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Affordable Housing in Reston Virginia

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Planning Affordable in Reston, Virginia

A Capstone Plan Document

Presented to the Academic Faculty
by
Maggie Gallagher

In Partial Fulfillment
Presented to the Academic Faculty
by
Maggie Gallagher

Virginia Commonwealth University
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Planning Affordable in Reston Virginia

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Introduction

Reston, Virginia is one of the first planned areas in America. Conceptualized in the 1960s by Robert E. Simon, Reston was planned and developed as an inclusive, beautiful suburb of Washington, D.C. Robert E. Simon planned for Reston with seven principles in mind. The Reston he envisioned was one where members could live, work, and enjoy their town (goal 4). Simon envisioned a Reston where residents would be able to remain in the community throughout their lives, with ‘a diverse housing supply that met a variety of needs and incomes of all people’ (goal 2). Simon envisioned and built a community with both structural and natural beauty (goal 6), and where the focal point of all planning is the importance of the dignity of the individual (All About Us). Although Reston was planned as an inclusive community it can still struggle to find the resources for affordable housing like many other affluent communities. As the area becomes more populated the cost of land will continue to rise, making it increasingly more difficult to create affordable development, for both developers and the local government incentivizing the affordable units. With the Metrorail expanding deeper into Reston, the continual raising cost of land, and the population continuing to grow, it is important to find new and innovative opportunities for affordable housing.

Currently, Fairfax County is re-evaluating its comprehensive plan. As an area within Fairfax County’s governance, Reston’s 2017 Comprehensive Plan is also being re-evaluating, to assess how it is meeting community needs. As a part of the re-evaluation, the housing supply in Reston and its goals for development will be reviewed, including the affordable housing units in the area. This plan aims to assess the stock of affordable housing in Reston, predict the future need for affordable housing, and create a strategy to address those needs. This plan was created for the office of the Hunter Mill District’s Supervisor Walter Alcorn in coordination with Commissioner John Carter and Supervisor Alcorn’s staff, including Gwenn Minton and Jose Delcid.

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1 The seven goals created for Reston include: (1) providing a variety of leisure opportunities, including a range of cultural and recreational facilities, (2) the ability to remain in the community throughout their lives, through a range of housing options, (3) emphasizing the importance individual, (4) residents being able to work in community, (5) to provide commercial, cultural and recreational facilities to residents, (6) creating a beautiful, structural and natural area, and (7) to make Reston financially accessible.
Plan Purpose

Reston has undergone vast development and change since its creation in the 1960s. Recently, the Metrorail system opened its first station in Reston in 2014 and plans to open a second station in Reston by 2021 (DullesMetro). The Metrorail expansion will lead to an increase in transit-oriented development zones (TODs) and will likely spur population growth in Reston as it connects the area to job opportunities and brings more jobs into the region. As Reston’s population continues to grow it is essential to evaluate the needs of the current Reston residents, to determine if their needs are currently being met, and to be cognizant of inclusivity goals intended for the area as it continues to develop. Reston’s second goal states, “inclusivity can be achieved through the local housing market by providing the opportunity to live in Reston by making housing available for all income-levels in the area” (All About Us). With that in mind, this plan evaluates the demand for affordable housing in Reston, the current supply of affordable housing, and how that demand will change in the future.

This plan answers four questions: (1) how is Reston meeting the local demand for affordable housing today, (2) is the existing housing is providing the community with quality affordable housing that is connected and integrated into the community, (3) how will demand change in the future, and (4) how can Reston strive to meet the everchanging demand for affordable housing?

Research Background

Existing Conditions

A brief history of Reston, Virginia

In 1961, Robert E. Simon bought 6,750 acres of land located near the newly developed Dulles Airport and access road. Robert E. Simon’s original plan for Reston was a part of the greater “city beautiful” movement, created with an idea not only for the physical layout of the town but also for the character of the town and the lifestyle of its people (All About Reston’s History). In a way, Simon’s plan reflects some of Frank Lloyd Wright’s “ideal city” concepts incorporating transportation, parks, character, and inclusion into the
design. Simon planned for Reston knowing it would be a suburb of Washington, D.C. but he wanted it to be different than the existing suburbs.

Simon envisioned a cohesive town that would be able to serve residents of all incomes, ages, and backgrounds. The original seven goals for Reston created a vision of a community that worked to provide housing, work, and recreational opportunities for all while also creating a beautiful structural and natural environment (Reston Master Plan, 1962).

**Reston Today**

Located in Northern Virginia, Reston is a Homeowners Association (HOA) within the Hunter Mill District of Fairfax County, the second wealthiest county in the nation (U.S. News). Reston has a population of over 60,000 residents who represent an educated population, with over two-thirds earning a bachelor’s degree or above. This population is predicted to grow over the next 20 years but is also predicted to reach the population capacity in Reston of 81,195 by 2033, as shown in chart 1 below. There is an effort to raise the population capacity but those efforts have yet to pass into any official ruling.

![Chart 1: Reston Population Trend and Prediction according to the US Census and Fairfax County](chart.jpg)
A majority of the population is within working age, between 16-64 years old, with a significant portion of the population falling within the 65-85+ age cohort, as seen in chart 2 below. With the growing population and large workforce age group, the need for housing will continue to grow. The 20–24-year-old and 25–34-year-old cohort may include individuals who are moving out of their family home for the first time, have their first job or are facing a school or other debt. This population may be looking for housing options that are affordable for their young professional budget. Young professionals are not the only ones who may be looking for housing options to fit their budget. Young families, those new to the area, those established in their career, or anyone who is seeking housing in Reston will need to find housing that they can afford, for those earning below the median income that may mean looking for affordable development.

![Reston Age Distribution 2019](chart2.png)

Chart 2: Reston Age Distribution according to the US Census
Restonian’s on average earn more than the average American. In Reston, 93 percent of the population is working a white-collar position, with an average median household income of $146,000\(^2\), more than double the average median household income of America (American Community Survey). Even with an above-average median income, as compared to the state and the country, there are still a total of 4,098 residents living below the poverty line, defined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (H.U.D) as earning $17,240 in a two-person household, shown in the chart 3 below. Single occupancy households earning below $57,450 qualify for affordable housing in Reston based on their income, which includes approximately 3,000 additional households. Reston needs to create housing that addresses the needs of all its households.

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\(^2\) U.S. Average Median Income: $68,703, Virginia Average Median Income: $76,456 (source: U.S. Census Bureau)
Housing optionality is essential in any community but is part of Reston’s DNA. Reston is noted in planning books and practices for being one of few areas completely planned before it was built. Robert E. Simon Jr. wanted Reston to represent his inclusive, “garden city” vision that provided spaces for all people of all backgrounds and all incomes, a “just city” – one that would promote equality, democracy, and diversity. With its rapidly expanding population and rising home prices, Reston leaders and citizen groups work to continuously ensure that Simon’s vision is realized, that there is space for all people. Other affluent areas also work to find the right incentives and policies to ensure the development of affordable housing. The COVID-19 pandemic has caused additional stress for the entire nation. With the unemployment rate still recovering many household incomes are not what they once were, people are struggling to find work and to earn what they were earning pre-pandemic, what they based their expected housing payments on. The increase in economic struggles will likely show an increase in demand for affordable housing, not only in the next couple of months but continuously as the United States and its economy continue to recover. The impact of the pandemic will far outlast the pre-vaccine era. This affordable housing plan works to ensure there is space for all through inclusionary zoning practices, preservation of existing housing, and planning for new development.

*Inclusionary Zoning:*

Inclusionary zoning (IZ) ordinances are implemented throughout the United States to encourage or require the creation affordable housing. The IZ ordinances require or encourage developers to create housing that is affordable to rent or buy for families of low or moderate-income. The first IZ policy originated in Fairfax County, Virginia (where Reston is located) in 1971 and the County still uses IZ policy today.

Inclusionary zoning can be defined as a policy that encourages or requires on-site or off-site development for affordable housing, usually with incentives for developers to encourage their participation. Incentives can include density bonuses, zoning variances, and fee reduction practices to allow developers more flexibility in planning (Levy et. al, 2012). Some localities have utilized inclusionary zoning practices to offer more affordable housing in their region. Although IZ intends to create more affordable
housing, some say IZ policies create cost burdens on developers, restrict new buildings, and increase prices for consumers (Levy et. al, 2012).

Many states have adopted laws that prevent localities from enacting mandatory IZ or limit their discretion when designing voluntary IZ policies. Dillon ruled states, like Virginia where the locality is required to have exact written permission to create housing policy, make it difficult to create IZ policy, as they must first obtain the written right to do so. States like North Carolina have a ban on rent-controls, making it difficult to create IZ policies that stick. Concerns about the impact of IZ policies on the housing market, economy, and social geography of an area could cause states to pre-emptively deter IZ efforts. Indiana, for example, prohibits localities from establishing any type of rent or purchase control for developers (Does Your City have Access to Inclusionary Housing, 2019).

Although some states make the development of inclusionary zoning policies difficult, IZ has become common practice in the United States, with a total of 866 jurisdictions currently utilizing some form of IZ policy. Inclusionary zoning can be a strong tool in planning to encourage and require the development of affordable housing. When developing IZ policies it is important to understand the community, as the best results of IZ are realized when the policy is customized to the region. To further push for the development of affordable housing that benefits the whole community a flexible, customized inclusionary zoning policy is the most effective. (Levy et. al, 2012).

**Fairfax County IZ History**

Fairfax County created the first IZ ordinance in the country in 1971, requiring 15 percent of all units in multifamily projects with more than 50 units to be dedicated to households earning between 60 and 80 percent of Washington D.C.’s metropolitan region’s average median income (AMI). This original requirement did not last more than 2 years before the Virginia Supreme Court ruled that the County did not provide just compensation for the affordable housing production, making it a “ takings” or an, “… appropriation of
private property by regulation without offering just compensation” (Levy et. al, 28), and because, as Virginia is a Dillon rule state, localities were not granted that right by their state legislature or in their constitution to create such a policy.

It was not until 1989 that the state officially gave localities the right to pass inclusionary zoning ordinances. In 1990, Fairfax County enacted the Affordable Dwelling Unit (ADU) program. The program is managed by the Fairfax County Redevelopment and Housing Authority (FCRHA) and staffed by the Department of Housing and Community Development. The program incentivizes developers to set aside a calculated share of units for households earning between 50 and 70 percent of the Washington D.C. Metropolitan AMI in exchange for density bonuses, or additional units allowed outside of the zoning policy for that area. Developers can opt-out of ADU development if they can prove that the units would cause economic hardship; in place of affordable units, developers can dedicate land or funds to the FCRHA (Levy et. al, 2012).

The program requirements have changed since it was officially enacted in 1990, guided by the advice of the Affordable Dwelling Unit Task Force. Various stakeholders participate in the task force including developers and housing advocates, allowing multiple parties to have a voice in any changes that may occur. From 1992 to 2011, Fairfax County has produced 2,448 affordable units throughout the County, typically located in job-rich areas (Levy et. al, 2012). The County has also been able to provide transportation-related benefits to these households.

Overall, the Fairfax County Affordable Housing Program receives praise from developers, County staff, property managers, and housing advocates for its consistency, clarity, monitoring, and overall management of the program. The program is flexible, able to change based on market fluctuations, input from developers and housing advocates, and the public interest (Levy et. al, 2012). As more residential units are built near Metrorail stations, and development trends continue to change, the percentage of ADUs in the area could decrease. Transit-Oriented Development is exempt from the IZ ordinance due to high development costs. To compensate for the potential loss of ADUs a second development program was created to meet market demand (Levy et. al, 2012). Workforce Dwelling Units (WDU), are units located near major transit, catered to a higher income household than ADUs. Although WDUs also aim to
create affordability in the housing market they serve residents who earn up to 120 percent AMI, a higher threshold than ADUs (Levy et. al, 46). This new policy creates a need for the affordable development program to be re-evaluated and possibly adjusted once again.

With the current ADU supply aging out of its price control lifetime, Reston will need to assess and re-address how it will meet the current and future demand for affordable housing.

Reston Zoning History

Since 1990, Fairfax County has modified the affordable housing ordinance section of its plan several times. As it applies to Reston, the changes enacted by Fairfax County have aimed to increase the number of affordable units as well as the quality of those units. One change enacted eight years after the original IZ ordinance was created altered the calculation for the ADU requirement, changing it from a fixed calculation (X number of ADU’s will allow for X amount of bonus units) to a sliding scale depending on how much of the density bonus the developer planned to use. Further, the revisions required that the ADUs developed in Reston must be comparable to market-rate housing and cannot be clustered together. The revision intended to encourage the integration of units into the community. In Reston ADUs are allowed to “float,” meaning that an ADU can at any time be rented as a market-rate unit and vice versa, when they are of equal quality (Levy et. al, 2012), allowing for flexibility in development and infill.

Planning for affordable housing is mandatory in Reston for new and re-development but there are incentives for developers. Density bonuses are given in exchange for providing affordable units and, because of the sliding scale, developers receive a larger density bonus the more ADUs they develop. Further, any units developed after February 28, 2006, have a 30-year affordability period (or control period) which varies slightly by tenure. The price control is renewable for the for-sale ADUs, but not for the rental units (Levy et. al, 2012), once the control period is over those units no longer have to be affordable.

Today, in Reston, affordable housing policies do not apply to high-rise buildings more than four stories with an elevator. To meet the gap in affordable units created by the exemption the County developed a Workforce Dwelling Unit program that targets households earning 80 to 120 percent of AMI (Levy et. al, 44), which is greater than those qualifying for ADUs. As the Metrorail
continues to expand throughout Reston WDU's will become a more common practice. As ADUs begin to expire throughout Reston, determined by their control period, and TODs continue to grow, the affordable housing market and IZ policy must be re-evaluated to enable Reston to best meet the needs of the community.

Current Stock

Reston currently offers 9 affordable development properties, as shown in Figure 1 below, with a total of 1,131 low-income units (pending the construction of new Lake Anne Fellowship. Of the 1,131 low-income units, 714 units receive rental assistance, where the renter typically pays no more than 30 percent of their income towards rent and utility costs. The remaining units are subsidized for residents, part of the Housing Voucher program which allows residents to live in a private market apartment, townhome, condominium, or single-family home of their choosing and pay 30 to 35 percent of their income as rent. The FCRHA pays the remainder of the rent to the landlords (Housing Voucher Program). Since 2014, a total of 453 workforce dwelling units have been developed by private developers in the Reston and Herndon (a nearby town) area (Affordable Housing in Reston Fairfax County, Virginia, 2020)

Map 1: GIS Map of Reston with Affordable Housing Locations
Challenges

Today Reston is facing an affordable market that is losing existing affordable units due to foreclosures and expired control periods. Along with the loss of affordable units, a strong economic downturn (such as what occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic) can, and has, forced families out of their homes, and into situations in which they need affordable housing. Additionally, the increased influence of the Metrorail in Reston has caused an increase of TOD, as shown in figure 2 below, a typically high-rise and expensive type of development that is excluded from the IZ policy for ADUs and are difficult to build affordable housing in due to the high cost of development. Workforce dwelling units have been used to combat the unmet demand for affordable housing. The WDUs accommodate a higher income demographic (with 80 to 120 percent AMI) and should not be considered an equal opportunity

Map 2: Planned Metro Expansion, Reston and Beyond (According to Dulles Metro)
development (Levy et. al., 2012). Although the WDUs do address a community's needs it is not addressing the same need as ADUs and could cause a decrease in the proportion of development dedicated to affordable units.

**Existing Knowledge**

**The Need for Affordable Housing**

In Virginia alone, 1 in 3 households is cost-burdened, with over 1 million families in the Commonwealth facing household costs that exceed their budget. Although moderate-income homeowners are also impacted by housing cost burdens, renters, especially low-income renters are particularly impacted by the high costs of housing, leaving them little to no budget for other needs such as food and transportation. Aside from providing housing for those living in the community, addressing the need for affordable housing can create jobs, tax revenue, and economic growth for the entire region (Welcome to the Neighborhood, 2017). Meeting the need for affordable housing through incentives, policies, and funding is essential, not only to those in need of affordable housing but to the community as a whole.

Various strategies can contribute to the ability of an area to develop affordable housing. Camoin 310, an economic and strategic planning firm, identifies seven zoning practices that have the potential to create affordable housing that aligns with area wages and further encourages affordable development. Used in both Fairfax County and Montgomery County, as outlined below, inclusionary zoning and incentive bonuses are two of the seven tools beneficial for the development of affordable housing. Requiring affordable development while incentivizing developers to build in the area contributes to both the overall housing market and the affordable market, drawing developers in while developing encouraging development for a range of incomes. The other seven tools identified include overlay zoning, varying resident types, priorities to affordable housing developers, fee waivers and tax exemptions, and allowing flexibility (Collins and Gallagher, 2020). Currently, the affordable development effort in Fairfax County utilizes five of the strategies above, but there are other ways to utilize the strategies in use to further meet the needs of the community.
Montgomery County

On the other side of the Potomac River, another county has created innovative solutions to address issues of housing affordability in their region. Montgomery County Maryland, located in southern Maryland, just outside of Washington D.C. first began its inclusionary zoning practices in 1973. Although Montgomery County is a large county in terms of land, 796 square miles, it has struggled to meet the need for affordable housing, mostly due to the minimal land available for development. Montgomery County has zoning ordinances in place that require residential development but limit the density (Levy et. al, 2012), making it difficult to develop for the growing population. Only 4 percent of the land in the County is available for development. Currently, Montgomery County is experiencing a slowed growth with a population just shy of 1 million, the second most populated area in Maryland (Levy et. al, 2012), as it continues to grow, planning for development, especially affordable development, will become increasingly important.

The residents of Montgomery County make up an educated, and diverse population with an above-average household income of $89,155. The rental prices in Montgomery County for these residents are above the national average, costing, on average, $1,466 a month. The foreclosure rate is just below the national average at 2.2 percent. All of which makes it similar to Fairfax County, in income, education, rental costs, and foreclosure rates.

The constraints to the supply side of the market have stressed the cost of housing in Montgomery County and lead to an increase in pricing. To combat this price increase and to provide housing options for residents of all incomes, Montgomery County has created an inclusionary zoning policy that requires developers to include affordable units in all new and re-development (Levy et. al, 2012).

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3 U.S Average Median Income: $50,046, Maryland Average Median Income: $68,854 (Source: U.S. Census Bureau)
4 U.S. Median Gross Rent: $855, Maryland Median Gross Rent: $1,131 (Source: U.S. Census Bureau)
Today the IZ policy in Montgomery County Maryland includes a sliding scale density bonus with a maximum bonus density is 22 percent, giving developers a 1 percent density bonus for every 0.1 percent affordable housing developed. The IZ policy, originally applied to buildings with 50 or more units, now applies to any development of 20 units or more. The only exception to the IZ requirement is in central business districts (CBDs) and transit-oriented development (TOD) due to their high cost of building affordable units in high-rise buildings. The IZ policy includes detached and semi-detached homes, townhouses, garden condos, high-rise condos, and apartments for sale or rents with a 30-year price control period for for-sale units and a 99-year price control period for rental units. Once the for-sale affordable units do expire the sale has to contribute to the Housing Initiative Fund (HIF), which further supports affordable housing in the region. For a for-sale unit to expire the same owners had to occupy the home for the entire control period, and if it were resold the control period would restart (Levy et. al, 2012).

Montgomery County’s IZ ordinance has created over 13,000 affordable units for sale or rent, of which 1,200 are still for sale today due to the control period. It has been criticized for having a very complex administrative process but the policy itself is appreciated among residents and respected among developers (Levy et. al, 2012).

Although some of the challenges Montgomery County faces (lack of available land and an emphasis on high-rise and infill development) differ from Fairfax County’s (loss of units), both counties created innovative solutions to address the demand for affordable development in their area. By using a sliding scale density bonus system to allow flexibility in affordable development, they enabled their programs to be developer-friendly while still addressing the needs of the community.

Affordability in Affluence

Both counties face an expanding population and constraints in affordable development. These conditions require further innovation, including creating affordable units in high-cost areas such as transit-oriented development (TOD) zones. Affordable development in high-cost areas is a common issue throughout the United States, especially for regions of affluence. On the other side of the United States, in Alameda County 51% of all renters experience a cost burden, 15% of whom experience an extreme cost
burden, paying 50% or more of their income toward housing costs. Homeowners in Alameda County also face cost-burdens, 38% of whom pay more than 30% of their household income to housing costs (Alameda County HOME Consortium, 2006). Due to the cost of development, “it is very difficult for even moderate-income households to become homeowners” (Alameda County HOME Consortium, 6). The average median income in Alameda County is $108,125 as of 2018 (U.S. Census Bureau), well above that of the United States, but they also struggle to address their housing crisis, with homelessness increasing 43% to 8,022 from 2017 to 2019 (Major Homelessness Spikes…, 2019).

The imbalance of affluence and the need for affordable housing can be seen again in Fairfax County’s neighbor, Arlington County. With an average median income of $117,374 as of 2018, it is another example of a county earning well above the AMI of the nation (U.S. Census Bureau). Arlington County offers finance and zoning incentives, rental assistance programs, and works with local non-profits to provide affordable housing for the community (Arlington, VA Housing, 2020). Unfortunately, as new high-rises continue to be developed and the population soars, (growing 15 percent in the last 10 years (U.S. Census Bureau) compared to Virginia’s 9% growth (StatChatVA, 2020)) the cost to develop continues to rise. As of 2014 10 percent of households were earning less than 30 percent of the Washington D.C. AMI with 25 percent of Arlington’s population was earning below $60,000 per year. With an average rental cost of $2,230, the 25% of the population earning below $60,000 would most likely be cost-burdened by rental costs, as paying any more than $1,666 would create such a burden. These households are a part of the 39% of the population spending more than 30% of their income on rent, creating a cost burden (Arlington County Affordable Housing Study, 2014). Arlington is yet another example of a county experiencing a demand for affordable housing in a region of affluence and growth. The continuously increasing cost of development and increasing incomes can create obstacles in affordable development.

The balance between growth and development can be difficult for regions of affluence to manage. Although the county does not want to hold itself back by limiting development it is important to remember that it is the residents of those areas that allow it to become what the region is today. Creative and innovative solutions that allow an area meet the demand for housing at all incomes must be thought through to best serve the community.
Theoretical Framework

The “city beautiful” movement began in the 1890s, advocating for better sanitation, improved circulation of traffic, monumental civic centers, parks, parkways, public spaces, civic art, and the reduction of outdoor advertising. The idea was that if a city were able to address all the above it would make that city more profitable and harmonious (Fairfield). The “city beautiful” movement is more than creating an aesthetic city, although that is a large part of it. The city beautiful movement strives to create harmony in development and design while meeting the needs of the community.

Reston put “city beautiful” into action through the various village centers, with the Reston Town Center serving as the monumental center, various parks and man-made lakes for the community, several public spaces, nature centers, village centers, and paths that connect the residents to the community amenities and other residents. The understanding of “city beautiful” planning and its role in Reston’s development shapes the understanding of the goal of affordable housing. While the main goal of addressing affordable housing in Reston is to meet the needs of the community and its members, it is also essential to ensure that, when planning for new affordable housing or addressing issues in current affordable housing, the accessibility, and harmony of the development within the Reston community is also taken into account.

Additionally, the founding principles of Reston coincide with the theory of justice in planning or planning for a “just city”. A “just city” understands the existing conditions within a community, interacts with the community, and involves the community members in the planning process to create an environment where all have opportunities (Thomas, 2008). This participation process allows the planner to not only gain access to community member's expertise but also provide local representation and input into the planning process.

While planning for Reston, and especially planning for affordable housing in Reston, it is important to keep the “just city” in mind, creating a community that represents the needs of its people, including prioritizing the impact of the design of the community
(Allied Media Projects). As part of the affordable housing plan in Reston, data has been analyzed to better understand the needs of the community. Residents will be asked to participate in the planning process, operationalizing the plan through surveys and interviews. Affordable housing represents the needs of low-income or cost-burdened families within the community, so they need to be involved in the planning process.

Even with a well-represented plan, achieving a completely “just city” is difficult and prone to obstacles such as time restraints, funding, and other opponents. A “better city” with realistic goals and an understanding of obstacles the plan may face is an achievable goal for any area and one that Reston can strive for. The “better plan” movement can be defined, for this plan, as an effort to strive for equal opportunities in housing and to ensure that the housing available meets the job, transportation, and sociocultural needs of its residents while recognizing the political, zoning, and financial restrictions. The term “better” is meant to signify an outcome that works towards the normative ideals of planning defined as, ‘making an urban life more beautiful, exciting and creative, and more just’ according to Paul Davidoff (Campbell, 2014).

The original plan for Reston, created in the 1960s, strived to be a more beautiful, inclusive, exciting, creative, and just area, more so than other suburbs in the region. Carrying the tradition of beauty, connectivity, placemaking, diversity, affordability, and opportunity into the affordable housing market will allow any affordable housing developments, and the residents, to be truly integrated into the community going forward. Creating affordable housing with the community in mind is more likely to benefit both the residents of the affordable developments but also to the whole community. Keeping the original goals of Reston in mind throughout the creation of this plan, while working towards a “better” city by seeking out housing representation will further help reiterate the values of Reston within the community and further drive the community to better meet the needs of its members.
Methodology

Research Questions

The Reston Affordable Housing Plan must operate with the fullest understanding of Reston, Fairfax County, and affordable housing in general. To do that, data has been gathered from the community, the County, previous studies, and through raw data from the U.S. Census, H.U.D, and other resources. Using the data outlined above this plan attempts to answer the following questions:

1. What is the current demand for affordable housing in Reston presently?
   a. How many units are there currently available to cater to this demand?
   b. Do units available meet senior and disabled affordable housing needs?
2. Are the currently available affordable housing units accessible to the community via public transit? Are they well integrated?
3. What is the predicted demand for affordable housing through to 2050 and is Reston situated to meet that demand?
4. What strategies can Reston utilize to meet future demand for affordable housing?
   a. Protecting existing affordable units
   b. Inclusionary Zoning Practices
   c. Public-Private Partnerships
**Sources of Information**

Information about Reston has been gathered from a variety of sources. A literature review has provided background information about affordable housing, but information about Reston specifically is also being utilized. The Supervisor’s office has shared many resources including the comprehensive plan for the County, and the amendments about Reston and housing specifically. The Supervisor’s office has also shared information on affordable housing, affordable dwelling units and workforce dwelling units, ordinance information, and the County’s affordable housing guide. Further, the Supervisor’s office shared community engagement meeting content from previous meetings, as well as the schedule for meetings to come, and minutes from workforce dwelling unit task force meetings. All of the background information shared provided a greater understanding of Reston and its development.

Sources such as the U.S. Census, American Community Survey, the H.U.D. website, the Metrorail page, Reston’s community pages, and others have been used to provide a deeper understanding of housing as it pertains to Reston and its demographics. Lastly, expert sources such as the Planning Commissioner of Reston, the Supervisors office, the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of Cornerstones, a nonprofit addressing the need for affordable housing, members of the Task Force, and the office of Housing and Community Development have been utilized to provide an understanding of what can be done, and what has been done, giving further context to the Reston Affordable Housing Plan.

Throughout the planning process, 6 interviews have been conducted with 7 different housing or Reston experts including Gwenn Minton and Jose Delcid of the Hunter Mill District Supervisor’s office, Tammi Petrine Committee Member of Reston Planning and Zoning, Judith Cabelli, the Director of the Affordable Housing Development Division for the Fairfax County Department of Housing and Community Development, Katherine Alexander, the Resident Life Director for the Fellowship house, Latishma Walters Regional Manager (Region 3), and Jenifer Henry-Jones, Community Developer (Region 3) with the Department of
Neighborhood and Community Services. The expert interviews have provided further background for affordable housing in general and more specifically affordable housing in Reston.

Stakeholder Outreach Methods

To gather and better understand stakeholder information, a survey has been created to further analyze the currently affordable dwelling units and how they are meeting the community's needs today. The survey created for residents asked if they feel their housing needs are met by the opportunities for affordable housing in Reston today, what they think could be improved or changed (if anything), and why they chose Reston as their home in the first place. The survey also inquired how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted their ability to afford housing today. Property managers of all 9 affordable housing developments were contacted to distribute this survey to their residents, and it was promoted through local Facebook pages. The survey was available online, through social media or offered as a paper copy if the property manager thought it was beneficial. Unfortunately, the online survey did not receive many responses, especially not from those living in affordable units. One property manager responded to the request to distribute and was reluctant to do so. The CEO of Cornerstones also offered their own survey results regarding resident life.

A separate survey was also distributed via local Facebook groups to better understand how the current housing market supports their needs. Members of the workforce were asked if they live in Reston or elsewhere, why they chose to live where they live, how long it takes them to get into work and if they do not currently live in Reston would they chose to live in Reston if it became more affordable. The goal of the workforce survey is to understand the current unmet demand from any workers who may be being priced out of the Reston housing market. The Chamber of Commerce was also contacted to further promote the survey in Reston businesses but never replied. This survey also received limited responses and is not representative of the true workforce in Reston.

The COVID-19 pandemic was an obstacle for community engagement, making it more difficult to interact with members of the community. Some members of affordable development do not have access to the internet, mostly from lack of computer or due to cost, making it significantly less likely they were able to participate in the online version of the survey. Community leaders and
members were the best sources of information to understand how, where and to whom the surveys should be distributed, as well as finding new ways to gather such data.

**Analytical Methods**

This plan used various analytical methods to answer the four research questions outlined above. To better understand the current demand for affordable housing in Reston data was gathered and analyzed from the U.S. Census Bureau. To better understand the demand for affordable housing in Reston, Katherine Alexander, Resident Life Director for the Fellowship Community who provides and manages affordable housing in Reston, was interviewed and surveys from Cornerstones were collected and analyzed. Data from the U.S. Census Bureau was also collected and analyzed using descriptive statistics to understand trends in the unmet demand for affordable housing. The U.S. Census Bureau provided population and income data that was be analyzed to understand the percentage of households who qualify for affordable housing in Reston. To understand if the affordable housing available in Reston today is meeting the needs of the residents the residential survey was distributed, but only received 22 response and the data does not accurately represent the target population. Cornerstones, a local nonprofit creating and operating affordable housing opportunities, shared their own resident survey as did Fellowship Square. Those surveys were analyzed to understand trends in what the current residents still need from affordable housing today, and how Reston could work to meet those needs. Latishma Walters and Jenifer Henry-Jones of Fairfax County’s Department of Neighborhood and Community Services also provided great insight as to what the residents are still missing in affordable housing. A new database, the Housing Indicator Tool (HIT) was also be utilized to create an understanding of how Fairfax County is reaching their demands for housing, to better frame Reston’s housing market. To calculate the future demand for affordable housing a trend extrapolation method was used to analyze trends in the growth of population and income in Reston in the past 10 years. Those trends will then be used to predict the population and demand for affordable housing in Fairfax County through 2050. Finally, the Reston Zoning Map, Reston Land Use Map, and an evaluation of the existing affordable housing developments were assessed and analyzed to better understand how Reston could utilize IZ policies to encourage affordable housing, where future affordable housing could be developed, how existing affordable housing could be leveraged to better meet the need for
affordable development in Reston through 2050 and will consider any other methods seen as fit (see Table 1). The three strategies outlined will allow Reston to:

1. Preserve the existing affordable developments in Reston today through policy and land-use strategies.
2. Utilize IZ to leverage affordable development.
3. Analyze land use in Reston today to create site selections for future affordable development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Data to Be Collected</th>
<th>Analysis Methodology</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the current demand for affordable housing in Reston?</td>
<td>Descriptive Statistics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the predicted demand for affordable housing through to 2050 and is Reston situated to meet that demand?</td>
<td>Trend Extrapolation, Gap Analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What strategies can Reston utilize to meet future demand for affordable development?</td>
<td>Inclusionary Zoning Assessment, Land Use Map Assessment, Existing Building Analysis</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What is the current demand for affordable housing in Reston?</th>
<th>Do the currently available affordable housing units have access to transportation, walkable, and well connected to services?</th>
<th>What is the predicted demand for affordable housing through to 2050 and is Reston situated to meet that demand?</th>
<th>What strategies can Reston utilize to meet future demand for affordable development?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Census Bureau Income</td>
<td>Affordable Unit Residential Survey</td>
<td>Census Bureau Income</td>
<td>Reston Zoning Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Census Bureau Population</td>
<td>Assess current units</td>
<td>Census Bureau Population</td>
<td>Reston Land Use Map</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workforce Survey</td>
<td>Cornerstone’s resident survey</td>
<td>Housing Indication Tool (HIT)</td>
<td>Site Observation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current waitlist information</td>
<td>Fellowship house resident survey</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Housing Indication Tool (HIT)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Analytical Methodology
Findings

This section will discuss the data collected and outreach findings per research question utilizing the sources outlined above. The goal of this section is to demonstrate what the Reston affordable housing market is supplying today, how the supply is or is not meeting demand, if it is prepared to meet future demand, and what groundwork Reston has in place to address future affordable housing demand.

Research Question 1: What is the current demand for affordable housing in Reston?

Although Reston is considered an affluent community there is still a portion of the population that requires affordable housing. The over 60,000 residents of Reston live in 25,232 houses with, on average, 2 people occupying each household. Over 50 percent of homes for rent in Reston cost between $1,500 and $2,500 per month, out of budget for anyone living below the poverty line. This creates not only cost threshold for those below the poverty line but also for households earning up to $55,000 per year. Currently, in Reston, 37 percent of residents experience a cost burden due to the rental rates, as seen in Chart 4 below.
The average rental rates in Reston would create a cost burden for 15 percent of the population (U.S Census Bureau), but according to Chart 4 below 37% of those in Reston renting experience a cost-burden. The increased percentage of cost burden households could be cause by a gap in supply in the housing market. Those who own their homes tend to be less prone to the cost burdens those in rental homes face, but cost-burdens in home ownership in Reston do still occur. Homeownership can be a difficult market to break into, especially for low-income families. According to the Urban Institute, this is likely due to the obstacles buyers face in securing a loan, understanding down payment requirements, credit scores, affordability, and access to resources to help households move (Goodman et al, 2018), not necessarily because owning a home is less affordable. Around 8 percent of those who own a home without a mortgage and 23 percent of those who own a home with a mortgage do experience a cost burden, as shown in charts 5 and 6 above, demonstrating either the lack of affordability in homeownership, other issues in other housing practices including bank loans, or individuals purchasing or remaining in homes outside their income capability. Housing options must address not only the needs of those living below the poverty line (6.9 percent of Reston’s population) but also those who qualify for affordable housing, defined as earning less than 30 percent of the greater Washington D.C. metropolitan statistical areas (MSA) average median income (AMI) or 11.6 percent of Reston’s population (U.S. Census Bureau).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gross Rent as a Percentage of Household Income in Reston</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 15.0 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.0 to 19.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.0 to 24.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.0 to 29.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.0 to 34.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.0 percent or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not computed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Units Costs as a Percentage of Household Income (without a mortgage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 10.0 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.0 to 14.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.0 to 19.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.0 to 24.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.0 to 29.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.0 to 34.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.0 percent or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not computed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Housing Units Costs as a Percent of Household Income (with a mortgage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than 20.0 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.0 to 24.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.0 to 29.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.0 to 34.9 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.0 percent or more</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not computed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Washington D.C. MSA AMI: $126,000
The distribution of housing costs in Reston as compared to the distribution of income highlights a gap in the local housing market. Table 2 below aims to understand how Reston is meeting the various housing costs capabilities. According to the data collected from the U.S. Census Bureau, there is an oversaturation of units costing between $500-$2,999 a month with the majority of the oversaturation in units costing between $1,500 and $2,999. This oversaturation refers to the additional units available, both for rent and ownership than there are households who can afford them. The over-saturation of higher-cost units can cause individuals or families to choose rental rates or mortgage costs that would create a cost burden if that was their only option. The households able to afford these costs were calculated off of the highest end of the rent capabilities of their grouping, meaning the number of households capable of affording the units could be lower than shown. If the housing market is catering to the high end of the rent capabilities per category, then those earning an income on the low end of the rent capability range may still be experiencing cost burdens, even if they are in a household that is technically within their rent capability range.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rent Capabilities</th>
<th>Households able to afford these costs</th>
<th>Rental Units</th>
<th>Homes with Mortgage</th>
<th>Homes without Mortgage</th>
<th>Total Units Available</th>
<th>Percent Rental Units</th>
<th>Percent of Need Met</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $500</td>
<td>1,176</td>
<td>563</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>717</td>
<td>78%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500 to $999</td>
<td>1,801</td>
<td>422</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>2338</td>
<td>3014</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>167%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,000 to $1,499</td>
<td>1,687</td>
<td>1077</td>
<td>905</td>
<td>1092</td>
<td>3074</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>182%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$1,500 to $1,999</td>
<td>2,526</td>
<td>3921</td>
<td>2046</td>
<td>5967</td>
<td>8194</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>236%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$2,000 to $2,999</td>
<td>3,315</td>
<td>2939</td>
<td>5255</td>
<td>8194</td>
<td>4660</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>247%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$3,000 or more</td>
<td>15265</td>
<td>834</td>
<td>3826</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: US Census Bureau Reston Household Income and Housing Costs data
Although cost burdens create additional stress both financially and mentally for anyone who owns or rents a home the cost-burden graphs above do not tell the full story. When creating a plan for affordable housing development it is the households earning below-average income who are most at risk to greater financial difficulty due to housing costs. Many times low-income households, especially those cost-burdened by their housing costs, must choose between what they consider most essential when deciding which bills they can pay that month. A majority of households that either rent or own their home in Reston do earn more than 100 percent of the Department of Housing Urban Development (HUD) Area Median Family Income (HAMFI), as shown in Chart 7 to the left. Although a majority of households are earning more than 100 percent of HAMFI there are still 7,265 households both owning and renting who live below the HUD Area Median Family Income (HAMFI), or $110,401, who would be more prone to the detriments of housing cost-burdens. It is also important to note the majority of households earning below 80 percent HAMFI, opposed to those households earning more than 80 percent HAMFI, are renters. This can be due to obstacles to homeownership such as loans, credit, and
other obstacles but also due to lack of supply as shown in the undersaturation of the homeownership options with mortgages below $500 a month, as shown in Chart 8 below.

Although the households earning below 30 percent of HAMFI or living in extreme poverty represent a small portion of the Reston population they experience a majority of the cost burden, in both 30 percent and 50 percent cost burden categories as shown in Chart 9 below, meaning they are households that pay more than 30 or more than 50 percent of their income towards housing. Those households earning more than 100 percent HAMFI do account for 1,360 households experiencing a 30 percent cost burden and 40 households experiencing a 50 percent cost burden. Although it is important to recognize the implication of cost burdens on these
households it is typically not detrimental as they are to those earning a more modest income. The number of households experiencing a 30% or 50% cost burden decreases as household income increases, except for those households earning more than 80 percent HAMFI within the cost burden greater than 30 percent of income category. The negative correlation between household income and cost burdened households is mainly due to the market having affordable housing options for those households, allowing them to stay in a comfortable pay range. The demand for more affordable housing for those households earning between 80% and over 100% HAMFI is currently being met by the Workforce Dwelling Unit (WDU) program, providing more affordable housing options in transit-oriented development zones in Reston. The WDU housing is a new initiative in Reston and has yet to find the demand it originally sought to meet.
When comparing homeownership to households who rent in Reston, homeowners tend to over represent in the low to no cost burden category with less than 30% of income going towards housing costs. The over-representation of cost burdens for homeowners could be overly influenced by households earning more than 100 percent HAMFI. As shown to the left in Chart 10, households owning a home are more likely to pay less than or equal to 30 percent of their income towards their home, creating what is considered a low cost-burden, if any. Homeowners are slightly more likely to experience a cost-burden paying between 30% and 50% of their income towards housing. Again, this over representation could be caused by households earning more than 100% HAMFI, who are likely not as financially stressed as those low-income households experiencing cost burdens. More households who rent experience a cost burden greater than 50 percent of their income. The representation of households who rent in the cost burden greater than 50 percent of their income category is concerning considering households earning less than 80 percent HAMFI are more likely to rent. This renter cost burden could cause low-income households to choose between necessities, adding undeniable financial stress. The greatest number of homes, both rentals, and owned homes are spending up to 30 percent of their income on housing costs, which is not considered a cost burden.

The cost burden demonstrated in the charts above indicates a need for more affordable housing. The cost burdens shown represent a populous that is paying a portion of their income to housing costs high enough to create additional financial stress on households, likely forcing low-income households to choose between one crucial expense or another. By creating additional households that are
priced to meet the income demands of the Reston population, the total overall cost-burdened in Reston could be greatly reduced, especially for those households earning less than 80% HAMFI.

Although cost burdens within the community can be an indicator of unmet demand, it is also important to consider the population who would like to live in Reston but are not able to. A survey was distributed to the Reston population to better understand how the current affordable housing is meeting demand. This survey only received 22 responses so the data collected should be viewed with the understanding that there is severe underrepresentation in the sample. Of those who did answer the survey only 2 did not currently live in Reston and indicated it was because of cost and housing size options. 68 percent of survey responses revealed that they are not the sole income earner of their household. 68 percent of responses also stated they have a household income over $120,000. As individuals, 50 percent earn an annual income over $120,000, and 27 percent earn an income less than $34,000 per year. Some questions that the survey should have also asked is whether the participant owns or rents their home or if they live in someone else’s home. Although the survey results are not representative of Reston due to lack of participation there is a trend of a strong upper or upper-middle class in Reston but also a need for low-income options in housing. Chart 11 above demonstrates the unmet demand of housing for households who can pay up to $500 a month. Although there seem to be more than enough units for those households able to pay $500 – $2,999 a month there is a large cohort of households who can pay over $3,000 a month for housing that’s demand is unmet. Although this can be beneficial in keeping Reston’s housing market more modest, it does
indicate that the cohort able to pay over $3,000 in rent are living in less expensive housing options, taking away options for those who can’t live in a more expensive unit.

To further understand the demand for affordable housing in Reston Fellowship Square, who operates two affordable developments in Reston have provided information about their waitlist in an interview with Katherine Alexander. She stated that it typically takes two to three years to get into one of the units of their 4 buildings, two of which are in Reston. Fellowship Square runs the Lake Anne Fellowship Home, with 300 residents, and the Hunters Woods Fellowship, with 250 residents. Both communities provide low-income housing to seniors and Lake Anne Fellowship is currently has a new building under construction to replace the current development, and Hunters Woods Fellowship is currently being renovated.

Katherine Alexander, the Director of Resident Life for Fellowship Square stated that Fairfax County is one of the best places to build affordable housing, compared to other nearby counties. Reston is rich with resources such as transportation, pathways and sidewalks, community centers, grocery stores and more. Fellowship Square provides different services for its residents including, but not limited to, community wellness seminars and food deliveries. Although Reston and Fairfax County are well suited to meet the needs of their residents Katherine stated that there is still a need for more affordable housing and her residents, senior low-income residents, could use more support transitioning into the next steps of care. Fellowship Square provides independent living for seniors, but there is not a lot of support or programs in place to educate the seniors on where they can go once they need more daily care. Senior low-income residents could use more support in transitioning into assisted living that they can afford with the help of Medicaid and Medicare.

By reviewing the answers to the survey distributed to the local population, the gap analysis displayed in Table 1 on page 32, and by speaking with Katherine Alexander is evident that Reston needs additional housing options. Reston needs to develop additional housing options in the less than $500 a month category as well as additional units for those earning up to 80% AMI. As shown in chart 11 above, the supply of households in Reston today does not meet the “Less than $500” per month demand, this is especially crucial for the lower-income households and to understand how to address the housing needs in Reston. Although the number of households that are capable of affording rent over $3,000 exceeds the supply this is not necessarily a problem for Reston as the population that can
afford to spend $3,000 a month or more on housing is likely to seek less expensive housing since that is what is available to them. Although that is beneficial for those high-income households it could make it more difficult for those with lower incomes to find homes within their pay range as they could be outbid by the households making more money.
Research Question 2: Do the currently available affordable housing units have access to transportation, walkable, and well connected to services?

To understand how the current housing market is meeting accessibility needs today a survey was distributed to the local low-income residents, surveys distributed to residents by Cornerstones and Fellowship Square were collected, and an analysis was completed of each of the 9 affordable developments in Reston today to better understand how accessible and integrated they are to the community.

Affordable Developments:

The 9 affordable developments are located throughout Reston as shown in Map 3 to the right. The blue outline represents the border of Reston, with 5 developments located in northern Reston, and 4 in southern Reston. The distribution of the housing throughout Reston allows for a diverse opportunity to access low-income housing no matter the resident’s wants or needs.
Transit

All the affordable housing developments in Reston are well connected to the bus lines in the community as shown in Map 4 below. The connectivity provided to each of the developments provides the residents ease of access to stores, jobs, and other necessary services such as schools, childcare, and parks. The black outline defines the border of Reston, but the bus lines do go beyond Reston’s reach. Although there is only one Metrorail station in Reston, two additional stations are planned to be constructed in Reston and will all be accessible by bus services. This MetroRail line connects Reston into Tysons, Arlington, Washington D.C., and Maryland and will soon connect the area further west to the Dulles Airport.

The North Point Village Apartments are located near 3 different bus routes, RIBS 4, Fairfax Connector Route 554, and Fairfax Connector Route 558. The RIBS 4 route is a short, 5-minute walk, from the apartments. It connects the complex to RIBS 2 route through the Reston Town Center Transit Station starting at 8:38 AM on the weekdays and continuing to connect the two routes every 40 minutes through 9:26 PM Monday through Friday, and 7:10 AM to 8:41 PM Saturday and Sunday. The RIBS 4 route from North Point Village Center to the RIBS 2 route takes about 10 minutes, RIBS 2 can then connects riders to the Wiehle-Reston East Metro Station, a 13-minute ride beginning at 8:06 AM and running through 10:04 PM Monday through Friday and 7:34 AM to 9:19 PM Saturday and Sunday. Route 554 and Route 558 both have a stop 1.1 miles, a 22-
minute walk from the North Point Village Apartments. Although this stop is further away both routes provide a direct route to the Wiehle-Reston East Metro Station. The 554 route begins picking riders up from the Wiehle Ave & Center Harbor Road at 5:40 AM and continues picking riders up from that stop every 18 minutes through 7:21 PM. The route to the Metro Station takes around 13 minutes. The 554 route pauses between 9:18 AM and 3:54 PM and is covered by an alternate route 558 that covers part of route 554 and part of route 552, another local route. Route 558 runs between 9:29 AM and 3:48 PM and between 7:49 PM and 10:29 PM every 40 minutes Monday through Friday. The alternate Route 558 takes about 20 minutes to complete the trip from the Metro Station to the stop nearest to the North Point Village Apartments. Route 558 also runs from 7:14 AM and 12:13 AM every 40 minutes Saturday and Sunday. It costs $2.00 to ride any of these bus routes (Fairfax Connector).

As marked by the stars in Map 5 to the left, Crescent Apartments, Lake Anne Fellowship House, Cedar Ridge Apartments, Reston Town Center Affordable Development, and Hunters Woods Fellowship are all located on RIBS 1 and RIBS 3. RIBS 1 and RIBS 3’s routes are the same but run-in opposite directions. Both routes leave Reston Town Center Transit Station at 5:08 AM and take around an hour to complete the route. Depending on which direction the bus is going the route from the affordable housing developments to the Metro Station should take about 20 minutes. The Hunters Woods Village Center, Reston Town Center Development, and Cedar Ridge Apartments have stops within their developments that receive service the entire day. Lake Anne Fellowship house also has a stop within its development, but the two routes do not stop there until 8:55 AM. Crescent Apartments does not have a designated stop but is a 3-minute walk away from the bus stop.
at Lake Anne Village Center which receives service from 5:08 AM to 12:48 AM every weekday, from 6:10 AM to 12:07 AM on Saturday, and from 6:10 to 10:07 PM on Sunday. The routes also connect the developments to the Reston Town Center, the North County Governmental Center, the Reston Regional Library, the Reston Hospital Center, and the Southgate Community Center. There is also a direct route from Reston Town Center to the Wiehle-Reston East Metro Station, running from 4:48 AM to 12:33 PM Monday through Friday and 7:03 AM to 12:03 AM on Saturday and Sunday. It costs $2.00 to ride these bus routes (Fairfax Connector).

Stonegate Village Apartments, as identified by the yellow star on Map 6 to the left has access to RIBS 3 discussed above as well as Fairfax Connector route 551, a stop that is only a 3-minute walk away from Stonegate Village Apartments. The 551 RIBS3 first picks up riders from Glade Drive and Freetown Drive and continues to do so every 30 minutes. The Fairfax Connector 551 route, also a 3-minute walk away, runs from 4:25 AM to 12:24 AM Monday through Friday, from 6:30 AM to 12:23 AM on Saturday, and from 6:30 AM to 9:23 PM on Sunday. These two routes connect Stonegate Village Apartments to Hunters Woods Village Center, Langston Hughes Middle School, South Lakes High School, South Lakes Village Center, and the Wiehle-Reston East Metro Station.
As identified by the red star on the Map 6 above, Shadowood Apartments are serviced by Fairfax Connector route 553. The closest bus stop is a 12-minute, 0.6 miles walk, away located at the corner of Soapstone Drive and Glade Drive. The 553 route begins to pick up riders on Glade Drive and Soapstone Dive at 5:53 AM and continues to run through 10:48 PM, with an alternate route (Fairfax Connector route 559) running from 8:40 AM to 3:53 PM and from 7:30 AM to 10:48 PM Monday through Friday. The 559 Fairfax Connector also runs from 7:00 AM to 12:17 PM Saturday and Sunday. The buses frequent the stops once every 18 minutes. This route connects Shadowood Apartments to the South Lakes Village Center as well as the Wiehle-Reston East Metro Station.

Finally, the West Glade Apartments as identified by the green star are served by Fairfax Connector routes 950 and 951. The closest stop is the United States Geological Survey bus stop, which is an 8 minute, or 0.4-mile walk away. These bus routes connect West Glade Apartments to the Wiehle Reston East Metro Station from 5:29 AM to 7:08 PM Monday through Friday, on a 40-minute rotation. All bus routes cost $2.00 to ride (Fairfax Connector).

Pathways:
Aside from the network of bus systems and the Metrorail system connecting the residents of Reston not only to the resources Reston has to offer but also to the surrounding area, there is also an intricate network of pathways within the community. The black line indicates Reston’s border in Map 7 to the right, and the green, blue, yellow, and gray pathways represent bicycle pathways, where green represents pathways are the most comfortable to bike on, blue somewhat comfortable, yellow less comfortable, and gray pathways represent where bikers should use caution. The W&OD trail, a trail opens to bikers, walkers, runners, and more, goes through Reston, connecting the community as far west as Leesburg and as far east as Washington D.C.
The purple network of trails represents where residents can walk, the bold purple line representing primary trials, the thin purple line representing the secondary trails, and the dotted line representing a natural surface. There is a vast network of trails within Reston and outside of Reston, but the Reston community has a great representation of walkable pathways as well as bike-able pathways. All of the affordable developments are connected to the pathways which further connect them to the community within Reston and beyond.

The Crescent Apartments, Lake Anne Fellowship, and Cedar Ridge Apartments are located on the most comfortable and somewhat comfortable pathways as well as secondary walking trails. The North Point Village Apartments are located behind the North Point Village Center, a grocery, shopping, and restaurant center. Although on Map 8 below, North Point Village Center may look removed from pathways, it is directly connected to multiple trails through sidewalks in the Village Center.
The remaining four complexes, Shadowood Apartments, Hunters Woods Fellowship, Stonegate, and West Glade, in southern Reston, as shown in Map 9 below, are all connected to comfortable pathways and on secondary trail systems. It is through these pathways and trail systems that the affordable developments are accessible to all and can access all the resources that Reston has to offer. If going forward Reston can continue to provide the connectivity to future housing that it does provide to residents today it could benefit both the residents of the affordable housing and Reston altogether.

Map 9: JADE Map of Reston Pathways Concentrated in the South
Other Services

Affordable housing is about more than just the physical building. Those who utilize affordable housing are most likely in need of assistance in other forms. Connectivity to various forms of transportation is essential but childcare, job training, and other services are also essential to the success of residents. According to an interview with Latishma Walters Regional Manager (Region 3), and Jenifer Henry-Jones, Community Developer (Region 3) with the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services Fairfax County provides residents with social workers to assess their needs and help them get on the waiting list for affordable housing or connects them with open affordable units through the 222-phone line. The Neighborhood and Community Services department in Fairfax County insures that residents have all the housing and resources information they need and are aware of how to access both further information and the resources.

Cornerstones, a local non-profit provides various food and basic needs assistance programs, financial assistance, foreclosure prevention, affordable child care, tutoring and homework assistance and community and family strengthening programs including RestON (Reston Opportunity Neighborhoods focused on improving the lives of children, youth, and their families with health, school, safety and college assistance), neighborhood coalitions, English as a Second Language (ESL) programs housing counseling and American Citizen Classes.

RestON or Reston Opportunity Neighborhoods, including West Glade, Stonegate and Cedar Ridge affordable developments, provide further opportunity and access to resources including their computer clubhouse. They also provide a program referred to as cradle to career to support kids in affordable housing through out their education and career path. Reston provides a human services center in Lake Anne that includes a career works program, to support employment for those in affordable units and provide funded job training, coaching and on site hiring. Depending on the property managers relationship with the development, affordable housing in Reston can help connect the residents with these various support systems provided by the county. Fairfax County supports self sufficiency for the residents with the help of these various programs.
Although these support systems are a huge benefit for affordable development residents, there is still room for improvement. Reston does provide two service centers to support those in affordable housing, they are both located in north Reston and both serve different needs. One human services building, for example, provides SNAP and unemployment support while the other provides mental health program, so if a resident needed both mental health and SNAP or unemployment support they would have to travel between the two buildings. The services are also not readily available for Housing Voucher households, they are instead checked-in on twice a year. For those who do have access to the various service buildings and their programs, they may not be aware of all the programs that are offered. Further accessibility and education on the opportunities would further benefit the residents.

In the individual affordable developments community rooms with 3-4 monitors are provided as well as public space such as playgrounds. Although it is beneficial for residents to have access to these resources most of them have not been updated since the development was created over 20 years ago and fall short, both size and technologically, of the community’s needs. The affordable developments in Reston fall short of providing digital access, and quality digital access at that, for those living in affordable developments. This can be a crucial part of career and academic success as COVID-19 has create a large work and learn from home environment.

Finally, Fairfax County did provide food distribution once a week and for those living in affordable development when the COVID-19 pandemic began, but that will be ending in May. The cancellation will likely create an increase in difficulty to food accessibility.

**From the Residents Point of View**

The resident survey for this plan was distributed via Facebook in Reston oriented groups. The coordinators for various affordable developments were also contacted in effort to distribute the surveys directly to low-income residents. Kerrie Wilson from Cornerstones and Christie Zeitz from Fellowship Square responded, and both offered to share their own resident survey results.
Christie also brought Katherine Alexander into the outreach efforts who was able to share their survey results and answer some questions about the community.

The survey designed and distributed for this purpose of this plan received 14 replies, one of which was from an individual who lived in an affordable unit, specifically the Lake Anne Fellowship House. The results of this survey are not representative of Reston residents who do live in affordable development. Of those who did response 8 people believe Reston housing is not affordable versus 6 who believe it is. When asked if there was enough housing within the respondent’s price range 8 respondents again said no while 6 said yes. There are not nearly enough responses to influence the plan but are interesting to note.

Fellowship Square was able to share their resident surveys results which identified some of the programs available through the Fellowship developments. They operate two developments in Reston, Lake Anne and Hunters Woods Fellowship Communities, and of their 690 residents 177 responded to the survey. The distributed survey reveals the residents of both communities have the opportunity to participate in activities such as worship services, exercise and fitness, computer programs, intellectual and learning programs and activities such as outings, games, shopping, the outdoors and musicals. They also have access to different levels of assistance including laundry, housekeeping, managing finances, using the toilet, managing medications and more. Although Fellowship does provide many support programs, they could still provide further support such as additional units to shorten the 2-3 year waitlist, and transitional housing. Since the Fellowship is an independent living center for low-income seniors their residents could benefit from programs that assist them in transitioning into assisted living.

**Housing Indicator Tool**

The Housing Indicator Tool (HIT) is a new tool was released this year by Hand Housing as a platform that provides up-to-date information on housing production across the D.C., Maryland, Virginia region. HIT tracks local efforts to produce and preserve affordable rental housing, holds the private and public sector socially accountable for expanding affordable housing, evaluates
programs intended to increase affordable housing, and underscores the importance of housing as a tool to address racial inequities across the region. The HIT takes comprehensive plans, inclusionary housing, local housing trusts funds, property tax, impact fees, and/or exempt public land as measurements for capability to deliver units permitted compared to production targets, total housing units permitted by jurisdiction, affordable units permitted and location of affordable units (Hand Housing).

According to the Housing Indicator Tool Fairfax County should add 5,000 units at 60% AMI or below in the next 15 years. The 5,000 unit include 713 units with rent costing under $799 a month, 740 units with a rent cost between $800 and $1,299, and 807 units with rent costing between $1,300 and $1,799 to address extremely low to low-middle housing needs.

The HIT also analyzes housing policy status including housing priority, housing trust fund, public land, inclusionary housing and property tax, impact fees, and tax or fee abatements or exemptions.

Although HIT analyzes Fairfax County and not specifically Reston it does provide guidance in housing goals for Reston. Reston makes up 5.3% of Fairfax County’s population. Based off population alone, Reston should provide 267 new affordable housing units at 60% AMI or below in the next 15 years. Of the 267 new units there should be 38 units with a rent cost of $799 or below, 40 units with a rent costing between $800 and $1,299 and 43 units with a rent cost between $1,300 and 1,799 to address extremely low to low-middle housing needs (Hand Housing).
Research Question 3: What is the predicted demand for affordable housing through 2050 and is Reston situated to meet that demand?

Reston currently has a population cap of 81,195, which it is situated to reach before 2032 as shown in chart 12 below, according to Fairfax County’s estimates. Currently, the population is 65,770, meaning it is predicted to grow by 23 percent. As the population continues to grow so will the need for affordable housing, if the 23 percent increase in population is applied to housing there will be 31,291 households in Reston by 2032. Right now, 11.6 percent of households earn up to 80 percent HAMFI, qualifying them for low-income housing. By applying the current 11.6 percent of households to the 2032 household prediction of 31,291, there will be 3,629 households that qualify for affordable housing. This affordable household number is subject to change as the job market shifts in the area.

As Reston continues to develop there is currently a requirement in the IZ practice that states that new and re-development must supply at least 12% of its units as affordable. With 11.6% of Reston’s population now qualifying for affordable housing, and as Reston continues to grow, the 12% requirement will only increase the gap between what is needed and what is provided in Reston, if current units are
allowed to time out and based on the fact that only 4.6% of that population has subsided or income based housing available today. In addition the Inclusionary Zoning policy in Reston is flexible. According to an interview with Judith Cabelli, Supervisor Walter Alcorn works with developers to find an affordable housing deal that works both for the district and the developer. It has been found that often more often than not that agreement provides more affordable housing than IZ policies require in the rest of the County. Although Reston, as a part of Supervisor Alcorn’s district, does do better in terms of affordable housing agreements, than the rest of the county it should capitalize on its higher standard to create a more permanent expectation for developers.

Research Question 4: What strategies can Reston utilize to meet future demand for affordable development?

Reston Zoning

As indicated in Map 10 to the right a vast majority of Reston falls under Planned Residential Community (PRC) zoning. PRC zoning was updated in 2019 to allow 13 to 15 persons per acre with special exceptions to mixed-use areas. In highly residential transit station areas planned for mixed-use development, the board can approve residential development up to 70 dwelling units per acre, as long as it follows the Comprehensive Plan.

The new provision to the PRC zoning regulation provides a new potential to expand in already existing neighborhoods. Although it is important to keep Reston the green, open space it is today, it is also important to provide affordable housing for all of the residents who need it today and in the future. As Reston
prepares for future growth it must also bring affordable development with that growth. An interview with Tammi Petrine indicated that, with the new allowance for density, not requiring developers to include affordable housing in their buildings if they are 4 stories or above with an elevator could cause an increase of inequity in housing opportunity in Reston.

The concentration of industrial (gray), commercial (purple and pink), and some high-density residential (brown) zoning is focused on the Metrorail station. This area is likely to become a suburban center, with two additional Metro stations under construction, and new businesses being created to support those stations, including stores, shops, and restaurants. The land surrounding those hubs likely qualify for board approval for high-density development. Currently, high-density development in transit-oriented development (TOD) areas have the option to provide WDU’s instead of ADU’s, further creating a gap in housing opportunity.

Land Use

Reston’s land-use plans are centered around the Dulles toll road, also known as 267, which connects Reston to Washington D.C. via I-66, to I-95 north and south, to the Dulles Airport, and goes as far west as the town of Leesburg. The Metrorail stations, both current and future also run along the toll road making it a transportation hub. The land surrounding the toll road is mostly commercial, as shown by the red coloring, but there are some residential spaces in the area, as indicated by the brown (high density),
orange (medium density), and light-yellow (low density) colors on the map. The light green spaces indicate an open space that is not forested.

As in most suburbs, Reston has pockets of higher-density land uses with a commercial center, but still has a significant amount of low-density residential areas. These low-density areas are essential to Reston and its character. The population capacity was created in an attempt to preserve the low-density development trend in Reston.

*Future Site Observation:*

As COVID-19 continues to force businesses to shut down or to allow their employees to work home, open office spaces have likely increased. Some businesses may not require employees to come back into the office even as the COVID-19 pandemic passes or may not be able to afford their office space throughout the pandemic. Reston should identify which spaces are open and if those spaces can be turned into affordable housing. With the commercial space centered near transit, the development would likely have to be mixed-income due to the cost of land. If Reston can utilize already developed land to further affordable housing it would be able to provide further housing equality while remaining a low-density area.

*Potential Office to Housing*

**Fannie Mae Office Space**

The Fannie Mae building located at 11600 American Dream Way Reston, VA 20190 is currently for sale. It is 9 stories of office space and currently includes parking and a fitness center. A 15-minute bus ride from Reston Town Center and an 18-minute bus ride from the Wiehle-Reston Metrorail Station it would be a convenient location for potential new affordable housing or mixed income housing. The current office space is less than a five-minute walk from the Washington and Old Dominion trail and a 7-minute walk from Plaza America, a local shopping center.

Figure 1: LoopNet Image of Fannie Mae Office
Two Freedom Square

There are five entire floors for sale in Two Freedom Square. Located in the heart of the Reston Town Center, with bus access to the Metrorail and soon to be within walking distance of a metro station this building could potentially become a mixed-use property, providing ADU’s as well as market-rate units. Two Freedom Square is well connected to various grocery stores, restaurants and retail throughout Reston Town Center and well connected to the bus line available pathways (Quick Reference for FCRHA Properties in Hunter Mill District).

South of Market

South of Market is also an office building available in the Reston Town Center. South of Market currently has four full floors available for sale. A two-minute walk from Two Freedom Square, South of the Market offers the same connectivity, retail, and food availability (Quick Reference for FCRHA Properties in Hunter Mill District).
Site Observation

North Point Village Apartments

The Apartments at North Point Village Center are owned by Cornerstones Housing Corporation (CHC) and operated by Quantum Real Estate Management. The Apartments have 1, 2, and 3-bedroom units with carpeted floors, controlled heat and air conditioning, in-unit washers and dryers, and are located just a short walk from the North Point Village Shopping Center which has a grocery store, restaurants, salons, bus connectivity and more (Quick Reference for FCRHA Properties in Hunter Mill District).

Figure 4: Photo of Apartments at North Point Village Center by Quantum Real Estate

Crescent Apartments

Crescent Apartments are garden-style apartments located near the Wiehle-Reston Metro Station, Lake Anne Shopping Village, and Reston Town Center. Crescent Apartments offer one, two, and three-bedroom floor plans with a modern kitchen high-speed internet, utilities included, and on-site laundry rooms. Crescent Apartments are well located on walking and biking paths, and bus lines (Quick Reference for FCRHA Properties in Hunter Mill District).

Figure 5: Photo of The Crescent Apartments by Quantum Real Estate
Cedar Ridge Apartments

Cedar Ridge Apartments are HUD 221(d)(3) funded Project-Based Section 8 subsidized affordable housing. The community includes 198 garden-style apartments. Located next to Lake Anne, a center for shopping, boutiques, art stores, and restaurants. The apartments are also a short bus ride away from the Reston Town Center, North Point Village Center and the Home Depot shopping Center, providing further options in terms of grocery shopping, jobs, and other resources. There is an elementary school located next to the Cedar Ridge Apartments and services such as after-school programs, adult education classes, computer learning classes, and other resident-oriented activities. The Cedar Ridge Apartments have two, three, and four-bedroom floor plans, with renovated kitchens, heat and air condition, hardwood floors, private balconies, patios, and more (Quick Reference for FCRHA Properties in Hunter Mill District).

Hunter Woods Fellowship

Hunter Woods Fellowship is a Privately-Owned Residence for Seniors and Persons with Disabilities. The rent for all residents of the Fellowship is based on family income for all units. The Hunters Woods Fellowship is currently under renovation which is due to be complete by 2021. The renovation includes essential repairs and modernizations including cosmetic improvements. Hunter Woods Fellowship is in Fellowship Square. The Fellowship has a waitlist that is now closed and has suspended the acceptance of applicants for the Section 8 Housing Program. The estimated waiting period for most current applicants is 24 months. Hunter Woods Fellowship aims to address housing needs of seniors (Quick Reference for FCRHA Properties in Hunter Mill District).
Reston Town Center

Public housing is available within different apartment complexes in the Reston Town Center. There are a total of 30 3-bedroom public housing townhouses located throughout the Town Center and managed by HCD, with oversite from the Housing Services Branch. The townhomes are well connected to the jobs and services in the Reston Town Center as well as the bus services that connect them to the rest of the community as well as the Metrorail Station (Quick Reference for FCRHA Properties in Hunter Mill District).

Shadowood Apartments

Shadowood Apartments in Reston include Public Housing scattered within a condo site. There are a total of 16 affordable units all of which are three-bedroom apartments. The affordable apartments are managed by the HCD and supervised by the Housing Services Branch. Located near South Lakes High School, Langston Hughes Middle School as well as a shopping center with grocery, restaurants, and other options. The Shadowood community is well connected to the Reston community through the bus services and trails (Quick Reference for FCRHA Properties in Hunter Mill District).
West Glade

West Glade is a Public Housing and Fairfax County Moderate Income Rental Program (MIRP) (mixed-income property) complex. Within the community 26 units fall under the Public Housing program, with 6 two-bedroom units, 16 three-bedroom units, and 4-four-bedroom units. An additional 24 units fall under the MIRP, with 20 two-bedroom units and 4 three-bedroom units. The units are supervised by the HCD and overseen by the Housing Services Branch. West Glade is located in south Reston directly next to the Dulles Toll road, a few minutes’ drive or bus ride from the Reston Town Center and nearby the Metro station. West Glade does currently have one plot of land that could be developed to provide further housing, as indicated by the red square in the image to the right (Quick Reference for FCRHA Properties in Hunter Mill District).

Stonegate Village

Stonegate Village is a HUD 236 Program which includes 46 Project-Based Section 8 subsidized housing. The development includes 234 units with 35 one-bedroom units, 81 two-bedroom units, 80 three-bedroom units and 34 four-bedroom units. The development is managed by HCD and is overseen by the Housing Services Branch. The development is located next to Dogwood Elementary School, near Dulles Toll Road, the Metrorail station, and Reston Town Center. Stonegate Village is well connected through pathways and bus services that run throughout Reston (Quick Reference for FCRHA Properties in Hunter Mill District).
Lake Anne Fellowship House

The Lake Anne Fellowship House is currently under development and, once constructed, will provide 240 apartment units as well as the demolition of the existing Lake Anne Fellowship House. The new Fellowship House will provide affordable apartments for low-income seniors in Reston. The project broke ground on October 22, 2020 and is predicted to be completed by the end of 2022. Lake Anne Fellowship House is being constructed next to Lake Anne Shopping Village and one of the various bus lines that Reston has to offer, connecting it to the Metro and other centers throughout Reston. Lake Anne Fellowship does and will continue to address housing needs of seniors in effort with the Hunter Woods Fellowship House as well as 2 other Fellowship Houses outside of Reston (Quick Reference for FCRHA Properties in Hunter Mill District).

Figure 12: Photo of the future Lake Anne Fellowship House by Fellowship Square
Summary

Reston is a planned community that was planned for inclusivity for people of all backgrounds and ages through public parks, neighborhood centers, connectivity and available housing. Due to an ever-changing population, Reston needs to continue to evaluate its area to understand how its resources meet the needs of the community. Reston and Fairfax County are in a time of transition as they re-evaluate their comprehensive plan, which includes the affordable housing available in the region. As Reston continues to expand with two new Metrorail stations under development, an increase in high-cost TOD development and a growing population, the plan for affordable housing must also be re-evaluated to continue to address the housing needs of the community.

Through the analysis, community engagement and further research conducted throughout this plan goals and next steps have been outlined to best meet the housing needs today and in the future. Using locally gathered data, expert resources, and community knowledge this plan has outlined the existing conditions in Reston today made a prediction of how those conditions and needs will change and created an understanding of three tools and opportunities Reston can use to address the housing needs now and going forward.
Vision Statement:

As Reston continues to grow and prosper it is essential to ensure that those who have lived in Reston have the opportunity to continue to do so, and those who hope to make Reston their home have the opportunity to do so through the creation and preservation of affordable housing.
Goal 1: Protect affordable development.

Goal 1 aims to preserve the number of ADUs available in Reston today and improve the quality of the existing units as needed. Currently, Reston’s ADU’s are subject to a time control period of up to 40 years depending on negotiations with the developer. The developer receives bonus density units depending on how many ADU’s they supply, but as the time control period comes to an end the developer keeps the bonus density units but is no longer required to offer affordable units. This policy could cause the affordable unit supply to decline in the coming years.

As Reston faces the impending end of the time control period a plan must be put into place to address a possible decline in supply. Preserving existing affordable housing is essential for the health of the affordable housing market and should be addressed before the time control periods run out.

In addition to time control periods, it is also essential to ensure the existing affordable housing market remains accessible and standardized in terms of upkeep. Affordable developments in Reston are aging and, because of that, there needs to be a plan in place to address any outdated aspects of the units. Not only are physical structures important to inspect but also the modernization of the current development units. As emphasized during the COVID-19 pandemic, students, workers, and people in general, must have reliable access to the internet. If the connection in the affordable developments is unstable or too costly that is something that should be addressed.

This goal is focused on the current housing supply, how to improve it and how to maintain it for future generations.
Goal 1: Protect affordable development.

Objective 1.1: Preserve or replace time-controlled affordable development.

  Action 1.1.1: Create an analysis of how many units will be lost to time control periods in the next 20 years.

  Action 1.1.2: Work with Fairfax County and existing developers to create overlay zoning that extends current the time control period for current and future affordable development to prevent the affordable housing supply to decrease before time control periods come to an end.

  Action 1.1.3: Create a tax credit program to encourage the preservation of current affordable housing past the time control period.

  Action 1.1.4: Create a plan to address any loss of units so the net supply of affordable housing does not force any residents to leave Reston due to lack of supply.

Objective 1.2: Address any deterioration in Reston Affordable housing

  Action 1.2.1: Hire a housing/site inspector to estimate the repairs needed in Reston's affordable housing stock.

  Action 1.2.2: Hold 2-3 focus groups to better understand the current resident's needs for improvement in Reston housing.

  Action 1.2.3: Create a budget, timeline, priorities and implementation plan to address repairs identified by an inspector and current residents.

  Action 1.2.4 Assess need of improvements to computer access, internet connectivity and shared space upgrades (playgrounds, etc.) through focus groups and analysis.

  Action 1.2.5 Create a budget, timeline and priorities sheet that realistically addresses the changes needed and creates an implementation plan.
Goal 2: Improve affordability and support

Goal 2 aims to improve the resources available for residents of affordable units in Reston. As previously stated, Fairfax County does provide a great number of support programs for those living in affordable units, as well as connection to social workers to assist them in getting on the waiting list for an affordable unit or connecting them with an available unit. Although Fairfax County does provide a variety of support programs there is room for improvement. Reston affordable housing residents would benefit from a more centralized human services center, and more consistent support programs for all residents.

It is also essential to continue to meet the demand for affordable housing through the creation of additional affordable units. As shown in Table 1 there is an unmet demand of units below $500, indicating that Reston must make an effort to add to the supply as they continue to grow. Throughout the findings, it was also indicated that those earning up to 80% HAMFI are experiencing cost burdens up to 50% at a more frequent rate than those earning above 80% HAMFI. For this reason, Fairfax County should look at housing in Reston on a more individual level, not all of those in ADU’s are experiencing affordability in their housing, and not all who qualify for affordable housing are always able to find a home in their budget. By supplying more ADU options and connecting the people to the units they need Reston can better address the housing needs of the people.

Reston currently has one homeless shelter, The Embry Rucker Community Shelter run by Cornerstones, that has 70 beds. As people experiencing homelessness begin to be able to transition out of homelessness it is essential, they have some stability. For that reason Fairfax County should create transitional housing for those experiencing extreme poverty. The transitional housing should have the same support discussed in Goal 1, possibly even to a further extent (more support staff per individual).
Objective 2.1: Encourage further cooperation between services supporting affordable housing tenants.

Action 2.1.1: Create two human services centers, one on the accessible bus line in north Reston and one on an accessible bus line in south Reston, that include support and opportunities currently housed in both existing human service centers.

Action 2.1.2 Create equal support program and opportunities for all affordable housing units, allowing all affordable units to same opportunities as RestON developments.

Action 2.1.3 Further advertise the program and support services to those who have access to ensure they are aware of the opportunities.

Objective 2.2: Create additional affordable units in Reston to meet the demand of those earning up to 80% HAMFI

Action 2.2.1: Create an individualized program to address the true meaning of affordability throughout Reston. With over 6,400 households earning less than 80% HAMFI experiencing a cost burden of up to 50% of their income they need for affordability is not being met even in ADU’s.

Action 2.2.2: Develop an additional 50 ADU’s under $500 rent in the next 5 years.

Action 2.2.3: Develop 50 transitional housing units for the homeless population.

Action 2.2.4: Create a transitional housing program to meet the needs of the transitional housing population to support and guide the residents through the transitional housing process, help them find jobs, and if budget allows providing mental, financial, and life skill support and guidance.
Goal 3: Plan for new units for future development

Goal 3 aims to aid Reston in planning for future affordable development. As Reston begins to age and change, and especially with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic Reston, now more than ever, must address the needs for affordable housing. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the United States has seen a drastic increase in unemployment and homelessness, and Reston is no exception. It has also impacted business altogether, forcing many businesses unfortunately to shut down permanently. The COVID-19 pandemic has also impacted the workforce in various ways, including creating a new surge in remote work. This forced push towards remote work has caused companies to rethink their working environment permanently. Due to the increase in closures and in work from home policies office spaces in Reston may be becoming available for sale at an increasing rate. Fairfax County can take advantage of the newly vacant space and create flexible zoning and tax incentives to encourage developers or owners to transform the space into affordable units. Fairfax County could also purchase the site themselves and use it to address the housing needs in the area.

Creatively utilizing other space, such as excess land on existing properties could also be used to meet the demand for affordable units, without using untouched land to do so.

Currently, Reston requires 12% affordable development when new units are built, or existing units are redeveloped, dependent on negotiations with Supervisor Alcorn. In Reston 11.6% of the population is earning up to 80% AMI but only 4.3% of housing in Reston is subsidized or income based, therefore the affordable development policy must do a better job requiring developers to meet that demand, or the gap between what Reston needs and what it has will only continue to grow.
Goal 3: Plan for new units for future development

Objective 3.1: Purchase under-utilized or no longer utilized office or industrial space to preserve for affordable development.

  Action 3.1.1: Create flexible zoning needed to allow a site to change from an office or industrial space to a residential space.

  Action 3.1.2: Create incentives for developers of abandon office space to create affordable housing.

  Action 3.1.3: Purchase abandoned office space, that identified in this plan or other, to keep with the promise of turning it into affordable units to meet future demand.

Objective 3.2: Utilize excess land on existing affordable development for additional affordable development.

  Action 3.2.1: Utilize excess land on currently affordable units to add additional units when possible without negatively impacting the quality of life in the West Glade apartment complex.

Objective 3.3: Create a new policy to better reflect the need for affordable housing.

  Action 3.3.1: Work within Fairfax County to create an IZ requirement the is non-negotiable and better reflects the affordable housing opportunity in Reston.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation Table: Goals, Objectives, and Actions</th>
<th>1-2 years</th>
<th>3-5 years</th>
<th>10 years</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Objective 1.1**  
Preserve or replace time-controlled affordable development | | | |
| **Action 1.1.1**  
Analyze potential loss of units due to time control | | | |
| **Action 1.1.2**  
Create new overlay zoning to prevent losses due to time control | | | |
| **Action 1.1.3**  
Create tax incentive to encourage the preservation of affordable units | | | |
| **Action 1.1.4**  
Commit to planning to address the net loss of units due to time control | | | |
| **Objective 1.2**  
Address any deterioration in Reston affordable units | | | |
| **Action 1.2.1**  
Hire housing/site inspector to estimate repairs needed in current affordable housing stock | | | |
| **Action 1.2.2**  
Hold 2-3 focus groups to better understand what affordable housing residents need | | | |
| **Action 1.2.3**  
Create a budget and timeline to address improvements identified by an inspector and current residents | | | |
| **Objective 2.1**  
Create further connectivity and accessibility to support available for residents. | | | |
| **Action 2.1.1**  
Create two human services centers, one on the accessible bus line in north Reston and one on an accessible bus line in south Reston, that include support and opportunities currently housed in both existing human service centers. | | | |
| **Action 2.1.2**  
Create equal support program and opportunities for all affordable housing units, allowing all affordable units to same opportunities as RestON developments. | | | |
**Action 2.1.3**  
Further advertise the program and support services to those who have access to ensure they are aware of the opportunities.

**Objective 2.2**  
Create additional affordable units in Reston to meet the demand of those earning up to 80% HAMFI

| Action 2.2.1 | Create an individualized housing program to address the true meaning of affordability in Reston |
| Action 2.2.2 | Develop an additional 50 ADU’s with household rent costs under $500 in the next 5 years |
| Action 2.2.3 | Develop 50 transition housing units for the homeless population in the next 5 years |
| Action 2.2.4 | Create a transitional housing program to meet the needs of the transitional housing population to support and guide the residents through the transitional housing process, help them find jobs, and if budget allows providing mental, financial, and life skill support and guidance. |

**Object 3.1**  
Purchase underutilized or no longer utilized office or industrial space to preserve for affordable development

| Action 3.1.1 | Create flexible zoning where needed to allow for the conversion of office space or industrial space to residential space |
| Action 3.1.2 | Create incentives for developers of abandoned office space to convert to affordable development |
| Action 3.1.3 | Purchase abandoned office space, that identified in this plan or other, to keep with the promise of turning it into affordable units to meet future demand. |

**Object 3.2**  
Utilize excess land on existing affordable development for additional affordable units
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Action 3.2.1</strong></th>
<th>Create and addition units by adding development onto West Glade.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Object 3.3</strong></td>
<td>Create a new policy to better reflect the needs of affordable housing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Action 3.3.1</strong></td>
<td>Work within Fairfax County to create an IZ requirement that is non-negotiable and better reflects the affordable housing opportunity in Reston.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
References


Fairfax Connector: 552 and 554 Reston North. (n.d.).


Fairfax County Jade. Fairfax County Virginia. (n.d.).


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Read the Principles. (n.d.), from https://designjustice.org/read-the-principles


*RIBS 2 and RIBS 4 Routes.* (n.d.).


United States of America, Fairfax County. (2018). *Communitywide Housing Strategic Plan* (pp. 1-17).


Appendix

Chart 1: American Community Survey education levels in Reston

Chart 2: American Community Survey Reston Poverty Percentages
Table 1: American Community Survey class of worker counts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class of worker</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Private wage and salary workers</td>
<td>27,208</td>
<td>78.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal, state, or local government workers</td>
<td>5,529</td>
<td>15.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-employed workers in own not incorporated business</td>
<td>2,052</td>
<td>5.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Chart 3: American Community Survey Reston Age and Gender Distribution
Chart 4: Distribution of Monthly percentage of Income paid to Housing (according to Town Charts)

Chart 5: Distribution of Monthly Owner Costs in Reston (according to Town Charts)
Chart 6: Reston Monthly Rental Rates According to town charts

Chart 7: 2019 Distribution of Income in the U.S., Virginia, and Fairfax County (according to the U.S Census)