



Arlington County Board
Ellen M. Bozman Government Center
2100 Clarendon Blvd
Arlington, VA 22201

October 14, 2023


Dear Chair Dorsey and members of the Arlington County Board:

My name is Dan Reed and I serve as the Regional Policy Director for [Greater Greater Washington](#), a nonprofit that works to advance racial, economic, and environmental justice in land use, transportation, and housing throughout Greater Washington. GGWash supports the draft recommendations for Plan Langston Boulevard with changes that are described below.

Plan Langston Boulevard is a forward-thinking document that reflects years of hard work and important conversations about the challenges, and opportunities, facing this corridor. The Langston Boulevard corridor is home to some of the county's highest-resource neighborhoods, with sought-after schools, multiple parks, plentiful shopping options, and easy access to the job-rich Rosslyn-Ballston corridor. It's also largely off-limits to the county's most vulnerable residents, due to the high cost of housing and lack of affordable options.

Affordable housing in Arlington is so concentrated that [nearly all of the CAFs \(committed affordable units\)](#) in the county are located south of I-66, outside of the Plan Langston Boulevard study area. Since 2010, only 100 CAFs have been added to the Langston Boulevard corridor, and according to the draft plan, as of August 2023 there are just 263 CAFs in the corridor available to households making under 60% AMI (area median income). While there are some market-rate affordable units along Langston Boulevard, there is no guarantee they'll remain that way in the future.

This plan is a once-in-a-generation chance to change this, as it recommends upzoning along the Langston Boulevard corridor, unlocking underutilized properties like strip malls for higher-intensity development, including thousands of new homes. The plan will guide decision-makers on how and where to place affordable housing for decades, meaning it must clearly express the county's commitment to creating more affordable homes and addressing a legacy of racial and socioeconomic segregation.

The Washington, DC region is great  and it can be greater.



With this in mind, we recommend the following changes:

- Include a commitment to expand existing housing programs to support households earning 30% AMI salaries.
- Identify ways to achieve the 2,500 CAFs along the Langston Boulevard corridor promised in the Affordable Housing Master Plan by 2040, not the current goal of 2075, which is not a serious solution for people who need affordable housing now.
- Include a firm commitment to an immediate review and update of the East Falls Church and Cherrydale area plans, to provide more CAFs towards our goal of 2,500 units along Langston Boulevard.
- Include a commitment to increasing Affordable Housing Investment Fund (AHIF) loans and other supports to preserve MARKs (market-rate affordable units) and build as many new CAFs as possible.
- Include a commitment to the timely development of a “Creative Toolkit” for increasing affordable housing production, including an acquisition fund for CAFs, bonus density provisions or incentives for affordable units along the entire corridor, and co-locating affordable homes on County/APS land.

Thank you for considering our comments. We’re excited to see Arlington County work towards a more inclusive future for the Langston Boulevard corridor, and we look forward to working with the County Board to make it a reality.

Sincerely,

Dan Reed
Regional Policy Director
Greater Greater Washington