Office of Housing
November 2013

# Revised Draft Housing Master Plan At a Glance

## DEFINITIONS

***Accessible housing:*** *Housing that is completely modified to accommodate persons with disabilities.*

***Affordable housing:*** *Rental or ownership housing costing no more than 30% of a household's gross monthly income before taxes. Income target groups: up to 60% area median income (rental) and 80% area median income (ownership).*

***Area Median Income (AMI):*** *A term commonly used to define income-targeting for housing. In 2011, the AMI in the Washington, DC metropolitan area was $106,100 for a family of four. This means that half of all area families earn more and half earn less than this amount.*

***Housing Choice Vouchers (HCVs):*** *Federal rent subsidies, administered by local housing authorities, that cover the difference between 30% of a household's income and a maximum rent amount.*

***Market affordable rental housing:*** *Rental housing that is affordable without rent or income restrictions.*

***Public housing****: Income-restricted housing units owned by a local housing authority and targeted to lower-income families who pay 30% of their adjusted income as rent.*

***Publicly assisted housing:*** *Rental units with rent and/or occupancy restrictions imposed as a condition of assistance under federal, state, or local programs.*

***Visitable housing:*** *Housing that enables persons with disabilities to visit, with an accessible entrance, bathroom and common area.*

***Workforce housing:*** *Housing units that target moderate income households: Rental: 60% - 80% AMI; Ownership: 80% - 120% AMI*

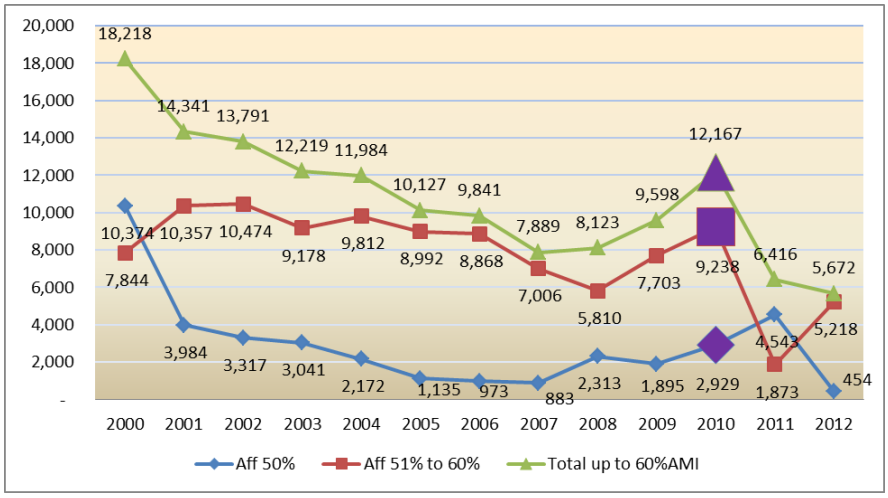
## Why does Alexandria need to plan for affordable housing?

### 1. Housing costs have risen faster than incomes.

From 2000 to 2011:

- The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD)-determined median income for the Washington Metropolitan area increased by **28%**, from $82,800 to $106,100
- The average rent for a two-bedroom unit in Alexandria increased by **71%**, from $1,034 to $1,765
- The average assessed value of residential property increased by **135%**, from $191,341 to $449,411:
  - Single family units: 137%, from $260,907 to $617,826
  - Condominium units: 149%, from $106,875 to $266,481

### 2. The number of market affordable rental housing units has declined.




### 3. There are not enough publicly assisted rental units.

- Alexandria has 3,710 rental units under programs with rent and/or income restrictions. Yet, in 2010, more than 14,000 households needed housing.
- The Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA) opened its public housing and Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) waiting lists for one week in 2011 (photo), and 15,000 households applied. As of June 2012, there were 7,895 households on the HCV waiting list and 7,796 on the public housing waiting list.

- The average waiting period for one of ARHA's 1,076 physical housing units is six to eight years.

## Who needs affordable and workforce housing?

### AFFORDABLE (2010)

Rental (2 persons at 60% AMI - $49,680)

- Paralegal
- Mental Health Worker
- Head Custodian
- Police Telecommunications Officer

Ownership (3 persons at 80% AMI -$55,920)

- Music Teacher
- Fire Fighter
- Electrician
- Licensed Practical Nurse (LPN)

### WORKFORCE (2010)

Rental (2 persons at 80% AMI - $66,240)

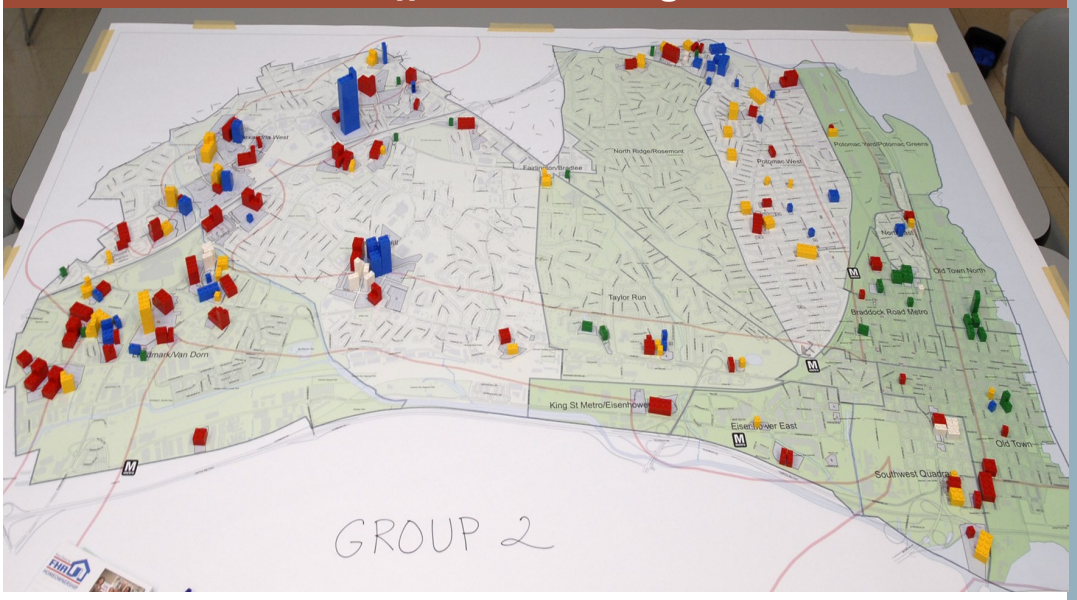
- Teacher
- Accountant
- Librarian
- Branch Manager

Ownership (3 persons at 120% AMI - $111,780)

- School Psychologist
- Attorney
- Two Schoolteachers
- Electrician and Retail Manager

Source of salary data: Bureau of Labor Statistics

## Where is Alexandria's affordable housing located?




The 2010 distribution of Alexandria's affordable housing, as depicted with Legos for the Housing Master Plan Allocation Exercise. Each "dot" on a Lego block represents 25 units.

Green = public housing and public housing replacement
White = affordable to households at 30% AMI
Blue = affordable to households at 31% - 50% AMI
Yellow = affordable to households at 51% - 60% AMI
Red = affordable to households at 61% - 80% AMI

## What is the Housing Master Plan?

Alexandria's Housing Master Plan is intended to guide future preservation and enhancement of affordable housing opportunities, community diversity, and economic sustainability.

## How was the Draft Housing Master Plan Developed?

The Housing Master Plan planning process was designed to ensure participation by stakeholders through:

- a series of 15 public meetings
- a bus tour of the City's existing affordable housing stock
- an allocation exercise which gave stakeholders the opportunity to consider future housing needs and locations

The Housing Master Plan Advisory Group was composed of the City's Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) plus an additional five appointees, including both public sector and private sector representatives. This group was charged with providing feedback on data presented. They also developed goals and objectives to guide the creation of the implementation plan.

*A team of allocation exercise participants uses Legos to create its vision of where affordable housing should be located.*

## Housing Master Plan (HMP) Guiding Principles

**Principle 1.** A variety of housing options for households of all incomes

**Principle 2.** Greater housing choice to people of all ages and all abilities

**Principle 3.** Partnerships to improve the affordable housing stock

**Principle 4.** Key factors in the future distribution of affordable housing:

- Access to transportation and services
- Strategic preservation or location opportunities
- Geographic distribution of affordable rental housing to mirror overall rental housing distribution

**Principle 5.** Social and cultural diversity through mixed-income communities

**Principle 6.** Affordable housing as an important element of a healthy and growing economy

## Goals and Strategies

### Goal 1: Preserve long-term affordability and physical condition of committed affordable housing.

**Strategies:**

**1.1** Preserve privately owned, publicly assisted units, with priority for affordability at 50% AMI.
**1.2** Obtain owner commitments for long-term preservation of current market affordable units.
**1.3** Preserve and commit existing market affordable units, with priority for affordability at 50% AMI.
**1.4** Increase housing affordable to households below 30% of AMI and senior households near transportation and support services.
**1.5** Support, where appropriate, rehabilitation of current or replacement ARHA units.

### Goal 2: Secure long-term affordable and workforce rental housing through strategic new development/redevelopment.

**Strategies:**

**2.1** Develop policies and regulations that incorporate affordable housing units as part of new development and redevelopment projects.
**2.2** Partner with nonprofit and for profit developers to develop new affordable housing.
**2.3** Include affordable housing plans in new or revised Small Area and Corridor Plans.
**2.4** Support, where appropriate, redevelopment or new development of ARHA units. (See also Strategy 1.5.)
**2.5** Seek substantial replacement of existing market affordable housing units demolished through redevelopment.

### Goal 3: Provide/support affordable and workforce home purchase opportunities for residents and workers.

**Strategies:**

**3.1** Assist in overcoming barriers to home ownership through prepurchase, post-purchase, and default and delinquency counseling.
**3.2** Provide financial home purchase assistance/incentives to income-eligible applicants and to City and Alexandria City Public Schools employees.

### Goal 4: Enable homeowners to remain in their homes safely, comfortably, and affordably.

**Strategies:**

**4.1** Provide rehabilitation services to existing low- and moderate-income homeowners.
**4.2** Assist low- and moderate-income homeowners to maintain and improve energy efficiency.
**4.3** Strengthen ability of senior homeowners with limited resources to age in place.

### Goal 5: Provide safe, quality housing choices that are affordable and accessible to households of all ages and abilities.

**Strategies:**

**5.1** Partner with existing property owners to increase accessibility and visitability.
**5.2** Promote and encourage development of new universally designed housing units.
**5.3** Encourage an increase in accessible and adaptable units above minimum required levels.
**5.4** Encourage visitable and accessible single-family residential development.
**5.5** Develop and promote minimum construction goals for adaptability and accessibility where not legally required.
**5.6** Facilitate use of Virginia Livable Home Tax Credit Program for accessibility and visitability.
**5.7** Partner with others to develop an assisted living facility serving varying income levels.

### Goal 6: Enhance public awareness of benefits of affordable housing and promote available housing and partnership opportunities.

**Strategies:**

**6.1** Enhance and increase community outreach regarding the need for and the benefits of having affordable housing.
**6.2** Increase awareness of existing City services and resources through collaboration with City agencies and appropriate service providers.
**6.3** Conduct stakeholder outreach efforts.
**6.4** Identify, foster and encourage potential development and public/private partnership opportunities.

### Goal 7: Enhance public awareness of the benefits of healthy, well-designed, and energy efficient housing that fosters the well-being of Alexandria Residents.

**Strategies**

**7.1** Provide rehabilitation assistance to existing multifamily properties and encourage new affordable multifamily properties to improve housing conditions, including energy efficiency and indoor air quality.
**7.2** Promote comprehensive smoke-free air policies within all assisted housing units in the City and encourage the owners of assisted housing to offer residents access to effective smoking cessation services.
**7.3** Assist owners of multifamily properties in educating residents of ways to address environmental triggers such as mold, dust, secondhand smoke, animal dander and rodents.
**7.4** Assist homeowners in assessing energy efficiency and indoor air quality through home audits and assessments. Provide access to affordable loan products to assist homeowners in improving the quality of their immediate living environment.

## Implementation Matrix

| Existing, New, or Modified Tool | Implementation Schedule | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | Type | 1-3 Years | 4-6 Years |
| **Programmatic Tools** | | | |
| Community Land Trust | N* | FS, LPD | |
| Development Fee Relief | N | FS, LPD | |
| Fair Housing Testing and Education | E | | |
| Home Purchase Assistance Loan Program/Enhancements | E, M | FS, LPM | |
| Home Rehabilitation Loan Program/Enhancements | E, M | FS, LPM | |
| Homelessness Prevention/Assistance | E | | |
| Housing Choice in New Construction and Rehabilitation | N | | P,FS, LPD |
| Housing Development Loans (Rental or Ownership) | E | | |
| Landlord Tenant Relations | E | | |
| Maximizing Public Land for Affordable Housing | N | | P,FS,LPD |
| Mixed-Income Affordable Assisted Living | N | P, WG, AO | |
| Predevelopment Funds | E, M | LPD | |
| Rent Relief Program for Seniors and Disabled | E | | |
| Rental Housing Assistance (Set Aside, Res. 830, HCV, etc.) | E | | |
| Resource Center for Affordable Housing | N | FS, DC, W | |
| Special District to Enable Access to Historic Tax Credits | N | P, FS, AO | |
| Voluntary Developer Contribution Formula/Update | E, M | LPM | |
| **Zoning Tools** | | | |
| Accessory Dwelling Unit Policy | | | |
| Phase 1 (New Coordinated Development Districts) | N | LPD | |
| Phase 2 (Full Program) | N | | AO, FS, LPD |
| Additional Density in Exchange for Affordable Housing | E,M | LPD, LOA | |
| Parking Requirements for Substantial Rehabilitation | N | LOA | |
| Parking Requirements for Affordable Housing Development | E,M | LPD | |
| Transfer of Development Rights | N | | FS, LPD |
| **Financial Tools** | | | |
| General Fund Direct Allocation Support | | | |
| Annual Lump Sum Appropriation | E,M | LPD | |
| Increased Dedicated Real Estate Tax Revenue | E,M | LPD | |
| Tax Increment Funding | E,M | LPD | |
| General Fund Foregone Revenue (Tax Relief) | | | |
| Homeowner Tax Relief for Seniors and/or Disabled | E | | |
| Tax Abatement for Substantial Rehabilitation | N | | LPD |
| Loan Consortium | N | P, FS, LPD | |
| Loan Guarantees | E,M | | LPD |

### *Abbreviation Key:

**E**-Existing, **M**-Modified, **N**–New

**AO**-Advocacy and Outreach; **DC**-Data Collection; **FS**-Further Study; **LOA**-Local Ordinance Amendment, **LOD**-Local Ordinance Development; **LPD**-Local Policy Development; **LPM**-Local Program Modification; **P**–Partnerships; **W**-Website Update; **WG** –Work Group

### REVIEW AND APPROVAL PROCESS:

The draft Housing Master Plan was available for public review from November 2012 until February 2013.

The Office of Housing also:

- Held Two Town Hall meetings (in City's East and West Ends)
- Briefed organizations upon request
- Held Work sessions with the Advisory Group, Planning Commission and City Council

The Revised Draft is now going through the final approval process, consisting of:

- Planning Commission Public Hearing
- City Council Public Hearing
- Final City Council Action

**The full Housing Master Plan is available at alexandriava.gov/HousingPlan.**

**For more information, call 703.746.4990, or visit alexandriava.gov/Housing.**