



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 4, 2019

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

DOCKET TITLE:

A Discussion of Regional Housing Initiatives and the Need to Increase the Production of All Housing, Including Affordable Housing, Over the Next Decade.

ISSUE: Regional initiative to increase housing production, with aspirational goals for both market rate and affordable housing over the next decade.

RECOMMENDATION: That the City Council accept the staff report and direct staff to continue to work on strategies which could result in the City working towards meeting the 2030 aspirational goals identified in the COG Regional Housing Initiatives process.

BACKGROUND: In the decade since the 2008 housing-led recession, housing production in the Washington Metropolitan Area has only reached about two-thirds of its pre-recession levels. A year ago, the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG) Board of Directors, composed of elected officials in the region, recognized that forecast housing production for the next several decades is insufficient to provide enough housing for workers for forecasted job growth, potentially placing even greater pressure on housing costs and availability and therefore limiting the region's economic competitiveness. The COG Board of Directors directed the region's Housing Directors and Planning Directors to investigate the issue and make recommendations. Overall, if job forecasts are met, there would need to be 75,000 additional housing units produced by 2030 (over current forecasts) to supply sufficient workers for those jobs.

Over the course of the past year, staff from the Office of Housing and the Department of Planning and Zoning have been collaborating with their counterparts across the region to explore both the barriers to, and the opportunities for, increased housing production in the region over the next decade or more. The Planning Directors determined that the region's comprehensive plans, master plans and small area plans already allow additional housing production above the current forecast, but that a number of barriers remain to seeing those

planned housing units constructed. The Housing Directors determined that a significant share of new units must be affordable to a range of incomes to match job growth and the anticipated incomes of existing and future worker households.

Through the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, the Housing and Planning Directors developed a methodology for setting aspirational goals for individual jurisdictions to meet the region's goal of 75,000 additional units over the decade and goals for the levels of affordability of new units. In Alexandria's case, the production goal would be to increase the pace of residential growth from about 8,400 housing units now forecast over the next decade to about 11,500. The housing affordability goal is that 75% of these 3,100 additional (net new) units be committed as affordable to incomes ranging from very low to workforce levels. This equates to about 310 units per year or about a 50% increase over the targets set in the City's adopted Housing Master Plan.

A presentation on this topic was reviewed with the Planning Commission and the public at the Commission meeting on September 3rd and with the Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee (AHAAC).

ATTACHMENT: Presentation

STAFF:

Emily A. Baker, Deputy City Manager

Karl W. Moritz, Director, Department of Planning & Zoning

Radhika Mohan, Principal Planner, Department of Planning & Zoning

Helen McIlvaine, Director, Office of Housing

Tamara Jovovic, Housing Program Manager, Office of Housing