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**[EXTERNAL]housing plan 2040**

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**From** Maura Dunn <mauradunn25@gmail.com>

**Date** Thu 5/28/2026 9:05 AM

**To** PlanComm <PlanComm@alexandriava.gov>

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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:

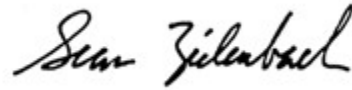
- As currently constituted, the Housing 2040 Plan does not set forth specific benchmarks against which to measure progress. AHAAC has communicated this concern to the Office of Housing, which has committed to developing such benchmarks (e.g., number of new affordable units to be developed) by the end 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

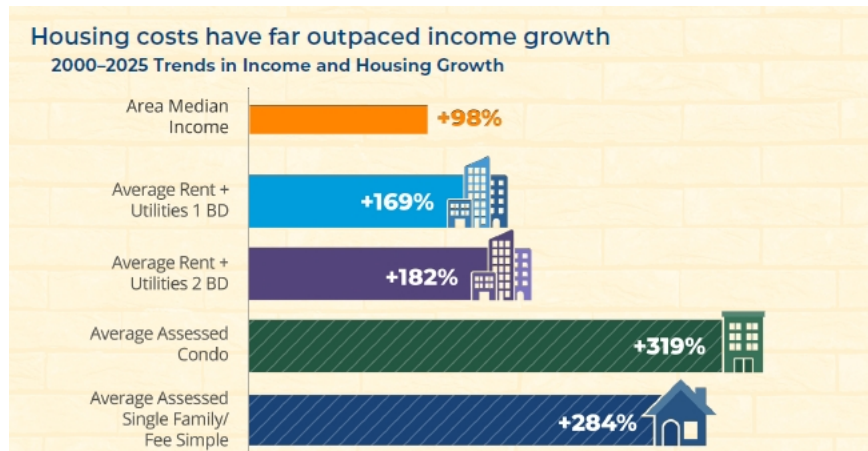
Members of the Alexandria Planning Commission,

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



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**[EXTERNAL]Personal comments for tomorrow's hearing**

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**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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