



# Expanding housing choices: a perspective on the missing middle framework and housing options in Arlington

presented by Eric berkey

*\*These remarks are not an endorsement by any group including the Douglas Park  
Civic Association.*



# Douglas Park Demographics\*

- ▶ Total population: 9,365
- ▶ 35 percent of residents identified as Hispanic/Latino, 33 percent as White, 17 percent as Black
  - ▶ compared to 64 percent, 15 percent, and 8 percent in Arlington total, respectively
- ▶ 65 percent of all occupied housing units occupied by renters
- ▶ **Story:** family able to purchase a duplex Penrose, later a single-family home in Douglas Park

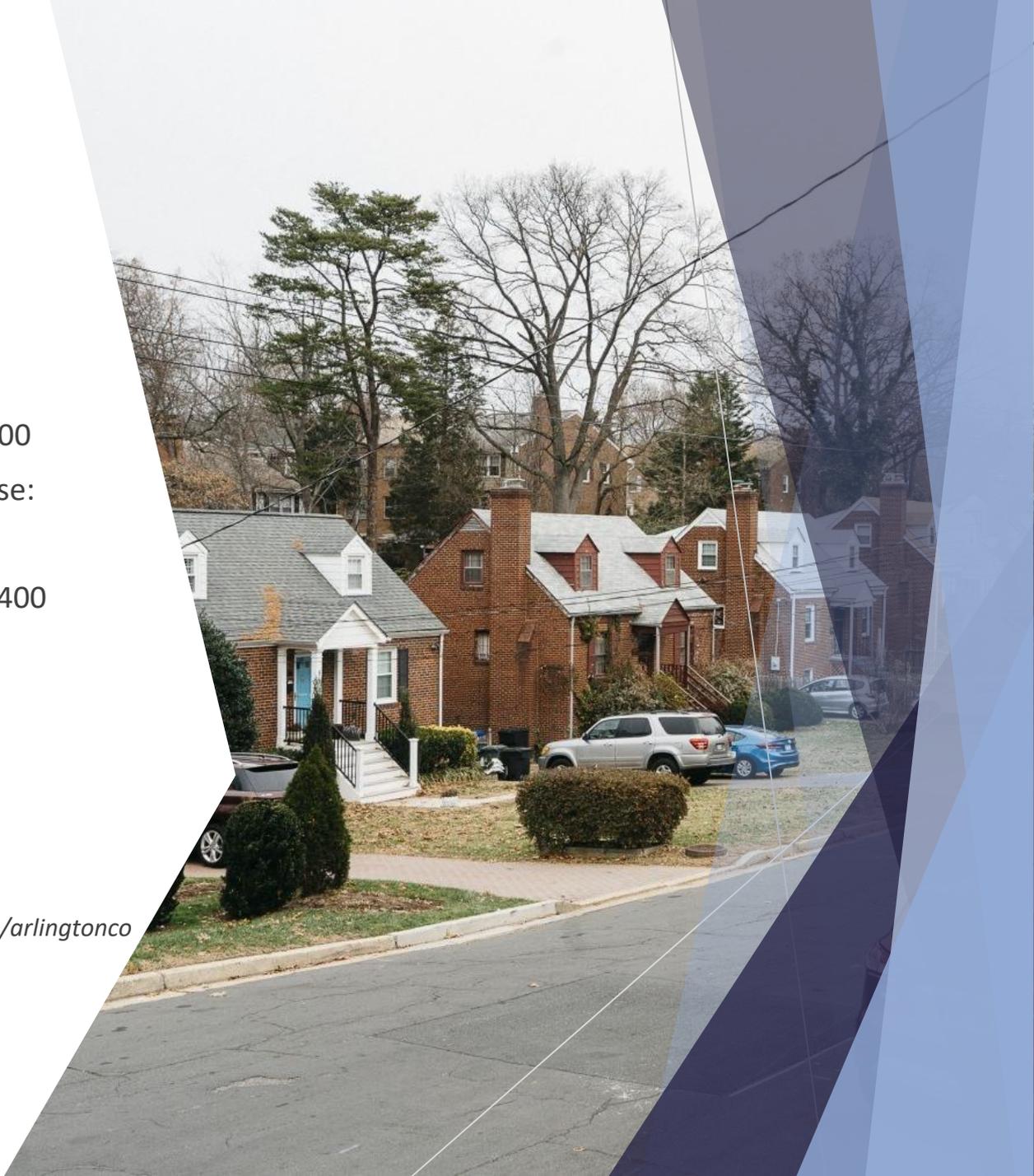
*\*2010 Census Data (provided by Arlington County)*



# Average assessed values in Arlington

- ▶ Single Family Detached: \$1,070,400
- ▶ Single Family Attached, Townhouse: \$785,200
- ▶ Condominium Townhouse: \$893,400
- ▶ Condos: \$453,000
- ▶ Cooperatives: \$152,000

*U.S. Census Bureau:  
<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/arlingtoncountyvirginia/NES010219>*



# The problem: Restrictive housing choices

- **Teardowns:** Between July 1, 2009, and June 30, 2019, 1,245 single-family detached houses were torn down to make way for new single-family houses (125 homes a year on average).
  - The average size of houses torn down was 1,515 square feet with three bedrooms. The houses that replaced these homes averaged 4,750 square feet – more than three times the size of the original house. These houses had an average sales price of \$1.7 million.

*Missing Middle Housing Study, Bulletin 1:*

*[https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2020/06/MMHS\\_ResearchCompendium\\_Bulletin1\\_final-1.pdf](https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/15/2020/06/MMHS_ResearchCompendium_Bulletin1_final-1.pdf)*

- **Retaining the status quo is a choice:** Missing Middle options cannot guarantee that larger single-family homes won't continue to be built on such lots, but it can provide an opportunity for different housing types that are more affordable to many residents and families and individuals looking to access Arlington's diverse neighborhoods.

# Area median income stats

- ▶ AMI for DC Area (family of 4): \$129,000  
*[https://www.arlingtonva.us/files/sharedassets/public/projects/documents/data-and-research/profile2022\\_1.pdf](https://www.arlingtonva.us/files/sharedassets/public/projects/documents/data-and-research/profile2022_1.pdf)*
  - ▶ A pair of GS-11 federal employees: \$149,990 together
  - ▶ An ACPD cop married to an APS teacher will hit (and then exceed) 100% AMI within their first five years of their respective careers with Arlington.
- ▶ 80% AMI (family of 4): \$113,840  
*<https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Programs/Housing/Income-and-Rent-Limits>*

# Current housing programs

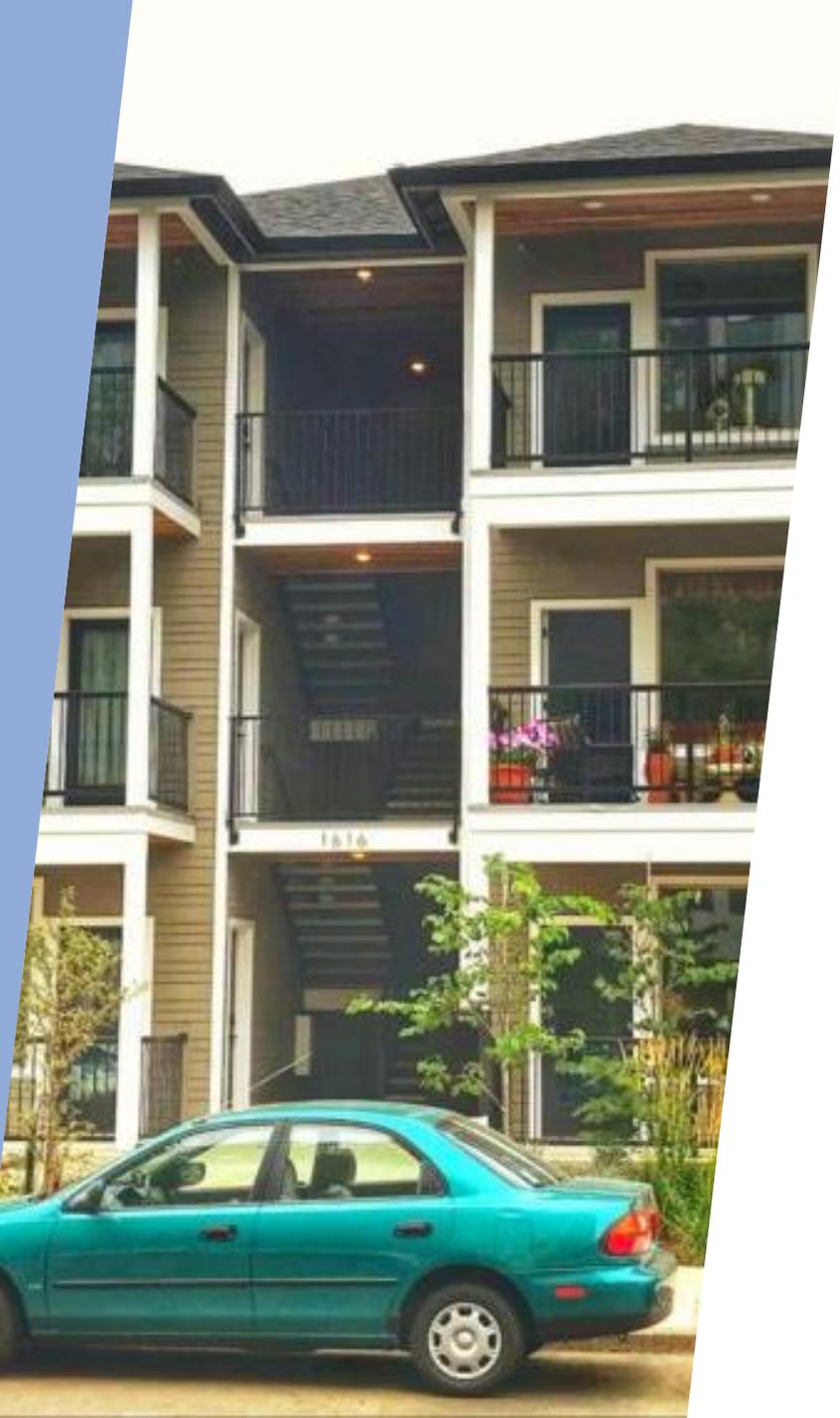
- Programs for low-income residents:
  - County's Homelessness Action Plan
  - MIPAP Program (affordable home ownership)
  - County Housing Grants (and Federal Housing Choice Program Vouchers)
  - Committed Affordable Units (CAFs)
- Land use tools are some ways the county can try to encourage greater supply and affordability of a variety of housing types through zoning mechanisms with no/minimal financial contributions from the County's budget.
  - Plan Langston Boulevard;
  - Columbia Pike Neighborhoods Form Based Code;
  - Multifamily Reinvestment Study;
  - bonus density provisions;
  - elder care zoning revisions, and
  - accessory dwelling ordinance

<https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Programs/Housing>

# WHO gets to have a say in our future?

- ▶ And how much of a say?
- ▶ County's Missing Middle Questionnaire:
  - ▶ 70% of participants living in apartments, condos, and townhomes said no to excluding housing types from the study, and 77% of participants who are renters said the same
  - ▶ Contrast with 78% of participants living in single family detached homes and 75% of participants identifying as homeowners saying yes to excluding at least some housing types from the framework
  - ▶ 61.5% of units are renter-occupied units and 38.5% of units are owner occupied units within Arlington

[https://arlington.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view\\_id=2&clip\\_id=4126&meta\\_id=212103](https://arlington.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=4126&meta_id=212103)



# Community engagement

- ▶ Is it important to help achieve a consensus or to ensure a diversity of backgrounds, perspectives, and experiences are heard?
- ▶ How are civic groups, especially the Civic Federation, ensuring that they try to be representative of their constituencies, or at least make efforts to do so and account for communities not actively participating in their discussions?
- ▶ Additionally, how are renters and residents in single family homes being adequately represented in these processes?

# WHY should you support missing middle housing?

- ▶ Provides a path for the development of duplexes, triplexes, and multiplexes in many parts of the county that only allow single-family homes. These are the types of housing options that the County started to prohibit in 1938 and enacted further restrictions between the 1940s and 1960s. Eliminating the stain of these restrictions is important to the future vibrancy of our community.
- ▶ It can provide opportunities for more families to live in neighborhoods throughout the county, for aging residents to remain in Arlington, and more.
- ▶ Characters make the neighborhood: not adapting zoning policies will prevent us from meeting housing challenges and make this a much less vibrant, welcoming community



# Join the growing coalition of Missing Middle supporters



Graphic credit: Alliance for Housing Solutions