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CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov

From: Alex Sprague <alextrified821@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, April 22, 2022 7:57 PM
To: CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov
Subject: [EXTERNAL]Testimony for the housing plan

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Hi,

Unfortunately I can't make the city council meeting tomorrow due to work so I will just state my comment here:

I commend the city for investing in housing but I am worried it's not enough.

I was just touring an apartment on the west end that I'm interested in moving into just yesterday (April 22).

I want to give a tremendous shoutout to Bryce Wiley, very nice energetic tour guide, I wish all landlords were like him. But he had some frightening news about the rent prices. The cheapest they'd be are \$1400 a month and as the year goes by, those prices are all set to go up!

I'm going to have a hard enough time paying for all that when making \$17 an hour, some people get paid even less for working equally hard or maybe even harder. Completely unfair.

We have to do something about it. If we can't lower rent prices, we need to at least invest in accommodations because this is ridiculous.

Thank you and see you soon.

Alex Sprague

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DRAFT COA TESTIMONY ON THE FY 2023 DRAFT ANNUAL ACTION PLAN
to be presented during the City Council Public Hearing scheduled on April 23, 2022

My name is Michael Schuster. I am the Secretary of the Alexandria Commission on Aging (COA). The Commission fully supports the FY 2023 Draft Annual Action Plan. We believe it substantially addresses the housing needs of Alexandrians, 60 years of age or older – comprising 17% of Alexandrian residents. Older Alexandrians face unique housing problems because of their special health care needs and fixed incomes. With median gross rent nearly \$1800 a month (2016-2020) not including utilities in Alexandria, many older residents on fixed incomes pay a disproportionate amount of their incomes toward housing – more than 74% of low-to moderate income Alexandrians pay more than 30% of their monthly income, the standard for what is considered “affordable,” on rent or mortgage payments. Affordability is an issue for both older renters and homeowners.

The Commission’s focus has been ensuring that older residents can “age in place,” that is, they can remain in their homes for as long as possible, rather than being forced to live in an institutional setting. We have consistently supported City policies that allow older residents to age in place, such as our support for the

recently approved ordinance permitting the construction of accessory dwelling units or ADUs, and the proposed development of affordable assisted living. The draft Annual Action Plan continues this aging in place policy in several ways. First, the plan provides for eviction prevention. Under the proposed plan, funding from the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) will assist 600 households in maintaining their current residence, many of whom are headed by older persons. Second, 150 persons would be assisted in obtaining permanent, stable housing. Thirdly, the proposed Plan would fund the modification or rehabilitation of rental units benefiting over 150 individuals, many of whom are either 60 years of age or over, or with disabilities. Finally, the Home Rehabilitation Loan Program would help 8 low-income homeowners to pay for repairs to their homes, making their homes more accessible as they age in place. Nonetheless, the plan fails to assist those who need some help with activities of daily living, such as with affordable assisted living like Chesterbrook Residences in Falls Church, and Culpepper Gardens in Arlington.

We look forward to working with both the City Council and the Office on Housing on the implementation of this one-year plan, as well as those in the future.