gatherings or travel. We are trying to avoid that conflict to every extent possible.</p>
12	<p>Other than the continued existence of racial covenants which are no longer enforceable, what evidence do you have of zoning policies which maintain discrimination?</p>	<p>That's one of the things we are doing, looking back at past policies, laws and practices that may have resulted in systematic discrimination and that may have left vestiges even today that impact of lives of persons of color in terms of access to decent and affordable housing and other quality of life factors. It is important to recognize if/where this may exist and to correct it so that all Alexandrians can live in an environment of fairness and equity.</p>
13	<p>How will the community feedback process ensure robust accessibility for individuals who speak limited English, have limited literacy, are disabled, or otherwise confront barriers to traditional means of engagement?</p>	<p>We have a strong commitment in our City to continue efforts to streamline our Office of Communications and Public Information and that effort is ongoing. The team is energetic and creative and brings a lot of knowledge and sensitivity to all these points that will enable them to work effectively and efficiently. We are committed to utilizing tools, resources and technology to ensure participation by the greatest amount of people in Alexandria as possible of all income, educational levels, abilities, languages, etc. We a want to make sure that there are avenues for everyone to participate. We are not saying this will happen overnight, but the City Council and staff are committed to it.</p>
14	<p>For ADUs specifically, how many have been used for long-term, affordable housing versus short term rentals (AirBnBs) or as additions to existing square footage (e.g. used as a home office)?</p>	<p>There are 40 Accessory Dwelling Units that were approved in February of this year and as of this month that number increased to 42. While ADUs are not required to meet affordability guidelines, they help to expand housing choices within the City. Additionally, the Regional Fair Housing Assessment has made a recommendation that the City could consider support to make them more affordable. In terms of short term rentals, City Code defines short terms rentalss as the provision of a room or space by an operator that is suitable or intended for occupancy for dwelling, sleeping, or lodging purposes, for a period of fewer than 30 consecutive days, in exchange for a charge for the occupancy. They must be registered with the City in order to operate.</p>

15	<p>From my understanding new building usually come with some form of parking minimum requirements. Has the city thought about reducing or eliminating those parking minimums for certain areas? Reducing or eliminating parking minimums in could have several benefits, including reducing the cost of housing, encouraging sustainable transportation, and making the city more livable.</p>	<p>The City has undertaken changes to its Multi-family parking regulations. The new parking standards establish parking ratios with allowances for lower ratios when particular conditions are met. This parking ratio is a starting point, from which projects may apply allowable credits according to the development's proximity to transit, walkability index score, and percentage of studio units within the development project. The City will continue to look at parking regulations particularly while also emphasizing opportunities for more walkable, service enriched and multi-modal options for communities.</p>
16	<p>Will developers be allowed to tear down adjacent SFH in the R2-5 zone and consolidate the lots to build townhouses or a 4-6 apartment building?</p>	<p>We appreciate this suggestion to examine this question. Many of the houses in Del Ray are on double lots. Lot consolidation is rare, as it is often property owners are not interested in purchasing the lot next door, nor do multiple properties often come to sale at the same time.</p>
17	<p>How much are taxpayers expected to spend per year to subsidize these affordable housing units? Is it already in the proposed 2024 city budget?</p>	<p>Response is being confirmed with the Office of Housing and will be posted shortly.</p>
18	<p>I am wondering if you are aware of the photo project I did in 1994-1995 documenting the Parker Gray neighborhood . It was the first exhibit at the Black History Museum. They own the photographs plus some oral history. Also many slides of the area. It was called "The Spirit of the Neighborhood " by myself, Carol Siegel. One of the photographs is in the Freedom House. It is of Eudora Lyles , who was an activist in the neighborhood.</p>	<p>Thank you for sharing this information about the resource of the photo project you completed for the Black History Museum.</p>
19	<p>Comment: I would find it interesting to see what constraints are on R2.5 property that prevented redevelopment of SF with 2-dwelling units and whether expansion to allow construction of 2-dwelling units in other SF zones would improve these types of dwelling being constructed.</p>	<p>Yes, this is an interesting topic to examine, since this is a zone that allows both single family and two-family dwellings.</p>
20	<p>It will be very informative to learn more about African American communities in Alexandria throughout its existence. Do you know if Arlington County initiated a similar in-depth analysis of this subject?</p>	<p>We did meet with Arlington County a few months ago, before their proposal was brought for consideration by their board of supervisors. We wanted to hear about any lessons they have learned. They told us after listening to our proposal that they were very glad that we had incorporated Housing for All as the Equity component because one of the things they thought they could have done better is to lead with equity. They did that later in the process. I think they've created a good program and see the importance of equity to these processes. Our City too will continue to emphasize the importance of equity as we move forward. I wanted to highlight to the people that are in the chat there's a piece of information that's very interesting (portion not understandable) there was a project in the 90's, as part of the African American history Museum. It is fascinating and we will be in contact with the museum.</p>
21	<p>I am excited about an Equity Impact process. Will this be something that developers will have to file in order to move forward? Thinking here of environmental impact statements/studies</p>	<p>We are in the initial stages of development in terms of analyzing potential Equity impacts. We have to give credit to the City's Housing for All Subcommittee that came up with the idea of including an Equity Impact Statement for future development projects. It's definitely something practical that is worthy of studying under this effort. We also want to make sure that the Zoning for Housing initiatives are analyzed through an equity lens, along through a data and analysis lens. We don't just want this to be a piece of paper that is signed. It has to be something that is linked to these initiatives with outcomes.</p>

22	<p>Since you are talking about re-shaping these long-standing single-family neighborhoods, shouldn't the people most directly impacted (the single family homeowners/neighborhoods) have a more heavily-weighted input – and veto ability on specific projects?</p>	<p>Questions 24 combined with 27 I am going to start with the percentage of housing for single-family with information from our Office of Housing Director, Helen McIlvaine.</p> <p>Based on the City's Office of Real Estate Assessment, single-family homes make up 25.9% of housing types, market rate rental units make up 43.8%; condominiums constitute 24.1% of our housing; committed affordable rental units are 6.0 percent and committed affordable condominiums are .2% of housing types. Consequently, 50% of our housing are rental properties, 25% are single family homes, and 25% are condominiums.</p> <p>We can combine these questions because there are a variety of people that are affected by this topic. It is very important. Those in single-family areas have bought into a lifestyle and a neighborhood that they are not necessarily interested in changing. That's enormously important. There are other instances where people say I haven't been able to get an apartment in Alexandria. So each of these groups that contribute to the City of Alexandria should have an opportunity to speak. Also, it is an ethical matter, that individuals across the City be treated equally when a proposal is being made.</p>
23	<p>According to the Alexandria Demographics and Statistics Dashboard - Continued, more than 5,100 or 7% of housing units are vacant. Census data and regional studies indicate that the population of NoVa is shrinking. How do you reconcile this with the statement that Alexandria is behind in meeting demand? Please answer specific to Alexandria not to regional goals or National topics.</p>	<p>Respectfully, Alexandria is part of the regional housing market and nationally too. We are not in a self-contained area where we only need to take care of people who already live here, or can ignore the effects of regional demand for housing on the housing prices here in Alexandria. Alexandria was a full partner, both myself and Housing Director McIlvaine, in the regional analyses of housing supply and demand, and demand for affordable housing, that fed into the Regional Housing Initiative to which Alexandria is a signatory.</p>
24	<p>What is the ratio of single family homes to other forms of housing and what percentage of Alexandria is currently zoned exclusively for single family houses?</p>	<p>Approximately a third of Alexandria is zoned for single-family homes. A few uses (some parks, schools, and churches) are permitted in zones that are otherwise limited to single-family detached housing. Staff hasn't calculated the land area zoned for single family detached housing that is used for these purposes.</p>
25	<p>What is the City doing to ensure input from those who will be helped the most by this effort such as potential residents and current renters?</p>	<p>The City is working very hard to bring as many people of all income groups and needs to the table for their input. You can help by sharing with those you know who have a stake in this effort to please join us and share their thoughts and input. Simultaneously we continue to gather and update information on affordability needs of our City. The information in Helen McIlvaine's presentation documents both current and future need. It is everyone's best interest to help in finding solutions to meet the need because many of these households are critical to our economy and quality of life and they are deserving of decent, safe and affordable housing.</p>
26	<p>From my understanding, new buildings usually come with some form of parking minimum requirements. Has the city thought about reducing or eliminating those parking minimums for certain areas? Reducing or eliminating parking minimums could have several benefits, including reducing the cost of housing, encouraging sustainable transportation, and making the city more livable.</p>	<p>The City has established new multi-family parking standards ratios with allowances for lower ratios when particular conditions are met. This parking ratio is a starting point, from which projects may apply allowable credits according to the development's proximity to transit, walkability index score, and percentage of studio units within the development project. Also development projects can ask that parking be reduced or parking be increased.</p>
27	<p>Has the City or a related Non-profit tried, or will you try, to find grants to write down home ownership or rentals. There are so many foundations that could help here</p>	<p>We will absolutely look ways to expand the funds we have, including grants. In terms of down payment assistance, we do provide help to people for the down payment assistance for first time homebuyers. We are also very interested in training people to help them become homeowners and to make sure that they have the resources to do so. We also have a class that trains people on condominiums.</p>
28	<p>What is the percentage of land use by SFH vs. all "housing land"? (I'm presuming the 30%+ Mr. Moritz cited is 30% of all city land, not 30% of of just the land that occupies housing).</p>	<p>All land that is used by single family homes is approximately 30%. However, we will be confirming the land use data base to confirm that.</p>

29	Will Zoning 4 Housing changes be subordinate to or override Small Area Plans?	Zoning for Housing is intended to be another tool to help achieve housing goals within Small Area Plans. With that, the City is seeking to change, modify or add provisions to the Zoning Ordinance to facilitate those goals. We therefore anticipate that the Small Area Plans and the Zoning Ordinance will work hand in hand. We expect to learn more about where and when nuances might occur between certain Small Area Plans and the Zoning Ordinance pursuant to Zoning for Housing and how to address them as the data gathering/analysis processes proceed under Zoning for Housing.
30	Thank you for the time in answering these questions	Know that the City appreciates everyone's participation and we hope that those here today will stay engaged and also that others will join this conversation. It is important that we hear from as many stakeholders as possible and hearing comments and questions is an important part of the information gathering and analysis process.
31	FYI, this really wasn't a listening session. It was a Q&A session. You didn't ask our opinions to listen to.....	The opening remarks did mention that questions and comments are welcome. The City will emphasize that in future meetings; thank you for that reminder. Also, both comments and questions are welcome via a Zoning for Housing/Housing for All form that is on the Zoning for Housing/Housing for All webpage. https://www.alexandriava.gov/planning-and-zoning/zoning-for-housinghousing-for-all Look under "Ways to Engage" to access that form.
32	Please also consider Dari/Pashto interpretation for the growing Afghan community in Alexandria.	Thank you for that reminder to offer Dari/Pashto translation.
33	My question on foundation research applies to Housing Alexandria as well. Can't they apply to the large foundations	We are confident that Housing Alexandria tries to leverage all resources possible but that is a question we can put to them.