



Text Amendment #2020-00007

Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)

City Council

January 23, 2021

Department of Planning & Zoning
Office of Housing

What is an Accessory Dwelling Unit?

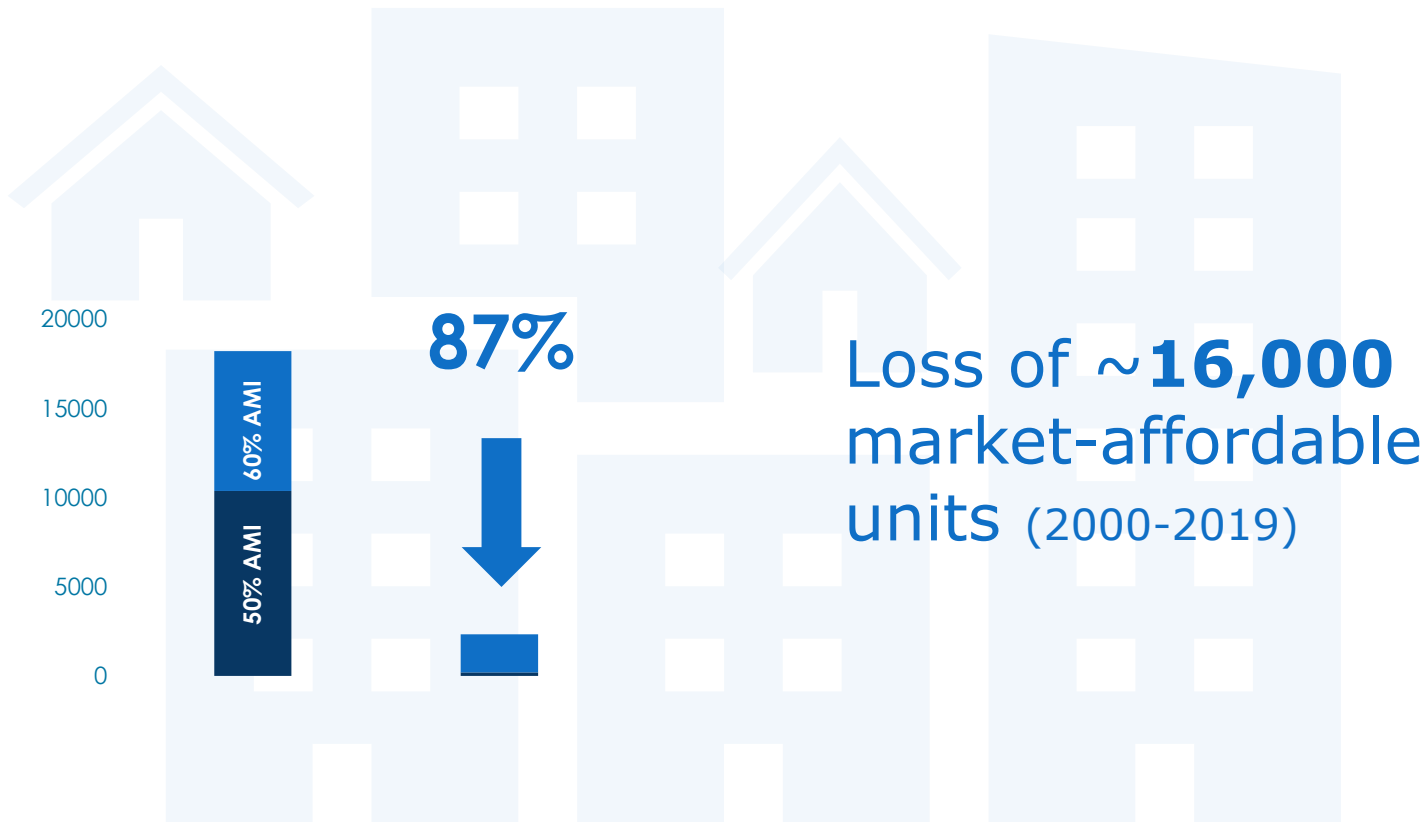
Secondary housing unit on a residential lot with a separate kitchen, sleeping area, and bathroom.



Purpose of Study

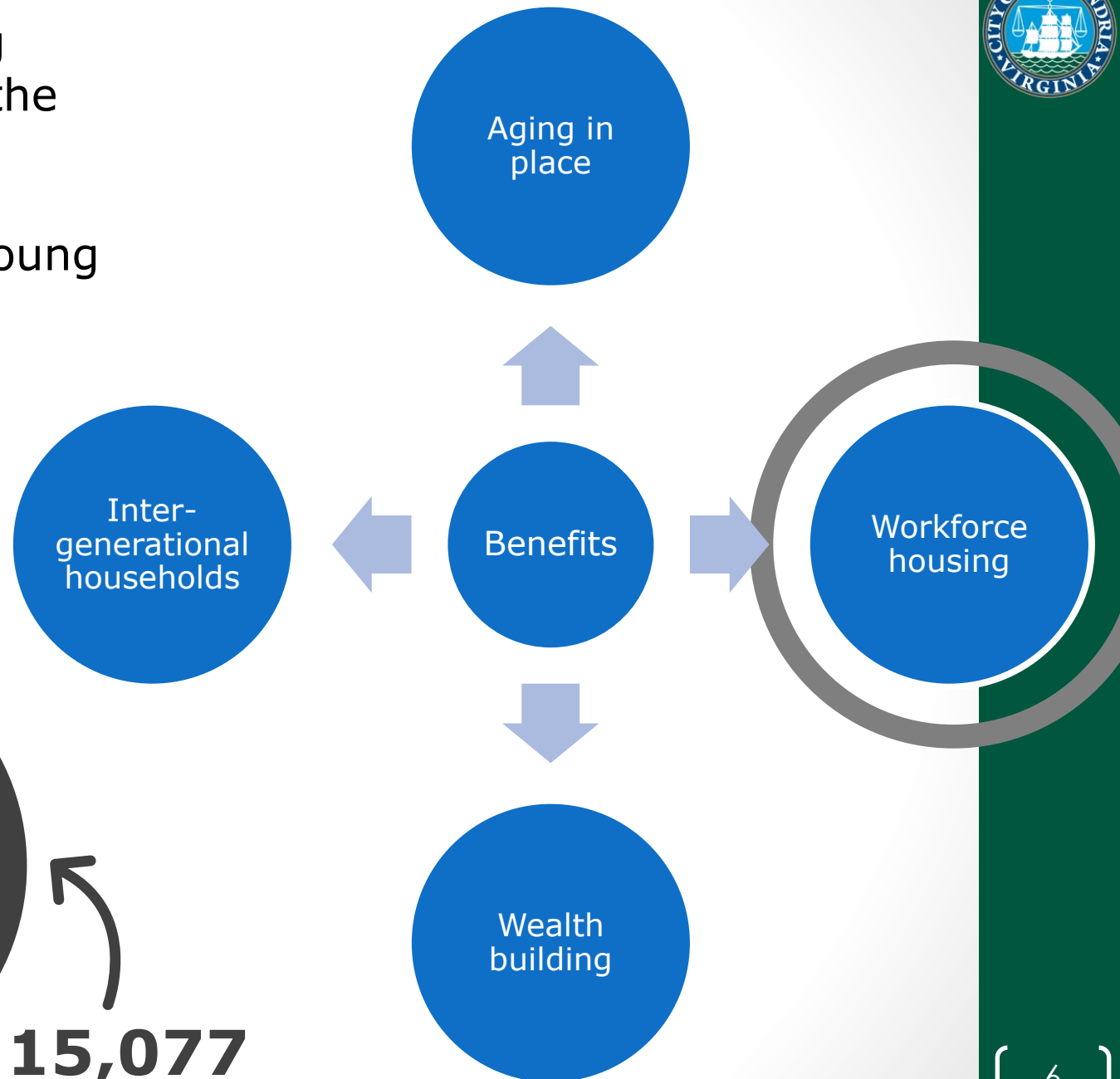
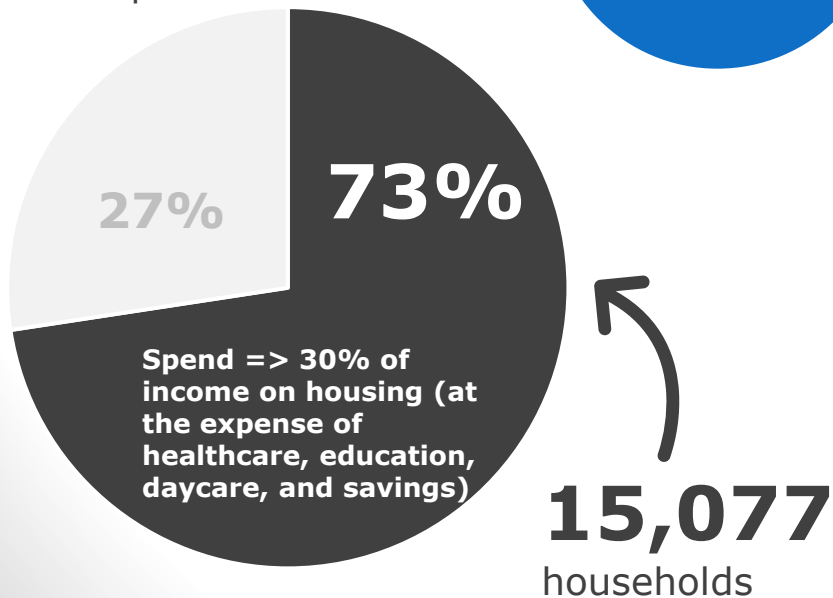
- Consistent with the recommendations of the **Housing Master Plan** and **Age Friendly Plan for a Livable Community**, and the **City Strategic Plan's** commitment to inclusive neighborhoods, the study was launched to draft an ADU policy to help expand housing options, affordability and accessibility in the city.

Why are accessory dwelling units an important housing option?

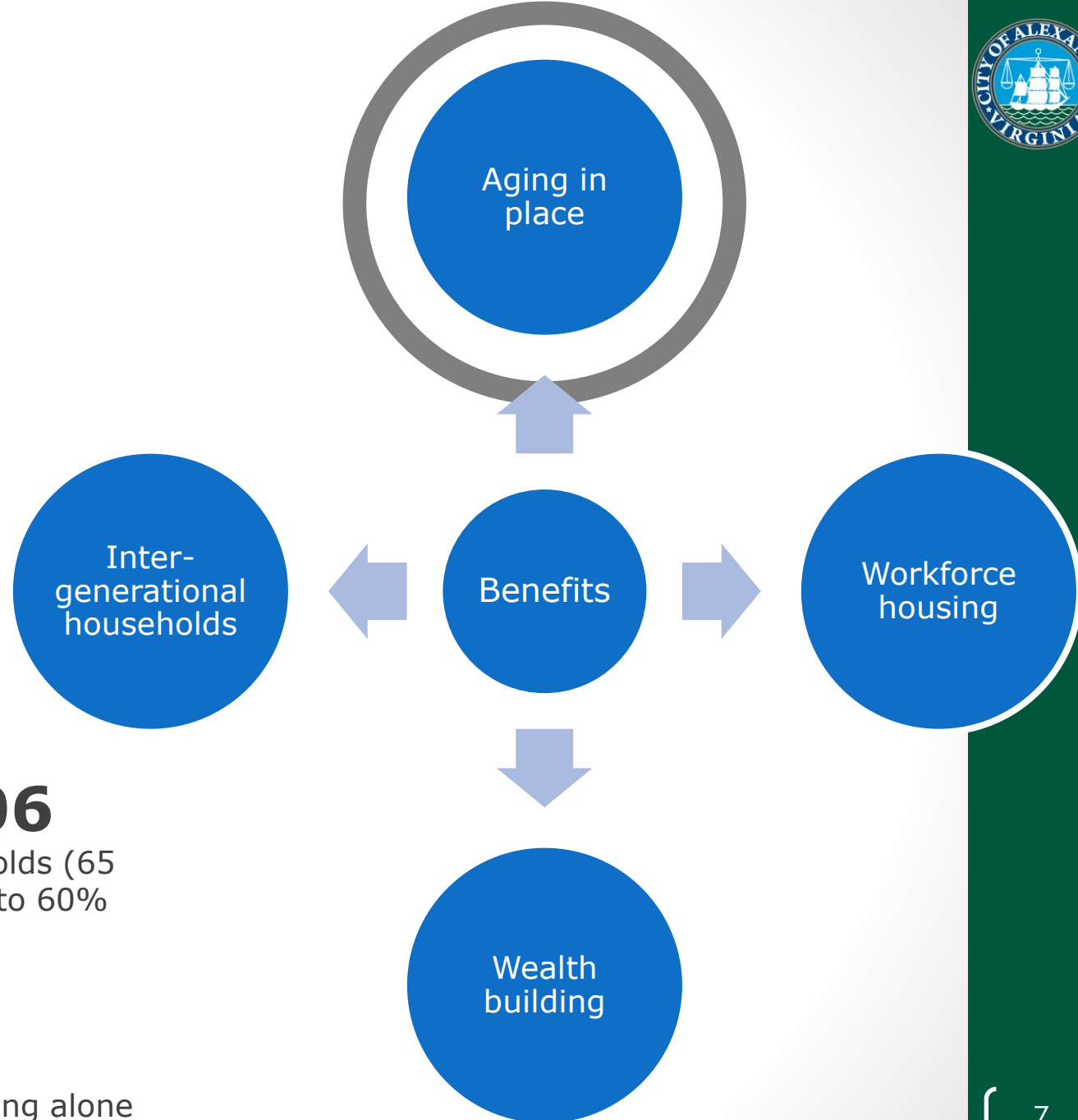


- Enhance housing affordability for the city's workforce, including recent graduates and young professionals

Cost burden among renter households with incomes less than \$75K



- Enable seniors and persons with disabilities to age safely, comfortably and more affordably in place by providing convenient on-site housing for their caregivers



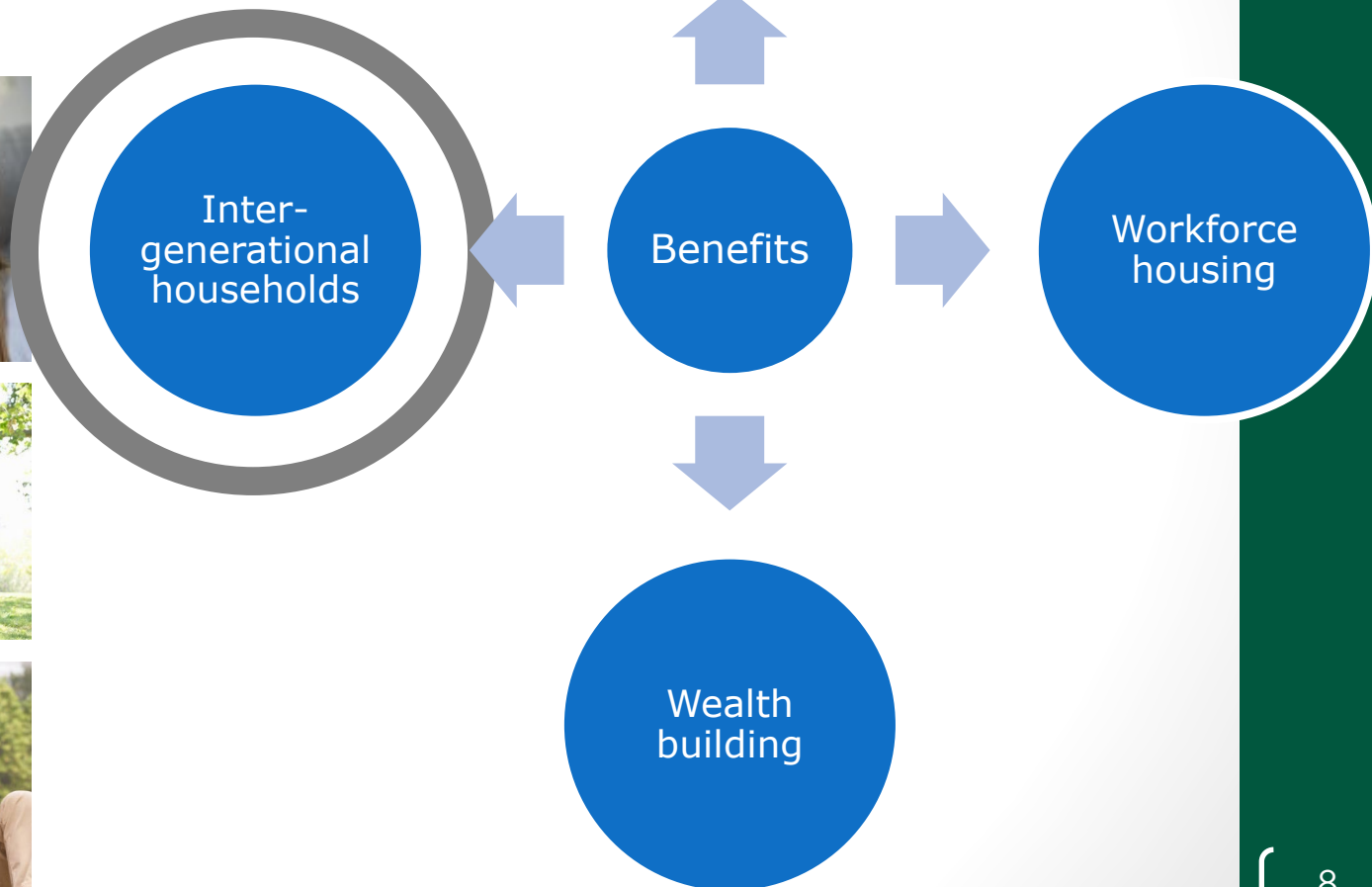
~3,350-3,906

Low-income senior households (65 and above with income up to 60% AMI)

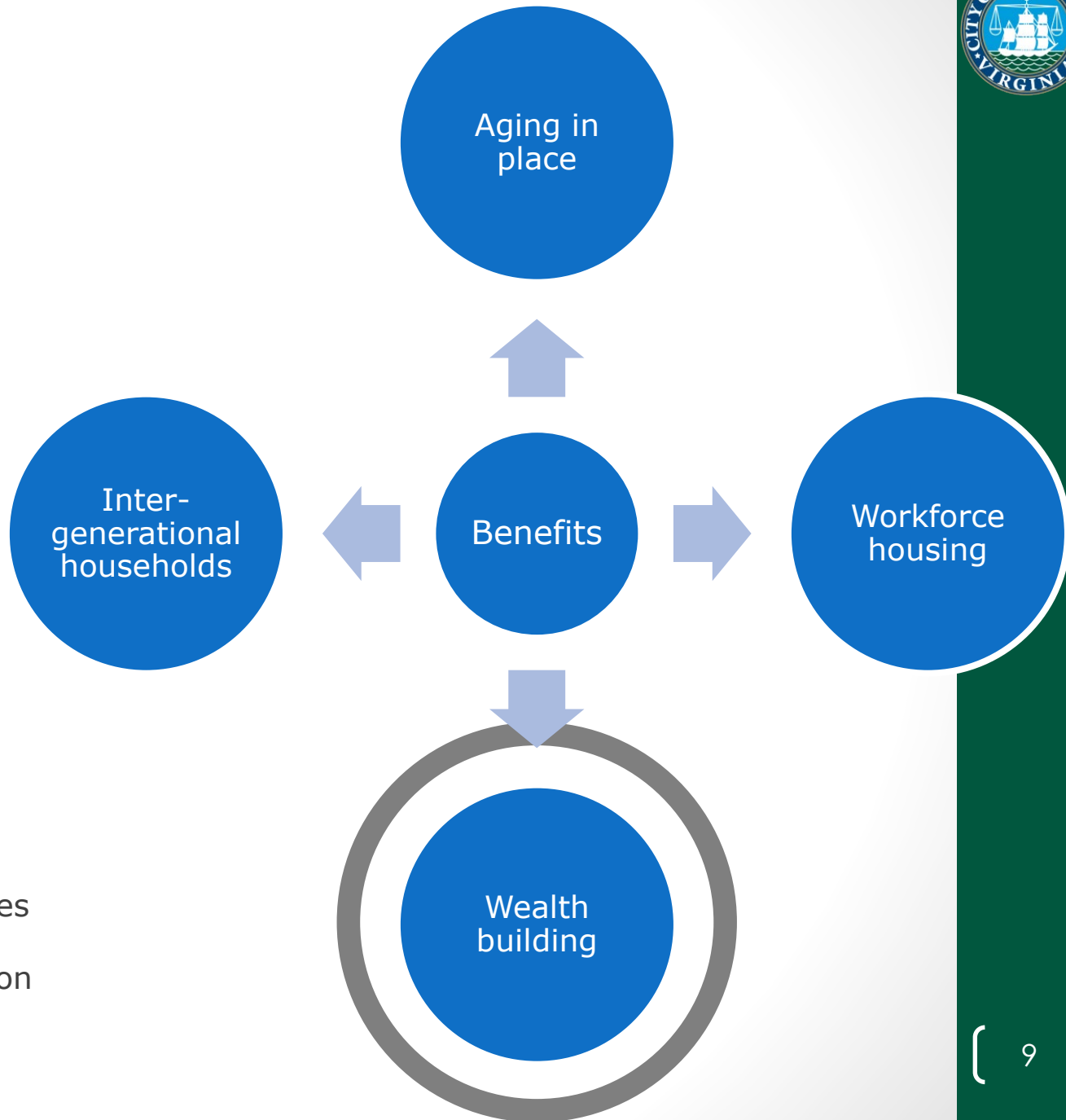
~6,132

Seniors (65 and above) living alone

- Foster opportunities for intergenerational households by providing on-site housing options for aging relatives and adult children



- Bring in supplemental income that helps first-time homebuyers and long-time Alexandrians at risk of being priced out of the city



3,650

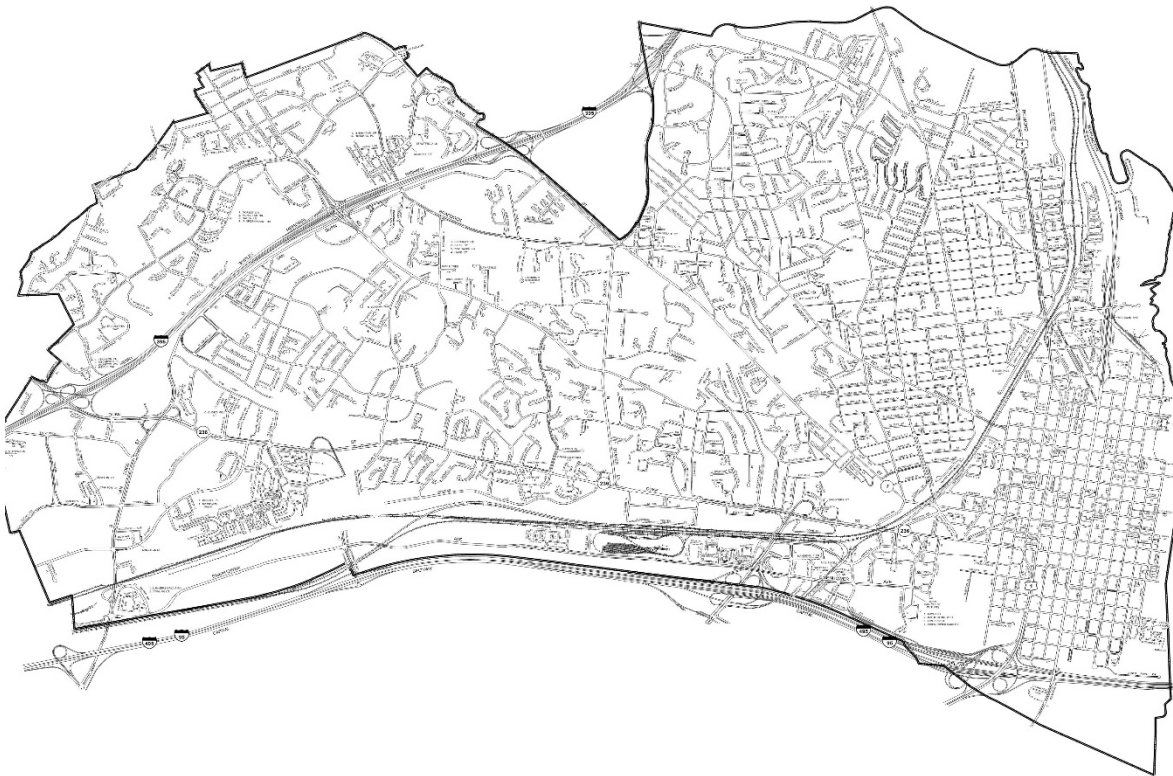
of homeowners w/incomes up to \$75,000 who spend more than 30% of income on housing



Staff Recommendations

Allow ADUs City-wide

Allow one ADU on any property developed with a single-family, two-family or townhouse dwelling.



Internal ADUs



Detached ADUs



Separate ADU Permit Required

A separate, no-fee permit administered by Planning and Zoning shall be required for ADUs.

Having a permit process for ADUs would:

- Increase predictability for applicants
- Ease implementation and enforcement of the proposed rules

Occupancy and Use Limitations

- Occupancy limited to three persons or fewer.
- Only one ADU permitted per property.
- The ADU/principal dwelling shall be under common ownership.
- Short-term rentals permitted following current City policy

Size Limitations

- Internal ADUs shall not exceed one-third of the principal dwelling's gross floor area
- Detached ADUs shall not have a footprint that exceeds one-third of the principal dwelling's footprint or the greater of the following:
 - 350 sq. ft. on lots $\leq 2,500$ sq. ft.
 - 500 sq. ft. on lots $> 2,500$ sq. ft.

Floor Area Ratio (FAR)

- Allow detached ADUs to be eligible for the same FAR exclusions currently applicable to detached garages/sheds
- Floor area eligible for exclusion would depend on the size of the property and other factors (location within historic district, dwelling type)
- Floor area eligible for exclusion within all detached structures on a property would be cumulative

Setback Requirements

- Detached ADUs must provide at least **one-foot** setbacks from side and rear lot lines
- If windows face the nearest lot lines, the setback shall be **three feet**.
- Dormers must comply with standard setback requirements

Height Limitations

Detached ADUs shall not exceed the height of the principal dwelling or 20 feet, whichever is less.

Other Considerations

- No off-street parking spaces required for ADU
- Create special exception process for ADUs

Outreach

Mar. 11: Commission on Aging briefing
Apr. 17: Intro to ADUs video presentation posted; survey released
May 13: Del Ray Citizens Association briefing
Jul. 15: Follow-up ADU video presentation posted; survey released
Aug. 18: North Ridge Citizens' Association briefing
Aug. 27: AHAAC briefing
Sep. 14: Second North Ridge Citizens' Association briefing
Sep. 21: Second Commission on Aging briefing
Oct. 1: Second AHAAC briefing
Oct. 6: City Council briefing
Oct. 9: Draft policy recommendations released; questionnaire posted
Oct. 22: Virtual community meeting
Nov. 5: Third AHAAC briefing
Nov. 6: Questionnaire closed
Nov. 23: Federation of Civic Associations meeting
Nov. 24: Second Del Ray Citizens' meeting
Dec. 1: Planning Commission briefing
Dec. 3: Fourth AHAAC briefing
Jan. 7: Fifth AHAAC briefing
Jan 12: Second City Council briefing
Jan. 13: Old Town Civic Association briefing

Planning Commission initiated and recommended approval