

Charter
Housing Commission
FINAL DRAFT – June 13, 2023

Section 1 – Introduction: The Housing Commission is created as an advisory body by the County Board of Arlington County, Virginia.

Section 2 – Mission: The Housing Commission will be the chief advisory commission to the County Board on housing issues in Arlington County. The Commission will serve a variety of functions aimed at advising the County Board on County housing conditions, trends and needs, and developing policy recommendations.

Section 3 – Governing and Supporting Documents:

1. Governing Documents

- Affordable Housing Master Plan
- Affordable Housing Ordinance
- Tenant Assistance Fund Policy

2. Supporting Document

- Consolidated Plan

Section 4 – Functions and Scope: The Housing Commission shall keep county and community leadership apprised of issues and actions regarding County housing conditions, trends and needs, and developing policy recommendations. More specifically, the Commission will:

1. Review existing County housing policies and guidelines and develop a comprehensive, clearly-stated, equity-focused, community representing County housing policy, consistent with various land use goals and plans, that provides an overall guide for County action spanning the spectrum of housing issues, such as:
 - increasing the supply of affordable housing;
 - improvement of the rental housing supply;
 - affirmatively furthering fair housing;
 - homeownership assistance;
 - specialized housing needs of the elderly, persons with disabilities, and other historically marginalized populations;
 - homelessness;
 - Department of Human Services housing related services; and
 - working with the Tenant-Landlord Commission on displacement and relocation issues.
2. Review and provide recommendations to the County Board on housing funding proposals that include the Affordable Housing Investment Fund (AHIF) and federal funds;
3. Review the housing data in Arlington in order to assess conditions, determine trends, reveal acutely pressing needs, and generally portray Arlington’s housing situation at specific points in time;
4. Review the effectiveness of new techniques and strategies related to housing finance and housing assistance and analyze potential incentives for private developers to provide affordable housing (i.e., density bonus);

5. Provide recommendations to the County Board on state and federal legislation deserving County support;
6. Provide housing recommendations to the County Board on the County's annual budget;
7. Participate in the development of the Consolidated Plan to guide county-wide housing, homeless, and community development strategies;
8. Consider the future role of the Commission as an advisor to the County Board, and how best to provide advice on housing related issues which come before the County Board; and
9. Review and monitor prior recommendations put forth by the Commission and determine which of those recommendations as yet are unfulfilled and should be pursued according to what priority; specify what further actions, if any, need to be undertaken; and develop an overall recommended strategy for accomplishing these purposes.

Section 5 – Membership: The Housing Commission shall comprise thirteen members. These members shall include at least one:

- representative of tenant interests;
- representative of developer, builder and/or real estate interests;
- representative of neighborhood interests;
- representative of community-wide nonprofit agencies;
- and at-large county board appointments.

The County Board will appoint and maintain a roster of members. Members will be appointed for four-year terms. All members serve at the pleasure of the Board.

The Housing Commission members are expected to serve a housing liaison function to other Commissions, working groups and planning studies in Arlington. A member of the Commission who fails to attend three Housing Commission meetings in a single year without providing advance notice to the Chair, or staff, may be asked to resign their remaining term on the Commission. The Commission Chair, after consultation with the County Board liaison, shall notify the member if such an action is warranted.

Chair and Vice Chair: The County Board shall appoint a Chair who shall lead the efforts of the Advisory Group. The County Board shall also appoint a Vice Chair.

Subcommittee Membership: The Housing Commission may create subcommittees, as necessary, to accomplish specific Housing Commission missions and the Chair shall appoint subcommittee leadership. Subcommittee membership may include persons who are not on the Housing Commission.

Section 6 – Staff Liaison: The County Manager shall appoint a member of staff from the Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development to serve as liaison to the Housing Commission.

Section 7 – Meetings: The Housing Commission will meet as needed to adequately fulfill its role and responsibilities outlined in this charter. The Housing Commission will meet once a month with no meeting in August. Meetings are typically scheduled nine to 12 days before County Board meetings. Agendas are available one week prior to each meeting. Subcommittees meet as needed.

All meetings will comply with Virginia Open Meeting requirements, the Policy Governing Electronic Meetings and Electronic Participation in Meetings, and the Freedom of Information Act. Agendas and meeting minutes will be made available to the public in a timely manner.

The Advisory Group Handbook provides additional information on the conduct of meetings as well as communication protocols that should guide all members in their advisory group work.

Section 8 – Reporting to the Board: The Housing Commission will provide recommendations to the County Board about area of responsibility. The Housing Commission will at a minimum submit an annual report to the County Board after consultation with the Board Liaison. The Housing Commission may, from time to time, be asked to provide comment at a regular Board meeting or Board work session. In addition, testimony from advisory groups on budget and capital spending priorities is always welcome. The Chair should consult with the staff liaison and review the published public hearing schedules.

Section 9 – Quorum and Voting: A majority of Commissioners must be present during a meeting to constitute a quorum. If the Commission does not have a quorum, no votes can be taken until a quorum is achieved. Motions properly seconded and brought for a vote must pass with support from one more than half of Commissioners present and voting.

Section 10 – Update of this Charter: Every three years, the Housing Commission shall review this charter to assure that it meets current needs. Any requests for changes must be processed through the Board Liaison.