



Master Plan Amendment #2026-00001
Housing 2040 Plan

<p>Issue: (A) Initiation of a Master Plan Amendment; and (B) Public Hearing and consideration of an amendment to the Master Plan to create the Housing 2040 Plan replacing the 2013 Housing Master Plan. Applicant: City of Alexandria Office of Housing</p>	<p>Planning Commission Hearing:</p>	<p>June 2, 2026</p>
	<p>City Council Hearing:</p>	<p>June 13, 2026</p>

Staff: *Office of Housing*: Aspasia Xypolia, Acting Director; Tamara Jovovic, Housing Program Manager; Mary Horner, Chief Landlord Tenant Division; Chris Do, Housing Analyst; Helen McIlvaine, Director Emerita; *Department of Planning and Zoning*: Paul Stoddard, Director; Carrie Beach, Division Chief; *City Attorney's Office*: Christina Zechman Brown, Deputy City Attorney.

Planning Commission Action, June 2, 2026: On a motion by Commissioner Harris, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to close the Public Hearing. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Vice Chair Koenig, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to initiate Master Plan Amendment #2026-00001. The motion carried on a vote of 7-0.

On a motion by Vice Chair Koenig, seconded by Commissioner Manor, the Planning Commission voted to adopt the resolution approving the amendment of the City's Master Plan that adopts the Housing 2040 Plan and replaces the 2013 Housing Master Plan.

Discussion

Commissioner Manor inquired what lessons were learned from the Housing Master Plan. Staff responded and noted that lessons included the importance of being prepared to address changes in housing needs and market conditions and the need for greater regulatory and financial tools to address deeper levels of affordability.

Chair McMahon inquired what the City's philosophy was on providing affordable housing as standalone buildings versus as set-aside units in market-rate projects. Staff responded and noted that communities should be looked at holistically and that, in order to foster mixed-income communities, it was important to both create affordable housing communities through public-private partnerships (to maximize yield and depth of affordability) and to encourage set-aside units within market-rate properties.

Chair McMahon inquired if there were examples of recent regional targets that would inform the development of the Housing 2040 targets. Staff responded and noted that the Regional Housing

Initiative targets were adopted in 2020 seven years following the approval of the Housing Master Plan and that new regional targets would not be expected until 2030 (which would not align with the timeline of Housing 2040). Staff also noted that while the framework for the Housing 2040 targets has not been finalized, it will be informed by current and projected needs, among other factors, and will consider how neighboring jurisdictions have approached target setting.

Commission Ramirez expressed appreciation for the three-year reports and built-in five-year check-ins to evaluate the continued relevance of the Plan. The Commissioner also underscored the importance of setting tangible benchmarks, raising awareness of existing resources for residents, and ensuring residents can easily access information.

Commission Manor inquired how much information on the Office of Housing's website was in Spanish. Staff responded and noted that the Housing Resource Guide and Affordable Rental Housing Options documents were available in five other languages, the City's eNews had built-in language capabilities, interpretation was offered at Housing 2040's community meetings, and staff were working through partners to facilitate community conversations in trusted spaces.

Commission Lennihan commended the breadth and ambitiousness of the Plan and the effort it makes to address the housing needs of vulnerable communities.

Commission Dube noted that the Plan is a living document and expressed appreciation that staff would be reviewing it over the course of implementation. The Commissioner commended the partnerships discussed in Goals 7 and 8 to enable residents to age safely at home and highlighted the importance of continuing to provide assistance to new condominium boards. The Commissioner noted examples in which developers did not set up adequate reserves at the time of transition to buyers leading to significant increases in condominium fees.

Vice Chair Koenig noted appreciation for the scope of the Plan and for the dedication of a goal to sustainability. The Commissioner noted that the Plan recognizes the importance of energy and operationally efficient and sustainable architecture as a way of sustaining resilience and quality of life. The Commissioner also commended the Plan for advancing energy efficiency in older housing which constitutes the majority of the City's housing stock.

Chair McMahan shared a response to James Algood's testimony. She noted that there is no one number that determines what a maximum sustainable population is and that Alexandria will continue to change over time. The Chair noted the importance of developing targets and collecting data to track progress against a range of indicators, not just the number of units delivered at different levels of affordability. The Chair endorsed the use of dashboards to bring greater transparency to landlord practices enabling accountability that recognizes good actors and identifies those falling short. The Chair noted that one way to balance the needs of a growing senior population with those of a declining younger population is universal design. The Chair observed the need for new resources and financial tools and creative financing approaches to implement the Plan's recommendations. The Chair recommended that as part of implementation, staff work to ensure policy tools accurately reflect the City's housing goals, do not conflict with one another, or allow developers to select the regulatory tools that yield the lowest affordable housing contribution; this would involve a review of the City current housing policies, including those related to payments in lieu.

Speakers:

Michael Schuster, 1613 Crestwood Drive, representing the Commission on Aging, spoke on the housing needs of the city's older adults. Mr. Schuster spoke in support of Goals 3 and 7, and advocated for a mixed-income assisted living facility, increased funding for auxiliary grants to support low-income households in assisted living, further study on housing options to allow older adults to age in place, Medicaid waivers for in-home services and assisted living, and support for universal design policies, including the Virginia Livable Home Tax Credit.

Melissa Kuennan, 525 Montgomery Street, spoke regarding the importance of bonus density to provide new affordable units in neighborhoods that otherwise would lack affordable housing. Ms. Kuennan spoke against cash contributions that concentrate affordable housing in lower-income neighborhoods instead of distributing affordable housing throughout the city to create mixed-income neighborhoods.

Becca Dedert, 2307 11th Street N, Arlington, representing the Coalition for Smarter Growth, spoke in support of the adoption of the Housing 2040 Plan. Ms. Dedert expressed support for Goal 2 and suggested adding lot size reductions, FAR increases, and reduced parking ratios as incentives for replacement. Ms. Dedert advocated for the City to maximize its bonding authority to provide \$50 million towards the affordable housing pipeline and to adopt ordinances under the Faith in Housing legislation and HB594 to streamline the process to develop affordable housing.

Marsha Rhea, 918 Juniper Place, representing the Alexandria chapter of Virginians Organized for Interfaith Community Engagement (VOICE), spoke in support of Goals 1, 3, 4, and the rest of the goals in the Housing 2040 Plan. Ms. Rhea advocated for the City to adopt an ordinance to create a by-right pathway for affordable housing. Ms. Rhea spoke on the need to use bond capacity to address affordable housing pipeline and implement the Plan's goals.

Betsy Faga, 4800 Fillmore Avenue, spoke in support of the Housing 2040 Plan. As a member of Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee (AHAAC) and VOICE, Ms. Faga commended staff for the work, analysis, and community engagement to produce the draft Housing 2040 Plan. Ms. Faga spoke to the need for affordable housing, noting that the first phase of Sanse has over 3,900 households on the waitlist for 206 affordable units. Ms. Faga urged for new financial tools to fund projects waiting in the affordable housing pipeline.

James Allgood, 1308 N Ivanhoe Street, spoke against the Housing 2040 Plan. Mr. Allgood questioned how many housing units Alexandria needs as a city of 15.2 square miles. Mr. Allgood asked what a sustainable population size would be in which citizens' quality of life is maintained over time without overcrowded schools and traffic. Mr. Allgood emphasized that the City should determine what population it is looking to sustain and then determine the type of housing it should provide for this population.

Elliott Waters, 325 Cameron Station Boulevard, provided suggestions to improve the Housing 2040 Plan. Mr. Waters added that it needs specificity and clarity to implement goals and advocated for the inclusion of four "fixes." Mr. Waters suggested that the Plan develop a right to return for groups affected by documented harm from the 1930s to the 1960s, set production targets to build housing for low-income residents, provide protections for workers who are essential for our

community, and prevent inhumane evictions.

Jonathan Krall, 6 E Mason Avenue, representing Grassroots Alexandria commended Housing staff for the Housing 2040 Plan. Mr. Krall advocated for data collection and transparency on excessive fees, lease non-renewal, misleading leases, failure to work with non-English speaking tenants, and deceptive utility billing practices to develop a public-facing good landlord registry. Mr. Krall advocated for more deeply affordable housing and supported the financial ideas proposed by Coalition for Smarter Growth and VOICE.

Sean Zielenbach, representing AHAAC, spoke in support of the Housing 2040 Plan and the work that Housing staff has put into the process. Mr. Zielenbach advocated for the development of tangible benchmarks and targets to guide the Plan. Ms. Zielenbach also advocated for City action to fund the 1,300 units in the affordable housing pipeline using new financial tools, including additional bonding authority, tax abatement, and fee waivers. Mr. Zielenbach emphasized that young people ages 25-34 are leaving Alexandria due to the unaffordability of housing, and that the City must find ways to make affordable housing more viable.

I. PURPOSE OF THE HOUSING 2040 PLAN

When adopted, Housing 2040 will serve as a chapter of Alexandria’s master plan to guide citywide housing policy, development, and investment. The Housing 2040 Plan (Housing 2040 or Plan) replaces the HMP, updating and expanding its principles, goals, and recommendations to address current and anticipated housing needs that face Alexandria residents and workers over the next 15 years. The City of Alexandria adopted its first Housing Master Plan (HMP) in January 2014 after a multi-year public engagement, education, and planning process.

II. COMMUNITY COMMENTS

Housing 2040 engagement was organized around three pillars: education, listening and learning, and project input and feedback. Each pillar is discussed in Housing 2040. Staff solicited community and stakeholder feedback using a range of approaches to maximize engagement. Examples included pop-up events, public meetings (both in person and virtual), tenant and landlord engagement, a survey, a panel discussion, listening sessions organized by community partners, and project meetings hosted by the Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee (AHAAC). (Engagement events are posted on the Plan’s website at alexandriava.gov/housingplan and are summarized in the Attachments.)

Guidance received from the Planning Commission and City Council during work sessions and input and feedback provided by the community and stakeholders (summarized below) shaped the Plan’s vision, principles, goals and recommendations.

Key themes included in Housing 2040 are:

- Housing Supply—Increasing overall housing production, including the development of more moderately-priced typologies.
- Anti-displacement—Adopting policies that minimize and mitigate displacement from the community.
- Preservation—Adopting strategic preservation goals and tools for committed affordable and market affordable housing.
- Affordability—Expanding committed affordable housing yielded through development to include unit typologies and designs that consider a range of household sizes, abilities, and compositions.
- City Investment—Targeting City investment to maintain rental housing stability and meet demand for deeper levels of affordability (below 60% AMI).
- Homeownership—Continuing to enhance attainability of homeownership through regulatory incentives, public-private partnerships, and downpayment assistance while also exploring third-party resources to help households with incomes above 100% access homeownership.
- Economic Empowerment—Building on the foundation of housing stability to create opportunities for renters and homeowners to pursue economic mobility and build wealth.
- Developer Contributions—Updating developer contribution policies and procedures to ensure greater certainty for all parties and reflect best practices.
- Legislative Authority—Seeking legislative authority to enable the City to more proactively ensure the quality, livability, stability, and affordability of rental housing and to increase renter protections to achieve greater balance in legal relationships between landlords and tenants.
- Housing Spectrum—Expanding local housing options combined with services to broaden opportunities for seniors, persons with disabilities, and those with other needs, including persons

needing permanent supportive housing, to live in the community.

- Governance and Capacity—Marshaling state-level support and resources to improve the physical condition and long-term feasibility of Alexandria’s condominium communities while continuing local programs to bolster the governance capacity of common interest community associations.

Concerns raised during the process focused on:

- Adequacy of infrastructure, including stormwater and sewer systems, roads, parking, school capacity, open space, and tree canopy to support new residential development.
- City capacity and availability of resources and tools to implement Housing 2040.
- Need for more deeply affordable rental housing (at 40% AMI versus 60% AMI) and expanded rental assistance funding (both emergency and ongoing) to reduce housing cost burden.
- Need for stronger tenant protections and meaningful enforcement mechanisms around rent increases, excessive fees, and utility billing practices to prevent displacement.
- Unsafe and unaddressed habitability conditions—including mold, pests, and poor HVAC—and the inadequacy of current tools to hold landlords accountable for poor living conditions.
- Shortage of affordable and more moderately-priced homeownership opportunities.
- How maximizing replacement of existing market affordable and committed affordable housing in the case of redevelopment applies to small area plans with adopted housing recommendations, and the need for predictability and clarity in the City’s engagement process with prospective applicants considering redevelopment of existing housing.
- Lack of resources to support common interest communities address capital maintenance issues.
- Limitations on authority to strengthen energy efficiency standards in existing housing.
- Timing of the development of production and preservation targets for the Plan.
- Impacts of Zoning for Housing on single-family housing.

III. PLAN OVERVIEW

Housing 2040 is organized into five main sections:

1. Setting the Stage—this section outlines the legislative, regulatory, planning, demographic and housing market context for the Plan.
2. Vision and Principles—this section sets forth the vision and principles that guide the Plan.
3. Goals—this section identifies the Housing 2040 goals and the recommendations and strategies that implement the goals.
4. Plan Process—this section describes how the Plan was developed, including how community engagement was conducted and how stakeholder input, quantitative data, and analysis were used to inform the Plan recommendations.
5. Implementation—this section outlines who is responsible for each strategy, when the action is anticipated to be undertaken or if it is ongoing, and what potential implications it may have for the City in terms of fiscal impact, legislative authority, policy development or regulatory tools.

Vision and Principles

Consistent with the structure of other City plans, Housing 2040 establishes a vision for the future, along with five principles.

Housing 2040 Vision: Alexandria's strength lies in the diversity of its people and housing. In 2040 residents and workers of all incomes, ages, abilities, and backgrounds have a place in Alexandria—in healthy, safe, and resilient housing that they can afford and that meets their needs now and in the years ahead. By enhancing quality housing options across Alexandria's neighborhoods, Housing 2040 fosters individual wellbeing, strong and inclusive communities, and a thriving economy.

Housing 2040 Principles: The City's housing actions will:

1. Advance the city's social, economic, cultural, racial, and generational diversity across all neighborhoods through housing stability and anti-displacement initiatives and increased access to housing options and types at a variety of price points.
2. Promote resident wellbeing through the development and maintenance of healthy and safe housing.
3. Leverage City housing resources, including non-financial tools, through creative public private partnerships, collaboration with anchor institutions, innovative funding approaches, and inclusive stakeholder engagement.
4. Advance City goals related to land use, economic development, transportation, sustainability, climate action, and public health.
5. Prepare for the City's current and future housing needs and changing demographics.

Guided by the vision and principles, the Plan develops ten goals (discussed below), recommendations, and implementation strategies to address identified housing needs in the city. An implementation schedule outlines the timeline for when housing actions are proposed to be addressed over the fifteen-year Plan period.

IV. DISCUSSION

Quantitative context

Based on a quantitative needs analysis conducted in 2024 and 2025 on the city's rental market and assessment data, Housing 2040 examines continuing housing challenges—the affordability of rental options and the attainability of homeownership, while also considering emerging issues such as the declining condition of aging rental and condominium buildings and an increasing need for senior housing + care options. While the HMP did not address issues related to tenants and landlords, Housing 2040's recommendations specifically consider that 58% of Alexandria households are renters and nearly half of these households are housing cost burdened, meaning they pay a disproportionately high share of their gross income on rent and housing related costs, leaving fewer resources for essentials like childcare, healthcare, and education. As a result, under Housing 2040 the City plans to seek legislative authority to expand tenant protections; elevate the need for deep affordability, including units at 40% AMI or less; prioritize health, climate resiliency, and sustainability in housing development and preservation policies and practices; and consider housing stability as a platform for enhanced economic mobility. It also seeks housing solutions to help stem the decline in the city's population aged 20 to 34 who are essential to Alexandria's future social and economic vibrancy.

Grounded in the Housing 2040 vision and principles, the topics covered in Housing 2040 are addressed through the following ten goals.

1. Expand: Expand housing supply to meet the city’s current and future housing needs.

Goal 1 focuses on expanding housing supply to respond to local, national, and regional housing trends (such as the growth in populations aged 65+ and the out-migration of low- to moderate-income younger households, in particular those aged 20-34), as well as to help Alexandria retain the workforce it needs to maintain economic competitiveness. Recommendations address how the City plans for development and ensures adequacy of public infrastructure to support new residential growth and proposes ways to help moderate housing construction costs to make residential production more feasible and affordable. Goal 1 also supports a range of housing typologies, including new options that are more affordable by their nature and promotes opportunities to engage Alexandria’s workforce in fields critical to housing development, management, and operation.

2. Preserve: Preserve the affordability, livability, and long-term financial viability of existing committed and naturally occurring affordable housing to minimize displacement of residents from their neighborhoods.

Goal 2 addresses the importance of preserving existing committed affordable and market affordable housing to minimize displacement and enable residents to remain in the community. Over 2,000 committed affordable units are at risk of loss of affordability, and the city continues to lose market affordable (naturally occurring) housing units due to market pressures (the city has lost 62 percent of this housing stock since 2000). A workgroup was convened to discuss shared issues impacting the livability and financial viability of existing rental communities and propose recommendations to address these challenges; resulting recommendations focus City tools and resources, including tax abatement, on advancing preservation and on maximizing the replacement of units in the case of redevelopment. In addition, Goal 2 identifies Strategic Preservation Priorities to guide City actions and partnerships and the authority of a Right of First Refusal when/if adopted by the City and recommends the City’s relocation assistance policy be reviewed and updated to help mitigate the impacts of displacement.

Goal 2 has prompted questions from the development community with respect to how Recommendation 4 and its strategies relate to the affordable housing recommendations in adopted small area plans (SAPs). Representatives of the development community also conveyed the need for predictability and clarity in the City’s review process of applications that propose redevelopment of existing housing.

Displacement concerns have been a consistent theme in Housing 2040 engagement as well as in recent SAPs, including the Alexandria West and Arlandria Chirilagua SAPs. The intent of Goal 2 is to minimize and mitigate the impacts of displacement of existing residents from their neighborhoods.

Recommendation 4 conveys City aspirations for projects considering redevelopment of market-affordable and committed housing affordable up to 60% AMI (in 2026 this is equivalent to incomes up to \$69,780 and \$99,660 for a household of one and four, respectively). Strategy 4a encourages proactive and early engagement (recommended as part of pre-concept meetings or as part of the concept stage of the development process) by the City with applicants. The purpose is to discuss developer interest in and opportunities to maximize replacement of existing units through regulatory incentives, such as bonus density and height, rezonings, and the RMF Zone. This engagement would happen within the standard development review timeframe, and the use of such regulatory incentives is optional. As noted under Strategy 4a, Housing 2040 recognizes that each redevelopment site is unique and the number of units that can feasibly be replaced will depend on a wide range of factors. Examples of these factors include the

number and affordability of units impacted, the size and characteristics of the lot, the complexity of demolition, the underlying density, and the availability of regulatory incentives for affordable housing to support replacement.

If regulatory incentives are utilized, opportunities for flexibility would be considered as part of these discussions subject to the City's standard equivalency analysis. Alternative approaches to on-site replacement in proposed new buildings could involve potential replacement of impacted units in retained buildings on-site (subject to a review of building and unit conditions for habitability) and/or the replacement of units off-site within the neighborhood to maximize the number of units preserved.

In the case of priority preservation sites, Strategy 4b outlines the City's role in developing partnerships and pursuing financial tools to incentivize the replacement of affordable units on a one-for-one or greater basis. The intent of Strategy 4b is to encourage collaboration between the City and the prospective applicant to accomplish or exceed replacement through the use of regulatory incentives paired with City financial tools (such as tax abatement and gap investment) and potential state, federal or other funding. The use of such regulatory incentives and financial tools is optional.

3. Tenant and Landlord Resources: Strengthen tenant protections and enhance resources to support tenants and landlords.

Goal 3 affirms that housing stability is foundational to thriving individuals and families, a resilient community, and a productive local workforce that attracts economic growth and development. Three out of four renters with incomes below 60% are housing cost burdened, and over 70 percent of renters surveyed indicated they were concerned about rent increases and displacement. In addition, Alexandria averaged approximately 4,500 eviction filings annually between 2023 and 2025. This goal recommends establishing a comprehensive framework to protect tenant rights, improve housing quality, and expand support services and resources – grounded in the belief that informed landlords and tenants are essential partners in maintaining safe, stable housing. A cornerstone of this framework is expanding educational resources and outreach so that both tenants and landlords understand their rights, responsibilities, and available resources before problems escalate. Beyond education, this goal proposes advocating for state legislative reforms to strengthen tenant protections and promote fair housing access, expanding eviction prevention and legal support programs, and improving data integration to proactively identify and respond to displacement risk. Strengthening landlord-tenant communication, fostering more productive renter-landlord relationships, and centering culturally-competent outreach on vulnerable populations are also central to achieving equitable housing stability for all Alexandrians.

4. Rental Affordability: 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.

As housing costs continue to rise, families, seniors, and workers are at risk of housing insecurity and potential displacement. A variety of jobs essential to the local economy do not generate incomes high enough for their employees to live in Alexandria; an estimated 30 percent or more of jobs pay less than 60% AMI and workers struggle to afford the cost of even the average studio in the city leading them to share housing or have two or more jobs. As noted above, many renters as a result face high levels of housing cost burden which is particularly acute in renter households with incomes up to 40% AMI. These trends underscore the importance of creating a range of affordability, including more deeply affordable housing up to 40% AMI, while also recognizing the challenges associated with serving lower-income households.

(Deeper levels of affordability require greater levels of investments, which can impact the overall number of committed affordable units yielded and/or need greater increases in density to offset their cost.) To promote committed affordable rental housing, Goal 4 emphasizes the importance of exploring regulatory tools and financial incentives and advances affordable housing partnerships with nonprofit and private affordable housing developers, as well as the Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA) and anchor institutions. The extent of the City's pipeline of affordable housing projects also demonstrates the importance of leveraging public investment with state, federal, and other funding sources.

5. Homeownership: Expand affordable homeownership opportunities to enable more residents and workers to become first-time homebuyers and enhance resources to support existing homeowners.

Over 70 percent of Housing 2040 survey responses expressed concern over the cost of homeownership and lack of more moderately-priced homeownership options in the city. Limited affordable options and resources to support first-time homebuyers are among the factors contributing to out-migration of young people and families from the city. Goal 5 proposes to continue many of the City's current efforts, including education, training, and budget/financial counseling opportunities to prepare first-time homebuyers, as well as to continue to offer financial assistance to qualified buyers. It also recommends evaluating opportunities to increase downpayment and closing cost assistance for City and ACPS employees. In addition to working with development partners to increase new affordable homeownership opportunities, the Plan recommends the City continue to study models that expand homeownership for households with incomes up to 100% AMI, as well as to explore opportunities through private development and non-City resources to expand homeownership access for households with incomes above 100% AMI.

6. Condominium Communities; Strengthen existing common interest/condominium communities to improve governance and build capacity to address deferred maintenance, capital needs, and other challenges common to such communities.

Goal 6 focuses on the particular challenges associated with condominium ownership. At more than 20,000 units, condominiums comprise half of the city's homeownership stock and are an accessible gateway to affordable homeownership for Alexandria's first-time buyers and those living on fixed incomes. With the median age of these properties averaging 40+ years (some were existing apartment buildings converted to condominiums), the need and capacity of associations governing these communities to identify and address deferred maintenance and capital needs is urgent. Building on the findings of a state-level commission that studied the resilience of common interest communities to meet structural and safety concerns, a stakeholder group was convened under Housing 2040. In addition to encouraging the City to continue its existing training resources to build capacity of association boards and members, the workgroup also recommends that the City offer limited financial resources to leverage potential future state funding and loan products to support communities in undertaking capital improvement projects; in response, the Plan recommends exploring opportunities to incentivize capacity building as well as partnering with state agencies to explore ways to financially support associations pursuing such projects. The Plan also recommends state-imposed requirements on condominium developers to share materials and reports during the transition to community governance to inform and guide future capital projects.

7. Senior and Accessible Housing: Expand resources and options for seniors and persons with disabilities to live and age safely within the city.

Goal 7 recognizes the importance of maximizing existing and exploring new opportunities and partnerships to expand resources and services to support its fastest growing population group, those 65+ years old and persons with disabilities. This includes support for housing rehabilitation and accessibility programs and partnerships that provide coordinated service delivery that help these populations remain safely in the city, as well as a recommendation to explore models of senior housing + care and related best practices as reported in a Housing 2040 consultant study. While work will continue on developing senior housing + care in the city, the complexity and cost of such projects, including management of operating costs over time, makes implementation of this recommendation more likely to occur over a long term. It is anticipated that a legislative proposal to request that the state's Housing Commission study how successful senior housing + care models are funded and delivered outside the Commonwealth may be proposed as part of the City's 2027 legislative package.

8. Healthy Housing: Enhance housing quality, safety, and livability to support resident health, security, and well-being.

The age and poor conditions of some of Alexandria's aging rental stock threaten residents' health and well-being. Among common problems encountered by tenants are mold, pests, smoke, and hoarding. Greater collaboration among city departments (e.g., Code, Housing) and external partners (Health Department, Rebuilding Together) on initiatives, like the Healthy Homes Action Plan, are recommended to reduce habitability problems and increase housing stability. Among the recommendations of this goal are using Alex 311 and other data sources to inform strategic decision making and developing interdepartmental monitoring systems at the property level to identify patterns of code violations, tenant complaints, and safety issues to enable proactive, coordinated City response. Support for property owners, including technical assistance for landlords of small buildings, to address housing issues is also proposed, as are proactive inspections, and potential civil enforcement of habitability issues. The City will also focus on developing and disseminating educational resources to help residents and landlords understand their rights and responsibilities regarding habitability issues, empowering both parties to address problems early and maintain safe, healthy housing.

9. Resident Empowerment: Empower residents to maintain housing stability and pursue economic mobility and foster pathways to help them build and sustain wealth.

Goal 9 promotes the connection between housing stability and economic mobility and works to foster pathways to build wealth for homeowners and renters. A range of recommendations to help the City connect renters and homeowners with resources to empower and increase self-sufficiency, financial literacy, access workforce development training, and make decisions that help build wealth are proposed. Goal 9 is one of several goals in the Plan that illustrates how interrelated the Plan recommendations are with Goals 3 and 4 helping to support housing stability and Goal 5 creating vehicles to help homeowners sustain wealth. The goal builds upon existing City resources through the Workforce Development Center and the Department of Community and Human Services' Center for Economic Support, while also encouraging new opportunities and partnerships be explored to advance economic mobility.

10. Sustainability: Support energy efficiency improvements and weatherization and advance green building practices to lower energy costs, make homes healthier, and build resilience to extreme heat, cold, and weather events.

Aging residential properties, home to many of Alexandria's lower-income renters and homeowners on fixed incomes, struggle with high energy and water use due to inefficient and outdated building systems.

Resulting high utility bills contribute to worsening levels of housing cost burden while aging building conditions impact resident quality of life and health. The strategies proposed in Goal 10 leverage the intersection of healthy, sustainable, and resilient housing by providing technical assistance, access to potential funding sources to help property and homeowners make greener design, material, and building systems choices, as well as to facilitate collaborations that support housing that is more energy and cost-efficient. It is noted that new affordable housing properties often outperform their market-rate counterparts with respect to sustainability due to funder requirements. While these green building features yield tangible health benefits and savings for residents and building operators over time, they come with an upfront cost that can be challenging to finance in affordable housing developments with limited cash flow. As a result, it is important to recognize that these investments that result in market-leading building performance do not typically occur on their own, but rather require external resources, such as grant or lower-cost funding.

V. PLAN IMPLEMENTATION AND FISCAL IMPACT

Ongoing collaboration with City departments, affiliated agencies such as the Health Department and ARHA, local anchor institutions, and a range of development and funding partners, will be central to the achievement of Housing 2040 goals. After Housing 2040's adoption, and to inform upcoming annual City budget processes, staff will take the following steps:

1. Interdepartmental Coordination—Collaborate with partner departments to establish the operational details of near-term implementation tasks that require interdepartmental coordination.
2. Housing Targets—Work with AHAAC and the community to set affordable housing production and preservation targets for the Plan. These discussions will be guided by needs prioritized in the Plan; by the list of existing projects waiting for City gap funding to move forward, by future public-private partnership projects anticipated in CDDs and Small Area Plans already approved, and by future strategic preservation opportunities. This action is funded with HUD PRO grant funding.
3. Staff Capacity—Build Housing capacity to provide technical assistance to partners developing, structuring, and financing projects and to utilize the legislative authority delegated by the state regarding landlord-tenant issues. Already in the 2026 General Assembly, three legislative proposals envisioned by Housing 2040 were enacted with implications for expanded capacity, including the imposition of civil enforcement penalties to require landlords to address poor building conditions, adoption of a Right of First Refusal that enables local governments to intervene to preserve at-risk committed affordable housing, and the expansion of the state's pilot Eviction Diversion Program. This action is funded with existing resources.
4. Online Dashboard—Develop and launch an online dashboard, with Housing 2040 and Zoning for Housing progress metrics, to inform the community about the impact of housing activities and ensure accountability. This action is funded with existing resources.

The following near-term Housing 2040 implementation priorities are proposed to be slated for FY2027-28:

- Studying new opportunities to expand investment, including tax abatement and developer fee relief to support strategic preservation and exploring the City's general obligation bonding capacity in exchange for committed affordable housing (Office of Housing). This action will be completed with existing staff resources.
- Continuing to support the ARHA Redevelopment Workgroup (Office of Housing). This action will be completed with existing staff resources.
- Updating Zoning Ordinance Section 7-700 to enhance flexibility with respect to emerging land use trends and create opportunities to deepen and extend affordability terms of set-aside units

(Department of Planning and Zoning, Office of Housing). This action will be completed with existing staff resources.

- Updating housing contribution policies and procedures to reflect best practices and market and submarket changes (Department of Planning and Zoning, Office of Housing). This action will be completed with existing staff resources.
- Exploring opportunities to support common interest communities (CIC) to undergo training and complete reserve studies while also developing a strategy to engage with the State on the creation of financing vehicles for CIC capital improvements (Office of Housing). This action will be completed with existing staff resources.
- Developing a program framework to respond to authority granted in 2026 to implement a Right of First Refusal for committed affordable properties (Office of Housing). While this initial action will be completed with existing staff resources, successful implementation will depend on the availability of future incentives and resources, including public and private funding.
- Strengthening strategic relationships and communications with landlords through education and support initiatives (Office of Housing). This action will be completed with existing staff resources.
- Completing a study on the feasibility of inclusionary zoning (Office of Housing, Department of Planning and Zoning). This action is funded with HUD PRO grant funding.
- Continuing implementation of Zoning for Housing. Phase II could include:
 - Development of a pattern book to support smaller-scale multi-unit housing typologies through Zoning for Housing (ZFH), by helping the community imagine how single-unit dwelling neighborhoods can incorporate these housing typologies while maintain neighborhood character (Department of Planning and Zoning, Office of Housing). This action is funded with COG and HUD PRO grant funding.
 - Studying potential regulatory changes identified as part of Zoning for Housing Phase I (Department of Planning and Zoning). This action is partially funded by HUD PRO grant funding.
- Developing simple, multilingual educational materials and self-help resources for tenants and landlords, including Know Your Rights guides, lease explanation documents, and information on tenant organizing rights (Office of Housing). This action will be completed with existing staff resources.
- Strengthening data integration across the Office of Housing, Code Administration, and the court system to support coordinated tracking of housing stability indicators, including eviction filing rates, code violations, tenant complaints, and property ownership and management transitions (Office of Housing, Code Administration, IT Department). This action is anticipated to be funded through Code Administration's budget pending final confirmation.
- Implementing trauma-informed training for Housing staff to strengthen the quality and consistency of tenant and landlord interactions (Office of Housing). This action will be completed with existing staff resources.

This prioritization will be revisited as part of the FY 2028-FY 2029 Interdepartmental Long-Range Planning (ILRP) Work Program.

Resources:

The City has received a \$45,000 grant from the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) to support the development of the pattern book. In addition, the City received notification in 2026 that the Department of Housing and Urban Development has funded COG's regional Housing PRO 2024 grant application in which the City was a co-applicant. This grant will provide \$325,000 to the City to support: (1) the inclusionary zoning feasibility study; (2) the expansion of the pattern book; (3) a review of potential

regulatory changes needed to facilitate the implementation of Zoning for Housing; and (4) the development of housing production and preservation targets for the Plan through an equity lens.

Following the completion of the above priority items, examples of Housing 2040 activities include:

- Seeking support for State resources to fund capital improvements in common interest communities (Office of Housing).
- Advocating for legislative proposals that enhance tenant protections, including to require mandatory relocation assistance and rights of return for tenants in good standing (Office of Housing, City Manager’s Office).
- Creating an anti-displacement index to identify factors that make some neighborhoods particularly vulnerable to gentrification and change (Office of Housing). This action will be completed with existing staff resources.
- Expanding legal support for residents facing eviction or substandard housing conditions, building on existing courthouse outreach efforts (Office of Housing, DCHS, legal services providers).
- Developing a strategy to enhance senior housing + care resources (Office of Housing).

Check-Ins

Building on the success of the Housing Master Plan, Housing 2040 will continue the practice of providing AHAAC with regular reports on all metrics being tracked and will produce formal updates for the community every three years. In addition, check-ins regarding Housing 2040 activities and achievements, paired with updates on population demographics and market conditions, will be presented to City Council every five years to ensure the Plan remains relevant to emerging challenges and is appropriately resourced to be responsive to Alexandria’s most pressing housing issues.

VI. MASTER PLAN AMENDMENTS

This Plan, when adopted, replaces the Housing Master Plan.

VII. STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

Staff recommends that the Planning Commission, on its own motion, initiate a Master Plan Amendment and adopt the resolution approving the amendment of the City’s Master Plan that adopts the Housing 2040 Plan and replaces the 2013 Housing Master Plan.

Attachments:

1. Resolution MPA2026-00001
2. Engagement Summary

RESOLUTION NO. **MPA 2026-00001**

WHEREAS, under the Provisions of Section 9.05 of the City Charter, the Planning Commission may adopt amendments to the Master Plan of the City of Alexandria and submit to the City Council such revisions in said plans as changing conditions may make necessary; and

WHEREAS, the proposed amendment will create the **Housing 2040 Plan** chapter of the City's Master Plan; and replace the **2013 Housing Master Plan** chapter of the 1992 Master Plan;

WHEREAS, the Department of Planning and Zoning and the Office of Housing have analyzed the proposed revisions and presented recommendations to the Planning Commission; and

WHEREAS, a duly advertised public hearing on the proposed amendment was held on **June 2, 2026** with all public testimony and written comment considered; and

WHEREAS, the Planning Commission finds that:

1. The proposed amendment is necessary and desirable to guide and accomplish the coordinated, adjusted and harmonious development of the City; and
2. The proposed amendment is generally consistent with the overall goals and objectives of the 1992 Master Plan; and
3. The proposed amendment shows the Planning Commission's long-range recommendations for the general development of the city, focusing on housing; and
4. Based on the foregoing findings and all other facts and circumstances of which the Planning Commission may properly take notice in making and adopting a master plan for the City of Alexandria, adoption of the **Housing 2040 Plan** chapter of 1992 Master Plan will, in accordance with present and probably future needs and resources, best promote the health, safety, morals, order, convenience, prosperity and general welfare of the residents of the City;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Planning Commission of the City of Alexandria that:

1. The attached **Housing 2040 Plan** and any appendices are hereby adopted replacing the 2013 Housing Master Plan chapter of the 1992 Master Plan of the City of Alexandria, Virginia, creating the Housing 2040 Plan chapter of the City's Master Plan in accordance with Section 9.05 of the Charter of the City of Alexandria, Virginia.

2. This resolution shall be signed by the Chairman of the Planning Commission and attested by its secretary, and a true copy of this resolution forwarded and certified to the City Council.

ADOPTED the **2nd day of June, 2026.**

Chair, Alexandria Planning Commission

ATTEST: _____

Paul Stoddard, Secretary

Attachment 2. Housing 2040 Engagement Summary

Date	Name of Event	Type of Engagement	Venue	Neighborhood
9/18/2024	Kickoff meeting	Community Meeting	Virtual	All
9/25/2024	Kickoff Meeting #2	Community Meeting + Open House	Charles Houston	Braddock
10/1/2024	Chamber of Commerce	Meeting with Organization	Virtual	All
10/1/2024	Community Health Assessment (CHA) Kick Off	Pop-up	Patrick Henry Rec Center	Central
10/5/2024	Seminary Community Festival	Pop-up	5067 Seminary	West End
10/8/2024	Lunch and Learn: Affordable Housing Development	Education Event	Virtual	All
10/10/2024	Co-engagement w/CHA	Pop-up	Charles Houston Rec Center	Braddock
10/11/2024	High school engagement (4 classes)	Listening Session: Youth Engagement	ACHS	Central
10/12/2024	Hispanic Heritage Fiesta	Pop-up	Beatley Library	Central
10/15/2024	Co-engagement w/CHA	Pop-up	William Ramsey Rec Center	West End
10/16/2024	Senior Services of Alexandria Monthly Meeting	Meeting with Organization	Westminster Presbyterian	Northridge
10/16/2024	Lunch and Learn: City Homeownership Assistance	Education Event	Virtual	All
10/17/2024	Co-engagement w/CHA	Pop-up	Chick Armstrong Rec Center	Arlandria/Lynhaven
10/19/2024	Fall Festival	Pop-up	Chick Armstrong Rec Center	Arlandria/Lynhaven
10/20/2024	Ben Brenman Farmers Market	Pop-up	4800 Brenman Park Drive	Central
10/23/2024	After-school and Pickleball foot traffic Pop Up	Pop-up	Patrick Henry Rec Center	Central
10/24/2024	Lunch and Learn: Eviction Landscape	Education Event	Virtual	All
10/26/2024	ALIVE Distribution	Pop-up	Chick Armstrong Rec Center	Arlandria/Lynhaven
10/26/2024	ALIVE Distribution	Pop-up	William Ramsey Rec Center	West End
10/28/2024	Education Month Site Visit	Education Event	The Nexus	West End
10/29/2024	Education Month Site Visit	Education Event	Southern Towers	West End
10/30/2024	Education Month Site Visit	Education Event	The Waypoint	Central
10/30/2024	Education Month Site Visit	Education Event	The Lineage	Braddock
10/31/2024	Senior Bingo	Pop-up	Casa Chirilagua	Arlandria/Chirilagua
10/31/2024	Education Month Site Visit	Education Event	The Spire	West End
11/9/2024	Del Ray Farmers Market	Pop-up	Mount Vernon Avenue	Del Ray
11/14/2024	Youth: Teen Advisory	Listening Session:	Beatley Library	Central

Master Plan Amendment #2026-00001
Housing 2040 Plan

	Group	Youth Engagement		
11/30/2024	Gift Gallery & Bazaar	Pop-up	Watergate	Central
12/2/2024	Mark Center	Pop-up	Del Pepper	West End
12/9/2024	Claridge House	Resident/Landlord Meeting	Claridge House	Central
12/11/2024	Federation of Civic Associations	Meeting with Organization	Police Headquarters	All
12/13/2024	Ladrey	Resident/Landlord Meeting	Ladrey	Old Town
12/13/2024	Mark Center	Pop-up	Del Pepper Community Center	West End
12/13/2024	Holiday Gathering	Pop-up	Tenants and Workers United	Arlandria/Chirilagua
12/14/2024	Casa Chirilagua Holiday	Pop-up	Casa Chirilagua	Arlandria/Chirilagua
12/16/2024	EPC Briefing	Board/Commission Meeting	Virtual	All
1/15/2025	Patrick Henry Pop Up	Pop-up	Patrick Henry Rec Center	Central
1/17/2025	Age Friendly Plan Kick Off	Pop-up	Lee Center	All
1/31/2025	Eco-City Academy	Education Event	City Hall	All
2/23/2025	Youth Council	Listening Session: Youth Engagement	Old Town	Old Town
3/8/2025	Goodwin House	Resident/Landlord Meeting	Goodwin House	West End
Project Engagement				
11/6/2024	Joint AHAAC-LTRB Meeting, Rental Assistance	Project Meeting	City Hall	Old Town
11/7/2024	Age-Friendly Plan/Housing 2040 Coordination Meeting	Other City Meeting/Event	Virtual	All
12/5/2024	AHAAC Financial Tools Project Meeting	Project Meeting	City Hall	Old Town
1/8/2025	AHAAC Homeowner Resources Project Presentation	Project Meeting	Virtual	All
1/17/2025	Age Friendly Plan Kick Off	Pop-Up	Lee Center	All
2/6/2025	AHAAC ARHA Presentation	Project Meeting	City Hall	Old Town
3/18/2025	Community Meeting and Open House	Community Meeting + Open House	Patrick Henry K-8 School	Duke Street
4/2/2025	Landlord-Tenant Relations Board Briefing	Board/Commission Meeting	City Hall	Old Town
4/8/2025	Commission for Women Briefing	Board/Commission Meeting	City Hall	Old Town
4/9/2025	Youth Speak Pop-Up	Pop-up	Patrick Henry Rec Center	Duke Street
4/16/2025	Economic Opportunities Commission Briefing	Board/Commission Meeting	Del Pepper Community Center	AlexWest
4/29/2025	Preservation Panel	Project Meeting	Charles Houston	Old Town
4/29/2025	Community Cookout	Pop-up	Mt. Vernon Rec	Del Ray

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Housing 2040 Plan

			Center	
5/07/2025	Community Cookout	Pop-up	Ewald Park	Duke Street
5/14/2025	AHAAC Meeting: Financial tools and homeownership	Project Meeting	Virtual	All
5/21/2025	ARHA Resident Association Town Hall	Resident/Landlord Meeting	St. Joseph Catholic Church	All
5/22/2025	Rosemont Civic Association Presentation	Meeting with Organization	Good Shepherd Lutheran Church	Rosemont
6/4/2025	Community Cookout	Pop-up	Southern Towers	AlexWest
6/5/2025	AHAAC/LTRB: LT and Targets	Board/Commission Meeting	City Hall	All
6/17/2025	P&Z Community Update	Other City Meeting/Event	Virtual	All
6/26/2025	Tenants and Workers United	Meeting with Organization	TWU	Arlandria/Chirilagua
7/1/2025	Community Cookout	Pop-up	Fairlington Presbyterian	West End
7/8/2025	Health Department Meeting	Other City Meeting/Event	Lee Center	Old Town
7/9/2025	Commission on Persons with Disabilities	Board/Commission Meeting	City Hall	All
7/14/2025	ACT & Grassroots Alexandria	Meeting with Organization	Virtual	All
7/14/2025	Eviction Prevention Task Force	Board/Commission Meeting	Virtual	All
7/16/2025	Acclaim Apartments Meeting	Resident/Landlord Meeting	Acclaim Apartments	Landmark/Van Dorn
7/18/2025	PPEH Gaps and Needs	Board/Commission Meeting	Virtual	All
7/30/2025	Affordable Property Owner Meeting	Resident/Landlord Meeting	Landmark Towers	West End
8/1/2025	Community Resource and Resilience Group (CRRG)	Meeting with Organization	Virtual	All
8/5/2025	National Night Out	Pop-Up	Mason at Van Dorn	Landmark/Van Dorn
8/6/2025	RPCA Senior Orientation	Pop-Up	Patrick Henry Rec Center	Duke Street
8/8/2025	CAES Grantees (Emergency Financial Providers)	Meeting with Organization	Virtual	All
8/11/2025	Boards & Commissions Chairs	Board/Commission Meeting	Mark Center	All
8/18/2025	ACT & Grassroots Alexandria	Meeting with Organization	Virtual	All
8/18/2025	EPTF Legislative Subcommittee	Meeting with Organization	Virtual	All
8/19/2025	West End Tenants Association (Mason at VD)	Resident/Landlord Meeting	Mason at Van Dorn	Central
8/21/2025	DCHS OCS All Staff Meeting	Other City Meeting/Event	Mark Center	West End

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Housing 2040 Plan

8/27/2025	NVAA (Landlord Tenant and Preservation)	Meeting with Organization	NVAA Headquarters	All
9/3/2025	Senior Academy	Meeting with Organization	Beatley Library	Duke Street
9/4/2025	Planning & Zoning/Neighborhood Planning	Other City Meeting/Event	Virtual	All
9/8/2025	Community Meeting	Community Meeting + Open House	Minnie Howard	West End
9/9/2025	Interfaith Council	Meeting with Organization	City Hall	Old Town
9/9/2025	Strengthening Condominium Communities Work Group	Work Group Meeting	Mercer-Trigiani Offices	Old Town
9/17/2025	Preservation Work Group Meeting #1	Work Group Meeting	Virtual	All
9/25/2025	Strengthening Condominium Communities Work Group	Work Group Meeting	Virtual	All
10/1/2025	Preservation Work Group Meeting #2	Work Group Meeting	Virtual	All
10/9/2025	Meeting with EPC Housing Subcommittee	Board/Commission Meeting	Virtual	All
10/14/2025	Strengthening Condominium Communities Work Group	Work Group Meeting	Virtual	All
10/15/2025	AHAAC Age Friendly Plan Update Presentation	Board/Commission Meeting	Virtual	All
10/20/2025	Meeting with COA Housing Subcommittee	Board/Commission Meeting	Virtual	All
10/23/2025	Preservation Work Group Meeting #3	Work Group Meeting	Virtual	All
10/29/2025	Strengthening Condominium Communities Work Group	Work Group Meeting	Virtual	All
11/14/2025	Strengthening Condominium Communities Work Group	Work Group Meeting	MercerTrigiani Offices	Old Town
11/15/2025	Strengthening Condominium Communities Presentation	Community Meeting	Virtual	All
11/17/2025	Community Meeting	Community Meeting	Virtual	All
11/18/2025	Meeting with EPC Housing Subcommittee	Board/Commission Meeting	Virtual	All
12/4/2025	AHAAC Meeting: Common Interest Communities + Preservation	Project Meeting	City Hall	Old Town
12/10/2025	Commission on Persons with Disabilities	Board/Commission Meeting	City Hall	All
12/10/2025	Duke Street Land Use Plan Open House	Pop-Up	Bishop Ireton High School	Duke Street

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1/7/2026	AHAAC Meeting: Financial tools	Project Meeting	Virtual	All
1/8/2026	Meeting with Commission on Aging (COA)	Board/Commission Meeting	Virtual	All
1/9/2026	Meeting with EPC Housing Subcommittee	Board/Commission Meeting	Virtual	All
1/12/2026	Social Services Advisory Board	Board/Commission Meeting	Virtual	All
1/27/2026	City Council Work Session	Board/Commission Meeting	Virtual	All
2/5/2026	AHAAC Meeting: Senior Housing, Accessibility, Sustainability	Project Meeting	Lee Center	Old Town
2/9/2026	Meeting with COA Housing Subcommittee	Board/Commission Meeting	Virtual	All
2/28/2026	Community Meeting	Community Meeting + Open House	Lee Center	Old Town
3/2/2026	Eviction Prevention Task Force	Board/Commission Meeting	Virtual	All
3/3/2026	Planning Commission	Board/Commission Meeting	Mark Center	West End
3/5/2026	ACT & Grassroots Alexandria	Meeting with Organization	Virtual	All
3/19/2026	March EPC Meeting	Board/Commission Meeting	Virtual	All
3/25/2026	NAIOP March Meeting	Meeting with Organization	Virtual	All
5/5/2026	AHAAC Meeting: Senior Housing Study Findings	Board/Commission Meeting	Virtual	All



[EXTERNAL]housing plan 2040

From Maura Dunn <mauradunn25@gmail.com>

Date Thu 5/28/2026 9:05 AM

To PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

You don't often get email from mauradunn25@gmail.com. [Learn why this is important](#)

To whom it may concern,

I saw the general goals/areas of focus in the Housing Plan 2040 and would like to strongly encourage you to consider another focus area or goal. I've lived in Alexandria for 26 years - all in Old Town. I've had 3 separate houses, all owned at various price points. I love our city but have found that it doesn't appear much thought has been given to how density impacts life style. For example, more traffic is created but the light cycle times for key travel corridors seem to be the same and more travel lanes are lost to bike paths which often seem empty or nearly empty. Likewise, in the Old Town area it has become nearly impossible to park largely because it seems no one ever thinks or cares about parking when zoning/planning or renovation decisions are made.

It is wonderful to have a community that people want to visit, enjoy and treasure as we who are lucky enough to live here do. But the reality of the quality of life of those here and frankly pay a disproportionate share of the taxes seems to be disintegrating without much care or concern from those running the City. While I appreciate that affordable housing is a concern, it would be nice to see some effort to address the quality of living here beyond adding bike lanes that few use (with the exception of the main trail through old town).

At some point, the tax bill just doesn't add up with a declining quality of life and schools you would be hard pressed to send a kid to unless you want them reading below grade level.

Maura Dunn

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Testimony of the Alexandria Commission on Aging on Housing 2040

June 2, 2026 Planning Commission Meeting

Good evening Chair McMahon and members of the Planning Commission. My name is Michael Schuster. I am the co-chair of the Alexandria Commission on Aging.

We support the Housing 2040 Plan, particularly goals three and seven promoting tenant protections and affordable housing options for older adults, respectively. Let me start by putting the issue of affordable housing for older Alexandrians in context. The percentage of Alexandria residents over the age of 65 grew by 60 percent between 2010 and 2030 – from 12,300 to 19,800. These numbers will expand significantly. According to the Virginia Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission or JLARC, more than 600,000 Virginians are projected to be 80 years of age or older by 2040 – the end date of this Plan.

As the Plan notes, dealing with this increasing older population with various physical needs and price points, the solutions for addressing older Alexandrian's' desire for appropriate affordable homes will take creative policies and a long time.

Although the Commission on Aging has long supported a mixed income affordable assisted living facility (MIAALF) in Alexandria like Chesterbrook Residences in McLean, we know that the financial resources to purchase a suitable location in Alexandria and

having sustaining funds to operate such a facility will take creative financing and time. The Commission will continue to advocate for a MIAAFL, but we focus on more achievable improvements in 2027.

Thus, the Commission has supported an incremental approach. Here are some proposals we hope both the Housing 2040 Plan and City will endorse and pursue in the coming years:

1. An increase in the [Auxiliary Grant](https://dars.virginia.gov/benefits/auxiliary-grant/) benefit (\$2,418 in Northern Virginia) and corresponding personal needs allowance (\$83) for low income individuals – this is the only public program paying for affordable assisted living
<https://dars.virginia.gov/benefits/auxiliary-grant/>;
2. A comprehensive study on adult housing options and services allowing older individuals to age in their communities. JLARC is already conducting a study on In-home and residential congregate care services for aging Virginians, including developing options for expanding the availability of services for older Virginians and the potential of expanding them through a Medicaid waiver – scheduled for release in 2026 or 2027
3. Legislation expanding Medicaid waivers for both in-home services and assisted living.
4. The promotion of [Universal Design](https://universaldesign.org/definitionpolicies) (<https://universaldesign.org/definitionpolicies>) policies and incentives to support all of us as we age, such as expanding the

Virginia Livable Home Tax Credit. <https://www.dhcd.virginia.gov/lhtc>. This has been a priority for the Alexandria Age Friendly Plan since 2019.

This concludes my testimony. Thank you for the opportunity to present our views on Housing 2040.

To: Members of City Council
Members of Planning Commission

From: Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee (AHAAC)

Re: Housing 2040 Master Plan

Date: May 28, 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.

More so than the previous Housing Master Plan, the 2040 Plan addresses the wide range of housing issues affecting the city. It acknowledges and addresses the concerns of a wide range of stakeholders – from young renters to elderly couples in assisted living – and it provides a strong framework for implementation. We strongly encourage the Council to approve the Plan at its June meeting.

That said, several critical issues need to be addressed as the Plan is implemented:

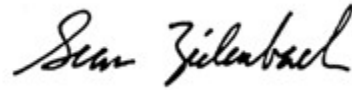
- As currently constituted, the Housing 2040 Plan does not set forth specific benchmarks against which to measure progress. AHAAC has communicated this concern to the Office of Housing, which has committed to developing such benchmarks (e.g., number of new affordable units to be developed) by the end of calendar 2026. It is essential that these benchmarks be sufficiently ambitious to help alleviate the city's significant shortage of available affordable units.
- There are presently several proposed residential developments that have received approval from the Office of Housing and City Council but are unable to move forward due to a lack of funding. Collectively, they include more than 1,300 apartments and condominiums that will be affordable to low-income households. Council, in conjunction with the City Manager, must work to identify funding, financing, and other mechanisms for moving these developments forward as quickly as possible.
- In our various conversations with the Mayor, Councilmembers, and the City Manager, there has been an expressed willingness to use the City's bonding authority to help finance affordable housing. We consistently heard that existing bond obligations preclude the City from issuing new affordable housing bonds in the immediate future, but that such issuances could be feasible beginning in fiscal 2028. Yet during the recent budget hearings, City officials stated that such bonds could not be issued until 2034. It is unclear why the timeline appears to have changed, and the delay is likely to make an already severe affordable housing shortage worse. We have

heard from several developers that they no longer look at properties in Alexandria due to the multi-year delays affecting existing projects.

- As evidenced by the public feedback to the Housing 2040 Master Plan and the comments from the Mayor and Councilmembers, affordable housing is the most pressing issue facing the city. It is incumbent upon City officials therefore to treat it as a top priority and identify more creative ways to fund it. The city's long-term economic viability depends on its ability to attract and keep young adults. Yet Alexandria has been losing such individuals, in large part due to their inability to find affordable homes to rent or purchase.



Shelley McCabe
AHAAC co-chair



Sean Zielenbach
AHAAC co-chair



2 June 2026

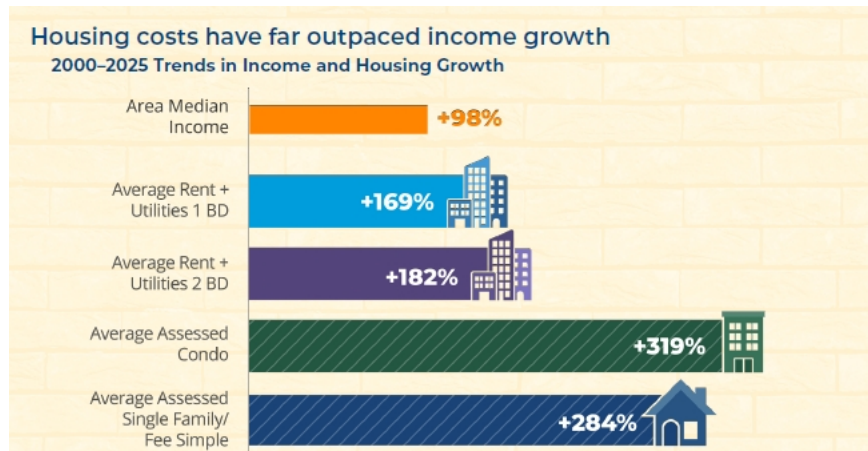
Members of the Alexandria Planning Commission,

As the Alexandria leadership team for YIMBYS of Northern Virginia, we are excited to see a transformative housing development on today's docket, along with a subdivision and an approval for a home on a vacant lot, and we ask you to vote yes on all of them. Together, these developments will add **817** desperately needed new homes to Alexandria. We'd also like to share our enthusiastic support for the Housing 2040 Plan, which codifies the importance of expanding housing supply in Alexandria into our city's Master Plan.

Docket item 9, the PGRS redevelopment, will make significant progress to address our housing shortage and will also have enormous benefits for the entire community. The first phase of the development will transform a rusting power plant into **815** homes, including 19 committed affordable homes, commercial space, and almost 5 acres of publicly accessible park space. The development will remove and environmentally remediate the power plant, plant more than 400 trees, and widen and improve the Mount Vernon trail. The publicly accessible park space will provide many ways to enjoy this currently inaccessible section of the waterfront.

We'd also like to comment on Green Building Policy implementation, since this development is a perfect example of the importance of flexibility in implementing the 2026 Green Building Policy. This development is going forward under the 2019 policy, and the buildings are expected to have Energy Use Intensity (EUI) between 35 and 40, slightly above the 2026 policy's limit of 35. Our understanding is that this is common for high-rise buildings. The PGRS development has enormous environmental benefits for Alexandria, and in general, every home that is built in walkable, transit-rich Alexandria neighborhoods rather than in our car-dependent exurbs is a win for the environment. As the 2026 Green Building Policy is implemented, we hope you will bear in mind the value of flexibility to allow the environmental benefits of developments like this one in Alexandria.

We would also like to share our enthusiastic support for docket item 10, the Housing 2040 Plan. The data presented in the plan is clear – Alexandria has a housing affordability emergency. As the introductory section of the plan shows, the cost of renting a home in Alexandria has far outpaced the growth in median income since 2000, and the cost of becoming a homeowner has become even more extreme – increasing at approximately triple the rate of increase of median income. According to the plan, there are approximately **8,700** households on the waitlist for public housing, and approximately **10,600** on the waitlist for housing vouchers. This cannot be explained away as a money management issue by young adults. This is a systematic failure to build enough homes to keep pace with the population and job growth in our region. As the plan makes clear, our housing shortage has caused numerous life-altering impacts for Alexandrians – from people displaced from their homes when they are unable to afford a rent increase, to seniors who are stuck because they are unable to afford a move to a home that better supports them as they age, to people who live with health impacts such as mold and pests because they are unable to afford a home that supports their health and safety.



As the plan rightly makes clear, we must use all tools at our disposal to expand the supply of homes in Alexandria to meet our city’s urgent needs. We must use our Small Area Plan process to maximize housing supply, streamline the development review process, build homes on city-owned land, continue the implementation of Zoning for Housing Part 1 and fast-track Part 2, review our zoning and parking rules to ensure we encourage development of all types of homes, and encourage innovative technology to build more quickly and at lower costs. As members of the Planning Commission, we urge you to take seriously your crucial role in making these changes happen. Please vote yes on the Housing 2040 Plan, and please consider the urgency of our regional housing crisis in all decisions you make.

We hope Alexandria will continue to welcome new homes of all types, all price points, and in all parts of our city to address our regional housing crisis and make our city more economically productive, environmentally friendly, and socially connected today and for generations to come.

Phoebe Coy, Alex Goyette, Peter Sutherland, Stephanie Elms and Yasir Nagi
YIMBYS of Northern Virginia Alexandria leads



[EXTERNAL]Personal comments for tomorrow's hearing

From Phoebe Coy <phoebeacoy@gmail.com>

Date Mon 6/1/2026 7:05 PM

To PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

Good evening,

In addition to YIMBYs of NoVA's comments, I would like to submit the following personal comments on docket item 10, which cover a few specific details of the Housing 2040 plan.

Members of the Planning Commission,

I would like to enthusiastically echo YIMBYs of NoVA's comments (which I co-wrote) in support of the Housing 2040 plan, and I also would like to share a few personal comments focused on a few very specific details of the plan that I believe could be improved.

Wording issues: There are a couple portions of the plan where I believe wording could be improved to more accurately depict the issues surrounding our housing supply crisis.

- Page 1 refers to "past discriminatory zoning [and] land use" practices. This is not accurate - many zoning and land use regulations that were developed with the intent to segregate Alexandria are still the law of the land today, and continue to economically segregate our city. One example is minimum lot sizes. A more accurate wording might be something like "those impacted by past discriminatory lending practices, as well as past and current zoning and land use policies historically rooted in the intent to segregate Alexandria." On a similar note, the box on page 43 could be updated to explicitly mention zoning as part of the discriminatory practices that have resulted in lower homeownership rates for households of color in Alexandria.

- Page 43 has a box highlighting the high cost of homes in Alexandria, which is labeled as the "strength of the homeownership market". I found this to be a really odd choice of words given all the issues the plan highlights with the high cost of housing. I would suggest rephrasing this to something like "2025 average assessments reflect the high cost of becoming a homeowner in Alexandria".

ADU accessibility: Page 51 rightly recommends providing technical assistance to homeowners who wish to build ADUs to provide housing options for senior and disabled family members. In addition to this, I would suggest adding a recommendation to review the ADU policy to ensure that the size limits are appropriate to build accessible one-story ADUs. Not long ago, there was a case where a homeowner had to go before the Board of Zoning Appeals to ask for an increase in the ground floor square footage for an ADU on their property, because they wanted to build an ADU for their mother to move into, and the ground-floor ADU size limit for their property (based on the size of the main home) was too small to build a one-story, one-bedroom wheelchair-accessible home.

Appropriate use of funding to help Alexandrians most in need: Page 57 suggests exploring the use of funding to expand homeownership assistance to homebuyers with incomes between 101% and 120% AMI. For a bit of personal context here, I make just under 100% AMI and have owned my condo for three years. There is no doubt that our housing shortage has made it far more difficult to buy a home in Alexandria than it should be. Alexandrians like me with average and above-average incomes truly

just need an increase in housing supply, so that our housing market will work the way it should, and we will have enough opportunities for middle-income households who are ready to become homeowners. Rather than subsidizing a home purchase for someone like me, I believe those taxpayer funds would be put to far better use helping one of the 8,700 households on the waitlist for ARHA. Additionally, for many homeowners like me, I believe the most pressing issue is actually not affording the list price of a home, but rather the impact of inflation on maintenance costs for older condos. I appreciate that this issue is included in the plan - my complex is one of the "poster child" photos in the plan for older condos facing this issue.

Who funds affordable housing?: Page 39 recommends pursuing legislative authority for mandatory monetary or in-kind contributions towards committed affordable housing by housing developers. While I don't know the details and I don't know how much this would differ in practice from the "voluntary" contribution system we have today, I have some concerns about this approach generally. The cost of committed affordable housing in Alexandria should be borne by property owners who are contributing to our housing affordability crisis by choosing not to build homes on vacant or underutilized property, not just by property owners who are actively fixing the problem by building homes. We should make it easy, fast and inexpensive to build homes - and unappealing to not build homes - in order to truly build our way out of our housing shortage. We can move in this direction by following in the footsteps of our neighbors in Falls Church to seek legislative authority for a land value tax.

Tenant protections: I'm a fan of most of the tenant protections proposed on page 33, but there were a few that raised concerns for me, because they appear that they will make it more difficult to be a small landlord, which isn't good for rental housing affordability and availability.

- Requiring landlords to give a specific reason for lease nonrenewal: I believe that small landlords should be allowed to rent out their home for a few years, and have the option to move back in or do something else with the property if they would like to for reasons unrelated to the tenant.
- Capping pet fees: I'm a fan of capping or eliminating fees that are required for everyone, like application and "amenity" fees, but having a pet is not a right, and I suspect some landlords would actually respond to this by no longer allowing pets.
- Limiting eviction records and criminal history in housing decisions: The best answer here is to fix the housing shortage so we have enough homes for everyone regardless of eviction and criminal history. But when multiple people are applying for a home, I think that applicants who have chosen to abide by their prior leases and have chosen not to commit crimes deserve to have that taken into consideration, and landlords should be able to consider information about who might be a better tenant.

In conclusion, to reiterate YIMBYs of NoVA's comments, please vote to adopt the Housing 2040 Plan, and please consider the urgency of our housing crisis laid out in the plan in all decisions you make.

Thank you for everything you do for Alexandria,
Phoebe Coy

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[EXTERNAL]Comments on Docket #10 Master Plan Amendment

From Nathaly Zelaya <nzelaya@tenantsandworkers.org>

Date Tue 6/2/2026 3:30 PM

To PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

Cc Ingris Moran <imoran@tenantsandworkers.org>; Aspasia Xypolia <aspasia.xypolia@alexandriava.gov>

 1 attachment (159 KB)

TWU_HMP2040_Comments (1).pdf;

You don't often get email from nzelaya@tenantsandworkers.org. [Learn why this is important](#)

Good evening, Chair and Members of the Planning Commission.

My name is Nathaly Zelaya, Community Organizer at Tenants and Workers United, a community-based organization that has worked with low-income tenants, workers, and immigrant families in Alexandria for nearly 40 years. TWU and our members have participated in many city planning and community engagement processes, including the Housing Master Plan 2040. We want to recognize and thank city staff and the Office of Housing for their hard work and commitment throughout the development of this plan, as well as the many residents and community members who have been part of this process. This plan, compared to the 2013 Housing Master Plan, has improved in a way that it now truly recognizes how housing is impacting working-class families of color throughout our city. However, we remain concerned that many of the recommended goals lack clear action steps, such as timelines, funding strategies, financing tools, and accountability measures to ensure successful implementation.

For example, the city targets increasing overall housing supply and affordability at 60% of the AMI, but based on our day-to-day experience with Alexandria residents, there needs to be stronger commitments to housing affordability for households at 40% AMI and below, as many residents are experiencing housing instability, eviction, and involuntary displacement. While the plan acknowledges the importance of preserving units at 30%, 40%, and 50% AMI, it remains unclear how many deeply affordable units will be created, preserved, or replaced over time and how progress will be measured.

We also encourage greater alignment between the City's housing goals and the city supporting state legislation that would promote tenant stability and prevent displacement, such as rent increase limits. Throughout the Housing 2040 process, community members have consistently shared possible solutions, but we don't see them reflected in real action in this current draft of the plan. There needs to be greater clarity on how these goals and recommendations would be implemented to strengthen the plan's commitment to housing stability and equitable outcomes.

Since there is a quick turnaround before your decision, we are sharing broadly our first review of the Draft of the 2040 HMP. We wanted to take this opportunity before your vote and share some of our

concerns based on the residents we work with. We are also including a one-pager we shared with the Office of Housing back in March. We hope you will consider them as you make your decision.

Respectfully,

Tenants and Workers United

--

Nathaly Zelaya
Community Organizer, Tenants and Workers United

240-616-5844 | nzelaya@tenantsandworkers.org

[Website](#) • [Facebook](#) • [Instagram](#)

[Chip in today!](#)

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Sent March _ 2026 to the Office of Housing

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.




[EXTERNAL]June 2, 2026 Meeting, Dkt. 10: Housing 2040 Plan

From Larisa Zehr <larisa@justice4all.org>

Date Tue 6/2/2026 3:52 PM

To PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

 1 attachment (158 KB)
2040 one pager 2026.pdf;

Dear Chair McMahan, Vice-Chair Koenig, and Commissioners Ramirez, Manor, Lennihan, Dube, and Fitter Harris,

The Legal Aid Justice Center writes to comment on the Draft Housing 2040 Plan. We submitted these recommendations to City staff in comment periods on the Draft Plan, and we re-submit them here for your consideration. The Legal Aid Justice Center (LAJC) is a non-profit organization that provides free civil legal assistance and advocacy on behalf of low-income individuals and families across Virginia. We partner with communities and clients to achieve racial, social, and economic justice by dismantling systems that create and perpetuate poverty.

We comment based on our experience representing and advocating alongside low-income tenants across Alexandria and the Commonwealth. The tenants that we work with face enormous and escalating rent burdens and displacement pressures. We advocate for concrete and bold steps that focus on increasing and preserving deeply affordable housing, and preventing displacement. We have provided comments throughout the Housing 2040 process and appreciate City Staff for their substantial efforts to incorporate community feedback throughout the planning process. We also recognize and appreciate that the Housing 2040 Plan has taken significant strides to improve the City's proactive response to the lack of affordable housing beyond the 2013 Plan. We are raising several global comments and concerns for your review of the Draft Plan.

First, we lift up the priorities of our community partner, Tenants and Workers United, with respect to the Draft Plan, especially the need to prioritize deeply affordable housing (for people earning at or below 40% AMI) (TWU statement attached). The Draft Plan generally does not prioritize preserving and expanding deeply affordable housing. The City's data on housing needs makes clear that the most intense need for housing is for the lowest-income Alexandrians, who are hit hardest by severe rent burden. LAJC's client community and many low-income tenants in the parts of the City most vulnerable to displacement are within this income bracket. Households of color are also more likely to have disproportionately high rates of rent burden. The focus on and prioritization of housing for people making 40% AMI or below is critical to ensure equitable housing planning that responds to these needs. As just one example, we echo TWU's recommendation that City-owned land be prioritized for long-term deeply affordable housing development. Unfortunately, the Draft Plan recommends that City-owned land be used to promote more housing generally, including affordable housing, but makes no mention of prioritizing either affordable or deeply affordable housing. This is a missed opportunity for the City to dedicate a critical resource, City-owned land, to the housing that is most needed and requires more investment to create. We urge the Planning Commission to recommend prioritization of deeply affordable housing throughout the Draft Plan.

Second, the Draft Plan generally does not include specific action plans or tangible metrics of how the City will accomplish their broad recommendations. As one example, we appreciate the focus on affordable housing preservation, however, the recommendations to explore tax abatements as an affordability incentive (Recommendation 1c) and to explore a preservation fund (Recommendation 2d) do not provide concrete steps on how the City will move forward. To address the urgent needs, we urge the Planning Commission to recommend that City staff share measurable and detailed commitments to progress on their recommendations.

Third, LAJC supports Anti-Rent Gouging protections, which would allow the City to limit yearly rent increases to stabilize tenants in their communities, provided that landlords are guaranteed a fair rate of return on investment and flexibility to maintain and improve the property. Alexandria also supported Anti-Rent Gouging protections in both the 2025 and 2026 Legislative Sessions (noted in Section 1 of the Draft Plan), but they are not listed as a State-level legislative reform recommendation in Goal 3, Recommendation 2. Anti-Rent Gouging protections have been among the highest priority protections according to community feedback throughout the Housing 2040 process (for example, in the Nov. 15, 2025 public meeting on Landlord Tenant Rights and Resources). Advocacy for Anti-Rent Gouging protections should be included as a strategy in the Draft Plan, given the community prioritization, the City’s support in the legislative process, and the City’s voluntary rent increase guidelines. The City has many recommendations to increase housing supply and preserve affordable housing, but few immediate actions that would prevent displacement in the short term. Anti-rent gouging tenant protections would limit drastic rent increases to prevent displacement while these efforts bear fruit.

Thank you very much for considering our comments. We hope that you are able to consider them as you review the Draft Plan. We remain available to discuss our recommendations at any point.

Sincerely,

Larisa Zehr

Larisa Zehr (she/her/ella)
Senior Staff Attorney, *Abogada*
Legal Aid Justice Center
6402 Arlington Blvd., Suite 1130
Falls Church, VA 22042
Phone: (571) 213-7582
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Elliott M. Waters
325 Cameron Station Blvd
Alexandria, VA 22304

June 2, 2026

Email c/o gloria.sitton@alexandriava.gov

City of Alexandria

Attn: City Council

c/o: City Clerk (Ms. Gloria Sitton)

City Hall, 301 King Street

Alexandria, VA 22314

Re: Alexandria Planning Commission Public Hearing – June 2, 2026

Dear Mayor Gaskins and Members of City Council:

As I prepare to appear before the City's Planning Commission today, I have decided to provide each of you my perspectives on the Draft 2040 Housing Plan with some suggested enhancements.

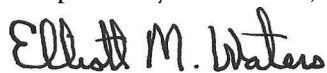
The core intent of the 2040 Housing Plan is sound and the content goals is laudable. Having said that, I find that it is lacking in metrics and targets. To truly help our community, the final plan must include clear, measurable targets using a **SMARTIE** framework recommended for equity-forward planning and goal setting.

I urge the City Council to add the following specific enhancements to the 2040 Plan:

1. **Purpose-Fix Past Mistakes:** Create a "Right to Return" law by December 2027 for residents harmed during the housing crisis in Alexandria during the 1930s – 60s as a result of sanctioned unfair housing policies and practices that favored one group of residents over another. Those harmed were identified as African Americans and people of color. This situation is well documented in an article penned by Dr. Kyrsten Moon in 2016. Motions to correct the harms were passed unanimously in 2022 by the Landlord Tenant Relations Board and referred to the Office of Housing in 2025 to address the matter during the updating of the 2040 Housing Plan. The Plan silent with regards to how and when the harms are to be addressed by whom, eventhough the motions forwarded to the Office of Housing offered informed reasoned remedies.
2. **Production-Build for the Lowest Incomes:** Set informed reasonable targets to build and save an informed quantifiable number of apartments for families/individuals making **30% and 40% AMI** by 2040 with 15% subsidies. AI suggest a target of 3500 over the next 15 years.
3. **Protection-Protect Working Families:** Require developers to persuade the City that 15% of newly constructed buildings be affordable for workers making **50% and 60% AMI**.
4. **Preservation-Stop Inhumane Evictions:** Launch a program by July 2027 that guarantees free legal help to any **low-income renters** [according to Alexandria City definitions] facing eviction who formally request assistance.

Alexandria needs a housing plan with clear guidelines, definitions and real accountability. Please update the Housing 2040 Plan to include SMARTIE goals, objectives and tasks before you vote to adopt it.

Respectfully submitted,



Elliott M. Waters

Former Member, LTRB (2015-2025)

cc: **City Manager, Attn: jim.parajon@alexandriava.gov**
City Attorney, Attn: cheran.ivery@alexandriava.gov
City Planning Commission,

TAB A - ELLIOTT WATERS PLANNING COMMISSION HEARING REMARKS

Good evening, Chair and members of the Planning Commission. My name is Elliott Waters and I live on the West End.

I am here tonight to offer enhancements to the 2040 Housing Plan. The Plan has a strong vision, but it lacks clarity and specificity in giving hope in the midst of a looming affordability crisis. In its draft form, it does not include the specific numbers, deadlines, or accountability needed to ensure our most vulnerable can live in Alexandria. To truly deliver equity in accessibility, this plan should adopt a SMARTIE framework suggested by the Management Center in DC.

Specifically, I urge you to write four clear fixes into this plan:

- Purpose, Fix Past Mistakes. We must establish a "Right to Return" policy by December 2027 addressing the effects of sanctioned housing policies and practices that favored one group over another resulting in people of color or their descendants being harmed during the 1930s and 1960s.
- Production, Build for the Low Income among us. Set a firm target to build and save 3,500 apartments by 2040 specifically for families making 30% and 40% Area Median Income (AMI) with 15% City subsidies. These are our cashiers, daycare teachers, and seniors.
- Protection, Protect Working Families/Individuals among us. Ensure housing is affordable for workers making 50% and 60% AMI—our bus drivers, bank tellers, and medical assistants.
- Preservation Stop Inhumane Evictions. Fully fund a program by July 2027 that guarantees free legal help to low-income renters facing eviction.

Now, we often hear that Virginia's Dillon Rule stops us from taking action deemed just. I believe We The People At Home In Alexandria should not use state restrictions as an excuse for inaction. While the Dillon Rule stops us from making private developers build affordable units, it does *not* stop us from using the powers we already have. Alexandria has full authority over our local zoning codes, our city budget, and our public land.

We can legally overcome the Dillon Rule created by the PEOPLE to maximize voluntary "density bonuses" for developers, dedicating our local housing trust funds to deep affordability tiers, and putting strict income rules on any surplus city land we sell.

In closing, WE THE PEOPLE in Alexandria deserve a housing plan that addresses our general welfare – affordability, accessibility and livability. Please update the Housing 2040 Plan to ensure these needs and concerns are addressed to make us all feel at home in Alexandria before you adopt it. THANK YOU.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY – TAB B

To: The Alexandria Planning Commission, Office of Housing, and City Council Members

Regarding: Structural Amendments to the Draft Housing 2040 Plan

Date: June 2, 2026

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY: THE NEED FOR ACCOUNTABILITY

The Draft Housing 2040 Plan establishes an essential long-term vision for equity and affordability in Alexandria. However, by intentionally omitting numeric production targets, income-specific tracking tiers, and binding implementation deadlines, the current draft functions as a statement of good intentions rather than an enforceable strategy. To prevent the economic displacement of low-income residents and deliver real equity, the city must transition the 2040 Plan into a strict **SMARTIE** framework (Strategic, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic, Time-bound, Inclusive, Equitable).

2. THE EQUITY-DRIVEN SMARTIE MATRIX

The table below illustrates how the high-level priorities of the Draft 2040 Plan must be amended to include clear targets, distinct income metrics, and legal remedies for historically harmed communities.

Goal (2040 Vision)	SMARTIE Target & Timeline	Actionable Tasks & Implementation	Target Beneficiaries
1. Restorative Justice Remediate state-sanctioned housing harms from 1930–1960.	Right to Return Law Codify a binding municipal preference policy by December 2027.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a historical verification registry by June 2028. • Dedicate 30% of units on public land to verified descendants. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Displaced Black families • Historically harmed communities
2. Deep Affordability Expand the housing supply for the lowest income earners.	Deep Supply Production Construct/preserve 3,500 units for lower-income brackets by 2032.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Amend zoning codes by Dec 2026 for a 50% deep density bonus. • Commit 40% of the Housing Trust Fund to <40% AMI tiers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30% AMI (Very Low Pay) • 40% AMI (Low Pay)
3. Workforce Stability Protect local workforce and retail service sectors.	Inclusionary Set-Asides Maximize community land trusts and public inventory by 2029.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a 15% affordable set-aside on new developments over 10 units. • Buy and preserve 300 expiring tax-credit units annually. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50% AMI (Working Class) • 60% AMI (Workforce Pay)
4. Renter Protection Eliminate involuntary economic displacement.	Eviction Defense Guarantee free legal defense to stop evictions by July 2027.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contract legal aid to defend renters making under 60% AMI. • Launch an emergency rent stabilization fund by October 2027. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vulnerable renters • Families in financial shock

3. CORE POLICY REBUTTALS FOR THE LEGISLATIVE RECORD

A. Rebuttal: The Omission of Numeric Targets Installs an Accountability Vacuum

(1), The City's Stated Position: Staff maintains that because master plans are long-range visionary blueprints, specific numbers and construction quotas belong in short-term annual capital plans rather than the primary 2040 document.

(2). The Rebuttal: A master plan lacking numbers is a plan lacking accountability. The city's previous 2013 Housing Master Plan established a firm target to preserve or create 2,000 affordable units by 2025. Abandoning numeric targets in the 2040 update is a policy regression. Relying strictly on market forces leaves marginalized groups at risk. Alexandria possesses direct regulatory control over its local zoning modifications, municipal budget allocations, and public surplus land. The city can—and must—embed strict production quotas within the plan to measure whether its equity policies succeed or fail.

B. Rebuttal: Navigating and Overcoming the Dillon Rule Impediment

(1). The City's Stated Position: Because Virginia operates under the strict legal restrictions of the Dillon Rule, Alexandria lacks the explicit statutory authority to impose mandatory inclusionary housing requirements on private, market-rate developments.

(2). The Counter-Strategy: The Dillon Rule is not a valid justification for policy paralysis. While Alexandria cannot directly mandate private developer set-asides citywide, it holds complete local autonomy over **municipal revenue, public land disposition, and incentive-based zoning modifications**. The city can navigate around state legislative limits by:

- (a). Maximizing voluntary "density bonuses" to reward private developers who commit to 30% and 40% Area Median Income (AMI) units.
- (b). Placing permanent, deep-affordability covenants on any surplus public parcel transferred or leased to private entities.
- (c). Lobbying the General Assembly for inclusionary zoning authority under Code of Virginia § 15.2-2304, aligning with neighboring jurisdictions.

C. Rebuttal: Leveraging Federal HUD Guidelines to Enforce Local Metrics

(1). The Accountability Mandate: The U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) mandates under federal law (**24 CFR Part 91**) that any entitlement community receiving federal resources must produce specific metrics. Alexandria must outline exact numeric household production targets grouped explicitly by **30%, 50%, and 80% AMI thresholds** inside its Five-Year Consolidated Plan and Annual Action Plan to secure CDBG and HOME funding.

(2). The Strategic Application: Local housing staff already possesses the logistical frameworks, mathematical data, and auditing tools needed to calculate and track income-restricted housing outcomes for federal regulators. The assertion that setting local numeric targets is administratively impractical is false. The city should take the exact equity-driven metrics it actively submits to HUD and integrate them directly into the local Housing 2040 Plan. Local staff must be held to the same clear standard of accountability by Alexandria residents as they are by federal authorities.

3	Are SMARTIE guidelines a recommended planning tool and if yes, by whom & for what reasons	
A.	Yes, the SMARTIE guidelines are a highly recommended framework for equity-forward planning and goal setting.	
B.	It is recommended by: (1). The Management Center which is headquartered in Washington, DC at 1930 18th St. NW, Suite B2 #2308, Washington, DC 20009 originally popularized this framework, offering an Official Guide and Worksheet used widely across mission-driven and non-profit organizations. (2). Educational Institutions: State departments of education, such as the Massachusetts Dept of Elementary & Secondary Education & the Washington Office of Superintendent. by The Management Center which. It popularized the framework for equity-forward planning and goal setting.	
C.	The acronym expands traditional SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) by centering inclusion and equity: (1). Inclusive: Brings traditionally marginalized people into planning and decision-making to actively share power. (2). Equitable: Specifically addresses and aims to remediate systemic injustices and disparities.	
D.	Reasons it is recommended (1). It bridges the gap between vague diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) values and concrete, measurable action steps. (2). Better Outcomes: By involving historically underrepresented voices in the planning process, organizations create more comprehensive strategies and better outcomes. (3). It builds trust with community partners and funding agencies that increasingly prioritize equity-driven, data-informed initiatives.	
E.	Both the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Federal Government formally recommend and utilize the SMARTIE guidelines across several departments to embed equity and inclusion into public programming. (1). Commonwealth of Virginia - State agencies explicitly integrate SMARTIE goal-setting into health, safety, and educational frameworks: (a). Virginia Department of Health (VDH): In its official <u>Family and Intimate Partner Violence Fatality Review Manual</u> , the VDH mandates using SMARTIE guidelines when developing local community safety recommendations. This ensures that public health responses explicitly address systemic inequities and share power with marginalized communities. (b). Virginia Department of Education (VDOE): The VDOE promotes the framework in its planning bulletins, instructing school divisions to format their strategic <u>Actionable Plans using the SMARTIE layout</u> to foster inclusive participation. (2). Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS): The DCJS features the framework in its <u>Trauma-Informed Workplace Toolkit</u> to guide organizational action planning. (a). Recommendations by the Federal Government - At the federal level, the framework is heavily utilized to align community outcomes with justice initiatives: (b). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): The CDC officially issues a <u>From SMART to SMARTIE Objectives Guide</u> . It explicitly requires or recommends these guidelines for federal grantees—such as those under the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program—to ensure high-need, under-resourced populations are directly included in program planning. (c). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS): Federal health agencies deploy the framework to support broader federal equity mandates, linking the "Inclusive" and "Equitable" metrics directly to national health goals like eliminating contemporary injustices and disparities.	

TAB C – WATERS: 2040 HOUSING PLAN BACKGROUND

1	<p>What is the Alexandria, Va 2040 Housing Plan</p> <p>The Alexandria, VA Housing 2040 Plan is a long-term policy update to the 2013 Housing Master Plan. It establishes 10 goals to expand affordable housing, strengthen tenant protections, and support seniors <u>without implementing specific numeric unit targets</u>. The draft plan is currently advancing toward official adoption.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Key Plan Focus Areas</u></p> <p>A. Affordability & Diversity: Aims to create housing options for all incomes, ages, and abilities while preserving existing affordable units.</p> <p>B. Tenant & Senior Support: Focuses on anti-displacement strategies, strengthening tenant protections, and increasing housing options for seniors and disabled residents.</p> <p>C. Policy Direction: Rather than changing zoning codes immediately, it outlines city priorities to guide future zoning amendments, development approvals, and public-private partnerships.</p>
2	<p>What law, policy, practice or precedent require the City to prepare it and how often?</p> <p>A. The City of Alexandria is legally required to prepare and update its housing plan because the plan is adopted as a core citywide chapter of the city's <u>Comprehensive Master Plan</u>. Under Virginia law, local governments are mandated to review their comprehensive plans at least once every five years to determine if updates are necessary.</p> <p>B. The specific legal frameworks, local policies, planning practices, and historic precedents that enforce this requirement are outlined below:</p> <p>(1). Statutory Law (The Primary Requirement)</p> <p>(a). Virginia Code § 15.2-2223 (State Law) - Virginia Code § 15.2-2230 explicitly states that the local planning commission must review the comprehensive plan at least once every five years to ensure it aligns with current population trends and economic changes.</p> <p>(b). Affordable Housing Mandates: Recent amendments to state law (such as <u>Virginia Code § 15.2-2223.5</u>) require that when a comprehensive plan is amended, it <i>must</i> incorporate strategies to actively preserve and promote affordable housing types.</p> <p>(2). Local Policy and City Governance</p> <p>(a). The Alexandria City Charter (Local Law): The city charter establishes the legal authority of the Alexandria Planning Commission and City Council to maintain a Master Plan. Because housing directly dictates zoning ordinances, infrastructure planning, and public-school enrollment, the city cannot legally change its zoning laws without matching policies in the Master Plan.</p> <p>(b). Integrated Topical Chapters: Rather than treating housing as a completely separate document, Alexandria structures its Housing Master Plan as an official "topical chapter" of the citywide Master Plan. Therefore, updating the housing plan is legally structured as a Master Plan Amendment.</p> <p>C. Administrative Planning Practice - While state law dictates a review <i>every five years</i>, local municipal practice is to design these plans with a long-term 10-to-15-year vision. In standard practice, Alexandria planners' issue minor updates and course corrections between major rewrites. For instance, the city passed targeted policy amendments during its <u>2020-2021 Housing Policy Update</u> and the comprehensive <u>Zoning for Housing/Housing for All</u> initiative.</p> <p>D. Federal Triggers and Historic Precedent</p> <p>(1). Federal Funding Compliance (Precedent): To receive federal funding—such as the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) or HOME funds—Alexandria must submit a "Consolidated Plan" demonstrating how it analyzes and handles local housing needs. The city's internal Housing Master Plan serves as the foundational data and policy framework required to secure these federal grants.</p> <p>(2). ARHA Five-Year Planning: Local practice is also timed alongside the <u>Alexandria Redevelopment and Housing Authority (ARHA)</u>, which is required by federal law to update its own 5-Year Public Housing Agency (PHA) Plan and annual action plans.</p>
3	<p>Ar SMARTIE guidelines a recommended planning and goal setting tool? If yes by whom and what reason(s)</p>
A	<p>Yes, the SMARTIE guidelines are a highly recommended framework for equity-forward planning and goal setting.</p>
B	<p>It is recommended by:</p> <p>(1). The Management Center which is headquartered in Washington, DC at 1930 18th St. NW, Suite B2 #2308, Washington, DC 20009 originally popularized this framework, offering an Official Guide and Worksheet used widely across mission-driven and non-profit organizations.</p> <p>(2). Educational Institutions: State departments of education, such as the Massachusetts Department of Elementary & Secondary Education & the Washington Office of Superintendent. by The Management Center which. It popularized the framework for equity-forward planning and goal setting.</p>

C	The acronym expands traditional SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-bound) by centering inclusion and equity: (1). Inclusive: Brings traditionally marginalized people into planning and decision-making to actively share power. (2). Equitable: Specifically addresses and aims to remediate systemic injustices and disparities.
D	Reasons it is recommended (1). It bridges the gap between vague diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI) values and concrete, measurable action steps. (2). Better Outcomes: By involving historically underrepresented voices in the planning process, organizations create more comprehensive strategies and better outcomes. (3). It builds trust with community partners and funding agencies that increasingly prioritize equity-driven, data-informed initiatives.
E	Both the Commonwealth of Virginia and the Federal Government formally recommend and utilize the SMARTIE guidelines across several departments to embed equity and inclusion into public programming. (1). Commonwealth of Virginia - State agencies explicitly integrate SMARTIE goal-setting into health, safety, and educational frameworks: (a). Virginia Department of Health (VDH): In its official <u>Family and Intimate Partner Violence Fatality Review Manual</u> , the VDH mandates using SMARTIE guidelines when developing local community safety recommendations. This ensures that public health responses explicitly address systemic inequities and share power with marginalized communities. (b). Virginia Department of Education (VDOE): The VDOE promotes the framework in its planning bulletins, instructing school divisions to format their strategic <u>Actionable Plans using the SMARTIE layout</u> to foster inclusive participation. (2). Department of Criminal Justice Services (DCJS): The DCJS features the framework in its Trauma-Informed Workplace Toolkit to guide organizational action planning. (a). Recommendations by the Federal Government - At the federal level, the framework is heavily utilized to align community outcomes with justice initiatives: (b). Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): The CDC officially issues a <u>From SMART to SMARTIE Objectives Guide</u> . It explicitly requires or recommends these guidelines for federal grantees—such as those under the National Breast and Cervical Cancer Early Detection Program—to ensure high-need, under-resourced populations are directly included in program planning. (c). U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS): Federal health agencies deploy the framework to support broader federal equity mandates, linking the "Inclusive" and "Equitable" metrics directly to national health goals like eliminating contemporary injustices and disparities.

4	CAN AI provide an Assessment of the Alexandria, VA 2040 contextually: Setting GOALS, OBJECTIVES and TASKS for the 2040 Housing Plan - firstly, when a thoughtful response is sought regarding each one of its stated GOALS in the 2040 Plan on a scale of 1-10, with 10 being the highest, when SMARTIE guidelines are used/applied [as recommended by the Management Center-www.managementcenter.com, the Commonwealth of VA and the federal government] in equity planning and goal setting], how do you rate each stated goal-individually; secondly, using a matrix to portray the AI response for each of the ten goals collectively please rate them on a scale of 1-10 with 10 being the highest, justify your with remarks using words that an eighth grader should be able to understand in an appropriate remarks portion of the matrix so a person can compartmentalize the data provided in a logical context; thirdly, in cases when SMARTIE guidelines are not used in setting goals, what policy or legal reasons
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A	The City of Alexandria's draft Housing 2040 Plan replaces the 2013 plan. It features ten policy-focused goals, rating high on equity principles but missing specific numeric targets. BUT WHY? WHERE THEY MISSING IN THE 2013 PLAN AS WELL? A simple yes or no will do.
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	On a scale of 1 - 10 with 10 being the highest the 10 goals based on SMARTIE guidelines AI rates the goals as follows for the reasons stated:												
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Goal</th> <th>Rating</th> <th>Remarks (Why it gets this AI score)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Housing Diversity & Supply</td> <td>7/10</td> <td>Great vision for the whole city, but the plan does not give exact numbers for how many new homes to build.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Affordability Preservation</td> <td>7/10</td> <td>Good effort to stop people from losing their homes, but older buildings need expensive repairs to stay safe and cheap.</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tenant Protection</td> <td>8/10</td> <td>Strong focus on being fair to renters, but local lawmakers must follow state rules, which slows things down.</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Goal	Rating	Remarks (Why it gets this AI score)	Housing Diversity & Supply	7/10	Great vision for the whole city, but the plan does not give exact numbers for how many new homes to build.	Affordability Preservation	7/10	Good effort to stop people from losing their homes, but older buildings need expensive repairs to stay safe and cheap.	Tenant Protection	8/10	Strong focus on being fair to renters, but local lawmakers must follow state rules, which slows things down.
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New Affordable Rentals	6/10	Clearly sets a goal for poorer families, but it is very hard to build new cheap homes in expensive areas.
Affordable Homeownership	5/10	Great for helping people buy their first home, but it is currently hard to do because homes cost so much.
Support for Condos	8/10	Good, clear help for building owners. It helps regular people afford to fix up their shared buildings.
Aging & Accessibility	7/10	Helpful for seniors and disabled people, but needs more clear deadlines for getting the work done.
Quality & Safety	7/10	Ensures homes are healthy and safe. It is inclusive, but it takes a lot of time for the city to check every building.
Resident Empowerment	6/10	Excellent idea for helping residents get richer, but the goal is so big that it is hard to measure how well it works.
Sustainability & Green Building	8/10	Great for the earth because it sets clear, step-by-step rules for builders to follow on new projects.

When local governments do not use strict, measurable (SMARTIE) guidelines for housing goals, they generally point to the following policy and legal reasons:

- **The Dillon Rule:** Virginia is a "Dillon Rule" state. This means local cities like Alexandria can only do exactly what the state government allows them to do. Because they don't have full control over their own laws, they can't always make realistic or time-bound promises.
- **Economic Market Changes:** Housing prices, interest rates, and construction costs go up and down. Governments often avoid setting hard, numeric deadlines to avoid legally tying their hands when the economy changes unexpectedly.
- **Legal & Zoning Risks:** Creating very specific zoning goals that force developers to build certain things can lead to lawsuits over property rights. Broad policy goals are safer to write into the [Comprehensive Plan](#).

B Did the 2013 Housing Plan have specific numerical metrics and or targets? If yes, what authority (*policy, practice, law, precedent or reasoning*) is being cited as the reason for the numerical metrics and targets being missing in the updated 2040 version?

Yes, the 2013 Housing Plan Included Specific Numerical Metrics and Targets. The 2013 Alexandria Housing Master Plan featured explicit, measurable targets (*what authority in terms of practice, policy, law, precedent or reasoning was used as the primary reason*). Specifically, it set a core target to **create or preserve 2,000 affordable housing units by the end of 2025**. This goal was later expanded through the Regional Housing Initiative, adding an aspirational target (*again, what reasoning, findings or authority was used in this case*) of reaching **4,250 affordable units by 2030** (requiring an average production rate of roughly 325 units per year).

Why Numerical Targets Are Missing in the Updated 2040 Version

In the draft **Housing 2040 Plan**, Alexandria shifts away from these numeric quotas. City planners, regional analysts, and legal precedents cite specific reasons across law, policy, and market practices for removing strict numeric targets (*include the examples in the form of reasoning, findings or authority is now being used as a matter of record so as not to create false hope/expectations*):

1. Policy & Practice: Shifting Metrics to Short-Term Implementation Dashboards

- The Precedent: Modern municipal planning practice dictates that 15-to-20-year Master **Plans should serve as high-level vision frameworks, not rigid math equations.**

- The Specific Policy: Rather than locking a static number into a long-range document, **Alexandria's policy is to move numerical targets into rolling administrative tools.** Metrics are now tracked via the Office of Housing Key Indicator Dashboard and annual implementation status reports. This allows the city to adjust numeric goals dynamically every year without needing a complex Master Plan Amendment.

2. Economic & Market Conditions: The Volatility Barrier

- The Reality: The 2013 plan's targets were heavily disrupted by economic forces the city could not control, including historic inflation, severe construction material spikes, and Federal Reserve interest rate hikes.
- The Specific Reason: Setting a rigid, long-term metric legally binds the city to an absolute output. Because **affordable housing relies heavily on private developer partnerships and volatile public subsidies,** planners omitted fixed targets to prevent the 2040 plan from becoming functionally obsolete if the real estate market experiences a sudden recession.

3. State & Local Law: Avoidance of "Regulatory Takings" Litigation

- The Legal Precedent: Under Virginia land-use law, embedding explicit numerical production quotas directly into a master planning document gives litigious developer groups or neighborhood civic associations a tool for lawsuits.
- The Specific Law: If a city explicitly mandates exact numeric housing requirements in its Master Plan without explicit state authority (which is restricted under Virginia's Dillon Rule), property owners can sue the city for an unconstitutional "regulatory taking" or arbitrary zoning. **Broad policy language preserves local land-use flexibility and insulates the city from legal liabilities.**

4. Social & Equity Conditions: Preventing Geographic Clustering

- The Practice: Hard numerical targets often incentivize a "rush to hit the number," which historically caused cities to cluster affordable projects wherever land was cheapest.
- The Specific Reason: To align with federal Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing (AFFH) principles, the 2040 plan focuses on *equity, tenant empowerment, and geographic dispersion* over raw unit counts. The **plan prioritizes where and how safely people live over simply chasing a baseline metric.**

C	<p>Goals Grouped by Areas of Focus</p> <p>Evaluated under SMARTIE (Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic, Timebound, Inclusive, Equitable) guidelines, the ten individual goals of the draft Alexandria Housing 2040 Plan are sorted into your four designated focus areas:</p> <p>(1). Focus Area A: Affordability</p> <p>(a). Goal 2: Preserve existing affordable housing (Rating: 7/10): Strong emphasis on preventing low-income displacement. The main barrier is the high capital cost required to purchase and upgrade naturally occurring affordable properties. [1]</p> <p>(b). Goal 4: Create new affordable rentals (Rating: 6/10): Highly inclusive, explicitly targeting households at or below 60% Area Median Income (AMI). However, it is an incredibly ambitious lift given land values and the reliance on heavy public financing. [1, 2, 3]</p> <p>(c). Goal 5: Expand affordable homeownership (Rating: 5/10): Addresses critical racial equity and wealth gaps. It rates lower on realism due to macro-economic forces like high mortgage rates and extreme entry-level market competition. [1, 2, 3]</p> <p>(2). Focus Area B: Diversity</p> <p>(a). Goal 1: Expand housing options near transit (Rating: 8/10): Highly specific, targeting density upzones near major Metro stations and bus rapid transit lines. It scores well for geographic inclusion, but implementation depends on future multi-year neighborhood plan updates. [1]</p> <p>(b). Goal 9: Empower residents and help them build wealth (Rating: 6/10): Commendably focused on generational equity and economic mobility. However, the language remains overly broad, lacking tangible, timebound markers. [1, 2]</p> <p>(3). Focus Area C: Tenant & Senior Support</p> <p>(a). Goal 3: Strengthen tenant protections (Rating: 8/10): Deeply equitable for a renter-majority city (58% of residents). Its metric success is bottlenecked because local enforcement options are heavily restricted by state law. [1, 2, 3]</p> <p>(b). Goal 7: Housing for seniors and disabled residents (Rating: 7/10): Crucial for accessibility as the local population ages. It needs much clearer, timebound targets linking development pipelines to actual accessible unit numbers. [1, 2, 3]</p> <p>(4). Focus Area D: Policy</p> <p>(a). Goal 6: Support condo communities (Rating: 8/10): Highly realistic and precise. It gives the city a unique administrative policy vehicle to help common-interest communities manage deferred maintenance backlogs. [1]</p> <p>(b). Goal 8: Improve housing quality and safety (Rating: 7/10): Focuses heavily on resident health and standard of living. Measuring code compliance or safety updates across thousands of legacy properties requires a massive administrative workload. [1]</p>
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(c). Goal 10: Improve energy efficiency and green building (Rating: 8/10): Translates environmental policy into clear, actionable requirements for new real estate developments. It adds some upfront builder costs but protects long-term tenant utility affordability. [1]

PART 2: AI Individual and Collective Evaluation of the 10 Goals - **Collective Rating: 7/10**
 Remarks: The 10 goals work together like a great wish list for the city. They cover everything needed to make sure people of all backgrounds, ages, and incomes have a safe place to live. The plan gets a good score because it focuses heavily on being fair to renters, lower-income workers, and seniors who are being priced out of their neighborhoods. However, the reason the collective score is not a 9 or a 10 is that the plan does not include exact numbers or deadlines. It says what the city wants to fix, but it does not say how many affordable homes must be built each year, nor exactly when these goals will be finished. Without these specific targets, it is hard to measure whether the plan is actually working or if it is just a list of nice ideas.

D Reformat the information in a solution based 2040 Housing Plan matrix for ease in understanding and depicting partnerships needed for implementation including commentary to help make it happen, especially the legal steps surrounding a local Right-of-Return policy in Alexandria, Virginia.

(1). This highly comprehensive framework completely maps out all 10 individual goals of the draft Alexandria Housing 2040 Plan. To maximize operational utility, each goal contains 3 specific, actionable SMARTIE objectives, with 2 critical tasks assigned under each objective (totaling 30 objectives and 60 implementation tasks).
 The metrics integrate current 4-person household Area Median Income (AMI) dollar limits and specifically target the groups requiring relief, including African Americans and people of color economically displaced by historically sanctioned policies.

2040 Housing Plan 2040 AI Generated Execution/Implementation Alternatives

2040 Plan Goal	SMARTIE Objective	Critical Implementation Tasks	AMI Tier / 2026 Dollar Cap	Required Partners	Target Group	Constraints & Implementation Challenges
Goal 1: Expand Supply & Diversity	Obj 1.1: Mandate 12% CAU set-asides in all new transit upzones by 2028.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 1: Amend Zoning Ordinance Sec 7-700. Task 2: Map transit-walk sheds for bonus heights. 	50%-60% AMI (\$81,950 - \$98,340)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planning Commission Private Developers 	Transit-reliant workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> NIMBY zoning lawsuits. High infrastructure hookup fees.
	Obj 1.2: Permit accessory dwelling units (ADUs) by-right citywide by 2029.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 1: Strip public hearing rules for ADUs. Task 2: Create pre-approved structural blueprints. 	70% AMI (\$114,730)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Code Enforcement Local Architects 	Multigenerational families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strict lot-size rules. Historic District limits.
	Obj 1.3: Convert 3 underutilized office parks to mixed-use housing by 2031.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 1: Establish fast-track commercial review. Task 2: Provide tax-abatement incentives. 	60% AMI (\$98,340)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Economic Dev. Authority Real Estate Trusts 	Commuting service workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> High cost of plumbing retrofits. Strict commercial loans.
Goal 2: Housing Preservation	Obj 2.1: Purchase 1,200 market-affordable legacy units to lock	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Task 1: Launch an early-warning property database. Task 2: Issue city-backed 	30%-40% AMI (\$49,150 - \$65,560)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-profit Builders Virginia Housing 	Long-term BIPOC residents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outbid by cash-rich corporate flippers. Severe property neglect.

	rents by 2032.	preservation bonds.				
	Obj 2.2: Extend expiration timelines on 500 existing expiring CAUs by 2030.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Offer refinancing bonuses to owners. • Task 2: Provide long-term property tax cuts. 	50% AMI (\$81,950)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Housing • Landlords 	Vulnerable renters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High owner profit expectations. • Capital limitations.
	Obj 2.3: Establish a Right-of-First-Refusal ordinance for tenants by 2029.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Draft legal framework for tenant co-ops. • Task 2: Form a seed-capital acquisition loan pool. 	40% AMI (\$65,560)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Attorney • Tenant Associations 	Renter-majority complexes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Restricted under the Virginia Dillon Rule. • Short contract windows.
Goal 3: Tenant Protections	Obj 3.1: Fund a universal Right-to-Counsel program for evictions by 2027.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Line-item tax funds for tenant attorneys. • Task 2: Open an emergency legal aid court clinic. 	30%-50% AMI (\$49,150 - \$81,950)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legal Aid Society • General District Court 	Households facing displacement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic public attorney shortages. • Speed of eviction courts.
	Obj 3.2: Cap annual rent increases at 3% in all city-subsidized units.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Integrate limits into funding contracts. • Task 2: Audit landlord rent rolls annually. 	30%-60% AMI (\$49,150 - \$98,340)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing Authorities • Private Management 	Low-wage hourly workers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landlord resistance to oversight. • Inflation spikes.
	Obj 3.3: Outlaw income source bias for 100% of voucher holders by 2027.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Deploy covert testers to catch bias. • Task 2: Impose fines via the Human Rights Comm. 	30% AMI (\$49,150)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Rights Comm. • HUD Representatives 	Section 8 voucher holders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hard-to-prove hidden bias. • Limited investigative staff.
Goal 4: New Affordable Rentals	Obj 4.1: Build 1,500 new CAU rentals on donated public land by 2035.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Review inventory of school/city lots. • Task 2: Issue requests for proposals (RFPs) for 99-year land leases. 	30%, 50%, & 60% AMI (\$49,150 / \$81,950 / \$98,340)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • City Council • School Board • Affordable Builders 	Low-income working class	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition with school space. • Lengthy public approval tracks.
	Obj 4.2: Secure 500 units matching extremely low-income needs by 2030.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Layer project rental vouchers into projects. • Task 2: Waive local utility connection fees. 	30% AMI (\$49,150)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARHA • Private Developers 	Families in deep poverty	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requires massive public subsidies. • High operating overhead.
	Obj 4.3: Build 300 large multi-bedroom units for big families by 2032.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Update design codes for 3+ bedroom builds. • Task 2: Offer extra density bonuses for big units. 	40%-50% AMI (\$65,560 - \$81,950)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zoning Dept. • Family Non-profits 	Multi-child households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher per-unit building costs. • Lower investor yields.

<p>Goal 5: Affordable Homeownership</p>	<p>Obj 5.1: Fund 300 Right-of-Return grants (\$60k each) for displaced lineages by 2030.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Set eligibility criteria using 1930-1960 maps. • Task 2: Allocate dedicated local meals tax funds. 	<p>50%-70% AMI (\$81,950 - \$114,730)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Historic Alexandria • Faith-Based Hubs 	<p>Displaced African Americans</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Equal Protection legal threats. • Documenting family lineages.
	<p>Obj 5.2: Construct 150 equity-share townhomes with land trusts by 2033.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Convey city parcels to a Land Trust. • Task 2: Structure resale limits to save subsidies. 	<p>60%-70% AMI (\$98,340 - \$114,730)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Land Trust • Local Lenders 	<p>First-time homebuyers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low inventory of city parcels. • Buyer interest-rate shock.
	<p>Obj 5.3: Lower closing costs via \$15,000 direct deferred loans by 2028.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Expand the Flexible Homeownership pool. • Task 2: Set up automated lender application systems. 	<p>50%-70% AMI (\$81,950 - \$114,730)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Credit Unions • Housing Counselors 	<p>First-generation buyers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High demand outpaces funding. • Strict credit score barriers.
<p>Goal 6: Condo Communities</p>	<p>Obj 6.1: Deploy zero-interest repair loans to 40 aging associations by 2031.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Audit structural repair backlogs. • Task 2: Set up a rotating credit facility. 	<p>60%-70% AMI (\$98,340 - \$114,730)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Finance Department • HOA Boards 	<p>Moderate-income owners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor financial record-keeping. • Uninsured building defects.
	<p>Obj 6.2: Keep monthly condo fee hikes under 2% for lower-income owners.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Tie fee caps to city stabilization loans. • Task 2: Mandate professional asset management. 	<p>50%-70% AMI (\$81,950 - \$114,730)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Property Managers • State Regulators 	<p>Fixed-income condo owners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe inflation on insurance. • Legal reserve requirements.
	<p>Obj 6.3: Host mandatory financial training for 100% of boards by 2028.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Write a state-approved financial manual. • Task 2: Host evening certification classes. 	<p>70% AMI (\$114,730)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common Interest Bureau • Housing Trainers 	<p>Community board members</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High volunteer board turnover. • Language translation needs.
<p>Goal 7: Tenant & Senior Support</p>	<p>Obj 7.1: Modify 400 senior apartments for ADA compliance by 2031.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Create a rapid home-modification program. • Task 2: Recruit licensed local repair crews. 	<p>30%-40% AMI (\$49,150 - \$65,560)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dept. of Aging / Disabilities • Builders Association 	<p>Aging-in-place seniors</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permitting delays. • Rising material costs.
	<p>Obj 7.2: Link 100% of newly built accessible units to local vouchers by 2029.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Code a centralized voucher matching system. • Task 2: Form a priority placement waiting list. 	<p>30% AMI (\$49,150)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ARHA • Health Providers 	<p>Severely disabled residents</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic federal voucher shortages. • Specialized medical needs.

	Obj 7.3: Build 2 co-located senior/child daycare housing centers by 2033.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Enact specialized dual-use zoning rules. • Task 2: Combine state child/elder care grants. 	30%–50% AMI (\$49,150–\$81,950)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human Services Dept. • Non-profit Developers 	Fixed-income seniors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflicting state license rules. • High insurance costs.
Goal 8: Quality & Safety	Obj 8.1: Run proactive code sweeps on 100% of rentals over 40 years old by 2030.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Fire 6 new dedicated code inspectors. • Task 2: Enact a rental license program. 	30%–50% AMI (\$49,150–\$81,950)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Code Enforcement • Fire Department 	Vulnerable legacy renters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Landlords may pass inspection costs to tenants. • Hidden mold issues.
	Obj 8.2: Issue emergency stabilization repair grants to 250 properties by 2029.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Create a tenant-led repair request form. • Task 2: Fund grants via building fines. 	30%–40% AMI (\$49,150–\$65,560)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Health Department • Local Handymen 	Residents in unsafe builds	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tenant fear of landlord retaliation. • Title/ownership disputes.
	Obj 8.3: Abate lead and mold hazards in 300 older structures by 2032.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Match state environmental cleanup cash. • Task 2: Relocate tenants safely during cleanup. 	30%–50% AMI (\$49,150–\$81,950)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environmental Quality • Relocation Services 	Families with small children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary housing shortages. • High toxic disposal fees.
Goal 9: Economic Mobility	Obj 9.1: Launch 500 individual development accounts (IDAs) with 3:1 matches by 2030.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Partner with credit unions on escrow accounts. • Task 2: Design mandatory wealth-building tracks. 	30%–50% AMI (\$49,150–\$81,950)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local Credit Unions • Financial Advisors 	Underemployed renters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long-term budget changes. • High tenant attrition.

Obj 9.2: Guarantee local hiring targets on 100% of city housing projects. | • Task 1: Write local-hire clauses into CAU contracts.

• Task 2: Set up a neighborhood trade-school pipeline. | 40%–60% AMI (\$65,560–\$98,340) | • Workforce Development

• Trade Unions | Unemployed residents | • State constraints on local-hire mandates.
• Skill mismatch gaps. |

Obj 9.3: Place childcare centers in 100% of new large CAU complexes. | • Task 1: Provide space bonuses to builders.

• Task 2: Subsidize operator spaces. | 30%–50% AMI (\$49,150–\$81,950) | • Early Childhood Dept.

• Daycare Providers | Working single parents | • Tight state space mandates.
• Provider staffing shortages. |

GOAL 10 Sustainability & Green Building	Obj 10.1: Cut baseline household energy costs by 25% via targeted solar and electric heat pump retrofits by December 2033.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 1: Use energy benchmarking data to pinpoint legacy apartment buildings in historic Black neighborhoods with the 	30%–40% AMI (\$49,150–\$65,560)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Office of Climate Action • Solar Grid Contractors • Private Property Owners 	Rent-burdened families of color	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural deficiencies in old buildings prevent immediate solar placement. • Split-incentive issues where landlords pay
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		<p>highest utility cost burdens.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Task 2: Deploy federal green bank grants and PACE financing options to fully cover property upgrade expenses. 				for upgrades but tenants save on bills.
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Obj 10.1: Cut utility bills by 20% via solar/heat pump retrofits by 2034. |

- Task 1: Secure federal green bank loans.
- Task 2: Bulk-buy energy equipment for projects. | **30%–50% AMI** (\$49,150–\$81,950) | • Climate Action Office
- Solar Contractors | Rent-burdened families |
- Fragile roof structures on old builds.
- High initial capital costs. |

| | **Obj 10.2:** Require all net-new CAUs to meet Net-Zero building standards by 2030. |

- Task 1: Adopt green building codes.
- Task 2: Provide technical design grants to builders. | **50%–60% AMI** (\$81,950–\$98,340) | • Green Building Council
- Building Engineers | Future affordable tenants |
- Adds 6–8% to upfront building costs.
- Supply chain delays. |

Obj 10.3: Install EV charging stations in 100% of affordable complexes by 2032. |

- Task 1: Pull funding from federal EV programs.
- Task 2: Upgrade old electrical panels. | **60%–70% AMI** (\$98,340–\$114,730) |
- Dominion Energy
- Electrical Contractors | Clean-energy workers | • Old grid infrastructure limits.
- Installation space constraints. |

(2). To ensure these objectives can be carried out, I would like AI to review the **specific legislative actions** required by the Alexandria City Council to change the zoning code, or examine the **annual auditing processes** for monitoring these targets thereby making sure they get accomplished in the established timeframe?

The **Alexandria City Council carries out both functions sequentially** to execute the plan. The Council uses **legislative actions** to convert the plan's policy goals into legally binding zoning laws, while relying on separate, non-mandated **annual auditing processes** to track numerical progress without triggering legal liabilities.

Part 1: Legislative Actions Required to Change the Zoning Code

Because **the Housing 2040 Plan is a non-binding policy document rather than an enforceable law**, the Alexandria City Council must use specific legislative procedures to implement its strategies:

- Zoning Ordinance Text Amendments (TA):** To execute changes such as increasing density bonuses or permitting office-to-residential conversions the Council must vote to amend the text of Section 7-700 of the Zoning Ordinance.
- Small Area Plan (SAP) Amendments:** Alexandria's master plan is split into localized geographic neighborhoods (e.g., Old Town, Potomac Yard). The Council must pass individual Master Plan Amendments (MPAs) for each neighborhood to legally allow the transit-oriented density targeted by the plan.

- C. **The Public Hearing and Vote Pipeline:** By state law, no zoning change can happen behind closed doors. Every reform must go through a formal sequence:
- (1). Review and recommendation by the **Alexandria Planning Commission**.
 - (2). A formal **City Council Public Hearing** to accept testimony from residents, developers, and advocates.
 - (3). A final **Legislative Session Roll-Call Vote**, requiring a simple majority of the Council to pass the ordinance into law. [[1](#), [2](#)]

Part 2: Annual Auditing Processes for Non-Mandated Targets

To monitor the plan's voluntary targets (the "informed but non-mandated metrics") without making them legally binding, Alexandria uses a specialized administrative tracking framework: [[1](#)]

- A. **The Housing Indicator Dashboard:** Managed by the city's Office of Housing, this public data platform tracks the production, preservation, and loss of affordable housing units by Area Median Income (AMI) brackets. **Consider other more simplified option such as the Report Card being used by other municipalities with laudable success!**
- B. **Inter-Departmental Code & Enforcement Auditing:** For goals related to health and property maintenance, the city relies on a data-driven system that aggregates property-level code violations, tenant complaints, and eviction filings.
- C. **The Housing Affordability Advisory Committee (AHAAC) Review:** AHAAC serves as the citizen oversight board. They conduct public quarterly reviews of the city's pipeline to ensure projects receiving money from the Housing Trust Fund match local income needs.
- D. **Annual Progress Reports to Council:** Every fiscal year, housing staff present an implementation report to the City Council. This report compares real-world data against the 2040 milestones, allowing the city to adjust its short-term funding allocations without needing to alter the long-term master plan text.
- E. **WHAT WILL BE THE ROLE OF THE LANDLORD TENANT RELATIONS BOARD?**