

2022

Affordable Housing Master Plan Implementation Framework

This update to the Implementation Framework identifies actions to better achieve the Affordable Housing Master Plan's goals, objectives, and policies over the next five years.



ARLINGTON
VIRGINIA

March 2022

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Message from the County Manager

Housing that is safe, secure, and affordable has consistently been a high priority for Arlington County. This commitment stems from the County's vision to be a diverse and inclusive community. It is a commitment to our hard-working residents and speaks to our core values. The Affordable Housing Master Plan established goals, objectives and policies designed to respond to the particular housing needs of our residents. However, goals do not fulfill themselves, they require continual creativity, resources, and innovation in order to be realized.

Each year, we report on the accomplishments that we have made towards achieving the goals of the Affordable Housing Master Plan. And it is truly remarkable to look back at our accomplishments since the adoption of the Affordable Housing Master Plan and to recognize the positive impact that our actions have had on the lives of thousands of households and for the broader community. Since September 2015, we have:

- Added 3,626 committed affordable housing units: increasing our inventory by 49% in about 6 years.
- Made steady progress towards fulfilling our policy to prevent and end homelessness and achieved our target of reducing our homeless population to under 200 individuals.
- Stemmed the tide of demolitions of market rate affordable housing in Westover by adopting a Housing Conservation District and supporting the acquisition and preservation of eight small apartment buildings by the Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing.
- Provided, and continue to provide, direct rental assistance to over 2,700 households annually.
- Quickly expanded emergency rental assistance in response to the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, enabling hundreds of families to maintain housing despite severe economic hardships.
- Secured an option for future residential development of the infill areas at the Crystal House Apartments site through a public-private partnership with Amazon. The development of new units together with the preservation of existing units will result in nearly 1,200 affordable homes in this high-cost area of the County, close to Amazon's new headquarters.
- Rapidly pulled together the resources needed to preserve affordability of 1,334 housing units in the Barcroft Apartment community. This unprecedented effort combined a \$150 million dollar County loan with \$160 million from Amazon's Housing Equity Fund to enable an affordable housing provider, Jair Lynch, to acquire the property and prevent the loss of the largest market rate affordable community in the County. This acquisition also enables Jair Lynch to address immediate repairs, add amenities, make property upgrades, and take steps to improve residents' overall living environment.

None of this could have been achieved without the dedication of County staff and the many partner organizations working together to make Arlington a better home for its residents.

We have achieved a lot, but we still have a long road ahead to fully realize our affordable housing goals. This update to the AHMP Implementation Framework sets the stage for the ongoing and future work that will be needed to attain greater housing affordability in Arlington.

Sincerely,



Mark J. Schwartz
County Manager

Introduction to the 2022 Affordable Housing Master Plan Implementation Framework

The 2021 Affordable Housing Master Plan Implementation Framework provides recommendations on how existing tools could effectively implement the County's affordable housing policy and suggests new tools to be developed or studied. These recommendations are in response to the updated housing needs analysis and input received through the community engagement process as part of the five-year review of the Affordable Housing Master Plan. This framework provides guidance from the County Manager to County staff for developing and overseeing specific policies and programs to meet the County's affordable housing needs. Actual implementation will be dependent on available financial and staffing resources as incorporated into annual workplans.

This is the first update to the Affordable Housing Master Plan Implementation Framework that was developed at the time of adoption of the Affordable Housing Master Plan. The first framework catalogued existing tools that furthered the policies of the master plan and provided recommendations for potential modifications to those tools. The framework also identified potential tools to further contribute towards realizing the master plan's goals and objectives.

This current draft framework focuses on recommendations both for existing programs and new efforts. Some are administrative in nature, while others will require future County Board actions. The recommendations are grouped in three categories;

- committed affordable housing production, preservation, financing and operation;
- land use policy and tools; and
- housing services and assistance.

An implementation schedule summarizes the recommendations and provides a likely timeframe for implementation.

An inventory of the current and continuing implementation tools is included which details the other ongoing programs and tools that contribute towards realizing the goals, objectives and policies of the Affordable Housing Master Plan. While this Framework is intended to be comprehensive, it does not preclude the exploration of other tools that may be appropriate for achieving Arlington's affordable housing goals.

And lastly, a list of suggestions that were received during the Affordable Housing Master Plan review that have been suggested, considered, but are not among the implementation actions recommended is also included

This framework should guide the preparation of future workplans, including budget requests where applicable in order to carry out activities in those work plans. However, it does not constitute a commitment of funding for these activities, which will be considered as part of the yearly budget process.

Overview of the AHMP review

The [Affordable Housing Master Plan](#), which had its five-year anniversary in September 2020, states that the Plan will be reviewed “at least once every five years to account for changing conditions within and beyond the County.” This review has been carried out under Housing Arlington, an initiative launched in 2019 aimed at expanding housing supply and affordability in the County. The AHMP review consists of three components: an update to the housing needs analysis; a five-year report; and an updated Affordable Housing Master Plan Implementation Framework.

Updated Housing Needs Analysis

The County commissioned the Fuller Institute at George Mason University to produce [the Housing Needs Analysis](#). The report was published in January 2021 and was followed by [online events](#) with Jeannette Chapman, the report’s author. The Updated Housing Needs Analysis describes the characteristics of Arlington County’s population and analyzes demographic, economic, and housing market trends between 2012 and 2018 (the most current data available at the time the report was prepared). The analysis also examines current housing affordability and housing needs in the County, identifies where current gaps between needs and supply exist, and forecasts housing demand to 2045 based on the most recent population and jobs patterns.

Some of the key findings of the report include:

- Population and household trends
 - The number of adults aged 65 and older increased 25.1%, reflecting the aging of the Baby Boom population.
 - The number of children increased 18.7%, even though the number of families with children was changed little during this period.
 - The number of young adults (ages 25 to 35 years old) decreased 11.6%.
 - The number of Hispanic residents in the County increased 9.2% and was the most significant source of population growth by race and ethnicity.
- Housing cost burden findings
 - Nearly two-fifths (38.6%) of all renters paid more than 30 percent of their monthly income on rent and were housing cost burdened, including:
 - 83.1% of all renter households earning less than 80% of Area Median Income;
 - 74.7% of single-person households aged 65 or older;
 - 58.1% of householders with a disability;
 - 57.6% of single-parent households;
 - 52.4% of Black or African American households; and
 - 50.2% Hispanic households.
- Housing supply gaps
 - There were 8,077 renter households with incomes below 30% of the area median income and 1,585 rental units affordable within this income band resulting in a deficit of 6,492 units in order to affordably meet this housing need.
 - Similarly, for the 5,210 households with incomes between 30% and 49% of the area median income, there were only 2,197 rental units affordable within that income range, resulting in a deficit of 3,013 units.

- Forecast of housing demand and population from 2015 through 2045
 - The average annual population growth rate is projected to be 1%, with gains modestly stronger during the first decade of the forecast period, with an overall increase in population of 36.7%.
 - As a result of the faster increase in lower income households, overall, the share of households earning above 120% of AMI is projected to decline from 52.0% in 2015 to 49.1% in 2045.
 - The segment of the population forecasted with the highest growth rate is that of households 85 years of age and older, which is anticipated to grow by 80.8%, from 1,800 households in 2015 to 3,250 by 2040.

Affordable Housing Master Plan Five Year Report

This [report](#) looks at the progress made towards achieving the County’s goals and objectives as established in the Affordable Housing Master Plan. The report differs from previous AHMP reports in that it looks at the cumulative achievements made in the five years since the AHMP adoption, rather than focusing on a single fiscal year. Highlights of the implementation actions and results related to each objective are detailed along with future actions. The last section of the report provides a status update on the 54 tools identified in the 2015 Affordable Housing Implementation Framework. A complete set of indicators accompanies the report, with detailed metrics going back to 2010.

Some highlights from the report which covered the five-year period from July 1, 2016 through June 30, 2020 are;

- The County realized a net increase of 1,433 committed affordable housing units;
- Affordability terms were extended on 845 units of committed affordable housing;
- 18 affordable homeownership units were added to the portfolio;
- The number of homeless individuals was reduced to less than the goal of 200 persons;
- 79 Permanent Supportive Housing units were added;
- The first solar energy installation in a committed affordable housing development occurred in 2020; and
- 100% of County loans for committed affordable housing projects were in compliance with their financial terms and obligations.

Public and Community Engagement

In January, to kick off the review, three online community events were held. Two of these featured Jeannette Chapman, the author of the updated Housing Needs Analysis, and provided an opportunity for community members to ask questions regarding the analysis. The third event covered the Five-Year Report, focusing on the County’s efforts and achievements toward meeting the goals and objectives of the Affordable Housing Master Plan.

An online feedback form was active from March 10 through March 31. During that time, 175 people provided comments on how the County could effectively achieve the goals and objectives of the Affordable Housing Master Plan, as well as views on certain policy issues that have generated the most interest/discussion over the last five years. A [summary of the online feedback](#) was reviewed with the Housing Commission’s Tools and Trends committee.

The Housing Commission was tasked with coordinating with County staff on the review. To this end, the Housing Commission’s Tools and Trends committee held seven open public meetings to review the AHMP. These meetings were held virtually from March-July 2021. Each meeting focused on a specific topic, focusing on the policy, implementation measures and the quantifiable results. All meetings were open to the public, who were encouraged to provide comments and share their opinions.

Tools and Trends Subcommittee Meetings and Topics

December 17	AHMP Review Kick-off
March 18	Rental Supply Objective and Policies
March 30	Rental Supply Implementation Tools
April 15	Homeownership and Fair Housing
May 10	Access Policy and Implementation Tools
May 25	Aging and Disability
June 22	Sustainability
July 19	Online Feedback Summary

County staff also participated in meetings with the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, Arlington Civic Federation, NAACP, BU-GATA (conducted in Spanish), Disability Advisory Commission, Tenant Landlord Commission, and the Climate Change, Energy, and Environment Commission.

Affordable Housing and Equity

Housing affordability and accessibility directly contribute to the County’s commitment to racial equity by enabling a wide range of households to reside in Arlington, especially households with limited means and persons with special needs. While accurate information regarding who benefits from committed affordable housing is not available, we do know that there is a higher share of BIPOC (Black, Indigenous and People of Color) rental households with incomes under 60% of the area median income (population served through committed affordable housing) compared to higher income levels and that this share increases at lower income levels.

A foundational principle of the Affordable Housing Master Plan is that housing affordability is essential to achieving Arlington’s vision to be a diverse and inclusive community. The County Board’s 2019 [Equity Resolution](#) further detailed the County’s commitment to advancing racial equity through its actions and activities. In response to this resolution [Realizing Arlington’s Commitment to Equity \(RACE\)](#) is being incorporated into all County activities. RACE seeks to foster an equitable Arlington where all are valued, educated, healthy and safe regardless of race.

Advancing racial equity has been an important part of formulating the recommendations in this Implementation Framework. As these recommendations are implemented, an equity lens will be applied to discern who benefits; who is burdened; who is missing; how do we know, and what do we do. Staff will use the Racial Equity Process Guide (currently under development) in developing or redesigning programs. Using this process will aid in defining desired results and clarifying underlying assumptions; identifying and using data to aid in program design and evaluation; and involving those most impacted in the process.

Affordable Housing Implementation Recommendations

Recommendations Regarding the Production, Preservation, Financing and Operation of Committed Affordable Housing

The production and preservation of committed affordable housing is fundamental to achieving the County's goals and objectives. The primary means by which affordable housing is produced in Arlington is through County financing. Committed affordable housing units are also achieved through various land use policies and tools.

When the County makes loans to developers for the production or preservation of affordable housing, it stimulates private investment. County loans provide only a fraction of the actual costs for these developments. Loans from private banks and money from private investment partners contribute an even greater share to the cost of producing affordable housing. Typically, County loans account for less than a quarter of the total development cost.

Committed affordable housing development aligns with other County goals that advance equity, support transportation investments, and improve environmental outcomes. The following recommendations will help the County better achieve the goals, objectives and policies of the Affordable Housing Master Plan through the production, preservation, financing and operation of committed affordable housing. Notably, a portion of the committed affordable housing that is developed is designated for Permanent Supportive Housing (see page 24) which is an important resource towards the objective of preventing and ending homelessness.

What is Committed Affordable Housing?

Committed Affordable Housing or CAFs are apartments guaranteed by agreement with federal, state, or County government, or through other mechanisms, to remain affordable to low- and moderate-income households for a specified period of time, generally 30 to 60 years. Rents in most cases are affordable to households earning 60% or less of the area median income, although some CAFs have rents affordable to households earning up to 80% AMI.

What is Area Median Income (AMI)?

The income at which half of the families of a particular household size have incomes higher and half have incomes lower in a defined area. The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) estimated the median family income for a family of four for the Washington Metropolitan Area for 2021 was \$129,000.

Financial Resources for Affordable Housing

To realize the AHMP objective to "Produce and preserve a sufficient supply of affordable rental housing to meet current and future needs," an additional 8,650 CAFs would be needed over the next nineteen years. Based on recent trends, about 800 of those units would likely be produced through land use mechanisms which allow for additional density. To produce the remaining 7,850 CAFs, the County would likely need to finance around 440 new units a year for the next 19 years. Currently the cost per unit for County-funded CAF projects is between \$85,000 and \$112,500 per unit. The estimated resources to fund that level of production would be between \$37.4 and \$49.5 million annually. For reference, the average annual funding for the County Loan Fund from 2016 through 2020 was \$26.7 million.

The above estimate is based on the number of CAF and market rate affordable units affordable up to 60% of the area median income as of June 30, 2021. Market changes affecting the rents of market rate affordable housing could increase this estimate. In addition, efforts to permanently preserve the affordability of market rate affordable housing will require additional funding beyond this base estimate.

Recommendations:

- Conduct an assessment of financing affordable housing through general obligation bonds, and the potential as a possible future financing mechanism. The assessment will take into account the County’s existing policies related to bonding and evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of using general obligation bonds as a funding source for affordable housing. The report will be shared with the Housing Commission to increase awareness around issues related to bond financing and allow for a public discussion on the topic. This recommendation does not commit the County to issuing general obligation bonds for housing.
- *Assess the Affordable Housing Ordinance and consider recalibrating the formula for cash contributions to be equivalent to the other options for compliance (on-site units).*
- *Explore mechanisms to reduce County fees and related infrastructure costs for 100% affordable developments.*

Deeper Affordability of Affordable Housing

The objective is to “Produce and preserve a sufficient supply of affordable rental housing to meet current and future needs” and its associated target focus on housing for households with incomes at or below 60% of the area median income. The Affordable Housing Master Plan has a policy to “Incentivize affordability below 60% AMI in committed affordable rental projects,” as more than half of the affordable housing need is for extremely low-income households (with incomes under 30% of the area median income).

The unaffordability of committed affordable housing for the lowest-income renters was a key takeaway from various meetings with low-income residents (Community Progress Network, BU-GATA, ACE Collaborative). The updated Housing Needs Analysis also confirmed the mismatch between housing needs and the housing supply: based on the analysis of American Community Survey microdata, there is a *deficit* of 6,492 units affordable to households with incomes below 30% of the area median income, while there is an *excess* of 265 rental units affordable at 60% AMI.

		Renter Households	Rental Units	Surplus/(Deficit) of units by affordability
Income and Affordability Level	Up to 30% AMI	8,077	1,585	(6,492)
	30% to 50% AMI	5,210	2,197	(3,013)
	50% to 60% AMI	3,332	3,597	265
	60% to 80% AMI	6,075	13,655	7,580
	Above 80% AMI	36,395	38,055	1,660

Source: 2016-2018 American Community Survey (microdata)

Arlington has long provided additional rental assistance to extremely low-income households (households that earn 30% or less of the area median income) through the locally funded Housing

Grants program, as well as the federal Housing Choice Voucher program. Through these two programs, 2,886 households received direct rental assistance in FY2021. Over 90% of the households assisted through these programs also live in committed affordable housing. These additional subsidies pay the difference between the actual rent of affordable housing (typically restricted to renters at or below 60% of area median income) and what the household can afford. The Housing Grants program limits eligibility to persons over 65 years of age, persons who are disabled, and working families with children.

The Housing Grants program will continue to explore expanding eligibility (as recommended later in this document). Meeting the needs of households at this income level will require actions both on the supply side (deeply affordable committed affordable housing) and the demand side (direct rental assistance).

Recommendations:

- *Provide incentives for the inclusion of extremely affordable housing units in projects financed by the County through the NOFA process.*
- *When projects seek refinancing through the County, incorporate adjustments to the affordability covenants to increase the share of units dedicated to lower affordability levels when feasible.*
- *Engage with owners of existing CAFs to explore collaborative approaches to increasing the share of units dedicated to lower affordability levels.*

Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) for AHIF and County Loan Funds

When funds allow, Arlington issues a Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) to solicit applications for the development of affordable housing with AHIF and other County Loan funds. The NOFA process is the principal means for selecting affordable housing developments for County financing. This process allows County staff to evaluate multiple proposals on a standard set of guidelines to determine responsiveness to established County policy goals, organizational capacity and readiness, and financial considerations. These guidelines provide a means for communicating the County's policy priorities and incentivizing applicants to respond to these priorities through project proposals.

The guidelines for the NOFA are re-evaluated prior to each round to ensure County policy goals are reflected, the recommendations below reflect new and changing priorities, based on this AHMP review.

Recommendations:

- *Incentivize the inclusion of units with deeper affordability at 40% and 30% AMI;*
- *Include the modified racially and ethnically concentrated areas of poverty (as defined in the [2019 Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing](#)), either as a component of geographic distribution category or a separate category;*
- *Consider incentives in alignment with the Community Energy Plan for projects with carbon free systems (electric or other) and appliances in existing.*
- *Incorporate criteria that promote biophilic design principles; and*
- *Consider equity in access to open spaces, parks, and natural areas.*

Existing Committed Affordable Housing Operations

All of the committed affordable housing in the County is owned and operated by private entities. While the County is not directly responsible for the operations of committed affordable housing, the County has vested interests in ensuring the quality of the housing stock, including healthy and safe housing conditions. The Affordable Housing Master Plan established the County's objective to ensure that all housing is safe and code compliant. The plan places additional emphasis as it relates to committed affordable housing: "Using the leverage of County investments, the County will ensure that all CAFs are code compliant and that affordable housing units meet higher standards for quality."

Recommendations:

- *Perform a Capital Needs Assessment for the existing CAF portfolio to ascertain short and longer-term capital needs in these communities and develop a plan for addressing anticipated needed property improvements.*
- *Increase physical inspections of CAF units and enhance Housing Quality Standards to enforce property conditions more broadly, coordinating with code enforcement and the Department of Human Services.*
- *Review compliance policies, procedures and practices and work with other jurisdictions to recommend a model that ensures adequate oversight of the County's affordable housing portfolio.*
- *Identify resources needed to ensure adequate oversight and inspection resources.*
- *Ensure that construction scope addresses major infrastructure/systems issues at County-financed properties at the time of acquisition or rehab/renovation.*
- *Apply additional oversight language in AHIF agreements and strengthen requirements in loan documents when possible for owners to support tenant councils and other tenant supports.*
- *For new projects, apply language in AHIF agreements that properties must perform a capital needs assessment at a specified frequency, to be defined.*

Committed Affordable Housing Resident Demographic Data

The County does not currently have a reliable mechanism for collecting demographic information on residents of committed affordable housing beyond household income. In order to better understand who is being served by committed affordable housing, the County will need to engage with owners of committed affordable housing to develop an effective mechanism(s) for collecting demographic data on CAF residents, including age, race, ethnicity, gender, and household size. This information is essential to evaluate the County's affordable housing efforts using an equity lens.

Recommendation:

- *Develop a plan and mechanisms for collecting reliable demographic data on residents of committed affordable housing.*

Colocation of Committed Affordable Housing with County Facilities

The Affordable Housing Master Plan established the County policy to “Consider affordable housing needs and goals when planning for major capital investment in new or redeveloping existing major community facilities, taking into account the neighborhood context.” Since its adoption, no affordable housing has been incorporated into community facilities. This policy lacks an effective and transparent implementation mechanism, although staff has begun to explore options through Housing Arlington’s Institutional Partnerships Initiative.

Recommendations:

- *Consider mixed-use development, incorporating affordable housing as a potential compatible use, as part of capital improvement (facilities) planning.*
- *Develop internal administrative procedures to incorporate affordable housing considerations into capital improvement planning.*
- *Explore developing additional mechanisms for colocation of affordable housing with County facilities through the Housing Arlington Institutional Partnerships Initiative.*

Equal Amenities in Accessible Units in New Committed Affordable Housing Developments

Accessible units should not be qualitatively different from standard units in the same building. Any in-unit amenity provided to tenants, such as in-unit laundry, shall be provided in accessible units and these amenities shall also comply with accessibility standards.

Recommendation:

- *Ensure that all accessible units in future committed affordable housing developments provide the same features as standard units.*

Conversion to all Carbon Free Systems in Existing Committed Affordable Housing buildings.

The Community Energy Plan was updated in 2019 and includes a principal goal to achieve Carbon Neutrality by 2050. Citing that buildings account for over 60 percent of energy consumption in Arlington, the plan establishes a goal to “increase the energy and operational efficiency of all buildings.”

The existing inventory of committed affordable housing includes many older apartment buildings that likely have older and less efficient HVAC systems that will need to be replaced before 2050. The Community Energy Plan addresses this, noting that “The ideal time to install energy efficiency upgrades is when a building is being renovated. Typically, 2-4% of the nation’s building stock is renovated each year; and current data suggests that in Arlington the rate may be even higher. Thus, by 2050 all or most of Arlington’s existing residential and non-residential buildings will likely have been either renovated or demolished.”

Recommendations:

- *Encourage, support and incentivize conversion to carbon free systems (electric or other) and appliances in existing CAF buildings.*
- *Research potential grant funding for clean energy conversions.*

Land Use Policy and Tools

The County has enacted a set of regulations and incentives aimed at increasing the supply of housing and the provision of more affordable housing, such as the Bonus Density and Accessory Dwelling Zoning Ordinance amendments in 2019. These policies leverage the private investments made in new residential, commercial, and mixed-use development to create or fund the creation or preservation of affordable units and allow for more housing diversity.

Multifamily Reinvestment Study – In Process

As part of Housing Arlington’s Land Use Tools initiative, the Multifamily Reinvestment Study seeks ways to stem the loss of market-rate affordable housing that occurs in multifamily apartment communities when property owners rehabilitate, redevelop, or add new units. The study also addresses the need to support increased housing development countywide and is exploring how new land use policy and zoning tools might help meet these goals.

Expanding Housing Choice: Missing Middle Housing Study – In Process

The Missing Middle Housing Study is directly related to the Master Plan policy to “Explore flexibility in housing types and residential uses in single-family neighborhoods.” The study is exploring how new housing types could help address Arlington’s shortfall in housing supply and gaps in housing choices. The study began in Fall 2020 and is envisioned in three phases. Anticipated outcomes include a shared understanding of the problem; options for County Board consideration; policy/regulation changes to enable new housing types; and identification of issues for further study. The study is one component of the Housing Arlington Land Use Tools Initiative.

Plan Langston Boulevard – In Process

Plan Langston Boulevard is a multi-year planning study that began in 2019. The purpose of this study is to develop an area plan for the Langston Boulevard corridor to guide long term public and private investment. The plan will provide a general vision with goals, objectives and recommendations for land use, building height and form, general open space locations, and transportation/connectivity improvements for the corridor.

As a means to guide the County’s development of affordable housing to ensure better geographic distribution throughout the County, the Affordable Housing Master Plan included a forecast of affordable housing for the year 2040. This forecast, set a goal of 2,500 affordable units for the Langston Boulevard area. Plan Langston Boulevard will create the policy environment needed to achieve the Affordable Housing Master Plan’s vision.

Affordable Housing Ordinance Review

The County’s Affordable Housing Ordinance provides four means of meeting affordable housing requirements for a site plan: on-site units; off-site units in proximity to the site; off-site units; and cash contribution. Providing multiple options is intended to provide the developer with flexibility in meeting the ordinance requirement, with each option approximately equal in value. In practice, over the last 15 years, most developers have chosen the cash contribution. Out of the 56 residential site plan projects since the ordinance was adopted (excluding AHIF funded projects), only 30 on-site committed affordable units have been achieved as a result. Although there may be many reasons for this preference, this may

indicate that the amount required as a cash contribution is not in alignment with the other options for onsite units.

Recommendation:

- *Conduct an analysis of the Affordable Housing Ordinance provisions to determine how it has performed over time, and whether to update the formula used for the affordable housing contribution in light of current conditions. If the results of the analysis find that an update is warranted, develop recommendations for adjustments to the Affordable Housing Ordinance and related sections of the Code of Virginia.*

Definition of “Family” in the Zoning Ordinance

The Affordable Housing Master Plan established County policy to “Allow for flexibility in the definitions of family and household for occupancy purposes.” The plan further stated:

“In response to the changing composition of families and households, the County will consider changes to the Zoning Ordinance to allow for a broader definition of family and household for occupancy purposes. These changes will allow for nontraditional families, extended families and unrelated individuals (including older adults and persons with disabilities) to live together to reduce their housing costs and, in some cases, more efficiently access services.”

The County’s draft Analysis of Impediments to Fair Housing also identifies limited household size as a barrier to fair housing in Arlington. No action has been taken since the adoption of the AHMP to expand allowed occupancy to more than four unrelated individuals.

Recommendation:

- *Initiate a zoning study to examine alternatives to the current definition of “family” in the Zoning Ordinance and to develop an appropriate Zoning Ordinance amendment.*

Affordability of Senior Housing and Elder Care

The Housing Needs Analysis found that 75% of single-person households aged 65 or older are housing cost burdened, and the forecast indicated that households headed by persons aged 85 and older are anticipated to increase by 81%. These data points highlight the increasing needs for housing affordability for older households. While older adults are welcome in all committed affordable housing, developments targeted specifically to seniors could focus greater attention on their needs. The unique aspects of providing senior housing, which can range from independent living to assisted living and nursing homes, go beyond the provision of shelter and incorporate varying levels of services and care. The Arlington County Zoning Ordinance does not currently differentiate this type of development in terms of setting an affordable housing requirement, in contrast to other forms of development.

Recommendation:

- *Initiate a study to examine how an affordability requirement could be structured within the Arlington County Zoning Ordinance for senior housing projects approved via site plan, and possibly Columbia Pike Form Based Code use permits. The focus will be on meeting the affordability requirement through on-site units/beds, as this may be the best way to ensure that low-income seniors benefit.*

Housing Services and Assistance

Housing Grants

The Housing Grant program is a locally funded rental subsidy program that covers part of the rent for low-income adults living in private rental housing. Participating households pay a portion of their monthly income towards rent with the remainder subsidized by the County's grant. The Housing Grant program issues grants to very low-income households with members who are age 65 or older, or who are permanently and totally disabled, or working families with children.

As noted previously, the vast majority of the County's committed affordable housing stock has affordability restrictions set at 60% of the area median income. Households with extremely low incomes (below 30% of the area median income) cannot afford to rent these units without additional subsidy. The updated Housing Needs Analysis found that there were 8,077 renter households in Arlington with incomes below 30% of the area median income, while the Housing Grants program roughly serves up to 1,400 households annually. The limiting factor for the program is eligibility under the three defined target populations and the maximum allowable rent under the program.

Recommendations:

- *Conduct a periodic review of the Housing Grants program to identify the program's policy goals effectiveness in meeting the housing needs of disabled, senior, and extremely low-income households, and to develop possible program adjustments. This initial review will be undertaken in FY 2023.*

Housing Choice Voucher Program

The Housing Choice Voucher program is a federally funded rental subsidy program that helps low-income county and non-county residents at or below 50% Area Median Income obtain safe, decent, and affordable housing in the private rental market. Participating households pay a portion of their monthly income, if any, towards rent with the remainder subsidized by the federal subsidy. Arlington County, recognized as a Public Housing Authority, locally administers the Housing Choice Voucher Program.

The Housing Choice Voucher program serves roughly 1,500 households annually. A waiting list for Housing Choice Vouchers typically accompanies the program due to high demand and a voucher holder's flexibility to move, or port, throughout the U.S with their subsidy. The program's waiting list has been closed for new applicants since 2012 where over 5,000 applications were accepted and continue to be eligible for a voucher upon turn over. The program continues to diversify its allocation of vouchers through securing additional specialized vouchers targeted to vulnerable subpopulations. Within the last two years, the program has received specialized vouchers for immediate deployment. These subpopulations include as homeless/at-risk of homeless, disabled, and veteran households.

Recommendation:

- *Deploy 36 federally issued Emergency Housing Vouchers to stabilize highly vulnerable populations through rental assistance as stipulated by the American Rescue Plan Act. These vouchers are targeted to (1) homeless, (2) at risk of homelessness, (3) fleeing or attempting to flee domestic*

violence, dating violence, sexual assault, stalking, or human trafficking, or (4) recently homeless households.

- *Fulfill 52 Mainstream Vouchers to Arlington County to serve non-elderly persons with disabilities who are transitioning out of institutional or other segregated settings, at risk of institutionalization, homeless, or at risk of becoming homeless.*
- *Explore the immediate timeline of reopening the Housing Choice Voucher's primary waiting list in order to solicit new income-eligible households seeking rental subsidy supports.*

State Rental Assistance Program (SRAP) for IDD

The [State Rental Assistance Program \(SRAP\)](#) serves individuals with developmental disabilities in the Settlement Agreement population who want to live in their own rental housing. The program is designed to provide rental assistance to single person families that meet the program eligibility criteria so they have the means to lease private market rental housing that meets their needs. Accessing this state resource will help reduce costs to local programs.

Recommendation:

- *Explore the possibility of entering into a Memorandum of Agreement with the state's Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services to administer the State Rental Assistance Program in Arlington County.*

Homeless Services/Continuum of Care:

Arlington County's Continuum of Care (CoC) has a clear mission to sustain an integrated, community-based support system which helps households at risk of homelessness keep their housing and assist any household that does become homeless in regaining stable housing. The CoC's mission is supported by a shared community responsibility that includes collaborative planning, an alignment of stakeholders and resources essential to Arlington County's Action Plan on Ending Homelessness. Through the CoC, specialized street outreach efforts are used identify persons experiencing street homelessness and those residing in places not meant for human habitation, offering ongoing behavioral health and case management services for those who may not engage with traditional shelter services.

Amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, Arlington County's CoC remained open and operational throughout the 2021 fiscal year. As measured by our annual Point-in-Time (PIT) Count, the total number of people experiencing homelessness (including those living in shelters) reached the lowest levels seen over the past 11 years; an overall 68% reduction in homelessness. The focus of Transitional Housing, Rapid Re-Housing, and Permanent Supportive Housing are to assist people in attaining and maintaining permanent housing. The Arlington County CoC connects people to housing interventions that best match their needs and preserve people's choices and preferences. The demand for housing and flexible rental subsidies continues to outpace the resources of the CoC. While the majority of people experiencing homelessness are able to attain and maintain housing, flexible funding resources remains a key ingredient towards ending homelessness.

Arlington County's commitment to racial equity has been reaffirmed by its CoC. Nearly 65% of all persons provided emergency shelter in Arlington County were identified as African-American. As a point of comparison, 9% of Arlington's total population are African-American. This disparity is a pervasive national trend and is cause for us to look at the root causes of housing instability, vulnerability for homelessness,

and barriers for persons of color. Strategic efforts are underway to find solutions to address racial disparities within all of Arlington County's shelters that specifically impact African-American, multi-racial, and LatinX households experiencing homelessness.

Recommendation:

- Fulfill Arlington County's CoC participation in a year long, systems racial equity assessment and planning initiative sponsored by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and facilitated by C4 Innovations consulting firm.
- Continue to leverage state, federal and philanthropic resources for Arlington County's CoC in alignment with its strategic plan.

Group Homes for Residents with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Several non-profit agencies operate group homes in Arlington County. Residential staff work in all of them, but the number of staff present, and the number of hours during the day and night when staff work varies. The level of staffing is determined by the abilities of the persons living in the home. Supervision, training and assistance are also provided under an Individual Support Plan within a group home. The number of individuals with developmental disabilities living in each home varies from four to seven. Non-profit agencies have contracts with Arlington County to provide 24-hour staffing.

Recommendations:

- *Complete the redevelopment of the group home on South Irving Street as approved through the Capital Improvement Plan.*
- *Provide for operational costs for maintenance of the South Irving Street home.*
- *Ensure that the new home is energy efficient with excellent indoor air quality and complies with standard for Net Zero Energy.*

Tenant Services and Support

Renters make up a majority of Arlington households, yet many don't know or fully understand their rights and responsibilities. Clear communication between tenants and landlords is important to ensure a healthy housing environment. There is an inherent power imbalance in the tenant-landlord relationship which can impede communication, language and cultural differences can add additional barriers for effective communication. Tenant services help tenants understand their rights and responsibilities and can provide another conduit for tenant concerns to be brought to the attention of property owners.

Recommendations:

- *Develop tenant landlord information and resources that are user-friendly and easy to find.*
- *Increase access to conflict resolution resources for tenants and landlords.*
- *Promote the Tenant Landlord Commission as a forum for tenants and landlords to conciliate and provide advice on grievances and provide training for commissioners in both technical (Virginia Residential Landlord Tenant Act, fair housing law, etc.) and non-technical (conflict resolution, meeting facilitation, etc.) areas.*

- *Provide training to staff in various departments who interact directly with tenants on both technical (VRLTA, fair housing, etc.) and non-technical (customer service, conflict resolution, etc.) subjects.*
- *Solicit periodic feedback from residents of committed affordable housing residents to ensure that policies and programs are responsive to resident needs.*

Real Estate Tax Relief Program

The Real Estate Tax Relief Program provides an exemption and/or deferral of real estate taxes for qualified Arlington homeowners age 65 and older, as well as certain totally and permanently disabled homeowners who meet income, asset and other eligibility requirements. Roughly 900 households receive full or partial exemptions or deferrals annually through the Real Estate Tax Relief Program. Foregone property tax revenue from this program is significant and could increase with an aging population.

Recommendation:

- *Periodically reevaluate the Real Estate Tax Relief program in regards to deferrals versus exemptions, asset and income limits, owner’s housing cost, and property value.*

Renter Accessibility Modification

The Fair Housing Act allows the person with a disability to make reasonable modifications which contribute towards the full enjoyment of the premises. Landlords are not required to make these modifications if it creates an economic burden, but they must allow the reasonable modifications at the expense of the tenant. Low- and moderate-income renters with disabilities often do not have the resources to pay for these modifications.

Recommendation:

- *Develop a Rental Accessibility Modification Program and identify funding to provide technical assistance and grants to assist low- and moderate-income renters with physical or sensory disabilities to complete accessibility modifications to their primary residences.*

Affordable Homeownership Study

Homeownership has been an effective means of wealth building for households, and for many represent their highest value investment. Due to the high cost of housing in Arlington, entry into homeownership is a high hurdle for many moderate and even middle-income households. The County supports homebuyer education, promotes state programs for first-time homebuyers, provides financial assistance through the Moderate-Income Purchase Assistance Program (MIPAP), and requires income-restricted Affordable Dwelling Units to be incorporated into condominium projects. Despite these efforts, the lack of affordable homeownership options is an ongoing challenge facing the County. In addition, low- and moderate-income homeowners can struggle with ongoing costs, such as repairs, maintenance and condo fees.

The AHMP addresses these challenges via the objective to “Produce and preserve a sufficient supply of affordable ownership housing to meet future needs,” and also specifically outlines a policy to assist the growing senior population, many of whom are homeowners: “Provide support so that older adults can

age in place or age in community through a combination of affordable and accessible housing with linkages to services.”

Homeownership is one way to address the racial wealth gap; as such, homeownership programs are one of the tools that can contribute towards advancing the County’s commitment to advancing racial equity through its policies, programs and activities.

Recommendations:

- *Develop a new overarching and integrative approach to homeownership program starting with defining a clear problem statement and goals. The homeownership program should serve as a continuum of program delivery intended to educate, guide and assist moderate-income Arlingtonians along the path to sustained homeownership and help the County meet its equity goals. As part of this new overarching homeownership program;*
 - *Consider developing a program to provide financial and technical support to low- and moderate-income homeowners for small repairs, estate planning, taxes, aging in place, and emergency relief.*
 - *Consider developing a pilot homebuyer training program for a small targeted group providing additional services, such as employment and career counseling and credit remediation, to both reduce barriers to purchase and to ensure long-term success.*
 - *Continue the Housing Arlington Condominium Initiative to provide outreach, education and technical assistance to low- and moderate-income condo owners in areas such as organizational capacity, maintenance and financing.*
 - *Conduct a review of the Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) portfolio to assess the sustainability and viability of that housing stock and to identify whether additional support to these homeowners is needed.*

Fair Housing Testing

The County’s Office of Human Rights conducts a fair housing test every two years. Fair housing testing is a method of comparing whether and how two persons of different protected classes are treated by a housing provider under similar circumstances, all other factors being held constant. The County’s’ fair housing tests have focused on race and national origin. However, most housing discrimination complaints filed with HUD in recent years have been based on disability status.

Recommendation:

- *Test for housing discrimination based on disability status in at least one of the fair housing tests in the next five years.*
- *Continue tests for housing discrimination based on race and national origin.*

Human Rights Ordinance

Virginia expanded the protections under the [Virginia Fair Housing Law](#) to include source of funds in 2020. "Source of funds" means any source that lawfully provides funds to or on behalf of a renter or buyer of housing, including any assistance, benefit, or subsidy program, whether such program is administered by a governmental or nongovernmental entity. The addition of the "source of funds" designation is important as it provides greater opportunities for households receiving assistance to choose where they live. In 2021, 99% of households receiving Housing Choice Vouchers lived in Committed Affordable Housing, this may be attributable in part to the reluctance of private landlords to accept Housing Choice Vouchers.

The [Human Rights Ordinance](#) is the local law that provides protections from housing discrimination. Amending the Human Rights Ordinance to include protections based on "source of funds" would harmonize the local ordinance with state law and signal a commitment at the local level to remove this potential discriminatory barrier to housing. The inclusion of this provision would allow affected persons to seek enforcement through the [Arlington Office of Human Rights](#) or through the [Virginia Office of Fair Housing](#).

Recommendation:

- *Amend the County's Human Rights Ordinance to include "source of funds" in alignment with Virginia's Fair Housing law.*

Implementation Schedule

The table below provides a general schedule for implementing the various recommendations included in the Implementation Framework, actual implementation will be dependent on available financial and staffing resources as incorporated into annual workplans.

Production, Preservation, Financing and Operation of Committed Affordable Housing					
Activity/Tool/Mechanism <i>Recommendation</i>		In Process	Immediate 1-6 months	1-2 years	3-5 years
Financial Resources for Affordable Housing	Page 6				
<i>Explore General Obligation Bonds</i>	New			●	
<i>Affordable Housing Ordinance Review</i>	New	●			
<i>Explore Reduced fees</i>	New				●
Deeper Affordability of Affordable Housing	Page 7				
<i>Incentivize units below 40% AMI through NOFA</i>	New		●		
<i>Modify affordability at refinance</i>	New		●		
<i>Collaborate with providers to adjust affordability levels</i>	New			●	
NOFA	page 8				
<i>Incentivize deeper affordability</i>	New		●		
<i>Apply modified R/ECAP</i>	New		●		
<i>Incentivize carbon free systems</i>	New		●		
<i>Biophilic design principles</i>	New		●		
<i>Equity in access to open spaces...</i>	New		●		
Existing CAF Operations*	page 9				
<i>Capital Needs Assessment</i>	New	●			
<i>Increase physical inspections of CAF units</i>	New	●			
<i>Review compliance policies, procedures and practices...</i>	New	●			
<i>Identify resources to ensure adequate oversight & inspection</i>	New		●		
<i>Ensure rehabilitation construction scopes are adequate</i>	New		●		
<i>Tenant supports included in AHIF agreements</i>	New		●		
CAF Resident Demographic Data*	page 9				
<i>Plan and mechanisms for CAF resident demographic data</i>	New			●	
Colocation of CAFs with County Facilities	page 10				
<i>Consideration of CAFs in CIP planning</i>	New			●	
<i>Internal admin procedures to incorporate CAF in CIP planning</i>	New			●	
<i>Housing Arlington Institutional Partnerships Initiative</i>	New	●			
Equal Amenities in Accessible Units in New CAFs*	page 10				
<i>Accessible units in future CAF developments provide the same features as standard units.</i>	New		●		
CAF System Conversion to Carbon Free*	page 10				
<i>Support and incentivize conversion to carbon free systems</i>	New			●	
<i>Research grant funding for clean energy conversions</i>	New			●	

Land Use						
Activity/Tool/Mechanism <i>Recommendation</i>		In Process	Immediate 1-6 months	1-2 years	3-5 years	
Multifamily Reinvestment Study page 11		●				
Missing Middle Housing Study page 11		●				
Plan Langston Boulevard page 11		●				
Affordable Housing Ordinance Review* page 11						
<i>Analysis of the Affordable Housing Ordinance</i>	New	●				
Definition of “Family” in the Zoning Ordinance page 12						
<i>Initiate a zoning study...</i>				●		
Affordability of Senior Housing and Elder Care* page 12						
<i>Initiate a zoning study...</i>	New			●		
Housing Services and Assistance						
Housing Grants page 13						
<i>Conduct a review of the Housing Grants program</i>	New	●				
Housing Choice Voucher page 13						
<i>Deploy 36 federally issued Emergency Housing Vouchers</i>	New	●				
<i>Fulfill 52 Mainstream Vouchers</i>	New	●				
<i>Explore reopening the HCV primary waiting list</i>	New			●		
State Rental Assistance Program page 14						
<i>Explore Memorandum of Agreement with the state’s Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services</i>	New			●		
Homeless Services/Continuum of Care page 14						
<i>Participation MWCOG systems racial equity assessment</i>	New	●				
<i>Leverage state, federal and philanthropic resources</i>		●				
Group Homes for Residents with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities page 15						
<i>Redevelopment of the group home on South Irving Street</i>	New	●				
<i>Provide for operational costs for maintenance of the home</i>	New	●				
<i>Ensure that the home is energy efficient and Net Zero Energy</i>	New	●				
Tenant Services and Support page 15						
<i>Develop tenant landlord information and resources</i>			●			
<i>Increase access to conflict resolution resources</i>				●		
<i>Promote the Tenant Landlord Commission</i>	New		●			
<i>Training for staff that interact with tenants</i>	New		●			
<i>Solicit feedback from committed affordable housing residents</i>	New			●		
Real Estate Tax Relief Program page 16						
<i>Periodically reevaluate the Real Estate Tax Relief program</i>	New					●
Renter Accessibility Modification page 16						
<i>Develop a Rental Accessibility Modification Program</i>	New					●
Affordable Homeownership Study page 16						
<i>Develop a new approach to homeownership</i>	New			●		
Fair Housing Testing page 17						
<i>Test for housing discrimination based on disability status</i>	New					●
<i>Continue tests based on race and national origin</i>		●				
Human Rights Ordinance page 18						
<i>Amend the ordinance to include all protected classes</i>	New		●			

Current and Continuing Implementation Tools

The County will continue to implement a broad range of programs and services to meet the community's housing needs and to further the Affordable Housing Master Plan's goals objectives and policies. This section provides a brief description of each of these tools and services that are ongoing. The [AHMP 5-year Report](#) included results from these activities throughout and included a section that provided status updates on each of these tools.

[Note: reference numbers do not match with the previous Implementation Framework and reports due to the addition and elimination of some tools]

Financing Tools

1) Affordable Housing Investment Fund (AHIF)

The County's Affordable Housing Investment Fund (AHIF) is a revolving loan fund that provides gap financing to developers that preserve or build Committed Affordable Housing (CAF) units in the county. AHIF is the key mechanism through which the County funds the construction and redevelopment of housing affordable to low-income renters, and also supports housing that combines housing and services for vulnerable populations. AHIF is funded by several sources; developer contributions obtained through the Affordable Housing Ordinance; general revenue; AHIF loan repayments; and a portion of property recordation fees.

2) Federal and State Funds

Federal and state programs provide significant financial resources for affordable housing. These sources of funding include Low-Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), federal and state historic preservation tax credits, HOME, and CDBG. The LIHTC program encourages affordable housing development by providing a federal income tax credit to property owners, and incentives for private investors to participate in construction and rehabilitation of housing for low-income families. The Virginia Housing administers the tax credit program.

Federal and state rehabilitation tax credit programs provide property owners with incentives for private investment in the preservation of historic properties. The CDBG and HOME programs are grants from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) that help the County to provide decent and affordable housing, clean and safe neighborhoods and to create economic opportunities.

3) Industrial Development Authority (IDA) Bonds

Arlington County has made use of IDA bonds for several purposes related to affordable housing including property acquisitions, new construction, and rehabilitation. IDA bonds are repaid by the affordable housing developers from the revenue generated from the affordable housing projects financed with the bonds. Bonding has been a critical piece of the County's overall affordable housing program and should be used as needed in the future.

4) Tax Incremental Financing (TIF)

A Countywide TIF policy was adopted in July 2014. This policy guides the use of TIF and provides parameters on how and when it can be used.

Arlington has two Tax Increment Financing (TIF) areas; the Crystal City – Potomac Yard – Pentagon City TIF, which was established in 2010 to support infrastructure investment, and the Columbia Pike TIF, which was established in 2013 to support affordable housing development and preservation.

The Columbia Pike TIF sets aside 25 percent of the increase in tax revenues above the base year revenue to be used to support the development and preservation of affordable housing in the Columbia Pike area. The Columbia Pike TIF is the funding source for TOAH (described below). The use and effectiveness of the Columbia Pike TIF for developing and preserving affordable housing will be monitored.

5) Transit Oriented Affordable Housing (TOAH) Fund

One of the biggest challenges faced by Arlington County in achieving its affordable housing goals is to provide affordable housing in transit corridors, where land and properties are most valuable. The Transit Oriented Affordable Housing (TOAH) program provides direct County support for projects that need additional funding in order to remain within the total development cost restrictions established by the Virginia Housing for the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit program. Uses of the fund are limited to costs of infrastructure and County fees. Currently, the TOAH fund is only available within the Columbia Pike planning area and is funded through the Columbia Pike TIF.

Land Use Tools

6) Affordable Housing Ordinance

The Affordable Housing Ordinance has been a key tool for leveraging private development for affordable housing. The provisions of this ordinance are defined in the County's zoning ordinance as part of the site plan approval. The ordinance applies to both residential and commercial special exception site plan developments that have a gross density with a floor-area ratio (FAR) in excess of 1.0. The specific details of this ordinance are established in the Code of Virginia and any alterations require legislation at the state level.

Under this ordinance, Affordable Dwelling Units (ADUs) must be affordable to residents earning 60 percent AMI, and this affordability level must be maintained for a 30-year period. Applicants may choose to comply with the ordinance in one of four alternative ways: on-site CAFs, off-site CAFs in proximity, off-site CAFs, or cash contribution to AHIF. The formulas for determining the number of units or amount of contribution are defined by this ordinance. The availability of optional ways to comply with the Affordable Housing Ordinance has been beneficial for meeting multiple affordable housing goals in the County. The provision of on-site units increases the number of affordable units in mixed-income, transit-accessible buildings, while the off-site option allows for a greater number of overall affordable units throughout the County. Contributions to AHIF are leveraged to generate additional public and private sources of funding for affordable housing.

7) Bonus Density

(Affordable Dwelling Units for Height and Density Above General Land Use Plan)

In addition to the Affordable Housing Ordinance, the County also uses zoning incentives available through the site plan process to encourage the production of affordable units. As part of site plan projects that involve requests for increased density, the County enters into negotiations with developers

about the provision of affordable housing above what is mandated under the baseline Affordable Housing Ordinance. The rationale is that affordable housing can be provided in exchange for the additional height and density granted by the County Board through the special exception site plan process.

8) Special Affordable Housing Protection District (SAHPD)

The Special Affordable Housing Protection District (SAHPD) as outlined in the General Land Use Plan identifies existing market rate affordable housing sites within the County's two Metro Corridors that are planned for site plan projects of 3.24 FAR or higher. The goal of the SAHPD is to retain affordable housing opportunities (through preservation or replacement) in the County's high-cost Metro corridors. SAHPDs have been established in the Rosslyn, Courthouse, Virginia Square, and Ballston area plans. In instances where redevelopment of these sites is proposed, the higher densities shown on the General Land Use Plan are intended to be achieved while providing for one-for-one replacement; replacing the number of bedrooms or the gross floor area (GFA) on a one-for-one basis.

9) Housing Conservation District

In 2017, Arlington County established a Housing Conservation District in 12 areas with significant market rate affordable housing. The district is intended to prevent the loss of market rate affordable housing, encourage and incentivize the distribution of affordable housing throughout the County, and preserve and enhance existing apartment neighborhoods, consistent with adopted policies from both the Affordable Housing Master Plan and General Land Use Plan. Work is continuing on development of appropriate land use incentives through the Multifamily Reinvestment Study.

10) Sector and Area Plans

From time to time the County undertakes land use planning efforts for specific areas. Many of these plans (e.g. Radnor/Ft. Meyer Heights, Crystal City, Clarendon) have included special provisions for affordable housing. These plans respond to the specific contexts, conditions, opportunities and constraints unique to each area. The County is currently developing an area plan for the Langston Boulevard area.

11) Form Based Code

A form based code is a land development regulation that uses physical form (rather than uses) as the organizing principle for the code. Form based codes can foster more predictability in the development process and in some places is an attractive alternative to conventional zoning. Arlington County has adopted two specific form based codes along Columbia Pike that apply to development in commercial centers and in the surrounding multifamily residential neighborhoods.

Columbia Pike Form Based Code – Commercial Centers. The Columbia Pike Special Revitalization District Form Based Code (FBC) was originally adopted in 2003 to foster mixed-use development along the commercial centers of Columbia Pike. There are currently no affordable housing requirements under the provisions of the Commercial Centers FBC.

Columbia Pike Neighborhoods Form Based Code – Neighborhoods. The County adopted the Columbia Pike Neighborhoods Special Revitalization District Form Based Code (FBC) in 2013. The primary focus of the Neighborhoods FBC is on the multi-family residential areas along the Pike where apartments and multi-family complexes are concentrated.

All development projects under the Neighborhoods FBC are required to set aside between 20 percent and 35 percent of the net new units for affordable housing. The affordable housing units must remain

affordable for at least 30 years for households earning 60 percent of AMI. The Neighborhoods FBC is designed to be a key tool to help the County achieve its affordable housing goals.

12) Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)

Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) allows for transfer of density from sending sites to receiving sites for the purposes of affordable housing, open space, historic preservation, community recreation and/or community facilities. TDRs can occur only through the site plan process on the receiving site and the County Board must approve all sending and receiving sites.

13) Accessory Dwelling (AD) Ordinance

An accessory dwelling (AD) unit is a self-contained apartment in an owner-occupied single-family home or lot that is either attached to the principal dwelling or, in some jurisdictions, in a separate structure on the same property. AD units (also known as accessory apartments, guest apartments, in-law apartments, granny flats or secondary units) provide supplementary housing that can be integrated into existing single-family neighborhoods to provide a typically lower-priced housing alternative. AD units can help promote the supply of rental housing for older adults and persons with disabilities. Homeowners can also build AD units to receive additional income and/or to allow them to remain in a home otherwise too big to fit their needs.

14) Family/Caregiver Suite

The Arlington County Zoning Code allows for family/caregiver suites. This provision allows for persons who provide care for the children, elderly or disabled occupants to live in the same dwelling. The suite may consist of not more than two rooms plus a bathroom and "efficiency" kitchen in a dwelling. The suite must be designed so that it can function as an integral part of the dwelling although the occupants may live independently of each other.

15) Affordable Housing Parking Standards

In November 2017, the Arlington County Board adopted off-street residential parking guidelines for new, multi-family residential projects approved by special exception in Arlington's Metro corridors. A key element of the guidelines includes reduced parking ratios for properties containing CAFs affordable at 60 percent of and 50 percent of AMI that are set at 70 percent and 50 percent of the market-rate minimums respectively.

Rental Assistance and Tenant Services

16) Housing Grants

The Housing Grant program is a County subsidy program that covers part of the rent for low-income adults living in private rental housing. Participating households spend a defined portion of their gross income on rent, with the remainder subsidized by the County's grant. The Housing Grant program issues grants to very low-income households with members who are age 65 or older, or who are permanently and totally disabled, or working families with children.

16) Housing Choice Vouchers

The Federal Housing Choice Voucher (HCV) program is administered by the County and subsidizes the housing costs of low-income households, including those with children, older adults, and individuals with disabilities. Households receiving Voucher assistance live in private rental housing and pay 30 percent of their income towards their rent, if applicable. The voucher covers the gap between the household's income and the approved rent for the unit.

The program is primarily designed for residents earning below 30 percent AMI, but serves some residents up to 50 percent AMI. Preferences are given to applicants who are homeless, victims of domestic violence, persons with a disability who qualify for Permanent Supportive Housing, individuals that qualify under the Olmstead Act and a residency preference for families who live, work, or have an offer of employment in Arlington County.

The program also implements special HUD programs that provide vouchers for homeless veterans, persons with AIDS, youth aging out of foster care, non-elderly disabled and families at risk of separation due to homelessness.

17) Affordable Housing Investment Fund Housing Services

The AHIF Housing Services Fund is an annual set aside of the Affordable Housing Investment Fund. It provides up to two years of funding for housing services projects that are new or expanded projects that address an unmet or changing housing need. Projects that have been funded in the past have included stabilizing families at risk of homelessness and resident services for households living in committed affordable housing units.

18) Tenant Assistance Fund (TAF)

A Tenant Assistance Fund (TAF) is a temporary, project-based program that provides income-qualified vested tenants with rental assistance if rents increase as a result of redevelopment. The fund is designed to mitigate the possible negative effects of increased rents resulting from the redevelopment, renovation, or acquisition of CAF properties. Private developers that redevelop or renovate an existing affordable multi-family residential building to preserve or create CAFs are required to submit a formal tenant relocation plan and administer the County tenant assistance fund (TAF) as part of the process of obtaining approvals and permits for the redevelopment project.

19) Tenant Relocation Program

The County has established relocation guidelines regarding tenant displacement when residential rental properties are proposed for demolition, rehabilitation or conversion through the site plan process. When tenants must be relocated due to redevelopment, they may be entitled to relocation payments or other benefits. The goal is to assist displaced tenants to move directly to safe and affordable replacement with minimal disruption to their daily lives. Providing tenant relocation assistance is voluntary for projects redeveloped by right.

Homeowner Assistance and Homebuyer Services

20) Moderate-Income Homebuyer Assistance Program (MIPAP)

The County's primary homeownership tool is the Moderate-Income Purchase Assistance Program (MIPAP), a shared equity, soft second mortgage program that provides prospective first-time homebuyers with up to 25 percent of the purchase price of homes in Arlington. MIPAP assistance is available to households with incomes up to 80 percent of AMI. CDBG is the primary source of funding for the MIPAP program.

21) Condominium Initiative

Housing Arlington's Condominium Initiative focuses on strategies to ensure that condominium owners can preserve and maintain their homes, as existing condominiums provide the most likely source of affordable ownership opportunities to low- and moderate-income households in Arlington.

This initiative includes three major elements:

- Build organizational capacity by providing resource materials, classes, workshops, direct technical assistance, and conducting outreach to association management, prioritizing condos primarily owned by low or moderate-income owners;
- Promote capital improvements by developing strategies and programs that help support maintenance and renovation needs in existing affordable condos; and
- Develop programmatic approaches for direct support by establishing cost-effective methods to provide direct assistance to financially vulnerable low- and moderate-income owners in the context of rising fees and capital expenses.

22) Federal and State Programs for Low- and Moderate-Income Homebuyers

Both the federal and state government offer programs that help low- and moderate-income households buy homes. The Federal Housing Administration (FHA) provides mortgage insurance on loans made by FHA-approved lenders throughout the United States. FHA loans have become the primary means by which low- and moderate-income households and first-time homebuyers purchase a home. FHA loans can have lower down payment requirements and higher allowable loan-to-value ratios than conventional loans.

The Virginia Housing offers loan programs targeting first-time homebuyers. Homebuyers must meet program income and home sale price limits and must complete VHDA's homeownership class.

23) Real Estate Tax Relief

A real estate tax relief programs is a program or incentive that reduces the amount of property tax owed by an individual homeowner. For low-income homeowners and those on fixed incomes, a reduction in real estate taxes can enable them to afford to remain in their home. Arlington's Real Estate Tax Relief program offers tax relief to homeowners who are age 65 or older or who are permanently disabled. Applicants for tax relief must meet income and asset limits (with the primary residence not counted towards total assets). Homeowners who qualify for a partial exemption may defer the balance due until the property changes ownership.

24) Home Modifications and Improvements

Through the Community Development Fund, Arlington supports Rebuilding Together, a nonprofit organization that makes critical repairs to homes of elderly and disabled residents

25) Homebuyer Education and Foreclosure Prevention Counseling

Homebuyer education enables first-time homebuyers to understand the complexities of purchasing a home. Participation in this program is mandatory for participants in MIPAP, but is available to anyone interested in purchasing a home. Homeowner education is delivered via free, six-hour courses taught by a nonprofit partner. The County also provides one-on-one counseling through its Housing Information Center.

Special needs and homeless services

26) Case Management

DHS offers a range of case management services that directly help households obtain and maintain housing, including linking them to support services and other resources. Rental assistance alone is not always sufficient for households to become stable in housing. These services are provided through DHS Economic Independence Division, Child and Family Services Division, Aging and Disability Services Division, Behavioral Healthcare Division, and community non-profit organizations.

27) Homeless Services

The Arlington Continuum of Care provides a range of services for persons and households who are homeless or at risk of homelessness including prevention, diversion, shelter (for those with no access to a safe housing placement), and rapid re-housing. Through an integrated, community-based support system, Arlington County helps households at risk of homelessness keep their housing, and will assist any household that does become homeless in regaining stable housing as quickly as possible.

DHS is the lead agency for the Arlington County Continuum of Care, an amalgam of non-profit organizations that ensure that available federal, state and local resources are used strategically to meet the needs of Arlington homeless households and those at risk of becoming homeless. All services are funded through a combination of Federal, State, County, and private resources.

28) Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH)

Permanent Supportive Housing (PSH) is a successful, cost-effective combination of affordable housing with services that helps people live more stable, productive lives. PSH is for persons with disabilities including serious mental illness, substance abuse, intellectual disabilities, and youth aging out of foster care who are homeless or at-risk of homelessness and have a serious housing need. Services are flexible and voluntary and not a condition of the lease. PSH is a proven model for disability populations in which the lease is held by adult(s) in the household and apartments are scattered across the County, primarily in committed affordable housing units.

29) Supportive Housing with Services

Because not all persons with disabilities can hold a lease in their own name and/or may need more supports than provided in PSH, the County offers a range of supportive housing for disability and special needs populations. Supportive housing combines housing and support services for the most vulnerable populations. Examples of housing types include group homes, transitional housing, supervised apartment living, congregate housing, and supportive studios. The County supports aging in place and assisted living services at Culpepper Garden and Mary Marshall Assisted Living residence.

- A) Several non-profit agencies operate group homes in Arlington County for persons with Intellectual disabilities and adults with serious mental illness. Residential staff work in all of them, but the number of staff present, and the number of hours during the day and night when staff work varies. The level of staffing is determined by the abilities of the persons living in the home. Supervision, training and assistance are also provided under an ISP within a group home. The number of individuals with ID living in each home varies from four to seven. Non-profit agencies operate the homes and provide services through contracts with Arlington County.
- B) Supportive Studio Apartment for Single Homeless Adults. Supportive studio apartments are efficiency units clustered together that include on-site supports to monitor tenancy and assist residents to maintain their housing. A local needs assessment documents a need for about 50 units. This model is targeted for people who have been homeless or are at risk of homelessness, with or without a defined disability, whose incomes are less than 30% AMI and who have very high leasing barriers often preventing them from leasing housing without supports and rental subsidy.
- C) Supportive transitional housing for youth aging out of foster care. Youth aging out of foster care often need assistance transitioning into adulthood including income supports and supportive services. Transitional housing can provide the environment where youth can get the support they need in stable housing. For youth the transitional housing option could be

individual apartments clustered together or a congregate living environment. The need for this type of housing is about 6 to 8 individuals annually.

- D) Supportive housing substance abuse and mental health disorders. Persons with serious mental illness or substance abuse often need temporary housing after experiencing a housing crisis and/or while waiting for entry into PSH or other permanent housing. Transitional housing is congregate living where individuals have their own bedroom but share kitchen and other space. Individuals are engaged in mental health and substance abuse services, but minimal or no services are provided on site.

30) Emergency Rental Assistance, Housing Stabilization and Eviction Prevention Services

DHS provides short-term financial assistance and case management to low-income households who are at risk of homelessness and can be diverted from shelter. The financial assistance allows households to become current on their rent, pay utility bills, and avoid or stop eviction proceedings. Case management services include financial literacy and budget management, employment counseling and/or job readiness and vocational education.

31) Landlord Partnership and Risk Reduction Fund

The Landlord Partnership is grounded in agreements between landlords and service providers representing homeless individuals and families with high housing barriers and case management needs. All individuals housed through this Partnership receive housing focused case management. Landlords participating in this partnership have access to a “risk reduction fund”, which assists in compensating landlords for lost rent or damages should a tenant vacate a unit. Participating landlords relax some of their screening criteria for program participants to aid in housing homeless individuals and families with high leasing barriers and service needs. The risk reduction fund is administered through a non-profit and was funded through AHIF Housing Services.

Building Services

32) Code Enforcement

Arlington County Code Enforcement enforces the Virginia Maintenance Code and the Arlington Condition of Private Property Ordinance to ensure the safety of Arlington residents and visitors. Code enforcement inspections are conducted both proactively and in response to resident complaints. Owners whose properties are in violation will receive notices of violation specific to the type of violation found. The notice will allow a specified period of time to correct violations; in some cases, repairs may require a building permit.

33) Education on Universal Design and “Visitability”

Universal design means the development of housing and surrounding areas so that they can be used by the widest range of people possible. The Arlington County website contains information in its Aging and Disability page on universal design. Information includes the Smart Choice Homes guide that was developed in 2012. The information is also posted to the Design Standards & Guidelines and Building Codes pages to encourage builders to consider universal design as they prepare their project designs.

Fair Housing Services

34) Affirmative Fair Housing Marketing Plans

The County promotes non-discrimination and seeks to ensure fair and equal housing opportunities for all of its residents. In addition to Federal laws that require non-discrimination in housing, the County is committed to promoting access to housing to promote diversity and inclusivity. As such, all AHIF

supported CAF developments provide an affirmative fair housing marketing plan that outlines steps it will take to promote its units to a diverse set of low- and moderate-income households.

35) Resources on Non-Discrimination in Housing

Educational materials about fair housing practices targeted to landlords and property managers could expand awareness of fair housing issues. These materials could include resources for developing affirmative fair housing marketing plans and other strategies for reaching and serving a diverse set of potential renters, including those with potential leasing barriers.

36) Fair Housing Testing

Fair housing testing is a method of comparing how two persons of different protected classes (e.g., of different races) are treated by a housing provider under similar circumstances, all other factors being held constant. There are two types of testing, targeted testing and random testing. Targeted testing is conducted in order to investigate a fair housing complaint or to determine if an agency that previously discriminated is still engaging in discriminatory practices. Random testing involves testing a sample of housing providers. The County's office of Human Rights investigates housing discrimination complaints as they are received, and conducts a random fair housing test every two years.

Implementation Tools and Actions Considered but Not Recommended

Significant input was received from members of the community throughout the review of the Affordable Housing Master Plan. The primary question that the review sought to answer was “how can the County better achieve the goals, objectives and policies of the Affordable Housing Master Plan?” The many thoughtful responses helped create this updated Implementation Framework which has been enhanced by members of the community sharing both their ideas and lived experiences.

All suggestions received have received due consideration. However, the recommendations of the Implementation Framework are set forth based on what can reasonably be achieved given constraints on resources and the limitations on local governmental authority. The table below provides a list of suggestions that have been put forward but are not included in the Implementation Framework recommendations.

Suggestion	Notes
CAF Development, Financing & Operations	
Pooled Equity Fund	Staff evaluated the pooled equity fund as part of the financial tools component of Housing Arlington and found through interviews with affordable housing developers that there was not a need for this type of fund. Other equity funds already exist in the region including the Washington Impact Fund. The County will continue to explore mechanisms to better leverage County funds for affordable housing.
Unified waiting list for committed affordable housing	Committed affordable housing is privately owned and operated by a host of non-profit and for-profit entities, each with their own property management systems and procedures. This makes a centralized waitlist untenable.
Create a Housing Authority to own and operate public housing	At present, the law prohibits the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) from funding the construction or operation of new public housing units if the construction of those units would result in a net increase in the number of units for any Public Housing Authority. For HUD’s purposes the County’s Department of Human Services’ Housing Assistance Bureau serves as the County’s Public Housing Authority administering the federal Housing Choice Voucher program and other HUD funded activities. In Virginia, formation of a Redevelopment and Housing Authority is required for local government to own and operate housing. By law, redevelopment and housing authorities exist in all localities but are dormant until activated by referendum. The most recent referendum to activate a redevelopment and housing authority in Arlington County was held on November 5, 2013. The referendum did not pass.
Explore subsidized “intentional intergenerational” living	Intentional communities are best organized by their proponents as they are very time consuming to organize and require a deep commitment from those involved. The County is open to receiving project proposals through the periodic Notice of Funding Availability.

Taxes	
Increase certain taxes for dedicated AHIF funding	The Affordable Housing Investment Fund has multiple funding sources including a portion of recordation fees; loan repayments; developer contributions resulting from the Affordable Housing Ordinance and Bonus Density provisions; and the County General Fund. Allocations from the General Fund have increased substantially over the years – from \$3 million in 2000 to an average of \$14 million for each of the previous two fiscal years (FY 2020 and FY 2021)
Separate property tax classification for affordable housing	Affordable Housing is assessed based on the revenue generated from rents received. Because rents are restricted and below the market rents this results in a lower property tax assessment. Alternative means for lowering property taxes would have a negative fiscal impact to the County’s General Fund which is a significant source for the Affordable Housing Investment Fund.
Payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT)	Affordable Housing is assessed based on the revenue generated from rents received. Because rents are restricted and below the market rents this results in a lower property tax assessment. Alternative means for lowering property taxes would have a negative fiscal impact to the County’s General Fund which is a significant source for the Affordable Housing Investment Fund.
Real Tax Increment Financing for affordable housing	The County has a TIF policy. Creating a “real” Tax Increment Financing district would limit the County’s ability to respond to the needs of the community through the annual budget process.
Reinstate the Multifamily Partial Property Tax Exemption for Rehabilitation	The Multifamily Partial Property Tax Exemption for Rehabilitation was repealed in 2020. The exemption was deemed to lack any public benefit at the expense of foregone County revenue.
Land Use Policy	
Planning studies for north of Route 29 along Williamsburg Boulevard, Glebe Road, George Mason Drive, and Military Road	<p>This suggestion was received in response to questions on barriers to achieving housing equity and the geographic distribution of affordable housing. Currently the County is undertaking a multi-year planning study for Langston Boulevard (Rt. 29) as well as a county-wide Missing Middle Study. The Missing Middle Study seeks to expand housing choice in neighborhoods that have historically lacked a diversity of housing options. The Study may include recommendations for further planning studies to achieve community priorities.</p> <p>New planning studies are generally initiated based on County Board direction and are generally intended to further the implementation of the County’s Comprehensive Plan and to achieve community priorities.</p>
Reduce site-plan requirements for affordable projects	The County Board has the ability to eliminate or reduce certain “standard” site plan conditions typically approved with site plan projects on a case-by-case basis. Site plan conditions are in place to help mitigate impacts from the proposed development. If conditions are reduced for affordable developments, that may result in unmitigated impacts on the overall neighborhood.

Add affordability requirements to the Columbia Pike Commercial Nodes Form-Based Code	Feedback received from the Columbia Pike Civic Association Presidents group during the AHMP approval process indicated a strong opposition to expanding the affordability requirements to the Commercial Centers FBC.
By-right bonus density for non-profit, 100% affordable housing	Bonus density is only obtainable through the site plan process. This is to ensure that the impacts of increased density are properly mitigated. However the County did adopt a Zoning Ordinance amendment in April of 2021 that allow for greater building heights for 100% affordable housing developments in certain multifamily zoning districts.
Expanded use of Transfer of Development Rights	Additional density is available for development sites through the site plan and bonus density provisions of the Zoning Ordinance, making purchased density through TDR – which is still subject to discretionary approval – much less viable.
Streamline approval process for affordable housing developments	Process improvements to the site plan review process have been implemented by the County. County staff now conducts a thorough review of site plan projects in the preliminary stage prior to formal acceptance of site plan application. This allows the developer to address issues with the project earlier in the process. Upon acceptance of a Site Plan application all Site Plan Review Committee (SPRC) meetings are scheduled. The number of SPRC meetings has been normalized to three meetings. The scheduling of these meetings at the time of the site plan application acceptance provides for greater certainty with regards to the time for projects to complete the Site Plan review and to be considered for action by the Planning Commission and County Board.
Create a policy on home sharing and co-living	At present the zoning ordinance allows up to four unrelated individuals can occupy a housing unit. The proposed zoning study to examine the ordinance’s definition of “family” could create additional opportunities for home sharing and co-living.
Reduce the parking requirements for affordable housing in areas outside the Metro Corridors	The Multifamily Reinvestment Study will be looking at appropriate parking ratios in the RA zones throughout the County.
Tenant Protections	
Rent Control or Rent Stabilization Ordinance	The County does not have the authority from the State of Virginia to enact this type of an ordinance.
Voluntary Rent Guidelines	Voluntary rent guidelines typically follow trends in average rents and request that owners keep rent increases within a range that is in keeping with the economy and housing market. Because average rents are influenced by the volume of newer higher priced housing rent guidelines could signal to property owners a need to increase their rents beyond what is reasonable for their specific property.
Tenant Opportunity to Purchase and/or County Right of First Refusal	The County does not have the authority from the State of Virginia to enact this type of an ordinance.

<p>Compensation for tenants displaced through by-right development</p>	<p>The County requires tenant relocation plans that provide for relocation allowances to be paid when displacement occurs through a discretionary action of the County. For committed affordable projects with County financing where tenants are displaced or might face an increased housing cost provisions are made for a Tennant Assistance Fund. However, when tenants are displaced due to by-right activities, the County has no discretionary role in the process. The County has expanded its contract for tenant services to include identifying when by right development might cause displacement of low-income tenants and to assist those tenants in finding new housing.</p>
<p>Homeownership</p>	
<p>Community Land Trust Cooperatives</p>	<p>The 2022 AHMP Implementation Framework recommends initiating an affordable homeownership study. These suggestions will continue to be considered as that study is carried out.</p>
<p>Financial Assistance for Condominium Associations</p>	
<p>Assistance to Low-Income Condominium Owners</p>	
<p>Employer-Assisted Housing</p>	
<p>Home Ownership Models for Supportive Housing with Services</p>	
<p>Create more specific programs aimed at increasing minority homeownership.</p>	