

RESOLUTION NO. 2926

WHEREAS, in September 2018, under the direction of its Board of Directors, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) launched a Regional Housing Initiative to determine what it would take to increase housing production - beyond targets planned in its Cooperative Forecast – in order to meet needs of the region’s projected future workforce; and

WHEREAS, the resolution adopted by the Board directed COG staff, as well the Planning Directors Technical Advisory Committee (PDTAC) and the Housing Directors Advisory Committee (HDAC), to conduct research to assess regional housing needs, specifically the amount of additional housing, location of additional housing and the cost/affordability of the additional housing needed for the Washington area’s future workforce, as well as to identify impediments to housing production; and

WHEREAS, the connection between housing supply and economic competitiveness emerged as a key learning from the Amazon HQ2 selection process attracting broad interest from COG’s 24 member-jurisdictions as well as among business, finance, philanthropy, and other private sectors not previously focused on housing issues; and

WHEREAS, Alexandria senior staff actively participated in the COG Planning, Housing and Chief Administrative Officer Committees which assisted COG with this housing assessment work; and

WHEREAS, Mayor Justin Wilson participated on the COG Board’s housing subcommittee to facilitate peer discussion among other elected leaders to achieve consensus regarding the region’s housing challenges and actions necessary to address them; and

WHEREAS, at the July 2019 COG Leadership Retreat, results of the housing assessment were organized as three regional targets around Amount, Accessibility, Affordability which targets were adopted for formal consideration by the Board; and

WHEREAS, at its September 11, 2019 meeting, the COG Board unanimously approved the regional targets for the forecast period from 2020-2030, including, increasing the amount of housing units to be produced regionally by 75,000 to 320,000 (“Amount”) locating at least 75% of all new housing in activity centers or near high-capacity transit (“Accessibility) ensuring 75% of all new housing produced be affordable to low- and middle-income households (“Affordability”)

WHEREAS, member jurisdictions were encouraged to share the regional housing targets widely within their communities and to adopt local targets to address housing production, accessibility and affordability, as well as to work with nonprofit, private and philanthropic sectors to advance the COG regional targets; and

WHEREAS, in September and early October 2019, City Council, Planning Commission and the Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee were each briefed on the Regional Housing Initiative, with these bodies informally endorsing the COG targets, including the share allocated to Alexandria related to additional housing production by 2030 (approximately 3,000 more units) with a goal that 75% of these, or 2,250 of these be affordable to low and moderate income workers; and

WHEREAS, the Department of Planning and Zoning and the Office of Housing presented a revised work plan to Planning Commission and City Council which prioritized various housing initiatives and accelerated their timing on the long-range interdepartmental work plan to occur in FY 2020-21; and

WHEREAS, the revised work plan was approved by City Council; and is currently being implemented by the departments; and

WHEREAS, consistent with its commitment to housing affordability as a tangible expression of Alexandria’s commitment to diversity and inclusivity, and to Alexandria’s role as a regional leader in housing collaboration and innovation, both of which contributed significantly to the City’s success in the Amazon HQ2 competition and in being selected for Virginia Tech’s Innovation

Campus, and consistent with Alexandria's aspiration to continue to lead regionally in the competition for economic growth and financial sustainability benefitting all of its residents, City Council wishes to formally endorse the targets now through this resolution; and

WHEREAS, in adopting the COG Regional Housing Initiative's targets, including an aspirational jurisdictional housing goal which essentially doubles the affordable housing target set in the 2013 Housing Master Plan, City Council directs staff to continue its efforts to maximize housing production, including affordable housing production, through land use and regulatory (non-financial) tools to the greatest extent feasible, including by developing a zoning for housing strategy for City Council's review.


NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT the Alexandria City Council endorses the Resolution R27-2019 unanimously adopted by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments Board to establish targets to address the region's housing needs, including aspirational targets regarding housing affordability as are thereby allocated to Alexandria.

Adopted: March 14, 2020



JUSTIN M. WILSON MAYOR

ATTEST:



Gloria A. Sittor, CMC
City Clerk