

HOUSING ARLINGTON RESOLUTION

Adopted by the Arlington County Board on March 19, 2019

WHEREAS, Arlington County, a community that strives for diversity, inclusivity and sustainability has reached a critical juncture in its land-use planning and housing policy creation; and

WHEREAS, balancing anticipated growth with the influx of new and prospective residents and commercial tenants, Arlington will continue to address the needs of its population; and

WHEREAS, like many jurisdictions, Arlington finds itself dealing with an ongoing series of seemingly disparate issues, with solutions aimed at seemingly disparate audiences: affordable housing for the neediest populations, a lack of affordable housing for moderate income earners, new businesses transitioning into areas with high commercial vacancies, and residents concerned about the livability of neighborhoods; and

WHEREAS, housing affordability is a necessary foundation for ensuring that families and individuals are successful in other aspects of their lives – stable employment, physical and emotional health, and educational achievement; and

WHEREAS, the work of providing support to residents at 80 percent of the area median income or less continues to be critical, with housing affordability for many Arlington residents recognized as an increasing challenge; and

WHEREAS, expanded, innovative and new efforts are needed to meet the needs of low-income, special needs and elderly households beyond traditional affordable housing efforts; and

WHEREAS, housing affordability is also identified as a challenge for households earning 80 to 120 percent of the area median income, whose incomes are too high to qualify for subsidies, but not high enough to find enough affordable choices when seeking market rate homes; and

WHEREAS, efforts need to focus on strategies and tools to provide housing types and price points not readily available in the Arlington market, referred to as “missing middle;” and

WHEREAS, there is a community consensus that housing affordability is a critical component to help Arlington strengthen its economy by incentivizing a supply that can house a wide range of employees; and

WHEREAS, Arlington’s and the region’s economy is changing and continuing to add a more diverse mix of employment opportunities; and

WHEREAS, the changing economy and added employment in its transit-rich corridors puts pressure on the affordability of Arlington’s housing stock; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County has adopted an Affordable Housing Master Plan as an element of its Comprehensive Plan, which aims to have an adequate supply of affordable housing available to meet community needs, ensure that all segments of the community have access to housing and housing efforts that contribute to a sustainable community; and

WHEREAS, Arlington County will build upon decades of work with previous initiatives and its Affordable Housing Master Plan to ensure it remains a sustainable community that provides a balance that serves a diverse population, an effective mix of land uses, access to resources, affordable childcare, a stable economy, transportation options, and more;

WHEREAS, Arlington County will increase its collaboration with the full range of stakeholders at the local, regional, state and federal levels to help it generate holistic solutions to affordable and missing middle housing issues; and

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that Arlington County declares the time is now to move forward with a recalibrated vision for housing the Arlington community that takes care of its neediest while providing ample opportunity for its middle class, one grounded in equity, stability and adaptability, an initiative to be known as Housing Arlington, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that Housing Arlington will be a focused, proactive multi-year initiative combining planning and implementation tools, housing policy, financial resources and innovative public-private partnerships, and that the County Board directs the County Manager to bring forward a program description setting forth effective solutions within our reach at the April 2019 County Board Meeting.