

# Survey of Approaches to Achieve the County's Affordable Housing Goals in Planning Processes

Department of Community Planning, Housing and  
Development

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- Summarize County's Affordable Housing Goals & Targets
- Review recent planning processes
  - Why processes were initiated?
  - Who was involved?
- What housing tools were identified?
- Outcomes?

# Affordable Housing Goals & Targets

1. Balance support for the elderly (20%), persons with disabilities (15%) & families with children (65%)
2. Prevent and end homelessness
3. Ensure that housing is safe and decent
4. Ensure that the provision of affordable housing is consistent with the County's sustainability and environmental policies

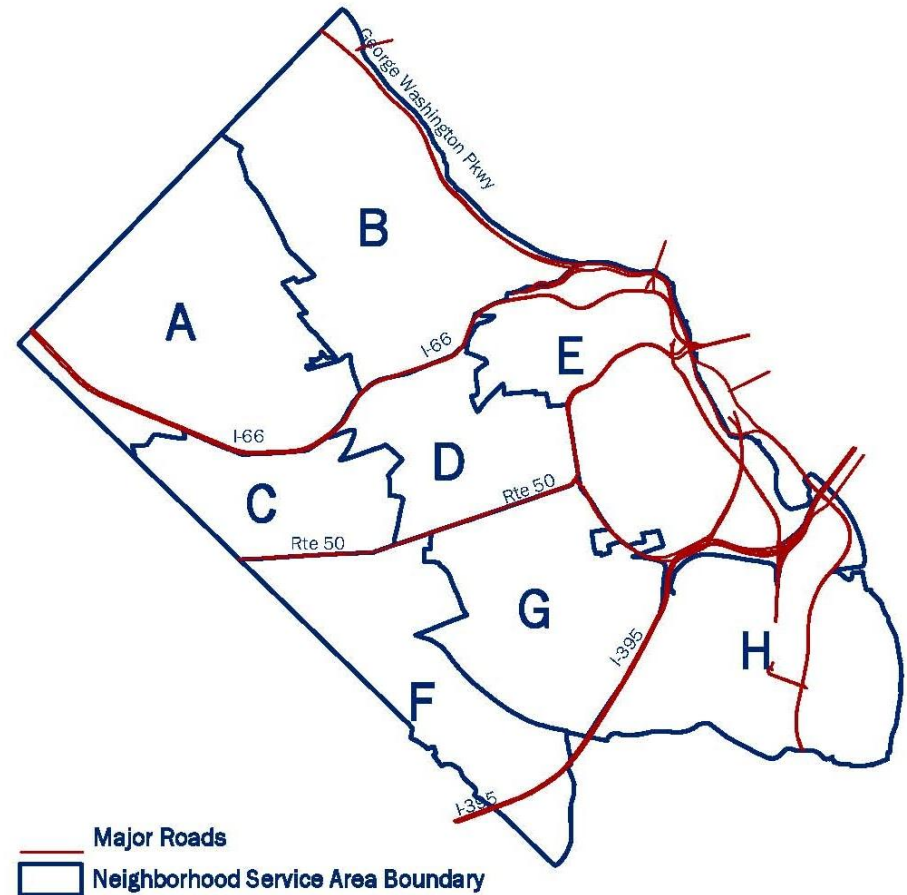
5. Permit no net loss of committed affordable housing and make every reasonable effort to maintain supply of market rate affordable units
  - Increase supply by assisting an average of 400 net new units / year
6. Reduce the # of households in serious housing need (<40% of median income - spending >40% of income on housing)
7. Increase the # of units with 2 or more bedrooms (family sized units)

## 8. Distribute committed affordable units within the County, neighborhoods, and projects\*

- 25% in Area A, B and C
- 60% in Area D, E, and H
- 15% in Area F and G

\* Not to be construed as caps or quotas

Neighborhood Service Area Map



9. Increase the rate of homeownership throughout the County
10. Eliminate housing discrimination
11. Provide housing services effectively and efficiently

# Recent Planning Processes

- Virginia Square Sector Plan(2002)
- Clarendon Sector Plan (2004)
- Fort Myer Heights North Plan (2008)
- Crystal City Sector Plan (2010)
- East Falls Church Area Plan (2011)
- Columbia Pike Land Use & Housing Study (Currently Underway)

## Sector Plans and Area Plans

- Developed to provide guidance for future public & private redevelopment
  - Recommendations from Area/Sector Plans inform changes to the General Land Use Plan and Master Transportation Plan
  - Sector/Area Plans incorporate previously adopted Policy Guidance from the County Board (Sustainability, Affordable Housing, Transportation, etc.)
    - Sector Plans –
      - Metro station areas (i.e. Clarendon, Va. Square)
      - Comprehensive
    - Area Plans –
      - Fort Myer Heights North, East Falls Church
      - Limited in scope
- Recommendations may further refine policies and goals, with specific implementation tools



# Organization

- Sector/Area Plans are developed by staff and citizen representatives
  - Task Force, Working Group, Neighborhood Group
  - Can be appointed by the County Board or the County Manager
  - Can be led by members of an appointed Advisory Board (i.e. Planning or Housing Commission)
  - Typically, neighboring civic associations are included
- Citizen representatives are relied upon to enhance communication with constituency groups
- Community forums, public hearings, County website, other media

## Range of planning topic areas:

- Land Use [commercial (retail), residential, hotel]
- Density
- Height and massing
- Urban Design
- Transportation
- Open Space
- Public Art
- Affordable Housing
- Sustainability
- Other

# Housing Discussion

- Iterative process:
  - The amount of affordable housing is somewhat dependent on land use, height, density and other planning topic area discussions
  - Economic and construction factors are analyzed / tested
  - New tools /approaches may be developed
    - Bonus density
    - Transfer of development rights
  - Further review by Housing & Planning Commissions / County Board

## Impetus / Issues:

- Concerns about loss of parking at VA Square Metro site
- Building heights
- Need for cultural facilities

## Group: Virginia Square Plan Review Committee

- Ballston / VA Square Civic Association (CA)
- Ashton Heights CA
- Lyon Village CA
- Tower Villas Condo Association & others
- Local churches - St. Charles & St George's
- GMU
- Arlington Arts Center
- American Legion
- Planning Commission
- Transportation Commission

## Impetus / Issues:

- Achieving proper use mix
- Urban design
- Transportation analysis

## Group: Task Force

- Clarendon / Courthouse CA
- Lyon Park CA
- Lyon Village CA
- Ballston / VA Square CA
- Clarendon Alliance
- Advisory Boards & Commissions (6)
- Business representatives
- Developer representatives

## Impetus / Issues:

- Potential for additional development pressure due to opening of Silver Line to Tysons / Dulles Airport
- Concerns about commuter traffic and lack of pedestrian and bicycle safety

## Group: Task Force

- Advisory Boards & Commissions (6)
- East Falls Church CA
- Williamsburg CA
- Madison Manor CA
- VDOT
- WMATA
- City of Falls Church

## Impetus / Issues:

- Potential loss of market rate affordable units
- Historic preservation
- Open space
- Transportation

Group: Plenary Group (28 members)

Working Group (6 members)

- 13 civic associations
- Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization (CPRO)
- 5 Advisory Board & Commissions
- BRAVO
- Alliance for Housing Solutions
- Major property owners
- Major developers

- Special Affordable Housing Protection District (SAHPD)
- Bonus Density and Height
- Transfer of Development Rights (TDR)
- Affordable Housing requirements in the Zoning Ordinance (Section 36.H.6 of the Zoning Ordinance)



# “Affordable Housing Ordinance”

- The Zoning Ordinance allows developers to choose whether to provide a cash contribution or to provide on-site or off-site units
  - Using a percent of the increased gross floor area (GFA) above 1.0 Floor Area Ratio (FAR) for the density up to the General Land Use Plan maximum for the site
- The County may approve projects exceeding the General Land Use Plan maximum
  - In exchange for additional housing contribution
  - County has additional leverage to get units on-site

- **Affordable Housing Investment Fund (AHIF)** County's main source to finance affordable housing preservation and development
- **Real Estate Tax Exemption** - partial tax exemption available for developers who do substantial rehabilitation on multi-family rental projects
- **Bond Financing** (state of Virginia and Arlington County/Industrial Development Authority [IDA]).
- **Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC)**
- **Federal Historic Preservation Tax Credits**

# Affordable Housing Tools

Planning Area	Land Use Tool(s)	Units Created / Preserved - Goal
Virginia Square	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable Housing Ordinance</li> <li>Bonus Density</li> </ul>	5% of 1,500 total projected units (Plan adopted pre- Aff. Housing Ordinance)
Clarendon	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable Housing Ordinance</li> <li>Transfer of Development Rights</li> <li>Bonus Density</li> </ul>	No specific goal, however overall mix of unit types, prices etc. encouraged
Fort Myer Heights North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable Housing Ordinance</li> <li>Additional height and density up to 3.24 FAR</li> <li>Transfer of Development Rights</li> </ul>	<u>Conservation Area</u> – preserve historic garden apartments <u>Revitalization Area</u> – Achieve 20% of development over the GLUP as affordable units
Crystal City	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable Housing Ordinance</li> <li>Additional negotiated affordable housing units for development above the GLUP</li> </ul>	550-1,200 units
East Falls Church	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Affordable Housing Ordinance</li> <li>Partner w/ non profit partners</li> <li>Encourage conversion of existing units nearby</li> </ul>	100-250 units
Columbia Pike	To be determined	To be determined

# Summary

- Sector / Area Plans set the vision for various areas of the County
- Staff works with citizen groups to develop Sector / Area Plans
- Affordable housing is addressed, but may not be the main focus of the planning effort
- The County implements Affordable Housing Policy through Sector / Area Plans and the Zoning Ordinance
- Local, State and Federal funding also utilized to create / preserve affordable units