



**A F F O R D A B L E**  
**H O U S I N G S T U D Y**

**C I V I C E N G A G E M E N T P L A N**

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## STUDY PURPOSE

### Value Message

#### **Affordable housing is essential to achieve Arlington's vision.**

Housing affordability is vital to the social and economic sustainability of our community. Providing affordability **benefits our community as a whole**, and:

**Supports our people** at all ages and stages of life, including young families who are just starting out; seniors who wish to securely age in place; families with children who value stability and neighborhood quality; and hardworking employees who deserve opportunity and choices.

**Improves our neighborhoods** by providing stability; maintaining diversity; assuring the quality of the built environment and neighborhood character; and reinforcing efficient transportation networks and land use policies.

**Strengthens our economy** by enhancing our market competitiveness; boosting economic development and revenues that pay for needs like schools and parks; attracting the best employees; connecting business owners with a stable customer base; and allowing consumers the flexibility to spend less of their income on housing.

Our Vision:  
*Arlington will be a diverse and inclusive world-class urban community with secure attractive residential and commercial neighborhoods where people unite to form a caring, learning, participating, sustainable community in which each person is valued.*

Our Affordable Housing Study will produce goals and policies that further our values of **diversity, inclusivity, choice** and **sustainability**. These values are central to the County's vision and are what make Arlington a desirable place to live, work, learn and play.

### Problem

#### **Many households can no longer afford to buy or rent here.**

The **affordable housing stock in Arlington has decreased dramatically**. Median incomes have not kept pace with the steadily rising housing costs. Between 2000 and 2013, average home sale prices increased by 140.3% while the average rent increased by 90.9%. Over the same timeframe, the County lost 13,500 affordable housing units primarily to rent increases.

## The Ask

**Help us build a solid foundation for the future of housing in our community.**

Arlington has a rich history as a place to find opportunity and enjoy a high quality of life. We have a successful track record of blending housing, transportation and growth choices that benefit the community as a whole. Today, we are seeing a shift in the community's housing challenges and needs – our policies need to shift with them. To sustain the diversity, vibrancy and economic prosperity of our community, **we need to act now.**

We invite the community to participate in this crucial planning step to ensure Arlington remains a diverse and inclusive place for everyone. The Affordable Housing Study will examine existing policies; assess current programs and resources; and identify needs and gaps in provisions for affordable housing. The result of our joint efforts will be a set of housing principles, goals, targets, strategies and priorities. Recommendations will be presented as:

- **Affordable Housing Element of Arlington's Comprehensive Plan** – establish a shared community vision; define housing policy; expand on goals, objectives and policies.
- **Implementation Framework** – define programs, tools and targets needed to achieve shared vision.
- **Monitoring and Evaluation Plan** – define measures, reporting standards and indicators of success.

## STUDY PROCESS

The study kicked off in July 2012 and is anticipated to be completed in June 2015. The County Board adopted a revised Study Charge on December 7, 2012. The result of the study will be an Affordable Housing Master Plan, which will include an Affordable Housing Element of Arlington's Comprehensive Plan, as well as an implementation framework and a monitoring and evaluation plan.

To date, three community forums and one community workshop, each engaging 100-200 residents, were held to collect input on establishing the community's vision. Additional outreach has included online surveys, a telephone poll, a civic engagement toolkit, presentations and displays at community events; including an interactive quiz at the County Fair, civic association and commission meetings, and interdepartmental strategy sessions.

The following upcoming milestones are planned:

- County Board work session on March 12 (Courthouse Plaza, 7-9pm)
- Community forum on March 28 (Washington Lee High School, 9am-noon)
- Community meetings and events throughout spring 2015 (see Appendix 2)
- County Board approval of Comprehensive Plan Element in July 2015.

### **Working Group**

In 2012, the County Manager appointed a 19-person Working Group comprised of representatives from advisory commissions and key stakeholder groups to advise County staff during the study process and provide input on the process implementation and recommendations. The group has met more than 40 times, with monthly meetings as well as additional committee, task force and focus meetings that delve deeper into specific topics. See Appendix 1 for a list of working group members.

### **County Board Liaison**

The study's County Board liaison, Mary Hynes, meets regularly with County staff to provide input and bridge communications and coordination with the County Board.

### **Stakeholder Network**

County staff have identified major stakeholders and interested parties who are consistently kept informed of the study's progress and solicited for input at key points in the process. Internal stakeholders include collaborating County departments who meet monthly on study issues as they relate to other disciplines such as transportation, the environment, parks and public services.

In addition to reaching these key stakeholders and their networks, staff maintains an email contact list that has grown to more than 475 subscribers.

## OUTREACH TO STAKEHOLDERS

Affordable housing is key for Arlington to achieve its vision of diversity, inclusivity, choice and sustainability. As such, all Arlingtonians have a stake in affordable housing in order to achieve Arlington's vision. To ensure robust civic engagement that reaches the breadth of stakeholders, activities will reach:

- Arlington residents
- Civic groups
- Neighborhood groups
- Faith communities
- Business community/employers
- Housing advocates
- Developers
- Low and moderate income residents
- Special needs residents
- Immigrant and minority residents
- Aging/senior residents
- Homeless residents
- Millennials.

Each of these groups is represented on the working group (see Appendix 1). In addition, specific strategies continue to be identified to ensure that stakeholder populations are part of developing a shared community vision for affordable housing. For example, Spanish materials and interpretation are available at community forums, and a Spanish-speaking community forum will be held in the spring.

# TOOLS FOR COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

## Meetings and events

Arlington County plans to sponsor two community-wide forums in spring 2015, one in-person and one virtual. In addition, issue- and area-based meetings will be held, including forums in English and Spanish for Columbia Pike residents, a faith community forum, and others as appropriate. See Appendix 2 for current schedule; updated schedule will also be available on the Arlington County website. Project staff is available to present at community events.

## Civic Engagement Toolkit

In spring 2014, a civic engagement toolkit was developed containing easy-to-use outreach materials for staff and working group:

- Civic engagement toolkit guide
- Terms to Know
- Powerpoint presentation on needs analysis and study process
- Feedback form
- "Affordable Housing is Essential to Achieve Arlington's Vision" fact sheet
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

For spring 2015, the civic engagement toolkit will be updated with the following materials:

- Powerpoint presentation on study recommendations
- Executive summary of draft Affordable Housing Master Plan
- Infographics on needs and goals of draft Affordable Housing Master Plan
- Fact sheets or messaging guides for community concerns
- Updated FAQs

## Additional Communications and Outreach Tools

Multiple communications vehicles will be used to share information about the study and its recommendations, including:

- Videos sharing personal stories
- Citizen article
- Local blogs and newsletters
- Press releases for events
- Updated County web page
- Social media campaign.

## APPENDIX 1 – WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

**Reverend Dr. Leonard L. Hamlin, Sr., Chair,**  
Faith Community (Macedonia Baptist Church)

**Michael Spotts, Vice-Chair,**  
Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee

**Linda Y. Kelleher, Civic Engagement Subcommittee Chair**  
Community Service Board

**Umair Ahsan,**  
Tenants (Arlington Voice/BRAVO)

**Shelynda Burney Brown,**  
Nonprofit Housing Developer (Community Preservation and Development Corporation)

**Robert Bushkoff,**  
Economic Development Commission (Dittmar Company)

**Richard Donohoe,**  
Homeownership Working Group of Housing Commission (Fidelity Bank)

**Doris Topel-Gantos,**  
For-profit Housing Developer (Bozzuto Development Company)

**John S. Grant,**  
Transportation Commission

**Matthew de Ferranti,**  
Housing Commission

**Joan Lawrence,**  
Historic Affairs Landmark Review Board

**David Leibson,**  
Ten-Year Plan to End Homelessness Task Force

**David Peterson,**  
Disability Advisory Commission

**Saul Reyes,**  
Community Based Organization (BU-GATA)

**Candice Rose,**  
Commission on Aging

**Kathryn Scruggs,**  
Civic Federation

**Stephen Sockwell,**  
Planning Commission

**Ori Weisz,**  
Tenant-Landlord Commission

## APPENDIX 2 – TARGET AUDIENCES

For updated schedule of events, see [arlingtonva.us/housing](http://arlingtonva.us/housing)

### Arlington residents

Community forum  
Social media

### Civic Groups

Planning Commission

Transportation Commission

Committee of 100  
Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Commission  
Historical Affairs and Landmark Review Board

Leadership Arlington  
Neighborhood College  
Arlington County Council PTAs  
League of Women Voters

### Neighborhood Groups

Civic Federation

Arlington Forest Civic Association  
Lee Highway civic associations  
Columbia Pike civic associations  
Columbia Heights West Civic Association

### Faith Communities

VOICE  
Arlington Interfaith Council  
St. Andrews Episcopal Church  
Our Lady Queen of Peace  
Temple Rodef of Shalom  
Macedonia Baptist Church  
Unitarian Universalist Church of Arlington  
Mt. Olivet United Methodist Church

## **Business Community/Employers**

### **Economic Development Commission**

Ballston BID

Crystal City BID

Rosslyn BID

Clarendon Alliance

CPRO

Arlington Chamber

Workforce Investment Board

## **Housing advocates and developers**

### **Housing Commission**

Alliance for Housing Solutions

**For-profit housing developer (Bozzuto)**

**Nonprofit housing developers (CPDC)**

Nonprofit Virginia

Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance

Natl. Assn. of Industrial and Office Parks

## **Low and moderate income residents**

**Community Development Citizen Advisory Committee**

**Tenant/Landlord Commission**

**Renters**

County outreach centers

## **Special needs residents**

Commission on Long Term Care Residences

**Disability Advisory Commission**

**Community Services Board**

Endeppendence Center

## **Immigrant residents/Minority groups**

**Community-based organization (BUGATA)**

Latino Roundtable

NAACP

LULAC

## **Aging residents/seniors**

### **Commission on Aging**

Culpepper

The Carlin

55+Program

Villages Network

## **Homeless**

### **10-year Plan to End Homelessness**

## **Millenials**

Leadership Arlington Young Professionals

**\*Working Group representative**