



Recommendations of the Affordable Housing Resources Panel

Melissa Jonas and Kevin Greenlief, Co-Chairs

March 12, 2018

ABOUT THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING RESOURCES PANEL (AHRP)

- In June 2018, the Board approved Phase 1 of its first-ever housing strategic plan, called the Communitywide Housing Strategic Plan
- This first phase led to the creation of 25 short-term strategies that can be implemented in the next two years
- Phase 2 of the Plan includes longer-term strategies for developing new tools, policies, and resources to support the production, preservation, and access to housing that is affordable to all who live and work in our community
- To accomplish Phase 2, the Board created the AHRP to provide recommendations on the number of additional affordable housing units the County should work toward developing and preserving, and the funding sources and mechanisms by which these units should be developed

ABOUT THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING RESOURCES PANEL (AHRP)

- Comprised of a broad base of stakeholders and experts:
 - Developers/builders
 - Chambers of commerce
 - Boards/authorities/commissions
 - Advocates
 - Nonprofit leaders

ABOUT THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING RESOURCES PANEL (AHRP)

- AHRP met from October through February
- Vigorous discussion about the need for new production and the tools to achieve the goals
- Preservation and land use are key issues
- Came to a consensus set of recommendations for the budget guidance

OVERALL FRAMEWORK FOR RECOMMENDATIONS DOCUMENT

The Affordable Housing Resources Panel (AHRP) recommendations document for the Board is structured into five strategic areas:

- Need, new production goals, and resources
- Preservation of affordable units
- Land use policies and regulations
- Institutional capacity
- Community awareness and legislative priorities

PANEL RECOMMENDATION:

NEED, NEW PRODUCTION GOALS, AND RESOURCES

Need: 15,000 new housing units are needed over the next 15 years that are affordable to households earning 60% Area Median Income (AMI) or less

Goal: Produce at least 5,000 new affordable units over the next 15 years using public financial resources

The 5,000 unit recommendation is a floor not the ceiling

The AHRP recognizes the importance of going beyond the goal of 5,000 new affordable units over the next 15 years through a variety of land use, regulatory, and other strategies, to leverage public investment

PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS:

NEED, NEW PRODUCTION GOALS, AND RESOURCES

Recommendation to the Board on Resources to Achieve Goal:

Increase the Affordable Housing Fund the equivalent of one additional cent on the real estate tax rate (in addition to the current half penny).

Further Recommendations to the Board on an Increase in the Housing Fund:

- Funds to be used for Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) loans for the private sector (for profit/nonprofit)
- Set a priority for projects that include units for individuals emerging from homelessness and/or individuals with other special needs; pair with project based subsidies

FCRHA use on its own projects restricted to:

- Acquisition/new construction housing for seniors and persons with special needs
- Acquisition of land for the purposes of facilitating a P3 project such as North Hill, Residences at the Government Center, Lewinsville
- Priority projects from the Board

PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS:

NEED, NEW PRODUCTION GOALS, AND RESOURCES

Recommendations to the Board to Achieve and Surpass the 5K by 15 Goal:

- Consider a countywide proffer policy on commercial contributions that are used for affordable housing production
- Consider a policy directing the buyouts from Affordable Dwelling Units (ADUs) and Workforce Dwelling Units (WDUs) be used to support the production of new affordable housing units
- Redirect funds from the Housing Trust Fund into new production
- Consider using the County's Economic Opportunity Reserve to finance fees related to regulatory requirements and possibly other pre-development activities

PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS:

PRESERVATION OF AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS

- The Board should reaffirm its commitment to no net loss of existing market affordable units to be achieved through public financing and land use policy
- The Board should prioritize the current funding of a half a penny in the Penny for Affordable Housing Fund to support preservation (i.e., Parkwood, Huntington Gardens). Current funding valued at approximately \$12.5 million per year.

PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS: LAND USE

- The Board should direct county staff to develop a package of innovative land use policies to further facilitate the development of affordable housing beyond the stated goal of 5,000 units.
- The Board should recommend the implementation of innovative land use policies to spur the development of affordable housing as a top priority of the new Deputy County Executive (overseeing land development services and planning and zoning).
- Possible implementation through modernization of Housing Policy Plan

PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS: LAND USE - CONTINUED

Further Recommendations for the Board to consider:

- A regulatory toolbox, including items such as:
 - Flexibility in parking regulations
 - Decreased processing time
 - Moderation and/or bonding of development fees

PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS: LAND USE - CONTINUED

Further Recommendations for the Board to consider:

- A land use toolbox, including items such as:
 - Recommendations of the Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) land use panel
 - Transfer of development rights program to facilitate the preservation and development of new affordable housing
 - Bonus density and height exceptions, including allowing affordable housing units to be discounted from density calculations as appropriate near Metro stations

PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS: LAND USE - CONTINUED

- Land use toolbox items continued:
 - Tax Increment Financing to offset infrastructure and other development costs
 - Partnerships with houses of worship

PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS: INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY

- The Board should evaluate the need for additional investment in the capacity of the county's regulatory agencies to assist affordable housing land use policy and regulatory issues.
- The Board should commit to an investment in the personnel capacity in the Department of Housing and Community Development
 - Include a “housing in all policies” manager to coordinate with county's planning/regulatory/development agencies

PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS: COMMUNITY AWARENESS AND LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Recommendations to the Board:

- Ensure that affordable housing is a critical focus area in the Countywide Strategic Plan
- Ensure that affordable housing has a prominent place in the Board's legislative program.
- Maintain affordable housing as a focus of the county's federal and state legislative efforts.
- Promote community awareness of, and support for affordable housing

PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS:

TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

- Affordable Housing Advisory Committee (AHAC) be re-constituted and in charge of monitoring progress and providing ongoing advice
- A dashboard should be developed to track progress
- An iteration of the AHRP be charged in five years with reviewing these recommendations and their progress and provide any necessary updates to the Board

THE PATH FORWARD

- One-on-One Briefings to Board Members
- Inclusion in FY 2021 Budget Guidance

Questions/Comments