



County of Fairfax, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: May xx, xxxx **DRAFT**

TO: Fairfax County Board of Supervisors OR Carmen Bishop?

FROM: Larry Zaragoza, DEnv, Chair
Environmental Quality Advisory Council (EQAC)

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Development of Options on Accessory Living Units (ALU)

Recognizing that draft language on the ALU ordinance will be developed in the coming months, we offer comments to help inform your drafting of a ordinance proposal.

We support clarifications to the ALU approval process. While the current ALU policy provides safeguards against uncontrolled ALU development, by right ALUs regardless of lot size and environmental impacts could have significant negative impacts.

We support a measured ALU policy that includes meaningful environmental safeguards that are monitored and enforced, including tree canopy protection requirements, limits on increases in impervious surface, avoiding approval of infill projects in areas that are likely to exacerbate downstream flooding, and stormwater management standards consistent with the County's environmental goals. ALUs should be studied with the aim of promoting them through appropriate incentives while attending to tree loss and stormwater concerns, consistent with the Comprehensive Plan and the 2025 EQAC ARE Land Use Chapter

EQAC strongly believes that the most environmentally sound, equitable, and scalable strategy for dramatically expanding affordable and workforce housing lies in accelerating high-density, mixed-use development in two interconnected types of places now explicitly supported by Plan Forward: (1) Transit Station Areas — neighborhoods within walking distance of Metrorail — and (2) Suburban Village Centers — mixed-use commercial zones that may not yet be well-connected to rail transit, but that are planned to grow into transit-ready communities through concentration of development and investment in enhanced bus service.

Providing housing for family members from a primary residence by offering an ALU may be the best option for a family member in need of family support. However, the use of ALUs to provide the owner another income stream will have unintended and unnecessary impacts. Moreover, ALU dwellings that are rented out for profit will command whatever the market will bear, which may not be very affordable.

We hope you find these comments helpful in developing a draft ordinance and thank you for considering these comments.

Thank you for your consideration and let us know if you have questions.

cc: Jennifer L. Miller, Deputy County Executive
John Morrill, Acting Director, Office of Environmental and Energy Coordination
Christopher Herrington, Director, Department of Public Works and Environmental Services (DPWES)
Tracy Strunk, Director, Department of Planning and Development (DPD)
Bill Hicks, Director, Land Development Services (LDS)
Matthew Hansen, Director, Site Development and Inspections Division, LDS
Allison Homer, OEEC
Brian Keightley, Director, Urban Forest Management Division
EQAC

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