



North Ridge Citizens' Association (NRCA) A Note on the City's Zoning for Housing Proposal September 2023

North Ridge Neighbors,

On September 5, the City of Alexandria's Planning and Zoning staff presented draft recommendations for "Zoning for Housing/Housing for All" initiatives designed to increase market and affordable housing across the city. The recommendations include nine areas of interest:

1. Bonus Height Density
2. Historic Development Patterns
3. Residential Multi-Family Zone Analysis
4. Industrial Zone Analysis
5. Coordinated Development Districts and Affordable Housing
6. Expansion of Transit Oriented Development
7. Office to Residential Conversions
8. Townhouse Zoning Analysis
- 9. Expanding Housing Options in Single Family Zones**

For North Ridge — a neighborhood zoned R-8 (Single Family Zone with a minimum lot size of 8,000 square feet) — the city's recommendations for Single Family Zones would mean:

- **Increased Number of Dwelling Units:** The city would approve one of two options to add different housing types to single-family zones within the current minimum for lot sizes, setbacks, and open space. Option 1 would allow two-unit dwellings. Option 2 would allow two-unit dwelling, as well as three to four multi-unit dwellings. These dwellings could be erected "by right" and not require a Special Use Permit.
- **Zoning Ordinance Definition for "Family":** The city would delete the definition of "family" from the zoning ordinance. The statewide building code requirements would determine dwelling occupancy maximums, regardless of who resides at the property.
- **Parking Requirements:** The city would approve one of two revised parking requirements based on the residence's distance from "Enhanced Transit Areas." Staff recommends no required parking within an Enhanced Transit Area and .5 spaces per dwelling beyond the area. For North Ridge, this could mean 1 space for a single dwelling or duplex, and 2 spaces for a three or four multi-unit dwelling. A second proposal for consideration would require a

parking spot for each dwelling outside of the Enhanced Transit Area resulting in up to four additional spaces for a four-unit dwelling.

This bundle of housing initiatives is on a fast track. The draft language was released last week, the final language will be released in late October, and the final vote is planned for November 28. This leaves just 12 weeks for community engagement, feedback, hearings, and a vote for what will be the biggest change to our zoning laws in our city's history — with only 4 weeks between the release of the actual language and the final action by City Council.

The schedule is as follows:

- September 5: Joint Planning Commission/City Council Work Session, City Hall (draft recommendations released)
- September 14: Community meeting, Beatley Library
- September 23: City Council Public Hearing, City Hall (opportunity to comment)
- September 24: City Council Town Hall (opportunity to comment) Location coming soon.
- September 25: Community meeting, William Ramsay Rec Center
- October 12: Community meeting, Charles Houston Rec Center
- October 14: City Council Public Hearing, City Hall (opportunity to comment)
- October 21: City Council Town Hall (opportunity to comment) Location coming soon.
- November 1: Planning Commission Public Hearing on Zoning for Housing, City Hall (opportunity to comment)
- November 14: City Council Public Hearing on Zoning for Housing, City Hall
- November 18: City Council Public Hearing on Zoning for Housing continued, City Hall
- November 28: City Council Meeting, City Hall (scheduled vote on Zoning for Housing reforms)

Meetings will be held in-person and have virtual options available. Registration for virtual participation of the next meeting (Sept. 14) can be reached at:

<https://apps.alexandriava.gov/Calendar/Detail.aspx?si=53398>

Comments and questions may be submitted at:

<https://www.research.net/r/AlexandriaVA-ZoningforHousing>

Letters to the Mayor and Members of City Council may be sent either individually or as a group through Alex311 at:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/Council#CityCouncilMembers>

Members of the Planning Commission and their contact information is listed at:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/boards-and-commissions/planning-commission>

The Zoning for Housing/Housing for All website is located at:

<https://www.alexandriava.gov/planning-and-zoning/zoning-for-housinghousing-for-all>

The North Ridge Citizens Association (NRCA) represents a diverse population with a variety of perspectives on important local issues. It is in our interest to advocate for a vibrant community with accessible and affordable housing options across the city. It is also important that we consider the city's geographical constraints and its capacity to provide adequate infrastructure including schools, roads, public services, and green space while preserving neighborhood character and quality of life issues.

We urge the Mayor and City Council to engage in open, transparent, and inclusive dialogue with all residents impacted by these proposals. Towards that end, NRCA has requested more time so residents can fully study, understand and consider the implications for their neighborhoods and provide input to the Planning Commission and City Council.

Please share this information with your friends and neighbors. More information will be forthcoming from the North Ridge Citizen's Association as this process moves forward. In the meantime, please contact info@northridgecitizens.org with questions or comments.