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Dear City Council Members,

I strongly support Zoning for Housing. Zoning for Housing will help Alexandria address the unmet housing emergency in our local community, create interesting and beautiful communities, and provide a more equitable living for our residents. I encourage the City of Alexandria to move proactively on Zoning for Housing.

We desperately need more housing to meet the demand in this area. I bought my home 3 years ago. Even in the short time since buying my home, housing prices have risen so fast that I could not afford to buy it today. Each and every year since I've bought my house, I have had an escrow shortage due to the rapid price increases that are a result of the unmet demand for housing in this area. Alexandria, and DC generally, is growing and we need to build to address the people who are moving to our communities. I believe that Zoning for Housing will modestly address Alexandria's housing emergency. The alternative is turning our City into an economically gated community, like San Francisco, where our teachers and firepersons cannot even afford to live in the City that they help support.

Zoning for Housing will also make our communities more beautiful and vibrant. I live in Old Town, one of the densest, most walkable, and unique parts of Alexandria. I regularly visit Del Ray, which is also a dense, livable, and walkable part of our community. Right now the Zoning Code makes neighborhoods like Old Town and Del Ray functionally impossible. We should be encouraging development in a pattern that allows walkable, dense, and enjoyable communities with housing that is accessible to all backgrounds. Indeed, I think by adopting Zoning for Housing, and moving forward with other reforms that encourage walkable neighborhoods and transit-oriented development, Alexandria can become an even better location to live, work, and play for all people.

Finally, Zoning for Housing will help address lingering equity issues that are entrenched in the current zoning code. Some parts of the Zoning Code were specifically designed to entrench economic and racial privilege in Alexandria, and continue to force the community to become more segregated over time. City staff have presented convincing data that we are economically segregating our community in a way that is making us more segregated as people are priced out of Alexandria. We can, and should, acknowledge this lingering effect and move to try to address the underlying inequitable systems that have been built into the City of Alexandria. Doing so will make our community more hospitable to current residents and newcomers.

For these reasons, I support the Zoning for Housing initiative as a way to make our community more affordable, more enjoyable, and more equitable. We owe it to ourselves and future residents to address our housing crisis immediately.

Respectfully,  
Dane Lauritzen  
Resident