

NORTHERN VIRGINIA AFFORDABLE HOUSING ALLIANCE

ADVOCACY ACTION ALERT

Alexandria Housing Activities November 2020

Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) Housing workgroup, November 10, from 5:30 - 7PM. [Register on zoom](#) by 9am on Nov 9 to select which strategies you'd like to discuss in breakout sessions. This work is part of [Building Alexandria's 2020-2025 Community Health Improvement Plan](#). Last year, affordable housing was identified as one of three priorities in the City's Community Health Assessment - the others being poverty and mental health. The CHIP workgroup provides an opportunity to develop and participate in a five-year plan to address housing. The strategies and tactics developed so far can be found in the [attached document](#). Housing advocates should also review the City's [Housing Master Plan](#), adopted in 2013, to review the housing goals and strategies set forth in the Plan, and note where there is alignment in the goals and strategies in the two documents.

CHIP Housing Workgroup Agenda:

- Welcome
- Overview of housing work during the pandemic - Eric Keeler, Office of Housing
- Breakout rooms to discuss strategies A, B, and C and report outs
- Breakout rooms to discuss strategies D, E, and F and report outs
- Next steps

Virtual Community Meeting on Heritage Redevelopment Project, November 11 from 6-8 PM. The community is invited to participate in a virtual community meeting regarding the proposed Heritage at Old Town redevelopment project. City staff will give a brief presentation on the overall project and answer questions from the community. The meeting will be conducted in English with Amharic interpretation.

Meeting access is listed below and posted on the [City's website](#):

- <https://zoom.us/j/95246119336>
- Meeting ID: 952 4611 9336
- Passcode: 536201
- Call in: 301.715.8592

Eviction Moratorium in Alexandria The temporary CDC eviction moratorium which ends Dec 31, 2020, protects residents who have been impacted by COVID-19 from eviction if they meet certain criteria; sign the CDC declaration; and agree to a rent repayment plan. Details on the eviction moratorium can be found [here](#). Activists and community groups in the City are working tirelessly to ensure that residents receive the appropriate information to avoid eviction, but despite their best efforts, this critical information is not getting to everyone. The table from the [RVA Eviction Lab quarterly report](#), shown below, states that, "notably all 88 of Alexandria's eviction judgements [from July - Sept 2020] were default judgements." The report explains that "default judgements mean that the tenant did not appear in court to challenge their eviction case, and eviction orders were entered in favor of the landlords." [Understanding the eviction process and tenants' rights](#) provides greater protection against a default judgment and can forestall an eviction.

As part of the community response, NVAHA is collaborating with three organizations - [ALIVE!](#), The Lazarus Ministry, and [Legal Services of Northern Virginia](#) - in the [Alexandria Eviction Prevention Partnership](#). This initiative will focus on residents who have received [writs of evictions](#). Individuals will be contacted and provided information to forestall the eviction process. Triage caseworkers will conduct targeted outreach to locate residents and provide information on their rights and the requirements of the CDC moratorium. Volunteers will assist residents with the paperwork and connect them with local and state rental assistance and organizations who can offer supportive services. NVAHA will provide data analysis and logistical support for the operation. This effort is supported through [The Resilience Fund](#) of ACT for Alexandria, and funds must be disbursed by Dec 30, 2020.

The CDC eviction moratorium is a temporary fix during the ongoing health crisis, and is insufficient to address the systemic problem of housing affordability and mounting debt for residents who are still required to pay back rent. The federal government must step in to remedy this situation with financial assistance that allows residents to remain safely housed, and protects landlords, especially small property owners, from possible foreclosure.

The Alexandria City Council will hold a virtual retreat meeting November 7, from 9 AM to 3 PM to discuss the Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 Operating Budget process and develop the City Council Work Program for calendar year 2021. During the budget portion of the meeting, City Council will be briefed on the City's financial outlook and Alexandria City Public Schools operating budget projections; receive input from the City's Budget and Fiscal Affairs Advisory Committee; and begin to discuss FY 2022 Budget Guidance, which will be considered and adopted at City Council's November 10 meeting. City Council will also work on development of its 2021 Work Program, which will identify the policies and initiatives the council is committed to working on during the calendar year. Once approved, the 2021 Work Program will serve as a "living document" for City Council, subject to periodic amendment.

Visit alexandriava.gov/Budget for more information about the FY 2022 budget process.

Alexandria's Housing Affordability Advisory Committee will meet Thursday, Nov 5, from 6:30 - 8:30 PM. This is a virtual meeting, and the public is invited to attend. See links for information regarding [Registration](#) and [materials for the meeting agenda](#).