



**The Fairfax County Democratic Committee
Urges the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to Increase Production of
Affordable Homes in the County**

Whereas,

Housing is a universal necessity of life. Without it, participating in most of social, political, and economic life is impossible, and keeping oneself and family safe and healthy can be extremely difficult.

Fairfax County has an extreme shortage of affordable homes. The housing supply has not kept pace with increases in population and jobs (both outcomes of a growing economy) and the cost of housing has risen much faster than wages, which for some workers have not risen at all. Additionally, the gap between wage growth and housing costs has accelerated in the Covid-19 pandemic. Phase I of the Communitywide Housing Strategic Plan (2018) identified the current need for 31,000 affordable homes and the future need for approximately 15,000 additional homes affordable to households earning up to 60 percent of the Area Median Income (AMI) over the next 15 years (2034), based on projected job and population growth in the county. It also warned that the market alone will not produce the necessary housing options for Fairfax County's future. Without significantly increasing the supply of affordable homes, Fairfax County's economic success and commitment to equity are in danger.

The lack of affordable homes in Fairfax County impacts a variety of people in our community. Among the most affected are low and middle-income workers (including many public sector and essential workers), seniors, workers early in their careers, persons with disabilities, and single-income households. The high cost of housing affects all generations. Many adult children of Fairfax County residents are unable to remain in or return to live in the county they grew up in. At the same time, elderly households present the second greatest need for more affordable housing behind small family households and singles.

Without affordable options for housing, many Fairfax residents and workers have left the county, contributing to employee recruitment and retention difficulties. Others have become homeless. On the night of the 2021 Point-in-Time Count, there were 1,222 people experiencing homelessness in Fairfax County, an increase of 17% from the previous year. And over 2,300 children enrolled in Fairfax County Public Schools are without permanent homes. The president of Northern Virginia Community College estimates that 15% of her students are homeless.

Fairfax County Democrats have already demonstrated our support for increased investment in the production of affordable housing. Last year, the Fairfax County Democratic Committee (FCDC) passed a resolution asking the Board of Supervisors to reinstate the Penny for Affordable Housing in Fairfax County.

Based on the 2018 Communitywide Housing Strategic Plan, the Board of Supervisors adopted the goal of producing a minimum of 5,000 new affordable homes by 2034 with no net loss of affordable homes.

FCDC is grateful for the work of the Board of Supervisors and the Department of Housing and Community Development in working toward the current goal. Thanks to the county's current programs to produce and preserve affordable homes, the county is moving toward the initial goal more rapidly than when the goal was adopted. Because of this rapid progress, the success of current initiatives, as well as the magnitude of the affordable home shortage (worsened by the pandemic), it is critical that the county accelerate its production and preservation of affordable homes and commit to doing so. Thanks to the work of the Board of Supervisors and the Department of Housing and Community Development, the county has already demonstrated that such an acceleration is also a realistic goal.

Therefore, be it resolved that the Fairfax County Democratic Committee calls on the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors to set a new goal of producing a minimum of 10,000 new affordable homes in the county by 2034 with no net loss of affordable homes.

PASSED and APPROVED on this 22nd day of March 2022.