



[Snapshot of Initiatives and Recommendations \(arcgis.com\)](#)

## Snapshot of Initiatives and Recommendations

Zoning for Housing | Housing for All

City of Alexandria, Virginia  
October 6, 2023

## Historic Development Patterns

**Purpose:** Identify favorable historic development patterns within the city's historic districts and established neighborhoods and provide recommendations that would allow these types of development to be built in the future.

## Expanding Housing Opportunities in Single Family Zones

**Purpose:** Broaden access to traditionally single-family only neighborhoods. Evaluate the current limit of one household per lot in single-family zones and the potential benefits of allowing a greater number of households per lot in those zones.

## Expansion of Transit Oriented Development

**Purpose:** Analyze existing barriers that limit increased development densities around transit stations. The purpose is to identify themes to guide future small area plans so that they better support densities near high-capacity transit.

## Industrial Zones Analysis

**Purpose:** The Industrial Zone currently does not allow residential uses but many uses within the Industrial Zone may be compatible with residential uses. This analysis analyzed the potential for allowing land zoned industrial to apply for Residential Multi-Family (RMF) zoning. It also looked at any barriers to the planned transition in some areas from industrial uses to mixed-use/residential uses.

## Coordinated Development Districts

**Purpose:** Increase the number of committed affordable housing units constructed in CDD zones.

## Office-to-Residential Conversions

**Purpose:** Determine if the City's current approach to conversions should be confirmed or amended. Investigate whether the Zoning Ordinance includes impediments to office-to-residential conversions and whether there are areas in the city where conversions should be incentivized or discouraged.

## Residential Multi-Family Zone Analysis

**Purpose:** Analyze potential expanded opportunities for the RMF zone.

## Townhouse Zoning Analysis

**Purpose:** Identify opportunities to increase consistency in zoning rules (lot requirements, Floor Area Ratio, and bulk/open space regulations) across the zones that allow townhouses. Revise lot, bulk, open space, and parking requirements to allow for small scale residential infill development in zones that permit townhouses without public hearing approval.

### Opportunities to Learn More

- November 1: Planning Commission Public Hearing on Zoning for Housing, City Hall (opportunity to comment)
- November 14: City Council Public Hearing on Zoning for Housing, City Hall (opportunity to comment)
- November 18: City Council Public Hearing on Zoning for Housing continued, City Hall (opportunity to comment)
- November 28: City Council Meeting, City Hall (scheduled vote on Zoning for Housing reforms - no public comment)

Comments may be submitted in advance to Department of Planning & Zoning staff at [PlanComm@alexandriava.gov](mailto:PlanComm@alexandriava.gov) for the Planning Commission Public Hearing and to the City Clerk at [CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov](mailto:CouncilComment@alexandriava.gov) for the City Council Public Hearings



**Answers from Alexandria's Planning Office to the RCA's Questions  
regarding the "Housing For All" Initiative**

1. Please provide more details on how additional housing density in Rosemont will impact sanitary and stormwater capacity. RCA members described sewer overflows in their basements which they stated they had never experienced until the Potomac Yard redevelopments. Will the expansion of multi-family housing in current single-family housing zones worsen this flooding? What evidence supports the City's determination that this will not occur?

**Response:**

The [City's 2021 Sanitary Sewer Master Plan](#) addresses future wastewater flows, identifies when and where infrastructure upgrades or improvements will be needed to accommodate growth, and includes overall plans to continue to serve the wastewater needs of residents and businesses by effectively operating and maintaining the sewer system. The Sanitary Sewer Master Plan also addresses regulatory drivers related to sanitary sewers, such as the 2017 combined sewer overflow (CSO) legislation.

In terms of growth data, the Sanitary Sewer Master Plan uses the growth forecasts through 2045 and post-2045 (build out conditions) to analyze the following:

- Hydraulic capacity of the City's collector (local) sanitary sewers;
- Hydraulic capacity of the Alexandria Renew interceptor sewers; and
- Treatment plant capacity

Also, the Department of Transportation and Environmental Services has information on its webpage relating to how to address backups: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/Sewers> Some of the suggestions include: the Backflow Preventer Reimbursement Program under which the City offers a partial [reimbursement program](#) for residents who have a licensed plumber install a backflow preventer device on their sewer lateral. These devices can help protect against future backups. The amount of the reimbursement is 50 percent of the cost to install the device up to a maximum of \$2,000.

Also, there is the Disconnect Private Sources of Stormwater Inflow from the Sanitary Sewer program which indicates another way to mitigate sanitary sewer backups is to disconnect private sources of stormwater into the sanitary sewer or reduce the impacts of those sources. Two examples of these sources are downspouts (roof leaders) and outdoor basement stairwell drains. If one sees that any of your downspouts discharge into the a pipe that goes into the ground or if you have an outside basement stairwell drain, and your home was constructed before 1970, there is a possibility they are connected to the sanitary sewer system. If you would like to find out if your downspout is connected to the sanitary sewer system, call us at 703.746.4014 so that City staff can help assess if they are connected to the sanitary sewer along with options for either disconnecting these sources or how to minimize their impact on sewer backups.

That said, please know that I am also forwarding information from your email to the Department of Transportation & Environmental Services indicating the thought by some residents that the problem may be associated with development at Potomac Yard so they can explore that.



2. Specifically, how will the older homes in Rosemont handle the added infrastructure (i.e. sewer, stormwater) stresses of the added density?

**Response:**

As background, please take a look at the [Zoning for Housing/Housing for All webpage](#). Information is included on the [Number of Units Anticipated and How Infrastructure Needs](#) are being addressed.

Staff estimates that Zoning for Housing could add as many as 2,800 net new units over the next 10 years. Increased housing production comes both from changes that allow a net increase in the number of new units that are allowed as well as (and possibly more importantly) making it easier for the many planned housing units to move from concept to construction. Alexandria currently has 80,000 housing units; plans approved in the past two decades allow for over 50,000 additional units, of which about 15,000 units have their required approvals but are not yet built.

All of those units have been analyzed for impacts on infrastructure and public facilities (water and sewer, transportation, public schools, open space, etc.) and accounted for in our long-range public facility plans. For example, as noted in the response to the first question, the [Sanitary Sewer Master Plan](#) identifies the sewer infrastructure needed to support all planned growth to 2045 and beyond. Long range enrollment forecasts are prepared collaboratively with Alexandria City Public Schools based on planned development and demographic shifts. This report uses the words “net new” to describe housing units that would be allowed by Zoning for Housing beyond those already allowed by small area plans and existing zoning.

3. Are ADUs already meeting our City’s additional housing needs? Why or why not?

**Response:**

Zoning for Housing/Housing for All’s purpose is to help expand housing production through accessibility in terms of choice in locations; through affordability in terms of price points; and through availability in terms of housing typologies and tenures. To-date, 53 applications for [Accessory Dwelling Units \(ADUs\)](#) have been approved. A key outcome of ADUs is to provide choice in typologies and locations. Also, as noted on the [Zoning for Housing/Housing for All webpage](#), the [housing need in Alexandria](#) far outstrips the number of ADUs that have been approved since their inception. Currently approximately 19,000 households in Alexandria (renters and homeowners) are cost burdened, meaning they are paying more than 30 percent of their income on housing, leaving limited resources for other life necessities.

4. Will the proposed parking requirements overwhelm our street parking?

**Response:**

As background, the Zoning for Housing/Housing for All webpage provides information describing the [parking recommendations](#).



Current parking requirements for residential dwellings are found in [Article 8 of the Zoning Ordinance](#). The requirement for single-family detached, two-family and row or townhouse dwellings is two (2.0) spaces per dwelling unit for single-family detached, two-family, and townhouse dwellings. The multi-family unit parking requirement is calculated by considering the number of bedrooms and proximity to transit. In terms of the City's current practice of reduced parking, the Alexandria City Council has approved reductions in required parking for residential infill projects without resulting impacts or neighborhood complaints. Between 2016 and 2023, 12 special use permit cases with parking reductions were approved, and in one case, Council reduced the parking requirement from one to zero. More information regarding the parking recommendations can be reviewed through the parking recommendations link above.

5. Please provide documents, information, studies, etc. supporting the assumption of X additional units over 10 years, as well as the parking study supporting the proposed reduction in the number of off-street parking spaces.

**Response:**

Please see responses under Question #2 above.

6. Do our current schools have the capacity to absorb the added density brought on by Zoning for Housing/Housing for All?

**Response:**

As part of the [Number of Units Anticipated and How Infrastructure Needs](#) are being addressed document, there is information that *states the student generation of 178 multifamily units is 15 over the 10 year period.*

7. Please provide a more detailed breakdown of land zoned for SF, duplex, TH, industrial, commercial, etc. that is based on number of households, not share of land. For example, we believe properties like the Virginia Seminary are labeled Single family but are not used as such. We need a more accurate picture of the breakdown.

**Response:**

The Zoning for Housing/Housing for All website includes a [single-family zone map](#). It also contains a list of all single-family zones and their allowable uses. While we have provided the amount of land area represented by those zones, you are right that these zones also include uses such as services and institutions that are tangential to qualify of life factors in neighborhoods. The City's GIS webpage can help those who are interested in isolating those uses. [Your Neighborhood Viewer | City of Alexandria, VA \(alexandriava.gov\)](#) The [Your Neighborhood Viewer](#) is an interactive viewer allowing you to search for important places



## ROSEMONT CITIZENS ASSOCIATION

around your neighborhood or area of interest within the City of Alexandria. Examples of what can be seen via this interactive map:

- Hospital and Fire Stations
- City Recreational Parks and Dog Parks
- Bike Share Locations, Metro Stations/Rail Information, Zip Car locations, and Bus Stops
- Post Offices, Libraries, Polling Locations, Trash Collection information, and more

8. Will additional HUD/federal funding be made available to the City by eliminating single family zoning?

**Response:**

As noted at the August 29 Zoning for Housing/Housing for All Kick-Off event, where a representative of the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) was present and part of the panel, HUD has released a [\\$85 million Pathways to Remove Obstacles Notice of Funding Availability](#) for which jurisdictions can apply. It is aimed to assist those jurisdictions which are undertaking zoning reforms to expand housing production, affordability and preservation. Alexandria is exploring that opportunity.