



## **Tenants and Workers United Recommendations on the City of Alexandria's Housing Master Plan 2040**

Tenants and Workers United believes that deeply committed affordable housing is essential to keeping Alexandria a place where long-time residents, low-wage workers, immigrants, families of color, and seniors can remain and thrive. As rents rise faster than wages, investing in truly affordable homes is critical to protecting communities' stability, preventing displacement, and ensuring everyone has an equitable opportunity to have a just, healthy, livable home in the city.

### **Alexandria's Housing Master Plan 2040 should:**

#### **Preserve and expand deeply affordable housing below 40% AMI, by the following:**

- Prioritize City-owned land for long-term, deeply affordable housing development, such as housing cooperatives.
- Increase current revenue and explore other means of revenue in order to create and preserve deeply affordable housing
- Require meaningful affordability in exchange for development Incentives when there is city approval on increased height and density. In order to ensure equitable outcomes, at least 35% of this new and additional supply should be deeply affordable so that low-income families, seniors, and long-time residents can remain in their communities.
- Offer property tax abatements for nonprofit affordable housing providers in order to incentivize creating deeply affordable housing.
- Work to expand deeply committed affordable housing opportunities across Alexandria, not only in neighborhoods where multifamily housing is already concentrated.
- Commit to using the city's bonding authority for an affordable housing bond for approved projects in the pipeline.
- Support the acquisition of existing rental housing by affordable housing partners, consistent with the City's Strategic Preservation Priorities. This is especially important as approximately 900 affordable units are at risk of losing their affordability restrictions by 2040. The City should establish a clear timeline and action plan to preserve these units before they are lost.

### **Tenant protections:**

- Adopt a neighborhood anti-displacement policy for new developments and projects in order to protect existing families against displacement.
- Increase funding for anti-displacement and tenant stabilization programs that keep tenants in stable housing before they are at risk of eviction: Fund and expand Alexandria's ARISE guaranteed income pilot; Expand the City's rental emergency assistance funds, Expand Alexandria's pilot rental subsidy program to make more affordable units

accessible for tenants who have income at lower AMI levels; Establish locally funded housing voucher program to improve housing options and reduce displacement for low-income tenants.

- Advocate for stronger tenant protections in the eviction process.
- Incorporate these tenant protections into contractual agreements and the development approval process.
- Advocate for tenant protections that promote and preserve affordable housing and prevent displacement, such as: Right of First Refusal for tenants, entities designated by tenants, and local governments; Anti-Rent Gouging protections, which means limiting yearly rent increases to stabilize tenants in their communities; just cause, which means preventing lease termination without cause; and relocation protections in case of redevelopment.
- Advancing the tenant protections discussed in the Prioritizing Tenant Rights and Housing Stability Recommendations created by African Communities Together and Grassroots Alexandria
- While we recognize that many tenant protections require action at the state level, the City still has the ability to create and strengthen local tools to protect tenants.
- The City should prioritize more effective strategies that equip tenants with practical tools and direct support. Based on our experience working with tenants facing eviction and other legal challenges, most issues stem from landlords failing to meet their legal obligations—particularly maintaining habitable conditions and respecting tenants’ rights. The City should focus its limited resources on holding landlords accountable and ensuring compliance with existing laws, rather than dedicating resources to supporting private landlords through lease explanations.

### **Why Immediate Action Is Needed**

We understand that the City of Alexandria has to follow an administrative process, but it is frustrating for our community members—longtime city residents—to continue participating and sharing their input, only to be told to come back and repeat it in another process. We hope that this time the process and outcomes can be different and that the input shared now is taken seriously and acted on in a timely way.

This frustration is even greater as residents are already worried about whether they will be able to continue living in the city they call “home.”

Again, Tenants and Workers United appreciates the opportunity to provide feedback, and we urge you to listen to the working-class families who will be most impacted by this plan.



March 24, 2026

Honorable Alyia Gaskins, Mayor  
Deputy Mayor Sarah Bagby  
Members, Alexandria City Council

Dear Mayor Gaskins, Deputy Mayor Bagby and Members of the City Council,

I am writing on behalf of the League of Women Voters of Arlington and Alexandria City. The League commends the Office of Housing for the obvious care and effort put into developing the City's Housing 2040 plan. The League supports the draft plan which aims to address many of the issues that have created a critical shortage of affordable housing in the city. We believe the plan would be greatly strengthened, however, by adding target dates and milestones to what is now primarily a policy statement. Only by doing so will we be able to measure progress toward the worthy goals included in the Plan.

For example, one of the strategies under Goal 1, Recommendation 1 is, "Maintain and publish a consolidated checklist of applicable policies, housing tools, affordability requirements, and contribution guidelines for use by developers and land use counsel at project inception." We suggest that there be a target date for when this checklist will be completed and available for use. Another example is the strategy under Goal 3, Recommendation 1, "Create and update multilingual self-help and resource materials, including Know Your Rights videos, plain-language guides, and information on Office of Housing services." We think the plan should identify when these materials are intended to become available and how many people the City hopes to reach with them. Throughout the draft plan the terms "continue to evaluate" or "regularly review and update" are used with no dates attached for completion, or even internal milestones. Likewise, the draft plan sets goals of reaching out to residents, landlords and developers without identifying how many people the City envisions connecting with via published materials, meetings or other forms of outreach. We urge you to add more specificity throughout the draft plan.

Affordable housing is a critical issue, arguably the most important issue facing the city. A strong Housing 2040 Plan with measurable targets will help the City to address these concerns. Of course, the Housing Plan is only the first step. In addition to a robust plan, funding for affordable housing initiatives and increased staffing is necessary to make these goals a reality! The League realizes that Alexandria faces a troubling and uncertain budget environment and we understand the City's reluctance to issue additional bonds at this time given its current obligations to fund new schools and other public infrastructure. That said, we note that public surveys consistently have found affordable housing to be at the top of residents' concerns – particularly for those residents with limited incomes. We highlight these alarming trends:

- There is a critical need for affordable rental housing in the city. Currently, 58% of households in Alexandria are renters; three quarters of renter households earning 60% or less of the area median income (about 50,000 people) are housing cost burdened, spending more than 30% of their incomes on housing. Substantial research has documented the negative ramifications of housing cost burdens on children's educational performance, family health and stability, and civic engagement, among other things.
- The city continues to lose residents in the 20-34 age group, in large part because of their inability to afford housing in the city. Working people, including well-paid professionals, simply cannot afford adequate housing for their families in addition to childcare and are forced to leave the City. This population represents the city's future, both economically and in terms of building a strong, community-minded, multi-generational population. Failing to retain these individuals threatens to deprive the city of their contributions to our community, both tangible and intangible, for generations to come as well as critical tax revenues now and in ensuing years.
- Because so many lower-income individuals and households cannot afford to live in the city, they must commute from elsewhere to their jobs in Alexandria. These commuters increase traffic on many of the city's main thoroughfares, with corresponding increases in pollution, declines in nearby residents' quality of life, and faster deterioration of the surface roads.
- The demand for affordable housing in the city significantly outstrips supply, and that gap threatens to widen over the next decade. The affordability restrictions on 2,100 publicly subsidized rental units are scheduled to expire by 2040. Given Alexandria's desirable location and its high market-rate rents, there will be strong economic incentives for many owners of currently affordable properties to convert them to market-rate apartments or condominiums when those restrictions expire.
- There are currently more than 1,100 affordable rental units to be constructed or preserved in projects that have received DSUP or CDD approval. Yet they are precluded from moving forward due to a lack of critical City funding to fill financing gaps.

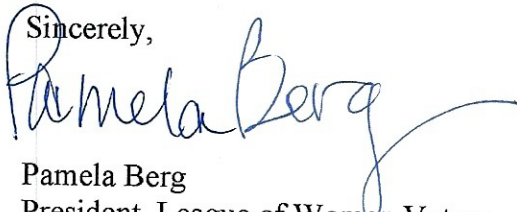
While we acknowledge the tradeoffs associated with imposing new taxes, waiving fees or issuing bonds in an uncertain political and economic environment, we encourage you to consider all possibilities for increasing the funds available to support affordable housing in Alexandria. For example,

- Increase the portion of the meals tax dedicated to affordable housing and/or find another source of dedicated funds among other fees or taxes collected by the City.
- Implement a tax on hotels and short-term rentals (e.g., Airbnb) whose revenues would be dedicated to affordable housing. Note that such fees would be paid almost exclusively by non-Alexandria residents.
- Implement a tax on home purchases above \$1.5 million and a higher tax on purchases above \$5 million and use some/all revenues for affordable housing. This has been done in other jurisdictions.
- Alternatively, impose a small annual property surtax on residences assessed at \$2 million or more, with the revenues dedicated to affordable housing.

- Begin the process of issuing at least \$50 million in new bonds starting in FY28 to support the development and/or preservation of the affordable housing projects that already have received Council approval.
- Formally incorporate a tax abatement policy for affordable housing properties, with a focus on deeply affordable housing. Such abatements reduce properties' ongoing operating costs and enable them to attract more capital from lenders and other private investors.
- Adopt Virginia Code §15.2-958.4, which would allow the City to waive building permit and other local fees associated with the construction, renovation, or rehabilitation of housing by 1) a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization with a primary purpose of assisting with the provision of affordable housing, and 2) a for-profit entity pursuing an affordable housing development.
- Prioritize funding and other City support for affordable housing projects based on the number and proportion of their units that will be affordable to households earning 60% or less of AMI.

We thank you for considering our input. The first step to achieving the City's goals for housing is to further refine the Draft Housing 2040 Plan to include definite target dates and milestones. This is the only way we can measure progress toward the goals and ultimately ensure all city residents have safe, accessible, and affordable housing. Please do not hesitate to contact us if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pamela Berg". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Pamela Berg  
President, League of Women Voters  
Arlington and Alexandria City

Copy to: Helen McIlvaine, Director, Office of Housing



## Alexandria Human Rights Commission

TO: Members of the Housing 2040 Planning Team  
FROM: The Alexandria Human Rights Commission

Dear Members of the Housing 2040 Planning Team:

The Alexandria Human Rights Commission is a City-appointed advisory body dedicated to promoting equality, fairness, and inclusion throughout the City of Alexandria. The Commission works to uphold and protect the human and civil rights of all residents by advising City Council, reviewing policies and practices, and engaging with the community on issues involving discrimination, equity, and access to opportunity. Its mission is to help ensure that Alexandria remains a welcoming community where the dignity and rights of every person are respected and protected.

The Commission appreciates the opportunity to review and provide feedback to the Draft Housing 2040 Recommendations for Affordable Housing Preservation and Common Interest Communities. We share and greatly appreciate this group's commitment to the future of housing in the city.

We appreciate the transparency in the master-planning process, and we have had opportunity to review the presentations and slides presented by the Housing 2040 Planning Team, especially in areas touching on our core mission, and we appreciate the opportunity to provide comments.

In reviewing this material, we observed that "Goal 2: Preservation," set out in the most recent presentation slides, is to preserve a 1-for-1 replacement of any units lost or expiring from the market.<sup>1</sup> Similarly, "Goal 1: Housing Supply and Diversity" and "Goal 4: Affordable Rental Housing," references incorporating programs and expanded housing options, as well as "[e]ncouraging a diversity of housing options and typologies to meet the needs of Alexandrians at different life stages." But it is not clear whether these goals refer to the "volume" of units versus the "types" of units.<sup>2</sup> We believe such a distinction is important to reflect the goal of availability of affordable housing.

Recognizing and addressing the need for not just preserving the status quo but, instead, meaningfully expanding the availability of affordable housing by increasing the supply of such units will work to recognize and improve equity and access to opportunities for qualifying Alexandrians and will facilitate inclusion of new and existing residents with diverse backgrounds.

We look forward to the opportunity to review and participate in future iterations and discussion as the Housing 2040 Planning Team continues to solidify its recommendations to Alexandria's City Council.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

On behalf of the Commission,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jonathan Thompson". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jon Thompson, Chair

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<sup>1</sup> See Item 2 at <https://www.alexandriava.gov/sites/default/files/2026-03/Housing2040Goal2Board.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> See <https://www.alexandriava.gov/sites/default/files/2026-03/Housing2040Goal4Board.pdf>

Dear City of Alexandria,

Subject: Housing 2040 Plan

We are writing in our personal interest and on behalf of the **Grassroots Alexandria Environmental team** to comment on the **draft Housing 2040 Plan**. We are writing in support of the overall goals of the Housing 2040 Plan and appreciate that goal 10 is focused on sustainability, which we believe positively supports Alexandrians and our community. As Alexandrians, we also strongly believe that Alexandria must act to improve affordability, increase housing stability, reduce evictions, and strengthen tenant and homeowner rights. As we are hearing during the budget debate, many Alexandrians are financially strained due to rising housing and rental costs, facing affordability challenges, and struggling to get their landlords to maintain their properties at a livable standard. Affordability and sustainability must be addressed together.

However, we believe that more is needed to address the needs of Alexandrians to make our community more resilient to climate change than is provided in the current Draft Housing 2040 Plan. **As part of Grassroots Alexandria's Environment team, we propose the following:**

1. **Provide greater social rewards for individuals, companies, and neighborhoods** that invest in housing, weatherization, and affordability and voluntarily participate in benchmarking activities for measuring progress towards more energy efficiency. Many goals in the draft Plan encourage greater communication and participation. For example, Goal 6 encourages the City of Alexandria to strengthen existing common interest / condominium communities. However, the draft does not indicate how we can encourage participation in such intensive, time-consuming activities by either landlords or residents. We believe that social rewards are the best tool to encourage greater community participation. While social rewards are not a replacement for funding support from the City or State, we believe that social rewards and approval should be emphasized as a way to increase participation and investment in our communities. Social rewards are important, and often neglected. Even minor recognition can incentivize individuals and companies to maintain better properties, support residents during economic hardship, or weatherize their residences.
  - a. The EPC recently adopted a tiered approach for businesses and individuals that upgrade their buildings and homes as a way to increase participation in the city.
  - b. Research shows that social rewards can drive decision making, improve mental health, and encourage pro-social behavior. Similarly, social shaming and rejection can deter decisions and, if used appropriately, can be a mechanism to discourage anti-social or harmful behaviors.
2. **Include financing options for sustainable upgrades and retrofits of buildings in Goal 4.** Recommendation 2 would benefit from an explicit reference to finding financing opportunities for retrofitting of buildings to improve their energy efficiency as outlined in Goal 10. These retrofits require considerable upfront investment that can provide

incredible savings for residents in the long run on reduced energy costs, better air quality, and reduced heating/cooling needs.

3. **Improve planning for better transit.** In Goal 1, the Plan recommends that the City support and track development of new housing resulting from the City's small area plan and development review processes. Small area plans take decades to update, and until they are updated will often work against the City's goal to maximize housing near transit. Instead of waiting to eventually update our Small Area Plans piece-meal, we urge the City to adopt Overlay Zones atop our current Small Area Plans that would expressly maximize housing within ¼ mile of specified transit corridors.

**As concerned residents, we also have feedback on the affordability aspects of the plan.**

Since 2000, Alexandria has lost nearly two-thirds of affordable rentals. Our City is losing the affordability fight, and more people each year are forced to move out of our community due to rising housing and rental prices. We believe that the following suggestions would help the City accomplish the goals presented in the Housing 2040 Plan.

4. Add more concrete actionable goals to the Housing 2040 Plan. We support the goals and priorities within the Housing 2040 Plan, but many of the Plan's strategy recommendations lack an actionable mechanism to achieve the stated goals.
  - a. In Goal 3, the Plan recommends to advocate for State-level legislative reforms to advance housing stability, affordability, and tenant rights. Similarly, Goal 8 supports initiatives and programs that enhance housing quality and standards, including legislation that ensures safe, decent, and well-maintained housing. We support the City's efforts to advocate for State-level legislative reforms, but such reforms may take years to pass through the General Assembly. Instead, we urge the City to propose stronger voluntary guidelines for landlords that will support transparency, reduce penalties and fees imposed by landlords on their residents, ensure necessary maintenance is performed, and guarantee tenant rights to organize. We further urge the City to add inspectors that will publicly report on landlord compliance with the voluntary guidelines.
  - b. In Goal 1, the Plan recommends that the City strengthen and expand policies, procedures, and regulatory tools and pursue options for enhanced legislative authority to maximize housing affordability. In Goal 7, the Plan recommends that the City encourage the development of a range of housing typologies, sizes, and price points, encourage the development of more deeply affordable housing, and support choice and accessibility for persons with disabilities. While we recognize that the City is working to update Zoning Ordinance Section 7-700, we urge the City to use its current toolkit and laws to encourage a range of housing typologies (and potentially to reconsider opposition to by-right residential development, such as that proposed in HB 816 and SB 454).
5. Provide greater support for renters and low-income households. The Housing 2040 Plan contemplates extensive support to homeowners as part of its recommendations. Goal 5 and Goal 9 both contemplate specific support to create pathways to homeownership and to sustain homeownership. While we acknowledge that homeownership has historically

been considered part of both the “American Dream” and of wealth building, we would urge the City to focus more specifically on renters and avoid assuming that homeownership is presently an outcome that should be expressly supported as a means for wealth building or stability. Homeownership should not be discouraged, but we also worry that such a strong focus on homeownership could inadvertently increase housing inequity within the city through multiple mechanisms:

- a. The majority of residents in Alexandria are renters. Approximately 58% of households in Alexandria rent their residences, while only 42% own their homes. NVCC students, contractors, and military service members all tend to rent homes while they complete their schooling, temporary contract terms, or military station. As housing prices increase, more people in Alexandria are intentionally choosing to rent their homes as the better way to build stability and wealth.
- b. Homeowners tend to be older, whiter, and wealthier than renters. The data also do not make clear whether homeownership is a pathway to stability and wealth, or whether it is an indicator of preexisting stability and wealth that is leveraged to purchase a home. Any homeowner services will almost necessarily operate to benefit individuals who are older, whiter, and wealthier than the average Alexandrian resident.

We appreciate this opportunity to comment on the draft Housing 2040 Plan, and urge the City to act to address the affordability and sustainability crisis that we are facing.

Signatures in Support,

*/s Dane Lauritzen*

*/s Laura Vanin*

*/s Julie Harris*



March 21, 2026

**RE: Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission Comments on Housing 2040 Draft Plan**

To: Tamara Jovovic and the Housing 2040 Plan Staff, Alx Office of Housing

CC: Mayor, Vice Mayor, City Council

*Submitted via: [engage.alexandriava.gov/housing2040plan](https://engage.alexandriava.gov/housing2040plan) and [housing2040plan@publicinput.com](mailto:housing2040plan@publicinput.com)*

Dear Housing 2040 Plan Staff,

The Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission (EPC) is pleased to submit comments endorsing the Housing 2040 Draft Plan Recommendations and Strategies. The EPC commends the Office of Housing, in partnership with the Office of Climate Action, for producing a thoughtful, ambitious, and aspirational plan that meaningfully integrates considerations such as sustainability, energy efficiency, climate resilience, and environmental justice throughout its goals. This is a significant improvement over the prior plan, and we are proud that EPC input contributed to shaping it.

**What We Affirm**

The EPC is particularly encouraged by Goal 10, which dedicates focused attention to energy efficiency improvements and weatherization, and green building practices to make homes healthier and more resilient. Having sustainability elevated to a standalone goal in a housing master plan is meaningful, and we do not take it for granted. We also affirm the sustainability ties woven throughout Goals 1, 2, 4, 6, and 8, which reflect a welcome recognition that affordability and environmental sustainability are complementary, not competing, integrated priorities.

For new developments, we specifically applaud reference to the Green Building Plan which identifies Energy Use Intensity (EUI) as a performance-based compliance pathway, and the encouragement of high-performance building approaches such as Passive House and geothermal HVAC systems. For existing housing, we applaud the Plan's strategy to encourage energy benchmarking for existing multifamily buildings, the technical assistance programs being developed by the Office of Climate Action including Eco-City CHAMPS and the Multifamily Challenge Program, and the The Pendleton Rooming House redevelopment project, which incorporated geothermal energy through a collaborative investment by the Office of Housing and the property owner, which is exactly the kind of creative, impactful work we hope to see continue and scale.

The EPC also encourages the final plan to explicitly call-out extreme heat and flooding as the primary physical climate risks facing Alexandria's housing stock. These are known, measurable, and already-felt threats in our community,



particularly for residents in low-lying areas and older, less insulated housing. While we understand the plan's current language references "extreme temperatures and weather," we believe naming heat and flooding directly will ensure that implementing partners, developers, and future city staff understand exactly what climate resilience means in Alexandria's specific context, and prioritize the residents most vulnerable to those risks.

### **One Flag We Ask You to Note**

The EPC recognizes that, as a Dillon Rule state, Virginia limits the authority of local jurisdictions to powers specifically granted by the Commonwealth. This constrains Alexandria's ability to affect greater change across the housing stock, for example to enact a stretch code requiring all new developments to follow the Green Building Plan, or to require energy performance improvements in existing privately owned buildings, tools the EPC would otherwise strongly advocate for, particularly given the energy burden borne by low-income renters in older multifamily housing.

We note this not as a criticism of the plan, but as a call to action at the state level. The EPC encourages the City to continue advocating in Richmond for expanded local authority over building performance standards and stretch codes, and to ensure that the voluntary programs established under Goal 10 are as well-resourced and widely promoted as possible in the interim. These are long-lived buildings, the decisions made today will shape the energy performance and livability of Alexandria's housing stock for generations.

The EPC is grateful for the iterative engagement process that shaped this plan and looks forward to continued collaboration as it moves toward adoption and implementation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marta Schantz".

Marta Schantz, Chair  
Alexandria Environmental Policy Commission

To: Director, Helen McIlvaine and Alexandria City Housing 2040 Plan Staff  
From: Elliott Waters (*past mbr 2015-25*) Alexandria's Landlord Tenant Relations Board  
**Subject: Redo Building A Better Community Not Just for Some But Everyone**

**Introduction:** Thank you for allowing me to speak on the need to correct harms visited upon Alexandria residents resulting from sanctioned housing policy and practices that failed to promote the general welfare of all Alexandrians. It is no secret, this problem is well documented and published in an article penned by Dr. Krystyn Moon entitled *The African American Housing Crisis in Alexandria, Virginia during the 1930s-1960s.* I would also assert that there is clear evidence in various human accounts of who lived during the 1930s-1960s and are still living among us or their descendants and more importantly in the archives of the City as well as business interest.

**Purpose:** It is my hope that the City of Alexandria's duly appointed and elected leaders will take action to verify, acknowledge and make amends for the harm reference in the past without further delay. Why? Because it is the moral, ethical, and just thing to do in a common quest to be a more perfect union of imperfect people. If we choose inaction in dealing with evidence based injustice, **history reminds us**, that pluralistic societies indifference to unaddressed unjust behavior is unwise. Why? It does not create *more perfect unions/communities* as reminded in a statement of truth mentioned in various speeches and campaigns - "*the arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends toward justice!*"

**Just and reasoned based solutions less finger pointing:** It is no secret that problem of which I speak, was presented to the Landlord Tenant Relations Board four (4) years ago and board members concluded the 1930-60s housing policies and practices were troubling since they did not appear to promote the common good of ALL Alexandrians and the known harmful effects are in need of just remedy. To help achieve a just solution, the board unanimously approved motions with the intent to forward them to the City Council. However, prior to my ending 10 years of continuous service on the LTRB, a majority of the Board voted to refer the two (2) motions below to the Office of Housing since it was updating the City's 2040 Housing Plan. As a member of the board, I believed the Board's motion was patterned after the actions of a true story involving Zacchaeus

a tax collector who harmed others but opted to correct his past mistakes after being encouraged *to lead a new life by treating others humanely as he desired to be treated*. I now hope that as appointed leaders/stewards in the City's Office of Housing aware of evidenced based flawed housing policies and practices of the 30s-60s you will recommend that elected leaders/stewards follow the humane example of Zacchaeus correcting the mistakes of their predecessors w/o further delay.

**Conclusion:** Without fanfare, I ask that the motions submitted to the Office of Housing be endorsed by the Team charged with preparing the 2040 Housing Plan be sent to the City Council for appropriate humane action w/o further delay.

Thanks again for considering this appeal to promote the common good of all Alexandrians during the 1930s - 1960s and in so doing send a clear message designed to match words of regret with deeds of remedy of which we can all be proud - *as a fuller expression of who we profess to be as Alexandrians united in common purpose manifested in our a vision- with values-priorities-goals rooted in team based reasoned Titan strategies.*

#### **Attachment A**

**1. As an FYI, the first advisory motion** named See something Say something adopted 5.04.2022 reads as follows:

“Based in part on Dr. Krysten Moon’s article entitled, *“The African American Housing Crisis in Alexandria, Virginia during the 1930s-1960s”* which provides evidence of sanctioned policies and practices that systematically denied people of color identified as African American residents’ access to housing not denied to other people of color identified as Caucasian Americans during the 1930s-1960s, we ask that the City of Alexandria *verify and acknowledge* this with intent to correct the harm.

**2. As an FYI, the second advisory motion** named Best Practices adopted on 11.02.2022 reads as follows:

“Given the clear understanding that the City of Alexandria, Virginia has a strong commitment to citizen/resident participation in good governance as evidenced by the number of citizen/resident boards, commissions and committees established by its City Council the Landlord Tenants Relations Board (LTRB) recommends:

- A. That City Council adopt a policy which encourages establishing advisory councils in non-governmental as well as governmental entities as a best practice in the City of Alexandria, and that
- B. Public/Private non-governmental entities be encouraged to form advisory councils on a voluntary basis with the clear understanding that any/all advice offered is non-binding as is the case with existing non-statutory City boards, commissions and committees, but that
- C. Any/all advice rendered to recipients of the advisory council’s advice [especially the decision - making body or agent] would be given serious consideration in addressing matters viewed as problems or challenges in a manner deemed to be both reasonable as well as transparent.

## Elliott's PRELIMINARY UNVERIFIED GOOGLE SEARCH ENGINE AI FINDINGS

- **CONTEXT:** Follow-up question asked by Elliott on the occasion of Safe Church required training conducted by the Episcopal Diocese of Southern Virginia (DIOSVA) 21 - 22 Feb'26 via Zoom.
- **QUESTION:** Can PTSD be transferred?

These are results in response to Elliott's posing the PTSD question to Google's AI search engine on the evening of 21 Feb'26:

What communities of faith or key medical schools have case study findings to support a belief that PTSD can be and is transferable. Please name the medical and communities of faith who have researched/case studied the aforementioned PTSD issue. To enhance clarity please indicate the period of time reflecting century and decade of research/case study done.

### OVERVIEW AI RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION ABOVE REGARDING TRANSFERABILITY OF PTSD

Research from key medical schools and institutions, particularly beginning in the late 20th century (1960s–1990s) and accelerating in the 21st century (2000s–2020s), supports the concept that Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and its effects are transferable. This phenomenon is commonly referred to as "intergenerational" or "transgenerational" trauma, which involves both learned behaviors and, as recent studies suggest, epigenetic modifications.

#### Here are the key medical schools, institutions, and community-based research efforts:

##### 1. Key Medical Schools and Research Institutions

- Icahn School of Medicine at Mount Sinai (New York):** Led by Dr. Rachel Yehuda, this institution has been pioneering in research since the 1990s and 2000s regarding Holocaust survivors and their children, finding lower cortisol levels (a biological marker for PTSD susceptibility) in offspring.
- NYU Langone Health (Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry):** Conducts ongoing research into how trauma is transmitted intergenerationally, including prenatal impacts on brain development.
- University of Minnesota Medical School:** Investigates intergenerational trauma, specifically regarding American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) populations, focusing on how historical trauma (e.g., boarding schools) affects parenting and offspring health.
- Yale School of Medicine (Department of Psychiatry):** Conducts research using stem cell models to understand how genetics increase susceptibility to PTSD, in collaboration with the Mount Sinai team.
- Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health:** Researched the genetic component of PTSD (heritability), finding significant overlap with other psychiatric disorders and high polygenic risks in studies spanning the 2010s.
- Columbia University (Department of Psychiatry):** Actively involved in neuroscience research on intergenerational trauma.
- University of California, Irvine (Department of Comparative Literature):** Involved in interdisciplinary studies of intergenerational trauma.
- University of Texas at Austin:** Contributes to research on the behavioral and molecular pathways of trauma transmission.

##### 2. Communities of Faith and Community-Based Research

- Interfaith Leaders' Learning Collaborative on Trauma (IFFLC):** Working with researchers to address trauma-related needs in Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC) communities, focusing on healing-centered engagement (ongoing, 2020s).
- Faith Communities for First Responders:** Studies (e.g., Asbury Theological Seminary) show that faith communities are essential in helping first responders process trauma, thus stopping the transfer of "unresolved" stress to spouses and families.
- Holocaust Survivors' Community (1960s–present):** Research began here in the 1960s, establishing that children of survivors were disproportionately represented in psychiatric clinics.

##### 3. Time Period of Research Findings

- 20th Century, 1960s–1980s:** Initial observation of the "secondary traumatization" of children of Holocaust survivors.
- 20th Century, 1990s:** Systematic, large-scale studies (e.g., National Vietnam Veterans Readjustment Study) helped define the scope of chronic PTSD.
- 21st Century, 2000s–2010s:** Research into the biological mechanisms, including epigenetic studies (DNA methylation) on cortisol, accelerated.
- 21st Century, 2020s:** Focus on "pair of ACEs" (Adverse Childhood/Community Experiences), neuroimaging of affected children, and, in 2025, experimental studies on psilocybin-assisted therapy for intergenerational trauma.

##### 4. Summary of Transfer Mechanisms Supported by Case Studies

- Epigenetic Changes:** Trauma induces chemical markers on genes that can be passed to offspring, affecting stress response (e.g., cortisol levels).
- Parental Behavior/Environment:** Traumatized parents may struggle with parenting, modeling, or attachment, creating a "secondary trauma" environment for children.
- Community/Collective Trauma:** Historical injustices (e.g., slavery, colonization, boarding schools) create lasting community-wide PTSD, as found in Native American and African American studies.

March 20th, 2026  
100 North Pitt Street, Suite 425  
Alexandria, VA 22314

Dear City of Alexandria Office of Housing:

On behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth (CSG), I am writing to provide feedback on the draft Housing 2040 Recommendations and Strategies. CSG has been the leading organization advocating for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, and transit-oriented communities for nearly thirty years.

We believe that providing housing options that meet people's needs across a range of ages, incomes, and family sizes is essential to an inclusive and economically prosperous region. Building more housing near transit, expanding the variety of housing choices available, and preserving and building affordable housing will allow us to meet our region's growing housing needs while creating sustainable, diverse, and thriving communities.

We are grateful that the City of Alexandria's Office of Housing is highly aligned with these objectives, as demonstrated by the final goals set forth in the Housing 2040 Master Plan. We especially support goals one, two, and four, and would like to provide comments on several strategies included in each.

**Goal 1: EXPAND the supply and diversity of housing options to enhance affordability and accessibility at all income levels, life stages, and abilities to meet the City's current and future needs.**

- **Rec. 1, Strategy A** - We support the evaluation of small area plans and development review processes for ways to maximize opportunities to increase housing supply near transit, and we encourage the inclusion of Bus Rapid Transit stops and high-frequency bus routes in addition to Metrorail stations as places to prioritize housing.
- **Rec. 1, Strategy G** - Tracking Alexandria's progress toward regional housing production targets, including those established by Metro Washington COG, is necessary to assess progress towards affordable housing goals. We encourage you to track the location target that 75% of new units are produced near high-capacity transit stations or in activity centers.
- **Rec. 3, Strategies A-C** - We strongly support continuing the implementation of Zoning for Housing regulations, encouraging the development of diverse forms of infill housing like ADUs and microunits, and revising mixed-use zoning districts to ensure multifamily residential developments are supported by adequate infrastructure in activity centers.
- **Rec. 4, Strategy B** - Monitoring car ownership to "right size" parking regulations is one of the most effective ways the city can prioritize housing affordability, especially near transit hubs. However, we encourage the expansion of these efforts to activity centers that are dense, walkable, and mixed-use, such as Old Town.

**Goal 2: PRESERVE the affordability, livability, and long-term financial viability of existing committed and naturally occurring affordable housing to minimize displacement.**

- **Rec. 4, Strategies A-B** - Maintaining equity considerations through anti-displacement policies is essential as the city assesses new developments. We strongly support all efforts to incentivize 1-for-1 replacements, including developer fee relief and tax relief, bonus height and density, and public-private partnerships. We also encourage the city consider the following incentives:
  - Additional density bonuses for transit-oriented development;
  - Lot size reductions, dimensional and form modifications, or floor area ratio increases for the production of affordable housing units, or any combination thereof;
  - Allowance of conversion of office, light industrial, and commercial space to multifamily use;
  - Allowance of lower-cost home construction alternatives, including manufactured homes and duplex manufactured homes; and
  - Reduction in parking ratios.

**Goal 4: CREATE rental housing that prioritizes affordability up to 60% of the area median income to expand opportunities for renters and workers with the fewest housing options.**

- **Rec. 4, Strategy A-B.** As the city evaluates the FY27 budget, we strongly encourage prioritizing the funding needed to reach affordable housing production goals and affordability targets - particularly as the city has over \$50M in approved affordable housing projects that are still unfunded. We support leveraging the city's bonding authority to clear this pipeline as well as reserving funding for Coordinated Development District (CDD) public-private partnership projects in the Capital Improvement Program (CIP) budget immediately following CDD approval.

We commend the city's thoughtful process in updating its Housing Master Plan and are grateful for this opportunity to provide feedback. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Dedert

VA Housing Advocacy Specialist

## MEMORANDUM

To: Alexandria Office of Housing

From: Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee (AHAAC)

Re: Housing 2040 Master Plan

Date: March 20, 2026

On behalf of AHAAC, we want to commend the Office of Housing for its tireless work on the Housing 2040 plan. The plan does an excellent job of capturing the concerns of the community with respect to the city's housing needs. It presents a strong set of underlying principles to guide the city's housing activities over the next 15 years. It illustrates many of the challenges the city faces in ensuring a sufficient supply of affordable housing for those at the lower end of the income continuum, and it accurately portrays the connections between affordable housing and the city's longer-term economic viability.

That said, we have a few recommendations for how the plan could / should be strengthened before it goes to City Council for approval:

- As we have discussed before, the plan currently suffers from a lack of quantifiable goals and hard targets. Most of the goals and recommendations focus more on process than on tangible outcomes (XXX new affordable units by 2040, for example). Without such clear benchmarks, it will be very difficult to assess the City's progress in meeting its affordable housing goals. We urge the Office of Housing to develop and quantify such tangible outcomes by the end of the year, in consultation with AHAAC and other key stakeholders in the city.
- The greatest need for affordable housing is for those at the lowest income levels (40% or less of the area median). While the plan details the need for housing affordable to households and families at or below 60% of AMI, it does not emphasize enough the needs of those further down the income ladder. Ensuring these very low- and extremely low-income individuals can afford to live in the city requires considerable subsidy, which clearly is limited. We suggest the plan acknowledge that challenge directly and at least offer some potential approaches for generating additional subsidy.
- There is a sizable gap between the supply of affordable housing and the demand for it. Even with the more than 1,100 new affordable units in the pipeline, that gap threatens to widen if currently affordable units are allowed to convert to market-rate housing or are left to deteriorate and become uninhabitable. Preserving the city's existing affordable housing – particularly that with income restrictions – should be of primary importance. With legislation moving through Richmond that would give municipalities a right of first refusal for expiring-use properties, Alexandria should work with nonprofits and mission-oriented for-profits to ensure that as much of this housing is preserved as possible.

- Along those lines, we urge the Office of Housing to incorporate the recent legislation that has been passed, along with that awaiting the governor's signature, in the Housing 2040 recommendations. With the additional powers that legislation gives to municipalities, the City will have more resources at its disposal both to preserve existing affordable housing and to facilitate the development of new affordable units. Some of the plan's recommendations therefore can and should be more aggressive.
- We recognize that market and political conditions are both largely out of the City's control and can significantly affect what is reasonable to achieve. The City may have considerably more or fewer resources at its disposal, for instance. In setting the quantitative Housing 2040 goals, we encourage the Office of Housing to consider various scenarios and offer a "normal," best-case, and worst-case projection of what is both realistic and aggressive. Moreover, we encourage the Office to revisit the projections on an annual or at least bi-annual basis to account for changing conditions.
- Developing the Housing 2040 plan has taken considerable staff time and months of hard work. Implementing its recommendations likely will take even more capital and human resources. To date, the Office of Housing has very few additional resources to help it undertake the Housing 2040 initiative. The staff has been stretched thin, and there is a real concern about burnout and accompanying turnover. To maintain sufficient continuity and institutional knowledge, it is critical that the City allocate more staffing and other resources to the Office of Housing. Doing so will help guarantee the successful implementation of the Housing 2040 plan.

We very much appreciate the work the Office of Housing does, and we remain willing to assist it however we can to further affordability within Alexandria. Please do not hesitate to contact us or other members of AHAAC if you have any questions about these recommendations.

Shelley Murphy, AHAAC co-chair  
Sean Zielenbach, AHAAC co-chair