

BOARD MEMBER POSITION PAPER

1. Position Statement: There is ample reason to believe the City of Alexandria's leadership is endeavoring to prevent modern day injustice and inequity from harming all Alexandrians. However, being proactive with present day initiatives ought not be at the risk of overlooking the harm done to those in the past. Simply stated, is it not incumbent upon caring and responsible elected and appointed leaders to help residents overcome harmful effects of unhealthy public policies and practices much like that being done to help residents overcome harmful effects of unhealthy medical threats [*in various forms*] to public health? In like manner, is it not also incumbent upon concerned residents, stakeholders and members of public/private advisory bodies (*governmental as well as non-governmental*) to help elected and appointed City leaders by providing advice and assistance to help remedy the effects of injustice and inequity in its various forms that impact the well-being of Alexandrians - past, present and future? I say yes to both questions and as a member of the City's Landlord Tenant Relations Board, I have prepared and submitted two motions for consideration and adoption to do that; namely, promote wellness by correcting errors of the past and suggesting another best practice going forward.

2. Advisories: There is evidence of sanctioned policies and practices that systematically denied people of color identified as African American residents' access to housing not denied to other people of color identified as Caucasian Americans during the 1930s-1960s. Why not verify and acknowledge it with intent to correct the harm -see Motion #1? Similarly, why not issue a statement encouraging public/private entities to establish advisory bodies voluntarily as a sign of by-in/acceptance of what is regarded as best practices in Alexandria. In the case of Motion #2, the intent being to promote community engagement, more fully in non-governmental as well as governmental entities.

a. **Motion #1** (*See Something, Say Something*) - see attachment 1A

Background Commentary: In 2016, Dr. Krystyn Moon, published a detailed scholarly article entitled, "The African American Housing Crisis in Alexandria, VA during the 1930s-1960s. The article reveals the crisis was a result of deliberate action to exclude them through a pattern of establishing and enforcing policies and practices intended to deny African American residents' full access to the same housing available to Caucasian Americans. It is no secret that inequity and injustice exist in various forms in Alexandria, Dr. Moon's article provides evidence that was lacking in order to support/justify the need to remedy harmful injustice considered long overdue. As a longtime resident, stakeholder and member of the City's advisory Landlord Tenant Relations Board, I have heard personal accounts of injustice and inequity in housing from residents of color fearful of "*speaking up & speaking out*" for the common good.

b. **Motion #2** (*Best Practices*) - see attachment 1B

Background Commentary: *the positive example the City has set in establishing advisory bodies as part of its policy and practice is exemplary. And yet, there are public/private non-governmental entities that have chosen not to follow the City's example in establishing advisory councils, primarily because they are not required to and not encouraged to as a matter of public policy – voluntarily. The aforementioned situation was highlighted recently during a City Council public hearing when it was inferred that a developer was being asked to do something that was not required or being asked of other entities. The "pushback" spoke volumes given the clear example the City has set as a means to achieve one of its strategic outcomes; namely, well managed government which in-turn helps public/private non-governmental entities be the best they can be. Upon reflection, hopefully, public/private entities can also appreciate, they too can help the City be the best it can be not only in following the City's example but its request as a team player.*

3. Support for adoption of recommended advisories

a. Implement the **City's 2022 Strategic Vision** (*In 2022, Alexandria is a historic, inclusive city of kindness, with distinct, vibrant and safe neighborhoods, a well-managed government, flourishing arts, culture, and recreation, a strong economy, thriving children and youth, active and secure older adults, environmental sustainability, healthy residents of all ages, and multimodal transportation*) along with **the actionable City priorities established for 2022!**

b. **Other attachments:**

2	Article by Dr. Krystyn in 2016 entitled, <i>The African American Housing Crisis in Alexandria, (1930s-1960s)</i>
3	Oakland, Ca article mentioning the 1939 Unsung Heroes involved in the Alexandria Library Sit-In
4	Melvin Miller's Testimony before City Council (Mayor Beatley Charing) - October 1967
5	Connection Newspaper Article, entitled, " <i>The Nice-Nasty Town</i> " – June 2017
6	NY Times Article, entitled, " <i>Black Homeowners Face Discrimination in Appraisals</i> " – Aug 27, 2020
7	Alexandria City Fair Housing Testing Summary (1990-2021) note: no recorded data for 1930s-1989
8	Background Information Supporting Discussion for Best Practice Motion
9	Members of Alexandria City Council Issue Statement on Inclusiveness – Nov 19, 2016
10	ALL ALEXANDRIA INITIATIVE-Background, Vision, and Goal
11	Email Thread with Office of Housing
12	Glossary of Terms

4. Suggested consideration of action for recommended advisories:

- Regular order – if adopted by LTRB submit thru liaison to City Clerk for City Council action
- Irregular order – if adopted and City Staff agrees to or desires to act on motion submit to Dep City Mgr Baker
- Community Engagement – if adopted provide suggested addressees a copy of motions as a courtesy for info
- Follow the Federal Government's example set by the Biden Administration according to the Urban Institute (**Attach #13**)
- See attachment #14:** Habitat for Humanity's - Five (5) policy solutions to advance racial equity in Housing
- Encourage resident stakeholders (individuals or groups) prepare position papers on action deemed appropriate.

5. Recommended adoption and/or consideration of feasible advisory solutions:

- Adopt See Something, Say Something Motion– as cited in the content of the motion (*acknowledge and alleviate harm*)
- Adopt Best Practice Motion – prepare press release encouraging public/private entities establish advisory councils effective immediately upon adoption by City Council & consider adding such language in the City's Relocation Plan Policy

ATTACHMENT 1A

MOTION #1: SEE SOMETHING SAY SOMETHING 1930's-1960's

Focus: Identify & correct the cause & harmful effects of the African American Housing Crisis in Alexandria, VA, 1930s–1960s”

- I _____ move that the Landlord Tenant Relations Board (LTRB)
- A. submit a request thru Deputy City Manager Baker or other City official(s) deemed appropriate, asking that Planning and Zoning staff in collaboration with the Office of Housing staff verify the content in the article penned by Dr Krystyn Moon entitled, “The African American Housing Crisis in Alexandria, Virginia, 1930s–1960s” and at the conclusion of the verification process
 - B. if the content of Dr Moon’s referenced work is verified (*in whole or in part*) recommend that the verifying staff:
 - (1) name/identity any unjust and inequitable housing and zoning practices [construed as legal] and
 - (2) in collaboration with other appropriate entities propose corrective action to remedy any harmful effects such practices had and/or continue to have on Alexandria African-American residents of that era and/or their descendants: *and*
 - C. in the interest of transparency that appropriate suggested public/private entities be provided copies of the reports of verification and recommended corrective action to include
 - (1) City Council Members,
 - (2) City Staff (Human Rights Commission, Race and Social Equity Officer, City Attorney)
 - (3) City boards, commissions, committees
 - (4) a suggested list of public/private non-governmental entities
 - D. moreover, after weighing the pros and cons - assent to:
 - (1) to providing “stakeholders” listed below a copy of the motion *“for information only”* in the interest of transparency as well as possible individual or organizational community engagement prior to the start of the requested work; and
 - (2) after completion of the work addressed above (see A & B) seek appropriate approval to host a Forum to inform Alexandria residents of staff’s work in identifying causes & effects of the African American Housing Crisis during the 1930’s-1960’s

ATTACHMENT 1B

MOTION #2: BEST PRACTICES

Focus: Advisory Councils are an affordable means to create trust, confidence, efficiency and effectiveness

Given the clear understanding that the City of Alexandria, Virginia has a strong commitment to citizen/resident participation in good governance as evidenced by the number of citizen/resident boards, commissions and committees established by its City Council, I _____ move that the Landlord Tenants Relations Board (LTRB):

- A. recommend that City Council adopt a policy which encourages establishing advisory councils, as a best practice in the City of Alexandria, and that
- B. public/private non-governmental entities be encouraged to form advisory councils on a voluntary basis with the clear understanding that any/all advice offered is non-binding as is the case with existing non- statutory City boards, commissions, and committees, but that
- C. any/all advice rendered to recipients of the advisory council’s advice [especially the decision-making body or agent], would be given serious consideration in addressing matters viewed as problems or challenges in a manner deemed both reasonable as well as transparent.

Focus: Advisory Councils are an affordable means to create trust, confidence, efficiency and effectiveness

The African American Housing Crisis in Alexandria, Virginia, 1930s–1960s

by KRYSTYN R. MOON

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In 1960, the *Washington Post* interviewed the Rev. Dr. John C. Davis, the minister at Meade Memorial Episcopal Church in Alexandria, about finding a home near his congregation. Although he had been a minister at Meade Memorial for fifteen months, Davis and his wife lived in the church. Even with \$30,000 saved, he could not purchase a home in Alexandria...“Any number of homes are listed in the paper every day, but as soon as I tell them I’m a Negro they say they have no Negro housing.”¹ When not tending to his congregation, Davis worked at Virginia Theological Seminary (VTS); however, the western, more suburban portions of the city where VTS was located also had as few housing options. Like many of Alexandria’s African American professionals, Davis would most likely be forced to live in Washington, D.C., where members of the African American middle class had greater access to housing.

By the mid-twentieth century, Alexandria found it difficult to house its residents and offer modern amenities.² The city’s eighteenth- and nineteenth-century urban core was seen as dilapidated and overcrowded, while its western portions were largely rural and underdeveloped. With the post–World War II suburban construction boom taking place in nearby counties, local leaders were especially concerned that white middle-class families would avoid Alexandria, choosing to shop, work, and live elsewhere. To address the shift in housing attitudes and practices, the city invoked a set number of strategies to improve its image and residents’ quality of life: annexation, hygiene codes, public housing, urban renewal, and historic preservation.³ Unfortunately, these policies—combined with Alexandria’s segregationist traditions—had a negative impact on African American renters and homeowners living in the city. As a consequence, such families as the Reverend Davis’ struggled to find places to live and were either forced into segregated neighborhoods or out of Alexandria completely.

The situation in Alexandria is reflective of the larger housing issues African Americans faced during the mid-twentieth century in American cities, both North and South. Scholars Arnold R. Hirsch, Ronald H. Bayor, Thomas J. Sugrue, Andrew Wiese, and Karen J. Ferguson have documented the complex interactions between local residents and public policy, which redrew racial boundaries in American cities and forced African Americans into hyper-segregated neighborhoods. In turn, they have argued, African Americans mobilized, often breaking with black elites who were more conciliatory toward whites, to protest openly housing practices and make them a civil rights issue. Alexandria’s proximity to Washington, D.C., also allowed African American activists access to the center of national political discourse on housing and civil rights; their lack of political power, however, inhibited their influence on federal policy, which tended to reinforce local segregation practices.⁴

The history of African American neighborhoods in Alexandria fits nicely into the scholarship of Andrew Wiese and Karen Ferguson, both of whom have documented such communities from the late nineteenth century through the post–World War II period.⁵ In the late nineteenth century, many blacks lived just outside of cities where they could own land with little interference from local governments or the white elite. Men and women also found plenty of jobs in nearby homes, farms, and factories to support their families without needing to commute to nearby towns or cities. Annexation by local municipalities often circumscribed the autonomy within these neighborhoods, especially by the late 1930s when white elites embraced the use of federal policy and funds to reimagine the racial landscape. Pamela Cressey, Alexandria’s longtime city archaeologist, points to the emergence of free black neighborhoods on the city’s periphery as early as the 1790s when the District of Columbia annexed Alexandria.⁶ After the Civil War, additional neighborhoods emerged from the African American refugee population just outside Alexandria’s western city limits. The city’s black neighborhoods—although significantly older than those profiled by other scholars—faced similar issues once annexed by Alexandria.⁷

After World War II, suburban African American residents in Alexandria and elsewhere were seen as a threat to the white, middle-class ideal promoted in prescriptive literature. Self-built homes, large gardens, farm animals, no services (such as water and sewer lines), and lodgers were all common practices among working-class families trying to support themselves.⁸ With the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954, the possibility of racially integrated schools panicked white, middle-class residents and local boosters, who pushed for even more rigidly segregated communities. African Americans, however, were not forced out of

suburbia. In fact, by the 1960s the number of blacks living in suburban spaces increased nationwide on a scale unseen in previous decades. Poverty, joblessness, crime, and decrepit housing stock propelled the African American middle-class to the suburbs. As in urban centers, the fight for decent housing was a civil right that affected suburbia as well.⁹

Many scholars have argued that a new generation of activists that emerged in the mid-1930s changed the ways in which African Americans responded to social injustice, including housing, in both urban and suburban environments. The breakdown of “managed white supremacy” in Virginia, as laid out by historian J. Douglas Smith, began in Alexandria with the 1939 sit-down strike over the lack of library facilities for black residents. These well-educated men were frustrated by the blatant inequalities in Alexandria and turned to civil disobedience to call attention to the problem. Simultaneously, the appeasing attitudes of the African American elite, who often worked with whites to promote “racial uplift,” did little to address the needs of the majority of blacks. Continuing in the tradition of direct action begun in the 1930s, many veterans became activists after World War II and turned to protests and other forms of direct action to question the racial status quo.¹⁰

Alexandria’s status as a medium-sized city just outside Washington, D.C., however, complicates previous analyses of housing, race relations, and the urban/suburban divide. Although Alexandria is recognized as a distinct city, it also maintains a unique relationship with Washington and, as such, points to the fact that a municipality can fulfill multiple spatial definitions simultaneously, depending on its relationship to other places within a region. In 1791, the federal government annexed Alexandria into the District of Columbia, which Alexandria predated by almost fifty years.¹¹ The federal government then retroceded the City of Alexandria and Alexandria County (now Arlington County) in 1847 in response to complaints from white elites who were frustrated by the lack of federal construction on the Virginia side of the Potomac River.¹² After the Civil War, black and white residents began commuting on a regular basis between Washington and Alexandria, a practice that continues today. Local migration between the two cities was not necessarily unidirectional but was dependent on housing, jobs, educational opportunities, shopping, and leisure activities, all of which were affected by the practice of Jim Crow segregation in both localities. Nevertheless, as a suburb of Washington, D.C., Alexandria’s local politics and housing issues were often informed by the political climate of the nation’s capital and the large, active African American community residing there.¹³

Furthermore, although historians have demarcated cities and suburbs as distinct spaces, the residential landscape within Alexandria’s borders supports the division between urban and suburban neighborhoods as an artificial one. Scholars Richard Harris and Robert Lewis argue that the “differences between the cities and the suburbs as a whole were quite minor and were dwarfed by variations within the city and among the suburbs.”¹⁴ In Alexandria, the desire among local leaders to isolate blacks and entice the white middle class was ubiquitous; so, too, African American demands for justice can be found wherever discrimination appeared, whether in the more densely populated downtown or the more suburban environments to the west. To further complicate the urban/suburban divide, local leaders often turned to the nation’s capital just across the Potomac River for guidance and support when addressing Alexandria’s various housing problems in the mid-twentieth century.

This article explores housing segregation in mid-twentieth-century Alexandria and the ways in which leaders used public policy to reconfigure local neighborhoods and promote the city as an ideal, white middle-class community. Starting in the late 1930s, it became apparent that African American residents had few decent housing options in Alexandria thanks to a housing shortage combined with racial segregation. By the postwar era, the housing problems facing blacks only increased. Intimidation and legislative action expanded the marginalization of the city’s African American renters and homeowners, both in its urban core and its more suburban areas to the west. In response, civil rights activists and their supporters mobilized resources on a local, regional, and national level to fight housing discrimination. Even though many of the problems surrounding African American housing persisted, governmental changes eventually led to shifts in the racial makeup of some (but not all) of Alexandria’s urban and suburban neighborhoods beginning in the early 1970s.

IN THE 1930s, Alexandria’s struggle to house all of its residents became apparent. This problem was tied to an influx of both black and white families and individuals migrating to the area for jobs, first as part of the New Deal and then wartime mobilization. Karen Ferguson notes in *Black Politics in New Deal Atlanta* that factories, military installations, and federal agencies all needed a large workforce, many of whom migrated from the countryside to southern cities.¹⁵ Increasing numbers of Washingtonians, who moved to Alexandria in search of a more suburban life, further reduced suitable housing. To meet demand, developers constructed homes and apartments with white-only housing covenants, such as Parkfairfax, for government workers, many of

whom were employed at the newly constructed Pentagon.¹⁶ African Americans, whose population had not increased for forty years, began to migrate to Alexandria looking for homes by the early 1940s (see Table 1). Their housing options were significantly different in comparison to their white counterparts.

Unlike other southern cities of its size, Alexandria had a long history of African American land and homeownership. Beginning at the end of the eighteenth century, free blacks purchased lots and built homes that were subsequently passed down through the generations. Some African American neighborhoods were outside the city limits but were eventually annexed as Alexandria grew. These neighborhoods, located near the city’s commercial corridor, were often racially mixed, housing poor whites and immigrants.¹⁷ When the Virginia state legislature passed a “segregation district” ordinance in 1912, allowing cities and towns to designate neighborhoods as white-only,

Table 1: The Number and Percentage of African Americans in Alexandria, 1900–1980*

Years	Total Population	Number of African Americans	Percentage of Population
1900	14,528	4,542	31
1910	15,329	4,188	27
1920**	18,060	4,112	23
1930**	24,149	4,912	20
1940	57,040	5,032	9
1950	61,787	7,622	12
1960	91,023	10,353	11
1970	110,938	15,644	14
1980	103,217	23,017	22

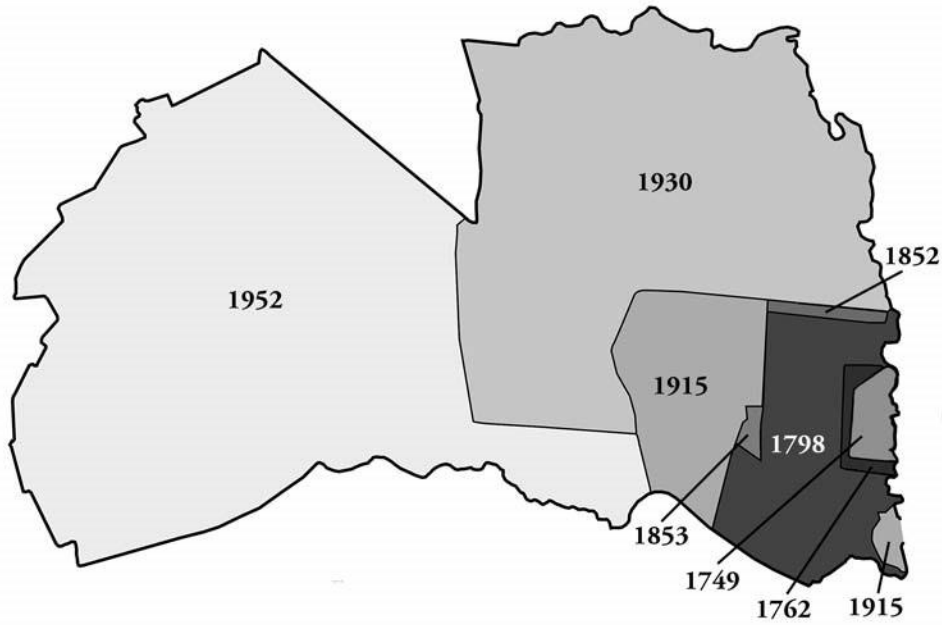
* Information for U.S. Census population numbers from 1910 through 1960 are from the *Historical Census Browser*, University of Virginia, Charlottesville. For population and percentage numbers from 1970 and 1980, see *1970 Census of Population and Housing: Virginia*, Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, December 1971 and *1980 Census of Population: General Population Characteristics, Virginia*, Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, August 1982.

** This number includes the total population of both the City of Alexandria and Arlington County, which had been established as a separate entity in 1920.

Alexandria’s city council never created such districts (Roanoke, Richmond, and Norfolk did).¹⁸ As late as the 1940s, blacks and whites in older portions of Alexandria still lived side-by-side or across the street from each other, although some blocks were completely black or white. A handful of white residents tried to maintain white-only housing, but the extent of their reach was limited.¹⁹

Housing built in areas annexed in the twentieth century was more racially segregated in comparison to Alexandria’s historic core (see Map A). Areas

Map A. Alexandria Annexation, 1700s–1950s

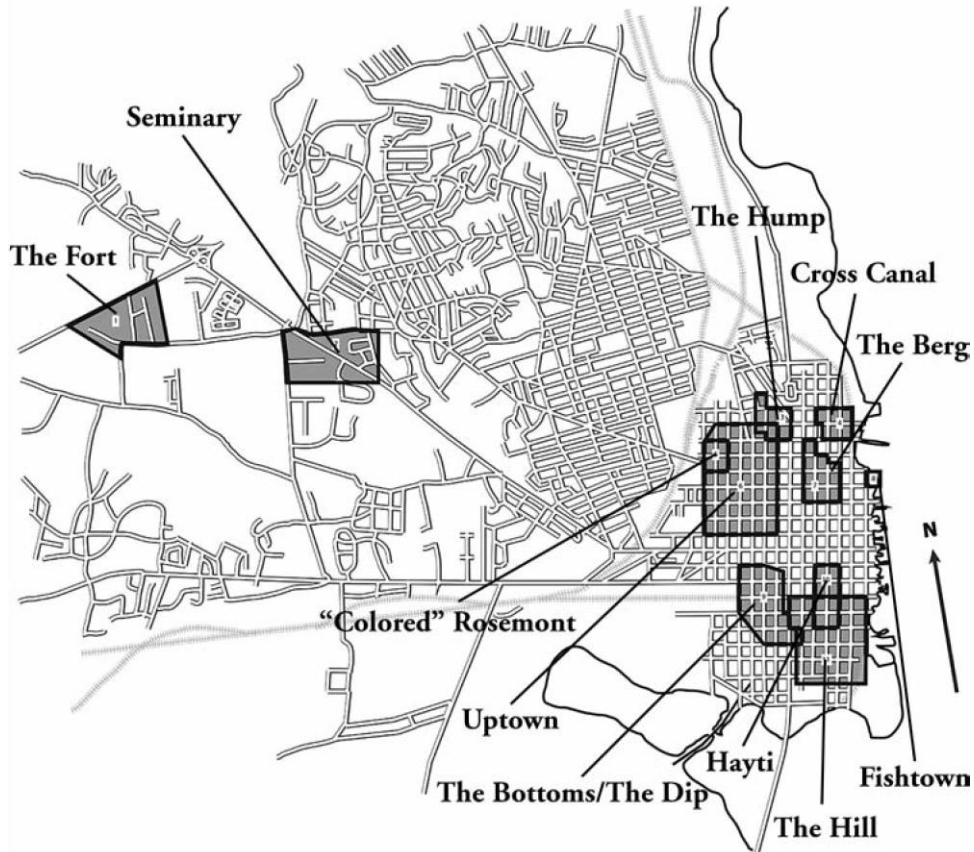


Map by Brian Brown, UMW Geography

annexed in 1915 and 1930 to the north of the city barred African American renters and homeowners.²⁰ Working-class whites, many of whom worked at a local rail yard, lived in the Del Ray and the Potomac neighborhoods, while blacks lived across the railroad tracks. Areas annexed in 1930 and 1952 to the west of Alexandria’s historic core were also rigidly divided. Large portions of this region were rural with white-owned farms and large estates.²¹ Two African American neighborhoods, Seminary (also known as Macedonia) and The Fort, contained a sizable number of residents. These neighborhoods were established in the years immediately following the Civil War (see Map B).

In addition to an increasing housing shortage, 1930s public policy heavily influenced the future of Alexandria’s African American housing. As Ferguson argues, the allotment of federal funds for slum clearance and public housing during the New Deal “represented the beginning of a massive

Map B. African American Neighborhoods



twentieth-century public works program that would reconfigure the racial geography of American cities.”²² In Virginia, the process began in Alexandria with state delegate Maurice D. Rosenberg, who cosponsored legislation for the development of local housing authorities. This legislation, a response to the National Housing Act of 1937, allowed cities and towns to create housing authorities to build public housing and improve blighted areas using federal funds. In a letter to Alexandria’s mayor, Rosenberg explained that many people were concerned about the city’s “bad housing conditions” and wanted a special meeting of the city council called to begin the process of creating a local authority.²³ The city council agreed.

To understand fully Alexandria’s housing problems, the council asked the Works Projects Administration (WPA) to study the situation. In its published report, the WPA found that 23 percent of Alexandria’s 8,076 dwelling units were substandard or in need of major repairs to make them structurally sound. Of these substandard dwellings, 15 percent housed whites and 67 percent housed African Americans.²⁴ The data from this report also correlated residents living in substandard housing with income level, family size, and access to public welfare. Overcrowded homes, which totaled 280, affected 2.5 percent of the total number of white dwellings and 7 percent of black ones. Forty-nine percent of families in substandard housing made less than \$1,000 a year. Most poor families were small, consisting of two to three people. Finally, only 11 percent of whites and 15 percent of African Americans in substandard housing were known to any welfare organizations. These final two percentages shocked researchers: public and private charities seemed unaware of the depth of Alexandria’s poverty.²⁵

While studying Alexandria’s housing conditions, the city began tearing down homes as part of its slum clearance.²⁶ In a letter to the city council in March 1939, Henry P. Thomas protested condemnations of African American housing. Thomas, a white lawyer, criticized the condemnation of Hannah Nelson’s property. He argued that her home was “actually in very good condition, in such condition that it can be repaired.” The council voted in favor of Thomas’ request.²⁷ In another letter, Lynn W. Ellis spoke directly to the impact of condemnations on African Americans generally:

You are aware of the fact that sixty per cent of the houses that is available for colored people has long out lived their usefulness. But if you demolish these houses immediately, then where shall all of these people find shelter? This is a matter that deserve[s] your closest thoughts. Certainly these people do not desire to live in fire traps but if that is the best that can do, then why turn them out in the streets in masses? The majority of the people that has rec’d moving notices has tried in vain to find new homes. Or places to store their belongings in such short time that has been given them.²⁸

The city council's minutes note that the letter was received but that no action was taken.²⁹



The John Roberts Public Housing Complex in the 1960s (*Special Collections, DC Public Library*)

In June 1939, the city council created the Alexandria Housing Authority, later known as the Alexandria Housing and Redevelopment Authority (ARHA), to formally administer slum clearance and public housing through federal funds.³⁰ A summary of a speech by Alexandria's city manager, Carl Budwesky, in the *Alexandria Gazette* explained that the city government's reasons for establishing AHA "was to eliminate insofar as may be possible unhealthful and unsanitary conditions in many sections of the city due to the fact that many homes in certain sections are not connected with the city sewer system. He cited the fact that most of the year in and year out jail population comes from these areas, that much of the time of the health department and a great deal of the funds of the welfare department are spent there."³¹

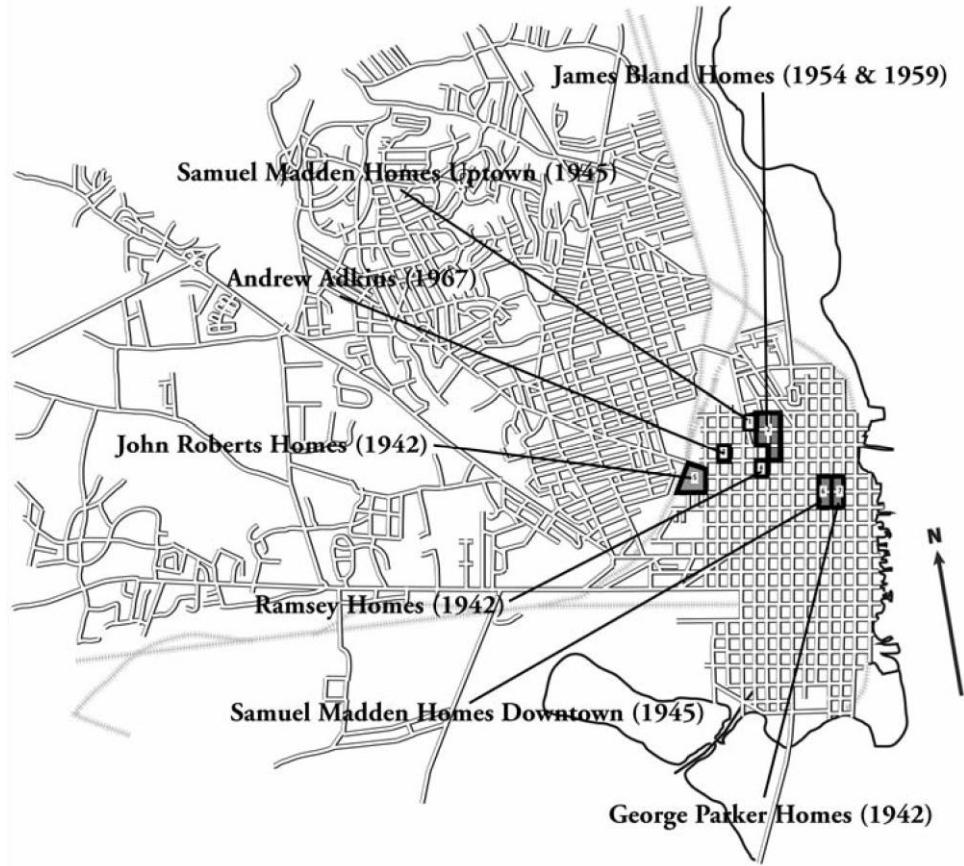
Budwesky's statement was very much in line with national conversations on blight during the Great Depression. In *The Rough Road to Renaissance*, historian Jon C. Teaford defines blight as "the process of physical deterioration that destroyed property values and undermined the quality of urban life."³² To solve these problems, it was argued that cities only needed new highways, sewers, up-to-date housing and commercial buildings, and less pollution.³³ Then white middle-class families, who had moved away to find safer and more hygienic places to live, would return to Alexandria to live, shop, and work. Thus, instead of addressing social and economic inequalities that affected African Americans, white boosters adopted physical improvements to remedy the city's problems.

Like other cities with a sizable African American population, Alexandria moved quickly to redraw its neighborhoods along more rigid racial lines through its new housing policies.³⁴ By 1940, ARHA planned to build about 200 units to help families in need of low-income housing and either raze or renovate the same number of privately owned homes.³⁵ A year later, ARHA condemned 240 homes and began construction on two segregated housing facilities. The white-only John Robert Homes was built on vacant land between the railroad tracks for the Richmond, Fredericksburg, and Potomac Railroad and the racially mixed Uptown neighborhood. The construction of George Parker Homes for African American families required condemnation of two blocks of The Berg, another mixed race neighborhood (see Maps B and C).³⁶ Based on a map included in the WPA's report, ARHA built George Parker Homes on two blocks that either housed 80 percent or more whites or was vacant (the area is not shaded in on the maps). However, the 1938 *Hill's Alexandria City Directory* listed several African American homeowners and two restaurants in the area. It can be speculated that this site was the one Lynn W. Ellis wrote the city council about in March 1939; by the time the WPA enumerators arrived, the area was leveled.³⁷

Public housing for African Americans in Alexandria also lacked the support from local government that public housing for whites received. One city council member tried—in lieu of housing black families at George Parker—to use the homes for white defense workers. His motion failed.³⁸ The number of units—110 for African American families versus 130 for white families—also did not

meet the housing needs of low-income blacks.³⁹ Finally, the city council allowed the construction of homes for African Americans that failed to meet local housing codes.⁴⁰

Map C. Public Housing, 1940s–1960s



Public housing not only reified racial lines but also did very little to address the immediate need of finding a place to live. African Americans in the late 1930s and 1940s continued to face overcrowded and, at times, dangerous housing conditions. A 1941 *Washington Post* article reported “as many as 20 Negroes [were] occupying three and four-room houses” in Alexandria.⁴¹ A “Letter to the Editor” also described three families living in a four-room “shack” along the railroad tracks in the Uptown neighborhood. Because of the building’s condition, all three families were evicted with no housing assistance.⁴² In 1943, the War Housing Centers around Washington had so few housing options for African Americans that they asked “every Negro family in this entire territory to go over his household and see if he can ‘double up’ a bit and take in a paying war guest or his family.”⁴³ To alleviate the situation, federal authorities intervened and condemned land in Alexandria to build three permanent housing communities for defense workers—Chinquapin Village and Cameron Valley for whites and Ramsey Homes for blacks—and two temporary trailer parks.⁴⁴ Although historian Arnold Hirsch notes the hands-off approach of the Federal Housing Authority (FHA) in the 1940s, in at least this instance, it interceded on the local level to address aggressively unmet housing needs. The FHA, however, avoided any attempt at desegregation and, in fact, reinforced the racial status quo.⁴⁵ The trailer parks created much controversy. The FHA placed fifty trailers for African American defense workers in The Hump, another mixed-race neighborhood, and another fifty for whites in the Del Ray neighborhood (see Map B). Federally funded trailer parks outraged white residents, city government, and Alexandria’s representative in the U.S. House of Representatives, Howard W. Smith.⁴⁶ Alexandria’s city council unanimously passed a resolution denouncing the project, arguing: “trailer type housing projects are in the main undesirable, and prejudicial to the health and general welfare of the general neighborhood.”⁴⁷ After an injunction by the courts failed, the council refused to supply sewer and water hookups to the trailers without a court order.⁴⁸ The federal government successfully installed the trailers by the summer of 1943. After the trailers were no longer needed, the FHA gave them to ARHA to house sixty-one displaced African American families.⁴⁹ In 1954, the site became black public housing known as the James Bland Homes (see Map C).⁵⁰

In the mid-1940s, ARHA built additional public housing developments, which continued the process of segregating more racially mixed neighborhoods. In 1945, ARHA also completed two complexes known as the Samuel Madden Development for Negroes. Samuel Madden “Uptown” was situated in The Hump, while “Downtown” was in The Berg neighborhood (see Maps B and C).

These latter housing units alleviated some of the problems African Americans encountered, although local need still was not met. In 1947, the Alexandria Council of Social Agencies reported that “[m]ost of the houses in Alexandria are old. Those in the slum area are of course in the worst condition. . . . These sections, where Negroes are densely settled, have houses some of which had very inadequate sanitary facilities.”⁵¹ The council even found war veterans who were unable to find suitable places to live for their families.⁵²

A combination of forces—a patchwork pattern of residential segregation, slum clearance, the construction of inadequate public housing, and a population boom—made finding a home difficult for Alexandria’s blacks, whether new arrivals or longtime residents. White leadership, which hoped to use federal funds to reorganize the city’s landscape along racial and class lines, and a lack of African American political representation only exacerbated the situation. Although concerned with the unsightly appearance of blight, city leaders were not equally interested in adequately housing residents, especially African Americans, or to look into the root causes of run-down neighborhoods. The 1950s and 1960s would place further burdens on those in need of housing.

AFTER WORLD WAR II, local politicians, civic organizations, and business leaders embraced large-scale urban renewal in hopes of accommodating Alexandria’s increasing population and the demands of postwar growth (see Table 1). Public housing and slum clearance was still important; however, city boosters were now interested in promoting a white middle-class lifestyle and constructing shopping centers, public buildings, parking, and open spaces. Leroy S. Bendheim, Alexandria’s vice mayor and member of the Alexandria City Council Redevelopment and Housing Committee, explained the need for renewal: “[t]hose who cling to ancient customs and moorings in the face of insistent progress will awake some day to find themselves living in a dead city, through which time and events have swept by to come to rest in more receptive climes.”⁵³ Some white leaders—afraid that Alexandria’s traditions and older housing stock might lead to further decline—sought to reimagine the city as relevant in the new postwar consumerist era. African Americans, however, were left out of this new image of Alexandria.

White community leaders experienced numerous pressures to pursue urban renewal. Modest attempts to improve Alexandria through the restoration of historic buildings had been made previously by individuals and local organizations. In the postwar era, however, these small-scale projects were no longer enough. About a decade earlier, Alexandria’s residents and city council had delineated an Old and Historic District, otherwise known as Old Town, within the city’s core. This designation protected many eighteenth and early nineteenth-century buildings from demolition while doing little to solve the city’s need for housing and modern amenities. Rather than focus on housing and the needs of its citizens, Alexandria prioritized its growing tourism industry and the creation of a commercial zone in Old Town.⁵⁴

The Old Town designation also made public works projects, such as the construction of parking lots and street expansion, nearly impossible.⁵⁵ Additionally, competition from newly established shopping centers, most notably Shirlington in 1944 followed by Seven Corners in 1956, meant consumers did not need to venture into Alexandria’s congested historic district.⁵⁶ The majority of the city’s residents were also no longer working within the city limits but were commuting to federal and office jobs along the region’s new highway system.⁵⁷ With their jobs elsewhere, these workers needed a greater incentive to live and shop in Alexandria. Finally, *Brown v. Board* terrified many white, middle-class parents who feared their children would attend integrated schools. The pairing of federal funds with local authority gave the white elite the ability to “contain,” according to Arnold Hirsch, the threat of integration.

Concerned with increasing Alexandria’s modern features and attractions, the city’s first attempt at large-scale urban renewal began in 1951 with what was known as the Prince Street Shopping Center. ARHA studied the eleven block area that would be affected by the plan and found sixty-four homes without private baths and only cold water plumbing. In the plan’s central five-block area, 100 homes were without private toilets. Thirty were in such a dangerous structural state that ARHA recommended demolition.⁵⁸ ARHA, along with the city council’s planning committee, endorsed seizing these properties through eminent domain and selling them to a private developer, who would use the land for a shopping center. The shopping center was to become Alexandria’s new commercial district so consumers would not have to leave the city or drive into the historic district.⁵⁹ Supporters argued that



Downtown Alexandria in 1955 (*Special Collections, Alexandria Library*)

“[t]his proposal is progress; it is a distinct step forward. . . . Let’s make historic Alexandria a progressive and prosperous Alexandria.”⁶⁰

During a public hearing on 21 June 1954, many Alexandrians criticized the proposed project. A group of local residents—made up of both white and black homeowners and renters—were up in arms about losing their homes. Representing some of the African Americans affected by the project, attorney Edwin C. Brown argued that his clients did not believe the city would help them find new homes once their properties were taken. He continued, connecting black poverty to the state of housing: “You know, as I know, that the housing situation as regards negroes is acute. They have low incomes and as a result will have low standards of living and they are not responsible for it! In any job, private or with the municipalities, they are the last ones to be hired and the first ones to be fired. What else can you expect but substandard living?”⁶¹

Other parties had different concerns. Some downtown business owners expressed outrage that the city council would use eminent domain and then sell the land to a private developer: they felt abandoned. A representative for Shiloh Baptist Church, an African American church located near the project area, argued that the plan would “leave in one corner thereof a Church serving a particular community but move the community away and leave the church there isolated.”⁶² The president of the Del Ray Citizens Association spoke against the concept of eminent domain and questioned whether the project actually remedied Alexandria’s public housing shortage.⁶³ After much political and legal maneuvering, the city council placed the project on permanent hold in November 1955.⁶⁴

Within a year, the city council was discussing urban renewal again, this time to access funds under the newly revised Housing Act of 1954. Three components of the law had the greatest impact on Alexandria’s development during the 1950s and early 1960s: all cities must generate a master development plan with community support; local governments must establish standards of structural integrity and healthfulness; and federal funds could be used for projects that were not primarily residential.⁶⁵

To access these funds, the city council focused on updating housing codes to comply with the new act. Passed in December 1957, the Minimum Housing-Hygiene Ordinance was a sweeping piece of legislation that required that all structures be healthful and sanitary.⁶⁶ Sanitarians, hired as part of the Division of Environmental Health within the Health Department, worked alongside the Fire Department to inspect buildings and cite owners for violations.⁶⁷ Both departments could condemn properties not in compliance with the new code, a power that facilitated demolitions in the late 1950s and early 1960s.

When drafting the Minimum Housing-Hygiene Ordinance, the city council also set up the Community Development Committee. Popularly known as the Committee of 77, it analyzed Alexandria’s neighborhoods by U.S. census tracts and wrote a report detailing the needs of each neighborhood.⁶⁸ In 1958, the committee published its report, which would be used to develop Alexandria’s master plan. Upon the report’s release, Stuart Morrison, secretary of the committee, explained: “Alexandria is at

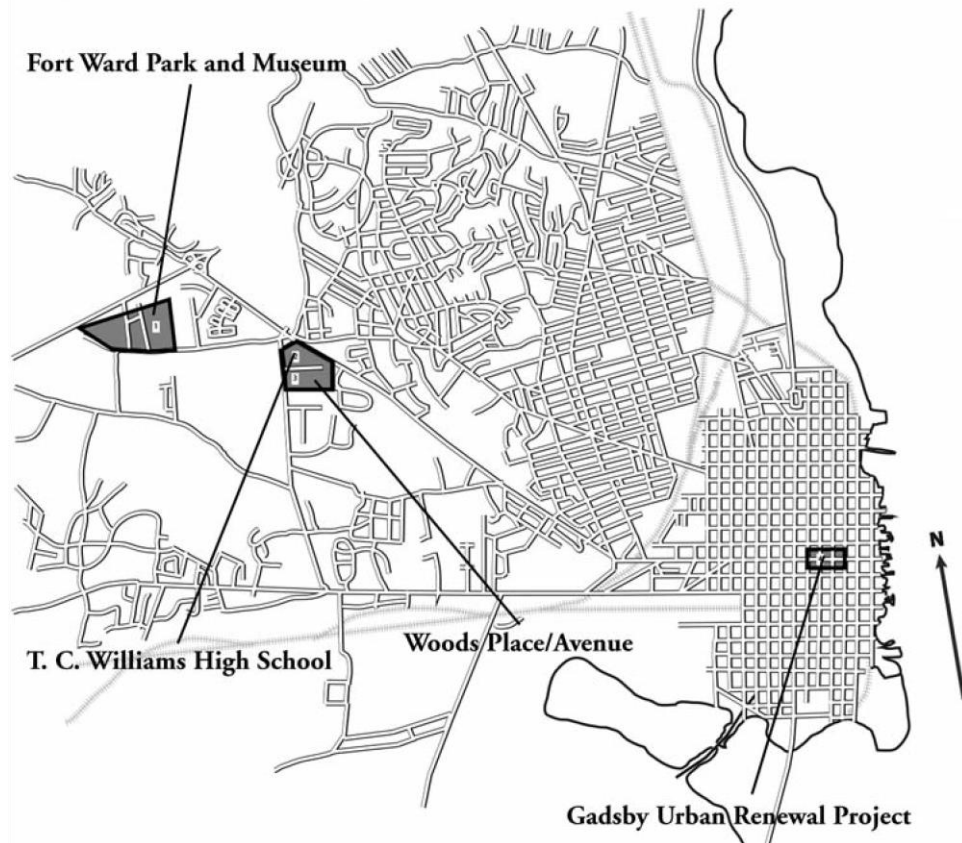
the crossroads and must now go ahead with a 'positive plan of action' for urban renewal."⁶⁹ The report stated that a scattering of blighted neighborhoods had emerged in Alexandria, negatively affecting both residents and visitors.

These neighborhoods tended to cater to Alexandria's African American community, many of whom lived in public housing or run-down tenements. Overall, the report recommended that city government implement policies to prevent blight, hire more staff to enforce laws, and make the historic area more accessible to cars.⁷⁰

One neighborhood stood out as Alexandria's biggest concern: Uptown. It reportedly contained "the most serious blight problems (with the attendant social problems of disease, crime, and juvenile delinquency)." Fifty-one percent of the neighborhood's housing was in need of major repairs.⁷¹ Even in the 1950s, Uptown was still a mixture of white and black residents. In another report issued by the Planning Department two years earlier, Uptown was reportedly 40 percent white and 60 percent non-white. These residents were among the poorest in the city, earning 50 percent below the city average. In 1956, the Planning Department recommended housing redevelopment in Uptown with federal assistance as "[p]rivate enterprise has not assumed the responsibility of providing decent living quarters for the people, and more than likely, will not be anxious to do so."⁷²

Despite the emphasis on Uptown's need for redevelopment, Alexandria's first federally funded urban renewal project focused on the city's historic commercial corridor. Redevelopment of this area was much in line with other urban renewal projects in the United States where white elites "used public authority and federal funds to remove the working class, and particularly poor people of color" from neighborhoods near commercial centers.⁷³ Blight reportedly surrounded this section of Alexandria, negatively impacting not only tourism and shopping but also challenging the city's white middle-class identity. A report generated by ARHA explained that "[m]ost of the dwellings in the area were built before the advent of modern building codes and zoning regulations. Their original foundations, exterior construction and interior arrangement and facilities fall so far short of standards for modern dwellings that it is not economically feasible to restore or recondition them since they not only have deteriorated but in addition are basically inadequate in design and deficient in construction."⁷⁴ Limited parking and traffic congestion also kept white middle-class shoppers away.⁷⁵ With newly built shopping centers only a few miles away, there was little-to no need for consumers to go into Old Town.

Map D: Urban Renewal, 1950s–1960s



The Gadsby Commercial Urban Renewal Project began in 1959 (see Map D). The project was named after Gadsby's Tavern, a late eighteenth century building converted into a museum in 1929 by the American Legion and one of the few buildings to be saved from the proposed demolition. According to the preliminary report submitted by ARHA to the city council, the Gadsby Project

would create a completely new commercial corridor, destroying a twenty-block area in the historic district. **Various versions of the plan included a range of new structures: a municipal center, parking lots, a park, high-rise apartment buildings, an auditorium, a department store, a civic center, and a 200-room hotel.**⁷⁶



Urban renewal in Gadsby in 1965 (*Special Collections, DC Public Library*)

Once again, local residents and businesses organized against such massive demolition. They were joined by another concerned group of constituents—historic preservationists. Unlike other opponents to the project, historic preservationists were critical of such sweeping destruction because they believed it would damage the city’s historic and architectural uniqueness and hamper its growing tourist industry.⁷⁷ In 1962, the Historic Alexandria Foundation explained that—though it supported the destruction of slums—the foundation was critical of the demolition of historic buildings without any consideration for rehabilitation.⁷⁸ The city council and Mayor Frank E. Mann recognized the problem and began plans to save some historic buildings and require that any new construction match the historic district’s colonial style.⁷⁹ Over the next few years, a greatly narrowed Gadsby Project emerged, focusing on the businesses and homes in the six blocks around City Hall.⁸⁰

As with the aborted Prince Street Shopping Center, housing for displaced residents was a major concern with the Gadsby Project. Seventy-five percent of individuals and families living around the commercial corridor were in need of public housing. Out of those families, twenty-nine were white and forty-six were black. No attempt was made to rehouse residents near the commercial corridor; furthermore, despite the *Brown v. Board of Education* ruling, city leaders refused to offer desegregated public housing to those displaced. Initially, ARHA planned for African Americans to find slots in its current public housing system, which by the late 1950s had 459 units available for occupancy with a turnover rate of forty-one units a year (as a point of comparison, white-only public housing had 462 units available with a turnover rate of 210 units a year).⁸¹ For the overflow, ARHA planned to give residents a list of private market homes for sale and rental units. Federal funds had been acquired to build additional public housing for African Americans; those homes, however, were not expected to be available until **1964.**⁸²

Around the same time, Alexandria’s city council approved two additional urban renewal projects—Fort Ward Historic Park and T. C. Williams High School (see Map D). Unlike Gadsby, which affected Alexandria’s urban core, both of these projects were located in less densely populated areas to the west of downtown. This section of Alexandria was slated for the rapid post–World War II suburban development, catering to white middle-class commuters who city leaders desperately wanted. The sites for Fort Ward Park and T. C. Williams High School also happened to be the two locations where African Americans could easily live in western Alexandria.

The establishment of Fort Ward Park began as part of the region's Civil War centennial celebrations. The Civil War Round Table of the District of Columbia initiated conversations with white residents about building a park on the remains of Fort Ward, one of the sixty-eight forts making up the Defenses of Washington. The park would be one of the stops along the Round Table's proposed Fort Drive, a freeway they hoped the federal government would build around Washington to alleviate congestion and promote tourism.⁸³ With suburban development encroaching on the area, local white



Rosenberg Department Store in 1955 (*Special Collections, Alexandria Library*)

residents moved quickly to petition the city council for a multi-purpose park, which would include passive recreational spaces and historic elements. The city council approved the project in 1954, using local funds to purchase land, reconstruct the northwest bastion, and build museum space. Federal funds acquired under the Housing Act of 1961 purchased additional land. The park opened on Memorial Day in 1964.⁸⁴

For African Americans, the construction of Fort Ward Park further constrained the already limited housing market. After the Civil War, a settlement known locally as “The Fort” was established on the site, and a handful of residents bought land, which was subsequently passed down. By the late 1940s, whites owned a majority of the land, but the majority of residents were African Americans. To facilitate park construction, sanitarians declared The Fort as blighted with all of its homes (eleven total) deemed “substandard.”⁸⁵ Residents recognized that they would either need to sell their property or move out of white-owned rentals. One former resident, Maydell Casey Belk, recalled the city pressuring her mother to sell: “The city told her [mother] that if she didn’t sell it she would lose out because they were going to condemn the houses because they didn’t have any bathrooms, no running water and stuff, so that is when she gave in.”⁸⁶ With their home under threat of condemnation, the Casey family sold their property to the City of Alexandria.

Seminary, another African American neighborhood in western Alexandria, was also slated for urban renewal. Its residents, like those at The Fort, settled in the area during the late nineteenth century and worked primarily in agriculture or at two nearby educational institutions—Virginia Theological Seminary (VTS) and Episcopal High School (EHS). Unlike those who lived in The Fort, African Americans owned the land in the **Seminary neighborhood. As a consequence, its population had grown significantly in the twentieth century as one of the few places where blacks could own property.**



Destruction of Rosenberg Department Store in 1965 as part of the Gadsby Urban Renewal Project
(*Special Collections, Alexandria Library*)

In its 1958 review of housing and land use, the Committee of 77 reported that “Mudtown [the derogatory name whites gave to Seminary] is a problem to the city.” Although some “houses may be rehabilitated, there [were] large numbers that should be removed.”⁸⁷ By 1960, city leaders abandoned any discussion of rehabilitating Seminary and shifted their focus solely toward replacing it with a “new high school to avoid serious overcrowding in the city’s two predominantly white high schools.”⁸⁸ Immediately, Alexandria’s Urban Renewal office declared forty-eight buildings in the project area substandard. A report promoting the Mudtown Urban Renewal Project stated: “[t]he area was never properly developed with dedicated streets, layout of lots, storm and sanitary sewers, city water, electricity, fire protection, etc.”⁸⁹ T. C. Williams High School—made famous in the 2000 film *Remember the Titans*—opened on the remains of Seminary in the fall of 1965.⁹⁰

Although white city leaders and residents were primarily concerned with housing conditions in Uptown, the neighborhood was never slated for largescale urban renewal.⁹¹ Instead, segregated public housing built in the late 1930s and 1940s was the city's main attempt to provide low-income African Americans with decent places to live. Urban renewal in Alexandria focused on other areas—its commercial corridor in the historic downtown and T. C. Williams High School and Fort Ward Park, both of which were located in the less densely populated western portions of the city. The former project catered to white business leaders who were concerned with competition from shopping malls and the impact of suburbanization. Urban renewal at Seminary and The Fort addressed the new standards of suburban living among Alexandria's middle-class whites. All three projects negatively impacted African American residents whose housing options had steadily decreased—while its population increased—following World War II.

THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT after World War II brought residential segregation to the forefront of national debates, connecting it with access to jobs, education, voting, and public spaces. Although the majority of Alexandria's white population was not concerned with overturning local housing practices, black activists and white progressives were vocal about racism's impact on housing accessibility. A younger generation of local leaders, who first appeared in the late 1930s and included many veterans after World War II, refused to follow the more conciliatory practices of previous generations and turned to direct action to bring attention to the injustices tied to Jim Crow segregation in Alexandria. By the early 1970s, Alexandria's housing—from its more suburban sections to downtown—saw marked demographic changes.

After World War II, African Americans faced continued housing pressures as their population increased and housing decreased. As noted in earlier, ARHA tended to ignore the needs of black residents. The city's urban renewal projects also displaced African American renters and homeowners, often forcing residents to scramble for housing in black neighborhoods or move out of Alexandria altogether. The persistence of housing covenants, especially in suburban developments in the western and northern portions of Alexandria, guaranteed that almost no African Americans could live there. Furthermore, the desegregation of public schools in the 1960s combined with the perception that the presence of black neighbors destroyed home values meant that white residents refused to sell or rent to them. In a few instances, African Americans even faced violence. In 1955, black renters who had recently moved into Del Ray—a white, working-class neighborhood north of Alexandria's historic commercial corridor—were threatened with an anonymous note followed by gunshots.⁹²

In the 1940s and 1950s, African Americans individually fought the taking of their land and homes. Charles "Buster" Williams, who lived in The Hump during the 1940s, recalled in an oral history using the courts to fight for a better sale price when his home was condemned to make way for public housing.⁹³ A 1944 *Washington Post* article highlighted individuals who refused to move out of their condemned home for a road to a newly constructed apartment complex.⁹⁴ In 1959, the Peters family sold most of their land to a local Catholic school, despite protests from city planners who argued the land was integral to the establishment of Fort Ward Park.⁹⁵ By the early 1960s, at least one Fort neighborhood family hired well-known lawyer and state senator Armistead Boothe to represent them against the city. Boothe brought in outside appraisers, forcing Alexandria to pay more than it initially offered.⁹⁶

By the early 1960s, African American residents turned to publicly criticizing Alexandria's race relations and housing situation. With the city's decision to build the new high school, Seminary's residents organized themselves and actively fought against the project. Retired Col. Marion I. Johnson, president of the Seminary Civic Association and vice president of the Alexandria Council on Human Relations, criticized city leaders for the lack of assistance to aid displaced residents, many of whom were struggling to find a place to live.⁹⁷ Johnson along with Armistead L. Boothe worked out an agreement with Mayor Leroy S. Bendheim and Councilmember Josiah S. Everly to set aside land and funds in the Mudtown Urban Renewal Project for the construction of a middle-class African American subdivision (see



Marion Johnson looking at plans for the newly built Seminary neighborhood in 1962 (*Special Collections, DC Public Library*)

Map D). Sixteen of the fifty-two families displaced from Seminary were able to purchase homes with the help of federal loans through the Urban Renewal Administration. The other families found places to live in public housing or in the private sale and rental markets. Two families left Alexandria.⁹⁸ Although collective action did lead to concessions on the part of city government to house displaced residents, there was still no attempt at desegregating.

After success at Seminary, local activists continued to be vocal about the overall situation in Alexandria. At a public hearing on housing in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area held by the U.S. Civil Rights Commission on 12 April 1962, Marion Johnson spoke explicitly about the



The Seminary neighborhood in 1962 (*Special Collections, DC Public Library*)

housing problems facing African Americans: “The most serious problem facing the Negro citizens in the city of Alexandria today is unavailability of decent, sanitary housing on any level because of the unwillingness of the financial institutions, private builders, and other segments of the homebuilding industry to provide housing that is available to the Negroes and the various actions of the city government in its urban renewal highway widening and other Government-sponsored projects.”⁹⁹

He cited Alexandria's segregationist practices, the lack of new housing options, and the city's refusal to embrace an open housing ordinance as hurdles for African American residents. Ultimately, without major changes in the local government's attitudes and practices "the Negro will be almost completely driven from the city of Alexandria. Only the public housing residents will remain to serve as a reservoir of domestic servants for the white community."¹⁰⁰

Public housing in the early 1960s not only continued to be segregated with little-to-no criticism from the federal government, but also African American-owned homes were still targeted for public housing. In 1962, ARHA revived a proposal to build 225 units of public housing; all three potential sites, however, were located in black neighborhoods. African American activists spoke out against ARHA's plans. A. Melvin Miller argued vehemently against the proposed public housing locations, citing the destruction of owner occupied homes, many of which were in good condition. He noted that "[t]he continuous decrease of land space available for Negro occupancy within the City is a most serious problem and the market for safe, sanitary housing above the low income level is almost nonexistent."¹⁰¹ Miller, a civil rights lawyer, was serving as the vice president of the NAACP's local chapter and president of the Durant Civic Association (a local civil rights organization). A few months later, the Federal Housing and Home Finance Agency placed a temporary hold on funds for the Gadsby and Mudtown Urban Renewal Projects until plans to help displaced residents were clarified. Ironically, the new plan included a much leaner segregated public housing program with a disappointing ninety units, not even half the needed number of units. Alexandria's urban renewal plans were recertified in fall 1962.¹⁰²

Under mounting pressure, Alexandria's city council held a closed-door meeting on 21 May 1963 to address desegregation.¹⁰³ From this meeting, the city created its Human Rights Ordinance, which for the first time in local law recognized the problems of racial segregation, including in matters of housing.¹⁰⁴ In a letter written a couple days later, Robert I. Terrell, president of the NAACP's local chapter, congratulated the mayor and city council "for rendering a judgment beneficial to the people of our City and the metropolitan area" through this ordinance, which he hoped would "influence all private business establishments supported by the public."¹⁰⁵ The Human Rights Ordinance, however, put the burden of proof on victims, again failing to address a systemic problem. Only through complaints to the Human Rights Director, who oversaw the Human Rights Commission, could an individual experiencing housing discrimination seek recourse. It is unknown whether discriminated residents used the process.

Although local government attempted to address racial prejudice, some private businesses and housing establishments also embraced desegregation. At least one apartment community in western Alexandria took it upon itself to desegregate. By the summer of 1963, Parkfairfax, one of the largest apartment complexes in Alexandria, announced that African Americans could rent units for the first time. Parkfairfax's policy shift was tied to negotiations between the National NAACP headquartered in New York City and the complex's owner, Metropolitan Life Insurance. MetLife maintained several white-only apartment complexes throughout the United States, which it desegregated at the same time.¹⁰⁶

Another major turning point was the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which required all federally funded programs to desegregate. Alexandria's public housing, however, was slow to act and continued to maintain the racial status quo. John Y. Kerr, ARHA's director, refuted criticisms from the local chapter of the National Urban League, blaming white residents for self-segregating and choosing to live apart from African Americans. Kerr went further, projecting that the city's ninety new units in Uptown would probably "be occupied by Negroes only" because whites would refuse to live in an African American neighborhood.¹⁰⁷ Segregation, in Kerr's view, was an individual problem and not the result of institutional practice.

The ninety-unit public housing development, which was tied to federal funding for Mudtown and Gadsby projects, displaced an additional twenty African American homeowners. One was Otto L. Tucker, a noted civil rights activist who, along with his brother Samuel, fought segregation in Virginia and participated in Alexandria's 1939 sit down strike. He protested ARHA's plans in the press. A *Washington Post* article stated that, according to Tucker, "the sole reason for the selection of the site was that its inhabitants are Negroes and that '50 per cent of the dwellings are owned by members of the Negro race.' [Tucker] also contends that in order to condemn properties there, the city must prove the area is a slum,

blighted or deteriorated. He said buildings in the area ‘provide safe and sanitary dwellings.’”¹⁰⁸ Despite these objections, Uptown’s Andrew W. Adkins Homes, named after the late pastor of Alfred Street Baptist Church, opened in 1967.¹⁰⁹

By the mid-1960s, protesters shifted their focus toward the desegregation of Alexandria’s housing market. It was believed that if African Americans could live anywhere they could afford, then they would no longer struggle to find housing and the market would stop being artificially inflated. By 1964, public housing had technically been desegregated; however, the private housing market continued to bar blacks from certain neighborhoods. Starting in 1966, an interracial group known as the Action Coordinating Committee to End Segregation in the Suburbs (ACCESS) organized protests throughout northern Virginia and southern Maryland that focused on the inability of African American homeowners and renters to find housing. They picketed private apartment developments, forcing owners to sign open occupancy agreements and include the phrase “Equal Opportunity Rentals” in their advertisements. To gain the attention of white suburban residents and local and federal politicians, ACCESS coordinated marches along major thoroughfares used by commuters to “dramatize the inferior housing of those poor Negroes and ones who can afford something better but can’t find it.”¹¹⁰ They walked more than sixty miles along the Beltway circling Washington, D.C., and made several stops in both the black and white sections of Alexandria. Later that year, ACCESS organized another march along Route 1, beginning in the historically African American Gum Springs neighborhood in Fairfax County and continuing through Alexandria and into Arlington County.

These protests, along with other forms of local activism, compelled the city council to pass a voluntary open housing ordinance in 1967. A. Melvin Miller, who had been recently appointed director of the Federal Housing Administration for the Metropolitan Washington Area, appealed to the city council for an ordinance going beyond the city’s Human Rights Law. In a recent oral history, Miller stated that he made this appeal after a school teacher with whom he and his wife lived—because they could not find housing for themselves—was unable to move into a certain apartment complex popular with retirees because it was “white only.” The deaths of several African American children caught in a house fire also inspired residents to demand safer housing options.¹¹¹

Many individuals and local organizations showed support for the ordinance, being the second such in the state (preceded only by Fredericksburg). Eileen Eddy, chairperson of Alexandria’s Economic Opportunities Commission, congratulated the city council on its “assumption of leadership in obtaining voluntary open housing and pledge[d their] full support.”¹¹² Because of its voluntary nature, the law had limited legal weight. Nevertheless, city manager Albert M. Hair, Jr., planned to hire staff to negotiate with owners of white-only apartment buildings about opening complexes to African Americans.¹¹³



Integration at the John Roberts Public Housing Complex in the late 1960s (*Special Collections, DC Public Library*)

By the late 1960s, federal legislation once again influenced local laws and practice. Passed six months after Alexandria's voluntary ordinance, the Fair Housing Act of 1968 became the federal government's first piece of legislation explicitly barring racial discrimination in all aspects of home purchasing and renting.¹¹⁴ The act was influenced by a report written by the Kerner Commission on the factors causing civil unrest. The U.S. Senate approved the legislation with the hope that allowing African American middle-class families access to suburban homes would offset mounting racial tensions in urban centers. Within weeks of its passage in the Senate, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was assassinated and the country witnessed riots in the nation's capital. The U.S. House of Representatives signed the Fair Housing Act as the National Guard protected the Capitol Building.¹¹⁵ In the next few months, Alexandria's city council would yet again debate housing, this time under the purview of the newly established federal guidelines to end racial segregation in the housing market.¹¹⁶

ALEXANDRIA'S DIVERSE HOUSING landscape and regional role as both a city and a suburb complicates current analyses of African American housing and discrimination in the mid-twentieth century. Regardless of housing density, black and white Alexandrians struggled over where African Americans could live. Local leaders and city boosters embraced a white, middle-class image of the postwar period and tried to modernize Alexandria. A consequence of city development, unintended or not, was forcing Alexandria's African American residents into increasingly segregated neighborhoods or out of the city completely. Federal authorities, as noted by other historians, ceded almost all control to local officials and refused to force Alexandria and other municipalities to desegregate housing. With a lack of government response to their housing needs, African Americans organized, protesting local government and often contacting federal authorities for support.

By the early 1970s, many of the same struggles of earlier decades persisted throughout Alexandria and the Washington, D.C., metropolitan region. A 1970 report generated by the Washington Suburban Institute on nearby Fairfax County argued that "institutional racism and land development are tied tightly together. So far they have resulted in excluding blacks from residence in the suburbs, in denying them adequate services when they do already live there, in denying them access to suburban employment centers and in their being feared and ostracized in the neighborhoods were they do live or attempt to live."¹¹⁷

In Alexandria, there was still not enough public housing to meet the needs of African American residents, 50 percent of whom were living below the poverty line. Alexandria's newly passed open housing ordinance included loopholes, limiting true residential integration and leaving the less populated western portions of Alexandria overwhelmingly white. **Rapid increases in home prices combined with the costs of historic preservation in Old Town only compounded issues.**¹¹⁸

Simultaneously, there were palpable changes. For the first time, African Americans were living in the city's older suburban neighborhoods to the north, which had previously been dominated by white railroad workers.¹¹⁹ By 1969, 14 percent of city government workers were black, including one individual on the Housing-Hygiene Board and another on ARHA's Board. Within a year, Ira L. Robinson was elected to represent Uptown on the city council, the first African American to do so since Reconstruction.¹²⁰ In response to his neighborhood's needs, Robinson convened a Low-Income Housing Study Committee that reported on the structural changes necessary to make Alexandria more affordable for poor families.¹²¹ Two months later, A. Melvin Miller, another vocal critic of Alexandria's segregationist practices, was selected to chair ARHA.¹²² As ARHA's head, he pushed for mixed income housing developments and furthered racial integration.¹²³

Despite these and other changes to Alexandria's racial landscape and housing practices, some of the same housing issues remain even today.

NOTE: Issue examples - see two (2) articles with perspectives and one (1) Fair Housing Testing Results Summary (1990-2021) listed after the footnotes below

FOOTNOTES

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10. J. Douglas Smith, *Managing White Supremacy: Race, Politics, and Citizenship in Jim Crow Virginia* (Chapel Hill, 2002), 250–84; Ferguson, *Black Politics*, 262–66; Wiese, *Places of Their Own*, 209–54.
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1. BACKGROUND

A. [Unsung Heroes that Helped Desegregate Public Libraries](https://oaklandlibrary.org/blogs/post/unsung-heroes-that-helped-desegregate-public-libraries/) by [D Nichole Brown](#) February 4, 2022
source: <https://oaklandlibrary.org/blogs/post/unsung-heroes-that-helped-desegregate-public-libraries/>

(1) Most school-age students know that if it weren't for non-violent protests such as sit-ins, they wouldn't be able to share a restaurant or lunch counter with their friends regardless of skin color. They also understand if it weren't for the Civil Rights movement of the 1950s - 1960s, everyone wouldn't be able to ride the bus equally or even attend integrated schools. Although most children learn about the Civil Rights movement, they rarely learn about public library sit-ins. So, I am going to give you a brief history of some of the people who fought to desegregate American Public Libraries:

An officer escorts five men from the Alexandria (Va.) Library in August 1939. They were arrested and charged with disorderly conduct. Picture courtesy of the Digital Public Libraries of America

On August 21, 1939, five well-dressed Black men entered the Alexandria Public Library in Alexandria, Virginia. They politely asked the librarian to register for library cards and were denied. After being denied library cards, they selected books from the shelves, sat down at separate tables, and began to read quietly. The librarian called the police to have the men removed from the library.

The coordinator of this protest was Samuel Wilbert Tucker. He was also a lawyer for the state of Virginia. That day, Mr. Tucker was not at the library and called the local newspapers to alert them of the protest. Over 300 spectators and newspaper photographers watched as the men were arrested by police, removed from the library, and charged with disorderly conduct. Mr. Tucker defended the men in court, and the judge refused to rule on the case.

The judge refused to rule on the case because this was a complicated situation. Although the Black men reading in the "whites only" library was a direct violation of the library's "whites only" policy, there was not a "colored library" available in Alexandria for the men to use. The lack of a "colored library" was a direct violation of Virginia state law. Although segregation was legal in 1939, it was illegal to deny "equal" resources for white and colored citizens. So technically, without a "colored" library, the men were legally allowed to use the "whites only" library. At least, that was what Mr. Tucker argued in court.

Because integration was not an acceptable solution in the Winn-Dixie south in 1939, the library board quickly approved the construction of a "colored" library which opened in April 1940. Most books, furniture, and fixtures in the new "colored" library were donated used books or castoffs from the main Alexandria library. When invited to apply for a library card at the "colored" library, Mr. Tucker refused. He argued he deserved equal access to the main library. The Alexandria Main Library was finally desegregated for adults in 1959. In 1962 the library was finally fully desegregated, permitting Black children to use the facilities.

In 2019, research by Alexandria Library staff discovered that the charges against the five men were still outstanding because although the judge never issued a ruling, the charges were never dropped. In October 2019, the Alexandria Circuit Court dismissed all charges, ruling that the men were "lawfully exercising their constitutional rights to free assembly, speech and to petition the government to alter the established policy of sanctioned segregation at the time of their arrest" and no charges should have been filed.

The Alexandria sit-in was the first staged sit-in to protest against library segregation. It happened 15 years before the birth of the 1954 Civil Rights Movement. The names of these pioneering men are William Evans, Edward Gaddis, Morris Murray, Clarence Strange, and Otto L. Tucker (Samuel Tucker's Brother)

(2), Death and legacy of Samuel W. Tucker: He died on October 19, 1990, survived by his wife Julia. They had no children. He is buried at [Arlington National Cemetery](#), sharing a tombstone with his elder brother George.^[4] The Robert H. Robinson Library that opened in 1940 and closed in 1959 became home of the [Alexandria Black History Museum](#).^{[36][37]} In 1998, Emporia, Virginia, dedicated a monument in Tucker's honor, with an inscription calling him "an effective, unrelenting advocate for freedom, equality and human dignity – principles he loved – things that matter."^[4] In 2000, Alexandria, Virginia dedicated a new school, Samuel W. Tucker Elementary School, to Tucker in honor of his life's work in the service of desegregation and education.^[38] In 2014, the city's library began collecting donations for the Samuel W. Tucker Fund, to expand a collection relating to civil rights history. Also in 2000, the Richmond City Council voted to rename a bridge formerly named after Confederate General [J. E. B. Stuart](#) after Tucker, despite controversy.^[39] In 2001, the [Virginia State Bar](#)'s Young Lawyers Conference implemented the Oliver Hill/Samuel Tucker Institute, named for both Oliver Hill and Samuel Tucker. The institute seeks to reach future lawyers, in particular minority candidates, at an early age to provide them with exposure and opportunity to explore the legal profession they might not otherwise receive.^[40] Since 2001, the Oliver W. Hill & Samuel W. Tucker Scholarship Committee has presented scholarships to deserving first year law students at Virginia law schools and Howard University.^[41]

source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Samuel_Wilbert_Tucker

1 rezoning ordinance, that it be placed on First Reading, with
2 public hearing and Second Reading at next regular meeting of
3 Council. The motion carried unanimously by a vote of 7 to 0
4 and it was so ordered.)

5 MR. A. MELVIN MILLER: Mr. Mayor and members of the
6 Council, I wonder if I could indulge you for just a few minutes
7 to present something that I mulled over quite a bit today
8 because a couple of things happened in our community the past
9 couple of weeks that pointed up a very depressing problem.

10 It is a problem that needs immediate attention and
11 immediate action. I did not decide really to come down and
12 publicly state this until after I gave it considerable thought
13 today.

14 The first incident happened a week ago Sunday on
15 Henry Street when two children were killed in a fire in a fire
16 trap. Back in December 1962 six children were killed in a
17 fire trap on Duke Street. All of these children happened to
18 have been Negro. They happened to have been extremely young.

19 These are families that are forced to live in this
20 type of housing solely because there is no other housing in the
21 city available in which they can live. It is not an economic
22 situation because my information tells me that these persons
23 were paying at least \$100 plus utilities in the unit they were
24 occupying. That is the first incident.

25 The second incident has been going on for about three

1 weeks and it involves the attempts of an elderly Negro couple
2 to obtain housing accommodations in some of our better
3 apartment developments in the city.

4 I would like to give you a little background about the
5 woman of this family. This woman taught for 42 years in the
6 public schools of Alexandria. She retired three years ago.
7 During her life here in the city she was one of the persons
8 who was instrumental in the formation of Hopkins House. Since
9 her retirement she has worked as a volunteer with the YWCA
10 and she has been giving private tutoring to students who need
11 it.

12 Because of her health and the fact that she was
13 living in a two-story dwelling, she found it necessary to move
14 into an apartment. She sold her house or contracted to sell
15 her house and then went looking for an apartment. She can well
16 afford any apartment that is available in the City of Alexandria.
17 This woman tried. She continually called me. I continually
18 tried to lead her to other places. She called many of our
19 apartment developments in town. They told her they had just
20 what she wanted until she got there and she was turned down at
21 virtually everyone of them because she is a Negro.

22 Last night she called me crying because she and her
23 husband had finally given up and felt that they had to move to
24 Washington to southwest into Tiber Island because this was the
25 only housing she could find.

1 Here we have a system where a woman devotes her entire
2 life and dedication in serving this city and the people of the
3 city and she is denied the opportunity to spend the remaining
4 years she has solely because she is a Negro.

5 These problems are not new. They only point up what
6 is happening in our city. They only point up the fact that we
7 need action now to solve the problems of how we are going to
8 adequately make housing available for Negro citizens in this
9 city.

10 I stood out there on Henry Street that Sunday and
11 watched them bring the two bodies of those children out of
12 that building. I think it would have been a wonderful education
13 if each one of you gentlemen had been there, too, because I put
14 myself in the place of that family. I had just as difficult a
15 time finding housing when I came to this city. Had it not been
16 for a few situations or a few breaks, I might have been in that
17 very house, not because I couldn't afford something else but
18 because that is all anybody would rent.

19 I said to myself, because I have two children just
20 about that same age, "What would I do if they were my two
21 children they were bringing out of there?" I consider myself a
22 very moderate man, but I don't think there is a person in this
23 town who could rest in peace if they had been my children.

24 Then I put myself in the position of this woman who
25 has given her entire life to the City of Alexandria and who

1 has been turned down and denied the right to rent accommodations
2 that she can well afford, that she can afford as well as any
3 person in this city. I said to myself, "How would I feel about
4 my City of Alexandria, my All American City that I labored so
5 hard for?" And, gentlemen, I hate to tell you what I thought.

6 But I am saying to you, these are the things that
7 cause the problems that beset our cities today. Behind
8 virtually every problem that has been brought forth in the
9 cities of America today is the problem of inadequate housing
10 and discrimination in housing.

11 You gentlemen are our elected representatives. We
12 need action and we need it now. There are people in this
13 community and others who point to things like this and say,
14 "This is why the moderate approach does not work." One of the
15 many things that has been said in the so-called Negro
16 revolution is the fact that if a system permits this to exist,
17 then you have to change the system.

18 I am saying to you, gentlemen, I don't know how much
19 longer in the City of Alexandria this system is going to be
20 permitted. We are asking for some action. We are asking for
21 your help. We are asking for it now and we would like to come
22 back again to find out if you gentlemen are going to take some
23 action. If you are not, I think it would be the best thing in
24 the world you could do is to publicly say to the Negro
25 community that either we feel we can't do anything or we won't

1 do anything. Then I think that puts things in their proper
2 perspective so the people won't have to be disillusioned, so
3 the children won't have to die, so that families won't be
4 required to live in housing that is not fit for dogs to live in.

5 I say to you, gentlemen, when you make that decision,
6 then it is up to the people in this community, particularly
7 the Negro community, to decide what they do from that point on.

8 I think of the times in this community when we have
9 meetings and decide things that have never come into being.
10 After that December 1962 incident the papers carried a big
11 story that they were going to have an investigation. This time
12 they didn't even bother with the investigation.

13 I bring this to you, gentlemen, not because I want to
14 put anybody on the spot but because I want to present to you
15 a problem in these past few weeks that has been a burning
16 problem in the Negro community. I know because my phone was
17 jumping off the hook. I wish you could have heard some of the
18 things that the people in the crowd were saying at the time they
19 brought those two children out of that house.

20 The only reason there were only two children killed
21 in that fire was because it happened to be one of the traps
22 that is not connected to another. If it had been one door
23 further, you would have had a whole block cleaned out.

24 Thank you.

25 MAYOR BEATLEY: Thank you, Mr. Miller.

1 COUNCILMAN MITCHELL: Mr. Mayor, I would like to
2 respond in one sentence to what Mr. Miller has had to say
3 and accept perhaps some of the responsibility for the failure
4 of this Council to attack the housing problem in Alexandria
5 before now.

6 I have been aware for sometime of Mr. Miller's concern
7 and of the concern of the Negro community in the City of
8 Alexandria with the desperate housing problems that they have.
9 I might comment that this is not a problem that is confined
10 entirely to the Negro community. Deplorable housing exists in
11 this city and it is a problem that should be attacked and I
12 think probably by this Council.

13 In order that we may at least pick up the ball and go
14 somewhere with it, I would like to move that the City Manager
15 be requested by the City Council to explore immediately the
16 possibility of employing a housing director as a member of the
17 staff of the City of Alexandria with the authority and
18 responsibility for housing problems in this city and for the
19 resolution of them, and to report back to the Council no later
20 than its next regular meeting with his recommendations in this
21 area.

22 COUNCILMAN PICKENS: I second the motion.

23 COUNCILMAN TIGER: Mr. Mayor, I would like to suggest
24 an amendment. As four members know, we met with Mr. Miller
25 and many other people a week ago Saturday. This was one of

1 the problems discussed. We had not had the fire then, of
2 course. In that meeting I not only said I thought we ought
3 to consider establishing a committee to look into the problems
4 but I also felt we ought to consider a resolution similar to the
5 one that is being acted on at Fredericksburg with respect to
6 voluntary housing.

7 I would like to suggest that the mover and seconder
8 amend the motion to say that the City Manager also be asked to
9 bring a similar resolution to this Council for consideration in
10 addition.

11 COUNCILMAN MITCHELL: My only trouble with that is I
12 have no idea what the Fredericksburg resolution said.

13 MAYOR BEATLEY: He is not talking about passage. He
14 is talking about considering.

15 COUNCILMAN TICER: I will make that a separate motion.

16 COUNCILMAN PICKENS: Mr. Mayor, I know all four
17 members discussed this with the Manager and I know that he has
18 sent for the Fredericksburg resolution. I have no hesitancy
19 as a seconder accepting Mr. Ticer's amendment.

20 COUNCILMAN MITCHELL: I have no hesitancy either
21 with the qualification that I don't know what it is. I assume
22 that it deals with voluntary action on the part of the Council
23 in the area of housing.

24 COUNCILMAN PICKENS: With all of the local real estate
25 operators and other community leaders.

1
2 COUNCILMAN MITCHELL: Why don't we make separate
3 motions in that area?

4 MAYOR BEATLEY: The first motion will be acted on. Is
5 there any further discussion?

6 COUNCILMAN PICKENS: I believe your intent is that
7 the housing director be attached to the City Manager's Office
8 or part of the City administration rather than the Housing
9 Authority. Is that correct?

10 COUNCILMAN MITCHELL: That is correct. The intent
11 of the resolution was not that the housing director would have
12 the sole authority in housing but that he would be responsible
13 in this area for housing in the City of Alexandria.

14 (Whereupon, there being no further discussion,
15 the motion carried unanimously with a vote of 7 to 0, and it
16 was so ordered.)

17 COUNCILMAN TIGER: Mr. Mayor, it is my understanding
18 that the City of Fredericksburg has recently had under
19 consideration and I think has passed a resolution which gives
20 the city government in Fredericksburg the power to take the lead
21 in encouraging voluntary open housing in the City of
22 Fredericksburg.

23 I would like to move that the resolution of the
24 City of Fredericksburg be brought to us by the City Manager
25 with such recommendations as he may have with respect to the
City of Alexandria adopting a similar resolution.

1 COUNCILMAN COLASANTO: I second the motion.

2 (Whereupon, the motion carried unanimously with a
3 vote of 7 to 0, and it was so ordered.)

4 COUNCILMAN PICKENS: I would like to say, although I
5 haven't been in contact with Mr. Day or Mr. Miller, but I know
6 Mr. Ticer and I and I think the other two members of Council
7 have discussed with the City Manager all of the issues that we
8 discussed with some fifteen leaders of the Negro community a
9 week ago Saturday.

10 Some of these he had already under consideration
11 and those that he didn't have, he has under consideration now
12 for a very early report to Council.

13 MAYOR BEATLEY: Thank you for your comments,
14 Councilman Pickens. Is there any further business?

15 (Whereupon, a motion was made by Councilman Colasanto,
16 seconded by Councilman Ticer, that the meeting adjourn. The
17 motion carried unanimously and it was so ordered.)

18 (Whereupon, at 9:35 p.m. the meeting adjourned.)

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ATTACHMENT 5

Connection Newspaper Article entitled, “the Nice-Nasty Town” penned by Vernon Miles dated June 8, 2017

Alexandria — On May 2, 2017 residents of the Del Ray neighborhood awoke to find their neighborhood plastered with posters bearing racist messages of hate against black Americans and against Islam. Like many Alexandrians, Lillian Patterson was shocked when she heard about the racist posters put up in Del Ray. “It really surprises me,” said Patterson. “I thought Alexandria was more subtle than that.”

The local residents quickly tore down the signs and replaced them with messages of love and support that a week later still remain on many telephone poles along Mount Vernon Avenue. But while Alexandrians, from neighbors to Mayor Allison Silberberg, have said the actions do not characterize this historic port city, Alexandria has a long history with racism. It is a history that was covered up and sometimes literally buried, but one that has never gone away.

Alexandria was a city built on the backs of slave labor. It was black slaves who were injured or killed in leveling the coastal cliff that give Old Town its current shape. In the early 1800s, Alexandria was one of the largest slave ports in the country. The Franklin & Armfield Slave Office & Pen, today the Freedom House Museum and home to the Northern Virginia Urban League, exported thousands of slaves across the American South.

Patterson is a fourth generation Alexandrian. Her family on her mother’s side has been in the city at least since the Civil War.

“For my grandmother, and for my mother, growing up in Alexandria was very much what it was like when I was coming along,” said Patterson. “It was a very segregated town. Everybody went their own ways. I didn’t know white people and they didn’t know me. When you live in divided communities you don’t even think about it, that’s just how it was.”

Andy Evans, a local community activist, said the racism in Alexandria was different than in other places in the south. The racism rooted deeply into the city was always something that simmered under the surface and only occasionally boiled over.

“The kind of racism that people talk about in the south is a little bit different from what you talk about in Alexandria,” said Evans. “There were places in south where if people would just walk in that neighborhood at night, you were in trouble. This was a town where nobody wanted to talk about it.”

While Alexandria is a southern city, James Henson, a local historian and one of the authors of “African Americans of Alexandria Virginia: Beacons of Light in the Twentieth Century,” said several factors have helped the city avoid more of the outright racial violence of other cities. Henson notes that the city’s proximity to Washington D.C. offered the city’s black citizens a degree of legislative protection in the 1800s. There were also education opportunities available in Washington D.C. that were inaccessible to black residents of other cities in Virginia.

ATTACHMENT 6

New York Times Real Estate Section

• **Black Homeowners Face Discrimination in Appraisals**

- Companies that value homes for sale or refinancing are bound by law not to discriminate. Black homeowners say it happens anyway.
- A second appraisal valued Abena and Alex Horton’s Jacksonville home 40 percent higher than the first appraisal, after Ms. Horton removed all signs of Blackness. Credit...Charlotte Kestl for The New York Times

• **By Debra Kamin**

- Published Aug. 25, 2020 Updated Aug. 27, 2020

- Abena and Alex Horton wanted to take advantage of low home-refinance rates brought on by the coronavirus crisis. So in June, they took the first step in that process, welcoming a home appraiser into their four-bedroom, four-bath ranch-style house in Jacksonville, Fla.
- The Hortons live just minutes from the Ortega River, in a predominantly white neighborhood of 1950s homes that tend to sell for \$350,000 to \$550,000. They had expected their home to appraise for around \$450,000, but the appraiser felt differently, assigning a value of \$330,000. Ms. Horton, who is Black, immediately suspected discrimination.
- The couple’s bank agreed that the value was off and ordered a second appraisal. But before the new appraiser could arrive, Ms. Horton, a lawyer, began an experiment: She took all family photos off the mantle. Instead, she hung up a series of oil paintings of Mr. Horton, who is white, and his grandparents that had been in storage. Books by Zora Neale Hurston and Toni Morrison were taken off the shelves, and holiday photo cards sent by friends were edited so that only those showing white families were left on display. On the day of the appraisal, Ms. Horton took the couple’s 6-year-old son on a shopping trip to Target, and left Mr. Horton alone at home to answer the door.

- The new appraiser gave their home a value of \$465,000 — a more than 40 percent increase from the first appraisal.
-
- Race and housing policy have long been intertwined in the United States. Black Americans consistently struggle more than their white counterparts to be approved for home loans, and the specter of redlining — a practice that denied mortgages to people of color in certain neighborhoods — [continues to drive down home values](#) in Black neighborhoods.
- Even in mixed-race and predominantly white neighborhoods, [Black homeowners](#) say, their homes are consistently appraised for less than those of their neighbors, stymying their path toward building equity and further perpetuating income equality in the United States.
- Home appraisers are bound by the Fair Housing Act of 1968 to not discriminate based on race, religion, national origin or gender. Appraisers can lose their license or even face prison time if they're found to produce discriminatory appraisals. Title XI of the Financial Institutions Reform, Recovery and Enforcement Act, enacted in 1989, also binds appraisers to a standard of unbiased ethics and performance.
- “My heart kind of broke,” Ms. Horton said. “I know what the issue was. And I knew what we needed to do to fix it, because in the Black community, it’s just common knowledge that you take your pictures down when you’re selling the house. But I didn’t think I had to worry about that with an appraisal.”
- Appraisals, by nature, are subjective. And discrimination, particularly the subconscious biases and microaggressions that have risen to the fore in white America this summer following the death of George Floyd, is notoriously difficult to pinpoint.
- [Editors’ Picks](#)

Ms. Horton shared her experiment in a [widely circulated Facebook post](#), earning 25,000 shares and more than 2,000 comments, many of which came from Black homeowners and carried the same message: This also happened to me.

- In each comment, a repeated theme: Home appraisers, who work under codes of ethics but with little regulation and oversight, are often all that stands between the accumulation of home equity and the destruction of it for Black Americans.
-



- The value of Stephen Richmond’s home in a Hartford, Conn., suburb jumped after he removed family photos and movie posters, and had a white neighbor stand in for him during a second appraisal. Credit...Monica Jorge for The New York Times
- After the first appraisal came up short on his house in an affluent, racially mixed suburb of Hartford, Conn., Stephen Richmond, an aerospace engineer, took down family photos and posters for Black movies and had a white neighbor stand in for him on a second appraisal. He was hoping to refinance; with the second report, he saw his home’s value go up \$40,000 from the initial appraisal just a few weeks earlier.
- In 2000, the American actor and comedian D.L. Hughley had an appraisal on his home in the Montevista Estates neighborhood of West Hills, a primarily white area in the San Fernando Valley in Los Angeles. Despite a steady uptick in the housing market and the addition of a pool and new hardwood floors, the house was appraised for nearly what he had bought it for three years earlier — \$500,000.
- In Mr. Hughley’s case, his bank flagged the report.
- “They were like, this has to be some kind of mistake because in order for your house to have come in this low, it would have to be in some level of disrepair,” Mr. Hughley said.
- The bank ordered a new appraisal, which came back \$160,000 higher, and Mr. Hughley went on to sell the home for \$770,000.

- Mr. Hughley talks about the experience in his book, “Surrender, White People!”, a satirical look at white supremacy, which was published in June by Harper Collins and examines racial inequality in the United States across education, health care and the housing market.
- “People always tell us to pull ourselves up by our bootstraps. But what if you remove the straps?” he said. “You’re invested in the American dream, you have capital, you have a chip in the game. And the fact that somebody could summarily minimize my wealth just because of a bias, it seemed crazy to me.”
- In response to the coronavirus pandemic, a federal ruling issued in March allowed appraisals for homes that were being sold to be done remotely in certain circumstances, temporarily pausing the need for interior home inspections. Those looking to refinance, however, still must complete an in-person appraisal.
- In Mr. Hughley’s case, the appraiser was fired. Ms. Horton has filed a complaint with the Department of Housing and Urban Development; when contacted about her case, HUD said it had been assigned to the Jacksonville Human Rights Commission. The agency added that it receives a handful of similar complaints each year.
- In 2018, researchers from Gallup and the Brookings Institution published [a report](#) on the widespread devaluation of Black-owned property in the United States, which they discussed in a 2019 hearing before the House Financial Services Subcommittee. The report found that a home in a majority Black neighborhood is likely to be valued for 23 percent less than a near-identical home in a majority-white neighborhood; it also determined this devaluation costs Black homeowners \$156 billion in cumulative losses.
- Many appraisers, both during the hearing and in the weeks after, defended their practice, noting that it’s their job to report on local market conditions, not set them.
- “Is there a problem with poor and underserved communities in the United States? Yes. Is it the appraisal profession’s fault? No,” wrote Maureen Sweeney, a Chicago-based appraiser in a letter to the house subcommittee following the hearing. “It’s like blaming the canary for the bad air in the coal mine, or blaming the mirror for your bad hair day. Appraisers reflect the market; we do not create it.”
- But what about a Black homeowner in a white neighborhood whose property is appraised for less than his neighbor’s? Whether appraisers are devaluing Black homes or entire Black neighborhoods, the core issue is the same, said Andre Perry, one of the writers of the Brookings Institution report and the author of “Know Your Price: Valuing Black Lives and Property in America’s Black Cities.”
- “We still see Black people as risky,” Mr. Perry said. “White appraisers carry the same attitudes and beliefs of white America — the same attitudes that compelled Derek Chauvin to kneel casually on the neck of George Floyd are shared by other professionals in other fields. How does that choking out of America look in the appraisal industry? Through very low appraisals,” he said.

ATTACHMENT 7

FAIR HOUSING TESTING SUMMARY RESULTS (1990-2021)

A comparison of past test results helps us measure progress in industry compliance with fair housing laws and evaluate the effectiveness of City programs including testing, fair housing education, outreach, and enforcement activities. The sustained downward trend in the number of identified problems is a reflection of the City's commitment to making Alexandria a welcoming community to all.

Fiscal Year	Market/ Test Type	Protected Class	Sites Tested	Tests Completed (including retests)	Identified Problems	Sites with Problems	Action <i>Include monetary settlements data</i>
1990	Rental Apartments	Race/National Origin(Hispanic)	79	96	19	14	1 Complaint1-\$10,000 Settlement
1991	Rental (Realtors)	Race/National Origin(Hispanic)	21	24	3	3	Remedial Action
1992	Rental Apartments	Familial Status	71	93	10	10	1 Complaint/1-\$4,000Settlement
1993*	Rental Apartments	Disability	78	291	28	25	3 Complaints/3 Settlements (\$2500)
1996	Rental Apartments	Race	20	20	0	0	No Problems Found
1997	Rental Apartments	Sexual Orientation	75	79	3	3	Remedial Action
1998	Sales	Race/National Origin(Hispanic)	16	62	14	7	3 Complaints/2 Settlements(\$10,000)
1999	Rental Apartments	Disability	70	218	6	5	Remedial Action
2000	Lending	Race/National Origin(Hispanic)	13	14	1	1	Remedial Action
	Rental Apartments	Race/National Origin Hispanic)	72	75	3	3	Remedial Action
2001	Rental Apartments	Familial Status	85	87	2	2	Remedial Action
2003	Rental Apartments	Multiple Bases	83	84	1	1	Remedial Action
2005	Sales	Race/National Origi (Hispanic)	12	12	0	0	No Problems Found
2006	Lending	Race/National Origin(Hispanic)	11	11	0	0	No Problems Found
2007	Rental Apartments	Race/National Origin (Middle-Eastern/Asian)	73	77	3	3	Remedial Action
2008	Rental Apartments	Race/National Origin(Hispanic)	64	66	2	2	Remedial Action
2009	Lending	Race	8	8	0	0	No Problems Found
2010	Rental Apartments	Disability	67	68	1	1	Remedial Action
2011	Rental Apartments	Familial Status	67	67	0	0	No Problems Found
2012	New Construction	Race	13	13	0	0	No Problems Found
2013	Lending	Race	13	13	0	0	No Problems Found
2014	Rental Apartments	Sexual Orientation	70	71	1	1	Remedial Action
2015	Sales	Race	9	9	0	0	No Problems Found
2016	Rental Apartments	Disability	57	59	2	2	Remedial Action
2017	Lending	Race/National Origin(Hispanic)	16	16	0	0	No Problems Found
2018	Rental	Race/National Origin	87	89	2	2	Remedial Action

2019	Sales	Disability (mobility)	12	13	1	1	Remedial Action
2020	Rental	Sexual Orientation/Trangender/Queer	87	87	0	0	No Problems Found
2021	Rental	Housing Choice Voucher	98	104	6	6	Remedial Action

ATTACHMENT 8 - INFORMATION & DISCUSSION FOR BEST PRACTICE MOTION

1. BACKGROUND

A. Building landlord-tenant partnerships that work: Like most growing municipalities, the City of Alexandria located in the Commonwealth of Virginia is experiencing challenges related not only to new construction but maintaining or enhancing existing construction – some historic. Given the existing challenge and the fact that the City of Alexandria prides itself on promoting constructive community engagement [*in-person or virtual*] to help ensure the voices and perspectives of city residents are heard there are various boards, commissions and committees tasked with advising the City leadership – those elected and those appointed – on a range of vital civic concerns. The City has set an outstanding example in not only in seeking advice from residents through its community engagement program but has formed a number of boards, commissions, committees to ensure the diverse voices are heard prior to voting on or approving matters. This motion seeks to encourage public/private non-governmental entities to do likewise – by choice. Each year a number of concerns are brought to the attention of public/private officials affecting the quality of life and in many cases the health and wellness of people residing in residential apartments without input from tenant advisory groups. That said, there is ample research as well as experience to show that when tenants are given a voice in the landlords decision making, it can lead to “buy-in” which in turn leads to building healthy relationships evidenced in trust, confidence along with greater efficiency plus effectiveness in governance. Councils of advice work when formed and supported. Moreover, they are cost effective given that almost all are comprised of volunteers will ing to give or their time and expertise for the common good of all. Replicating advisory councils at the public/private non-governmental residential level as part of an overall business practice to solve challenges at the residential level with tenant participation is an idea whose time has come rather than wait for a crisis where tension and finger pointing are likely to occur. This motion should be viewed as a preventive measure much like preventative medicine. Finally, a great argument can to made contending that advisory councils can work at the residential community level- all one need do is look at how the practice is working in our HUD housing. To be clear, I am not saying that advisory councils are the “perfect solution” to the all matters, rather I am saying the cost/benefit of having and encouraging the formation of voluntary advisory councils who provide “non-binding” advice is a no brainer idea whose time has come to a small city capable of doing great things when parties are committed to finding solutions that enhance the quality of life, human relationships and the environment to include property maintenance at affordable prices.

B. Traditional role of advisory councils: The role of a *non-governing* advisory board is not to make decisions, but rather to provide current knowledge, critical thinking and analysis to help public/private leadership in the City make wise/informed decisions – voluntarily. Simply put, the responsibility of the advisory board of which I speak like a governance board or board of directors in terms of composition [*with diverse and inclusive participants*] is different in terms of expected outcomes. Note: The premise being tapped into here is a best practice of establishing, maintaining and strengthening healthy relationships in diverse inclusive ways and means promotes a strategic good manifested as well managed governance.

(1). The Purpose of an Advisory Council

Before forming an advisory council, it's crucial ... to decide what the advisory board's [purpose](#) will be. Common purposes for forming advisory councils are:

- (a). Providing technical expertise or advice in specific areas such as technology, science, health, policy, law, marketing, public relations, etc.
- (b). Helping spearhead a special project from planning to completion
- (c). Fundraising for a specific project
- (d). Providing an independent sounding board for the board of directors
- (e). Serving as an advocate for the organization
- (f). Fulfilling several roles for a nonprofit program where the organization serves as the fiscal agent
- (g). Serving in an honorary role
- (h). Offering services as a spokesperson for the organization

While the purpose of an advisory council varies based on the organization's needs, *all advisory councils should have a clear understanding of their purpose, guidelines and limitations.*

(2). Basics of Advisory Councils

- (a). Advisory councils are a group of individuals that effectively supplement ...skills and abilities to help guide the organization toward its stated mission.
- (b). Advisory councils don't typically have any authority. In most cases, the board of directors retains the ultimate governing authority. The primary [role of an advisory board](#) is to provide ...key information and to make recommendations to them on certain matters.
- (c). As a collective body that's likely to have strong opinions, it's important ...to provide some type structure for their advisory councils so that their meetings are useful and productive. It's helpful for advisory councils to have policies of their own...
- (d). It's also important for advisory councils to have a [governing charter](#). A committee charter is a useful tool for providing a written description of the council's role and purpose. The charter provides guidelines on the council's membership, meetings and how and who they're expected to communicate with

Source: <https://www.boardeffect.com/blog/what-is-an-advisory-council/>

C. Advisory councils work with uncomplicated transparent purposeful buy-in: I am keenly aware, that "councils of advice" currently exists in public housing and many homeowner associations as well as civic associations. We can learn from those that work such as in HUD housing where "trust" is achieved when I is willing to become we as in a team. Given that reality, we, the LTRB, are recommending that in those residential venues where Advisory Councils do not currently exist at the dwelling or apartment level that advisory councils be formed for the purpose of helping achieve a strategic vision in partnership with the City of Alexandria like the one currently highlighted in its strategic plan and subsequent supporting implementation plans. We believe an important first step is establishing a "common sense" policy which encourages the voluntary formation of advisory councils in those residential venues where they do not exist now is to make a commitment to work together to establish advisory council relationships to not only promote the common good of their residential areas but the good of public/private non-governmental successful businesses in Alexandria City.

Pt. 964 PART 964—TENANT PARTICIPATION AND TENANT OPPORTUNITIES IN PUBLIC HOUSING

Source: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CFR-2018-title24-vol4/xml/CFR-2018-title24-vol4-part964.xml>

Subpart A—General Provisions

Sec.964.1 - Purpose.

964.3 - Applicability and scope.

964.7 - Definitions.

964.11 - HUD policy on tenant participation.

HUD promotes resident participation and the active involvement of residents in all aspects of a HA's overall mission and operation. Residents have a right to organize and elect a resident council to represent their interests. As long as proper procedures are followed, the HA shall recognize the duly elected resident council to participate fully through a working relationship with the HA. HUD encourages HAs and residents to work together to determine the most appropriate ways to foster constructive relationships, particularly through duly-elected resident councils.

964.12 - HUD policy on the Tenant Opportunities Program (TOP).

964.14 - HUD policy on partnerships.

HUD promotes partnerships between residents and HAs which are an essential component to building, strengthening and improving public housing. Strong partnerships are critical for creating positive changes in lifestyles thus improving the quality of life for public housing residents, and the surrounding community.

964.15 - HUD policy on resident management.

964.16 - HUD role in activities under this part.

964.18 - HA role in activities under subparts B & C.

964.24 - HUD policy on FIC Program.

964.30 - Other Program requirements.

Subpart B—Tenant Participation

964.100 - Role of resident council.

The role of a resident council is to improve the quality of life and resident satisfaction and participate in self-help initiatives to enable residents to create a positive living environment for families living in public housing. Resident councils may actively participate through a working partnership with the HA to advise and assist in all aspects of public housing operations.

964.105 - Role of the jurisdiction-wide resident council.

964.115 - Resident council requirements.

964.117 - Resident council partnerships.

964.120 - Resident management corporation requirements.

964.125 - Eligibility for resident council membership.

964.130 - Election procedures and standards.

964.135 - Resident involvement in HA management operations.

964.140 - Resident training.

(a) *Resident training opportunities.* HUD encourages a partnership between the residents, the HA and HUD, as well as with the public and non-profit sectors to provide training opportunities for public housing residents. The categories in which training could occur include, but are not limited to:

(1) Community organization and leadership training;

(2) Organizational development training for Resident Management Corporations and duly elected Resident Councils;

(3) Public housing policies, programs, rights and responsibilities training; and

(4) Business entrepreneurial training, planning and job skills.

(b) *Local training resources.* HUD encourages the use of local training resources to ensure the ongoing accessibility and availability of persons to provide training and technical assistance. Possible training resources may include:

(1) Resident organizations;

(2) Housing authorities;

(3) Local community colleges, vocational schools; and

(4) HUD and other Federal agencies and other local public, private and non-profit organizations.

964.145 - Conflict of interest.

964.150 - Funding tenant participation.

Subpart C—Tenant Opportunities Program

964.200 General.

964.205 Eligibility.

964.210 Notice of funding availability.

964.215 Grant agreement.

964.220 Technical assistance.

964.225 Resident management requirements.

964.230 Audit and administrative requirements.

Subpart D—Family Investment Centers (FIC) Program

964.300 General.

964.305 Eligibility.

964.308 Supportive services requirements.

964.310 Audit/compliance requirements.

964.315 HAs role in activities under this part.

964.320 HUD Policy on training, employment, contracting and subcontracting of public housing residents.

964.325 Notice of funding availability.

964.330 Grant set-aside assistance.

- 964.335 Grant agreement.
- 964.340 Resident compensation.
- 964.345 Treatment of income.
- 964.350 Administrative requirements.

Subpart E—Resident Board Members

- 964.400 - Purpose.
- 964.405 - Applicability.
- 964.410 - Additional definitions.
- 964.415 - Resident board members.
- 964.420 - Resident board member may be elected.

(a) *General.* Residents directly assisted by a public housing agency may elect a resident board member if provided for in the public housing agency plan, adopted in accordance with 24 CFR part 903. (b) *Notice to residents.* The public housing agency must provide residents with at least 30 days advance notice for nominations and elections. The notice should include a description of the election procedures, eligibility requirements, and dates of nominations and elections. Any election procedures devised by the public housing agency must facilitate fair elections.

- 964.425 - Small public housing agencies.
- 964.430 - Nondiscrimination.

2. BASIS FOR MOTION

A. Does no harm

B. Intended to help those fearful of coming forward to voice concerns and advice a sanctioned forum to do so

C. In keeping with purpose of the LTRB to recommend constructive policy and advice to the City leadership

ATTACHMENT 9

Members of Alexandria City Council Issue Statement on Inclusiveness

For Immediate Release: November 19, 2016

The members of the Alexandria City Council have issued the following statement:

Alexandria, Virginia, is a city of kindness and compassion.

We are a thriving community of engaged residents with strong ideals of peace, community service, and both shared and diverse cultures.

Our city declares itself to be a hate-free zone. We are an accepting and embracing community where we treat each other with human dignity and respect. There is no place for intolerance in our community. This is a core value of our city.

In recent times, many of our neighbors, families and children have expressed fear and apprehension, and there has been an increase in hateful and dangerous speech and acts nationwide. Recognizing everyone's First Amendment right to freedom of speech, we are also dedicated to freedom from fear.

People of diverse culture, race, color, nationality, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, and persons with disabilities live and work together in Alexandria and bring pride and prosperity to our community.

On behalf of the City of Alexandria, the Alexandria Human Rights Commission, and the people we serve, we reaffirm our responsibility to ensure that each person within our jurisdiction is accorded equal protection under the law, including the rights enshrined in the Constitution of the United States and the Virginia Constitution, and those set forth in the Alexandria Human Rights Code.

We proclaim that we remain committed to diversity and to fostering an atmosphere of inclusiveness that respects the dignity and worth of every person without regard to race, color, sex, religion, ancestry, national origin, immigration status, marital status, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or familial status, and we declare that we denounce hate speech, hate crimes, harassment, racial bias, anti-Semitism, Islamophobia, anti-immigrant activity, and harmful bias and discrimination in all forms.

Mayor Allison Silberberg
Vice Mayor Justin Wilson
Councilmember Willie F. Bailey Sr.
Councilmember John T. Chapman
Councilmember Timothy B. Lovain
Councilmember Redella S. "Del" Pepper
Councilmember Paul C. Smedberg

ATTACHMENT 10 - ALL ALEXANDRIA: The Background, Vision, & Goal



The City of Alexandria is committed to working toward a world where we are all embraced for who we are, and are able to thrive to reach our highest potential.

Removing barriers to full participation and belonging in life and culture. Equity means promoting just and fair inclusion throughout our city, and creating the conditions in which everyone can participate, prosper, and reach their full potential.

Under the direction of the City’s first Race and Social Equity Officer, Jaqueline Tucker, City departments and an interdepartmental workgroup are working to build a framework, in collaboration with City employees, community members, and other stakeholders, to ensure policy decisions advance race and social equity for all Alexandria residents.

ALL Alexandria means each and every resident thrives in our historic, vibrant and diverse city.
ALL Races, Religions, Countries of Origin, Sexual Orientations, Ages, Genders and Abilities

Background

The appearance of Northern Virginia as a haven of affluence and upward mobility is shattered when examining census data, which reveals disparities in education, health, housing, economic resources, and more. A 2017 report from the Northern Virginia Health Foundation identified 15 “islands of disadvantage” across the region—clusters of adjacent census tracts where affluence and upward mobility rub shoulders with communities struggling with poverty and inequity. Two of these “islands of disadvantage” are located in the City of Alexandria.

In many instances, the disparities within Alexandria are just a few blocks apart. In 2011, in one Census tract separated by W. Glebe Road, the median household income was nearly \$166,000; just across the road, the median house income was \$49,370. More recent Census data show that racial disparities persist in educational attainment, household income, and other areas:

- In the City of Alexandria, white median household income (\$122,401) more than doubled that of Hispanic or Latinx (\$60,637) and Black or African American (\$58,821) households. White households earned

approximately 15% more than Asian households (\$104,043). Source: American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates 2018

- Poverty was higher among Blacks or African Americans (34%), which represented only 20 percent of Alexandria’s population, and among the Hispanic or Latinx group (29%), which made up only 16% of the population. By comparison, poverty among white people was 20%, even though whites made up 49% of the city’s population. Source: ACS 5-Year Estimates 2018
- More members of the white (39%) and Asian (30%) populations received bachelor’s degrees compared to Black or African American (22%) and Hispanic or Latinx (14%) groups. Similarly, more white (47%) and Asian (39%) populations received graduate or professional degrees compared to Black or African American (14%) and Hispanic or Latinx (12%) populations. Source: Latest Available ACS 1-Year Estimates 2016-2018

But data is only part of the picture; it does not help us understand how and where the City can tackle inequity.

Programmatic data, collected through the City, coupled with community engagement, and using proven and tested tools and best practices, can help Alexandria.

To understand these disparities, as City government and as a community we need to take an honest look at history, and the systemic and institutional nature of disproportionality across all indicators of life and well-being. This is not just a Northern Virginia problem or a City of Alexandria problem: it is a national and global concern, deeply rooted in racism and anti-blackness.

We must thoroughly understand that people are not the problem, it is the systems and institutions (including government), and the policies and practices that they have created, perpetuated and maintained that lead to these outcomes.

VISION

Alexandria is a caring, kind, compassionate, fair, just, and equitable city that is an affordable, livable community **for ALL**.

THE GOAL

Reduce and eliminate disparities and inequities experienced by ALL Alexandria residents, especially residents of color and those that have been historically and systemically marginalized.

The Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE)

The [Government Alliance on Race and Equity](#) (GARE) normalize, organize, operationalize, national best practice is being used by more than 200 local, regional, and state government jurisdictions across the country to achieve racial equity and advance opportunities for all. This Theory of Action will help to drive the City’s efforts to develop a framework for action to achieve racial and social equity.

- Normalize concepts and conversations around race, incorporating conversations around race at every turn and opportunity within city government and in the community; making ourselves more comfortable with naming race as a key indicator and predictor for how well people do.
- Organize City staff, with involvement and input from the Alexandria community, around advancing equity throughout City government, and consequently, in the community.
- Operationalize Moving from racial equity theory to action, by using local data and racial equity tools, to develop and implement equitable policies, programs, and procedures across City government and the community

ATTACHMENT 11

EMAIL THREAD RELATED TO LTRB MEMBER’S MOTION – See Something Say Something

7. From: EMW <waters325@comcast.net>
To: Helen McIlvaine <Helen.McIlvaine@alexandriava.gov>, Melodie.Seau@alexandriava.gov
Cc: Bonnie Naugle <bonnie.naugle@gmail.com>, EMW <waters325@comcast.net>
Date: 04/01/2022 11:19 AM
Subject: [EXTERNAL]In Person LTRB Meeting - April 6, 2022

Helen,

Thank you for your response dated today.

For purposes of relevant clarity, will the responses being prepared address the apparent inequity and injustice during the 1930s -1960s documented in Dr Moon's article since its accuracy is yet to be acknowledged by City Staff or Council? I ask the question because it is a central part of the motion being proposed. If acknowledgement is implied based on current action of City Staff mentioned in your email below, it needs to be done by speaking plainly. May I state City Staff and City Council are in agreement with the accuracy of Dr

Moon's article and cite you as the source or can you provide me a source? I ask this question because it can serve as a basis for modifying the motion of concern. Hope you understand the need for objective clarity.

Regarding work being done to address equity/social justice, can you also provide an estimated date this information which seems related to the second part of the proposed motion is likely due since it may impact the language in it as well, namely: the era [1930s-1960s].

With appreciation,
Elliott

P.S.: It is my intent to share our email communications with the LTRB members at the April meeting

6. From: Helen Mcllvaine <Helen.Mcllvaine@alexandriava.gov>
Date: 4/1/22 08:21 (GMT-05:00)
To: waters325@comcast.net, Melodie Seau <Melodie.Seau@alexandriava.gov>
Cc: Bonnie Naugle <bonnie.naugle@gmail.com>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL]In Person LTRB Meeting - April 6, 2022

Elliott, staff is glad to prepare a written response regarding the work being done across city departments to address equity and social justice issues. It will take some time, but I'm glad to coordinate getting summaries and providing them to you. That might be the right moment to schedule a virtual meeting to discuss these and to see which of the initiatives would be of greatest interest/relevance to the LTRB for presentation/discussion at future meetings.

FYI, last spring, the City adopted the ALL Alexandria Resolution, <https://www.alexandriava.gov/Equity>. Extensive training and education is occurring internally among city staff currently, but additional community engagement is planned in the future.

Helen

5. From: waters325@comcast.net <waters325@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, March 31, 2022 5:51 PM
To: Helen Mcllvaine <Helen.Mcllvaine@alexandriava.gov>; Melodie Seau <Melodie.Seau@alexandriava.gov>
Cc: Bonnie Naugle <bonnie.naugle@gmail.com>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]In Person LTRB Meeting - April 6, 2022
Importance: High

Greetings Helen,

I welcome the opportunity to discuss the "See something say something motion- below." Is it possible to meet " via zoom or on a recorded line - for accountability purposes at 1:30 tomorrow (Friday, Apr 1) or next week?.

Since you have my proposed motion and basis for it, is it possible for you to provide a written response to it that addresses the work being done to address and mitigate/alleviate the inequity and injustice documented in Dr Moon's article? I am providing some definition of terms to help focus our discussion since it appears staff's focus is on systemic racism whereas the focus of the motion proposed is focused on addressing legal/moral established standards of justice and equity - more objectively.. Feel free to provide your own definition of terms as well as offer a dispute resolution process.

It is important that you know while I am the author of this motion. in a true sense - It is not my motion. Rather, it is a motion shaped by over six years of listening, learning and hearing the voices of fearful, hurting and wounded residents who in the words of Dr Moon give reason to believe "*some of the same unjust and inequitable practices of the past remain even today.*".

With appreciation,
Elliott

MOTION (below): SEE SOMETHING SAY SOMETHING 1930's-1960's

I _____move that the LTRB:

A. submit a request thru Deputy City Manager Baker or other City official(s) deemed appropriate, asking that Planning and Zoning staff in collaboration with the Office of Housing staff verify the content in the article penned by Dr Krystyn Moon entitled, "The African American Housing Crisis in Alexandria, Virginia, 1930s–1960s" *and at the conclusion of the verification process*

B. if the content of Dr Moon's referenced work is verified (*in whole or in part*) recommend that the verifying staff:

(1) name/identity any unjust and inequitable housing and zoning practices [construed as legal] and

(2) in collaboration with other appropriate entities propose corrective action to remedy any harmful effects such practices had and/or continue to have on Alexandria African-American residents of that era and/or their descendants: *and*

C. in the interest of transparency that appropriate suggested public/private entities be provided copies of the reports of verification and recommended corrective action to include

- (1) City Council Members,
- (2) City Staff (Human Rights Commission, Race and Social Equity Officer, City Attorney)
- (3) City boards, commissions, committees
- (4) a suggested list of public/private non-governmental entities

D. moreover, after weighing the pros and cons - assent to:

- (1) to providing "stakeholders" listed below a copy of the motion "*for information only*" in the interest of transparency as well as possible individual or organizational community engagement prior to the start of the requested work; and
- (2) after completion of the work addressed above (see A & B) seek appropriate approval to host a Forum to inform Alexandria residents of staff's work in identifying causes & effects of the African American Housing Crisis during the 1930's-1960's

Motion Focus: Identify & correct the cause & harmful effects stemming from the African American Housing Crisis in Alexandria, 1930s–1960s"

TERMS

Systemic racism - Interplay between individual, interpersonal, and institutional, which creates natural energy and cycle of continued advantage/power and inequity. It continues without action. Pop Wisdom: The structural racism framework is what allows systemic racism to exist.

source: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/equity/race-and-social-equity-definitions>

Injustice - process of not reinforcing and establishing a set of just policies, practices, attitudes, and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts, and outcomes for all individuals and groups

source: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/equity/race-and-social-equity-definitions>

Inequity - differences in well-being that disadvantage one individual or group in favor of another. These differences are systematic, patterned and unfair and can be changed. Inequities are not random; they are caused by past and current decisions, systems of power and privilege, policies and the implementation of those policies.

source: <https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/inequity>

Mitigate - to make something less harmful, unpleasant, or bad

source: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/us/dictionary/english/mitigate>

PURPOSE OF THE LANDLORD TENANT RELATIONS BOARD

The Landlord-Tenant Relations Board (LTRB) was established by City Council in 1971 to investigate and mediate landlord-tenant disputes and *to make recommendations to City Council with respect to public policies affecting landlords and tenants*. The duties, powers, and responsibilities of the LTRB found in Alexandria City Code reads: The duties, powers and responsibilities of the Landlord Tenant Relations Board can be found in §12-5 of the Alexandria City Code and include the following: **(a)** Consider grievances of landlords and tenants when grievances are referred to the Board by City Staff; **(b)** *Act in an advisory capacity to the City Council on public policies affecting landlords and tenants*; **(c)** Formulate and recommend legislative proposals to City Council; **(d)** Develop and publish guidelines and summaries regarding the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants, and **(e)** *Participate in educational activities relating to landlord-tenant issues*.

4. From: Bonnie Naugle <bonnie.naugle@gmail.com>

To: EMW <waters325@comcast.net>

Date: 03/31/2022 2:08 PM

Subject: Re: [EXTERNAL]In Person LTRB Meeting - April 6, 2022

Hi Elliott,

I believe they want to share with you the work they are already doing related to your motion, so that you can craft the motion to reflect both current work happening and desired outcomes. Dr. Moon is already working with the city, so that report should be forthcoming. Perhaps we ask for an update on that?

I don't think it's necessary for them to do additional work to confirm each of her statements, since she's written it with references and maps. As a scholarly article, the city should be able to use her work as a resource.

Your motion has several parts:

1. Verifying the content of her work (see my points above) - I think we can recommend use of her work as a resource; the information is public and easy to confirm if they have any questions.
2. Producing a formal report of corrective action to be made - let's find out from the city if this is in process before requesting it.
3. Sending the report to the City HRC, Attorney, Council, and LTRB - if the report is in progress, we can certainly recommend that a copy be provided to these groups if not already planned.

I'm fine with you having a conversation with the staff, and feel free to report back during our meeting. It would be a great help to have their insight to add to your motion discussion.

Regarding the previous email in that thread:

I can provide the additional items to the LTRB along with the agenda, your report, and draft March minutes - we still need to approve those. The current roster is online: <https://www.alexandriava.gov/Boards>. I'll ask Melodie to update us on the older minutes.

Thanks!
Bonnie

3. On Thu, Mar 31, 2022 at 10:35 AM EMW <waters325@comcast.net> wrote:

Good morning Bonnie,

I am providing the email below for your acknowledgement and information.

Since the email is addressed to me presumably as a LTRB Bd Mbr, it is my intent to point out the need to await LTRB action on my proposed motion at the April meeting to avoid confusion rooted in a good staff intention.

If you desire to respond to staff, as LTRB Chair, I will defer to you.

Respectfully,
Elliott

2. From: Helen Mcllvaine <Helen.Mcllvaine@alexandriava.gov>
Date: 3/31/22 9:24 AM (GMT-05:00)
To: waters325@comcast.net
Cc: Melodie Seau <Melodie.Seau@alexandriava.gov>
Subject: RE: [EXTERNAL]In Person LTRB Meeting - April 6, 2022

Elliott, Melodie and I had a chance yesterday -while we were both in the office – to discuss your proposal. We'd like to line up some presentations to the LTRB over the next several months to provide the board information about the many initiatives underway across several departments to address systemic racism in the city, including to mitigate issues related to housing opportunity including new approaches to zoning. Would you have time at 1:30 for a call so we can discuss with you? We think this fits well with your proposal but want to understand more what you would hope to accomplish so we're working in a complementary fashion. If 1:30 isn't good, please suggest some times tomorrow that you're available for a call.

Helen

1. From: waters325@comcast.net <waters325@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 30, 2022 4:57 PM
To: Bonnie Naugle <bonnie.naugle@gmail.com>; elijahst.dennis@yahoo.com; rcernucan@paradigmcos.com; katherine.oconnell@gmail.com; drmartin101020@gmail.com; olivia.jenkins@greystar.com
Cc: Melodie Seau <Melodie.Seau@alexandriava.gov>; Helen Mcllvaine <Helen.Mcllvaine@alexandriava.gov>; Karl Moritz <Karl.Moritz@alexandriava.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL]In Person LTRB Meeting - April 6, 2022

Bonnie,

For the board packet:

My Vice Chair report is in the form of two motions

a. Motion For Decision: See Something, Say Something: 1930s - 1960s (for discussion and vote at Apr meeting)
Bd Mbr Advisory Note: Process wise, since Boards, Commissions, & Committees have no tasking authority, if the motion passes (since the Deputy City Manager is aware of this proposed motion as well as the two staff offices she supervises), I suggest LTRB ask Deputy City Manager Baker if she would assent to handling this motion as an ask item or if she chooses to defer to the City Manager; if they believe as a matter of regular order that it should be sent to City Council. In that case, then I propose LTRB send the motion

through the City Clerk to the City Council for their information and action/sponsorship. Input/advisory comments from Staff Liaison are appreciated in this matter.

b. Pending Proposed Motion: City Council establish advisory councils as a "best practice" in Alexandria (for information in Apr and discussion/vote in May)

Request for status/update during Apr meeting regarding:

- a. Current list of LTRB members;
- b. Will copy of approved March minutes posted on the City's website be included in the LTRB April Packet ?
- c. When will the LTRB minutes be posted that predates the last set of minutes now on the website, i.e. November 1, 2017?

(1). How far back can the City website list past LTRB meetings since it was established by City Council on 10/26/1972

(2). Can the City's website reveal the link to access archived LTRB agenda, packet items to include minutes and other attachments?

Thanks,
Elliott

ATTACHMENT 12

GLOSSARY

● **Primary Sources:**

- 1. <https://www.alexandriava.gov/equity/race-and-social-equity-definitions> // could not find in City Code
- 2. https://www.vacourts.gov/courts/overview/glossary_of_court_terms.html / could not find in Virginia Code
- 3. <https://www.lawinsider.com/dictionary/united-states-federal-government#:~:text=United%20States%20Federal%20Government%20means,the%20United%20States%20of%20America.> / could not find in federal code
- 4. <https://www.ojp.gov/ncjrs/virtual-library/abstracts/restorative-justice-overview>
- 5. <https://icma.org/glossary-terms-race-equity-and-social-justice>

● **Secondary sources visited but not used:**

- 1. <https://www.merriam-webster.com/>
- 2. <https://thelawdictionary.org/>

TERM	Alexandria City	Virginia	U.S. Gov't	ICMA - International City/County Management Association
Equity	Fairness and justice in policy, practice and opportunity consciously designed to address the distinct historical and structural challenges of non-dominant social groups, with an eye to equitable outcomes. The goal of equity is to acknowledge unequal starting places and correct the imbalance.	A body of civil law concerned with doing justice where money is inadequate or inappropriate as a remedy. Examples of equitable actions include divorce and injunctions. Equity cases are handled by circuit courts.		Equity is the guarantee of fair treatment, advancement, opportunity & access for all individuals while striving to identify & eliminate barriers that have prevented the full participation of some groups and ensuring that all community members have access to community conditions & opportunities to reach their full potential and to experience optimal well-being & quality of life.
Justice	The proactive process of reinforcing and establishing a set of policies, practices, attitudes, and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts, and outcomes for all individuals and groups. <i>See also, racial justice.</i>			
Legal Justice				
Moral Justice				
Legal equity				
Moral equity				
Racial Inequity	Race as the number one predictor of life outcomes, e.g., disproportionality in education (high school graduation rates), jobs (unemployment rate), criminal justice (arrest and incarceration rates), life expectancy, etc.		...the systematic fair treatment of people of all races and ethnicities that allows equitable outcomes. Once racial and ethnic inequities are eliminated, race and ethnicity are not factors in outcomes.	Racial inequity is when two or more racial groups are not standing on approximately equal footing, such as the percentages of each ethnic group in terms of dropout rates, single family home ownership, access to healthcare, educational opportunities, career mobility, etc.

Racial Injustice	The proactive process of reinforcing and establishing a set of policies, practices, attitudes, and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts, and outcomes for all individuals and groups impacted by racism. The goal, however, is not only the eradication of racism, but also the presence of deliberate social systems and structures that sustain racial equity through proactive and preventative measures.		means countering oppressive social and institutional structures, and fighting for the basic rights of racially oppressed peoples.	The systematic fair treatment of people of all races, resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all. Racial Justice [is defined] as the proactive reinforcement of policies, practices, attitudes and actions that produce equitable power, access, opportunities, treatment, impacts and outcomes for all. Racial justice—or racial equity—goes beyond “anti-racism.” It is not just the absence of discrimination and inequities, but also the presence of deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain racial equity through proactive and preventative measures.
Restorative Justice			a process whereby parties with a stake in a specific offense resolve collectively how to deal with the aftermath of the offense and its implications for the future."	
Values			Human values: means the social, cultural, historical, economic and environmental influences that have an impact on the quality of life	
Letter & spirit of Civil Law				

DEPARTMENT OF HOUSING & URBAN DEVELOPMENT GLOSSRY OF TERMS

Source 1: https://www.huduser.gov/portal/glossary/glossary_all.html#s

AFFORDABLE HOUSING: In general, housing for which the occupant(s) is/are paying no more than 30 percent of his or her income for gross housing costs, including utilities . Please note that some jurisdictions may define affordable housing based on other, locally determined criteria, and that this definition is intended solely as an approximate guideline or general rule of thumb.
AFFORDABLE HOUSING PROGRAM (AHP): A competitive program of the Federal Home Loan Bank (FHL Banks) system that provides grants twice a year through financial institutions for investment in low- or moderate-income housing initiatives. The program is flexible, so that AHP funds can be used in combination with other programs and funding sources, thus promoting a project's feasibility.
BLIGHTED STRUCTURE: A structure is blighted when it exhibits objectively determinable signs of deterioration sufficient to constitute a threat to human health, safety, and public welfare.
CHRONICALLY HOMELESS INDIVIDUAL: A homeless individual with a disability who lives either in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter, or in an institutional care facility if the individual has been living in the facility for fewer than 90 days and had been living in a place not meant for human habitation, a safe haven, or in an emergency shelter immediately before entering the institutional care facility. In order to meet the “chronically homeless” definition, the individual also must have been living as described above continuously for at least 12 months, or on at least four separate occasions in the last 3 years, where the combined occasions total a length of time of at least 12 months. Each period separating the occasions must include at least 7 nights of living in a situation other than a place not meant for human habitation, in an emergency shelter, or in a safe haven.
DILAPIDATED HOUSING: A housing unit that does not provide safe and adequate shelter, and in its present condition endangers the health, safety or well-being of the occupants. Such a housing unit shall have one or more critical defects, or a combination of intermediate defects in sufficient number or extent to require considerable repair or rebuilding. Such defects may involve original construction, or they may result from continued neglect or lack of repair or from serious damage to the structure.
DISABILITY: A physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more of the major life activities of such for an individual.
ELDERLY PERSON HOUSEHOLD: A household composed of one or more persons at least one of whom is 62 years of age or more at the time of initial occupancy.
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT PROGRAM (CDBG): Created under the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974, this program provides grant funds to local and state governments to develop viable urban communities by providing decent housing with a suitable living environment and expanding economic opportunities to assist low- and moderate-income residents. CDBG replaced several categorical grant programs, such as the Model Cities program, the Urban Renewal program, and the Housing Rehabilitation Loan and Grant program.
FAIR HOUSING ACT: 1968 act (amended in 1974 and 1988) providing the HUD Secretary with fair housing enforcement and investigation responsibilities. <i>A law that prohibits discrimination in all facets of the homebuying process on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, familial status, or disability.</i>

FAIR MARKET RENT (FMR): Primarily used to determine payment standard amounts for the Housing Choice Voucher program, to determine initial renewal rents for some expiring project-based Section 8 contracts, to determine initial rents for housing assistance payment contracts in the Moderate Rehabilitation Single Room Occupancy program, and to serve as a rent ceiling in the [HOME](#) rental assistance program.

FAIR MARKET VALUE: The amount of money that would probably be paid for a property in a sale between a willing seller, who does not have to sell, and a willing buyer, who does not have to buy.

HOUSEHOLD: All the people who occupy a housing unit. A household includes the related family members and all the unrelated people, if any, such as lodgers, foster children, wards, or employees who share the housing unit. A person living alone in a housing unit, or a group of unrelated people sharing a housing unit such as partners or roomers, is also counted as a household.

INADEQUATE HOUSING: Housing with severe or moderate physical problems, as defined in the American Housing Survey (AHS) since 1984. A unit is defined as having severe physical problems if it has severe problems in any of five areas: plumbing, heating, electrical system, upkeep, and hallways. It has moderate problems if it has problems in plumbing, heating upkeep, hallways, or kitchen, but no severe problems.

INCOME LIMIT (IL): Determines the eligibility of applicants for HUD's assisted housing programs. The major active assisted housing programs are the Public Housing program, the [Section 8](#) Housing Assistance Payments program, [Section 202](#) housing for the elderly, and [Section 811](#) housing for persons with disabilities.

MARKET AREA: The geographic area from which a project owner could reasonably expect to draw applicants, based on the services and amenities offered by the development and the needs of the community.

MARKET VALUE: The most probable price that a property should bring in a competitive and open market, provided that all conditions requisite to a fair sale are present, the buyer and seller are knowledgeable and acting prudently, and the price is not affected by any undue stimulus.

MINORITY NEIGHBORHOOD: A neighborhood in which the percentage of persons of a particular racial or ethnic minority is at least 20 points higher than that minority's percentage in the housing market as a whole; the neighborhood's total percentage of minority persons is at least 20 points higher than the total percentage of minorities for the housing market area as a whole; or in the case of a metropolitan area, the neighborhood's total percentage of minority persons exceeds 50 percent of its population.

NONPROFIT HOUSING ORGANIZATION: Any private organization that is organized under state or local laws; has no part of its net earnings inuring to the benefit of any member, founder, contributor, or individual; and has a long-term record of service in providing or financing quality affordable housing for low-income families through relationships with public entities.

PROHIBITED BASES:

Civil rights statutes establish the demographic categories by which discrimination is prohibited. Under the Fair Housing Act, the prohibited bases are race, color, religion, sex, national origin, familial status, and disability.

PROTECTED CLASSES:

Demographic categories of persons established by civil rights statutes against whom discrimination is prohibited. (See also Prohibited Bases.)

REHABILITATION: The labor, materials, tools, and other costs of improving buildings, other than minor or routine repairs. The term includes where the use of a building is changed to an emergency shelter and the cost of this change and any rehabilitation costs does not exceed 75 percent of the value of the building before the change in use.

RENOVATION: rehabilitation that involves costs of 75 percent or less of the value of the building before rehabilitation.

SECTION 202: Provides capital advances to finance the construction, rehabilitation or acquisition (with or without rehabilitation) of structures that will serve as supportive housing for very-low-income elderly persons, including the frail elderly, and provides rent subsidies for the projects to help make them affordable.

SECTION 8 EXISTING RENTAL ASSISTANCE: Provides rental assistance to low-income families who are unable to afford market rents. Assistance may be in the form of vouchers or certificates.

SECTION 8 HOMEOWNERSHIP PROGRAM: Allows low-income families who qualify for Section 8 rental assistance to use their certificates or vouchers to pay for homeownership costs under a mortgage.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING PROGRAM: This program is authorized by title IV of the Stewart B. McKinney Homeless Assistance Act (the McKinney Act) (42 U.S.C. 11381–11389). The program is designed to promote the development of supportive housing and supportive services, including innovative approaches to assist homeless persons in the transition from homelessness, and to promote the provision of supportive housing to homeless persons to enable them to live as independently as possible.

SUPPORTIVE HOUSING FOR THE ELDERLY: Housing that is designed to meet the special physical needs of elderly persons and to accommodate the provision of supportive services that are expected to be needed, either initially or over the useful life of the housing, by the category or categories of elderly persons that the housing is intended to serve.

SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES: Urban, suburban, and rural places that successfully integrate housing, land use, economic and workforce development, transportation, and infrastructure investments in a manner that empowers jurisdictions to consider the interdependent challenges of: 1) economic competitiveness and revitalization; 2) social equity, inclusion, and access to opportunity; 3) energy use and climate change; and 4) public health and environmental impact.

SWEAT EQUITY: Using labor to build or improve a property as part of the down payment.

TRANSITIONAL HOUSING: A project that has as its purpose facilitating the movement of homeless individuals and families to permanent housing within a reasonable amount of time (usually 24 months). Transitional housing includes housing primarily designed to serve deinstitutionalized homeless individuals and other homeless individuals with mental or physical disabilities and homeless families with children.

URBAN RENEWAL AREA: a slum area or a blighted, deteriorated, or deteriorating area in the locality involved which the Secretary approves as appropriate for an urban renewal project.
URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT: a project planned and undertaken by an LPA [Local Public Agency] in an urban renewal area with Federal financial and technical assistance under Title I of the Housing Act of 1949. A project may involve slum clearance and redevelopments rehabilitation and conservation, or a combination of both. It may include acquisition of land, relocation of displaced site occupants, site clearance, installation of site improvements, rehabilitation of properties and disposition of acquired land for redevelopment in accordance with the Urban Renewal Plan.
VACANT UNIT: a dwelling unit that has been vacant for not less than nine consecutive months.
VERY LOW-INCOME: <i>Households whose incomes do not exceed 50 percent of the median area income for the area</i> , as determined by HUD, with adjustments for smaller and larger families and for areas with unusually high or low incomes or where needed because of facility, college, or other training facility; prevailing levels of construction costs; or fair market rents.
WORST CASE HOUSING NEEDS: Needs experienced by unassisted very low-income renters who either (1) pay more than one-half of their monthly income for rent; or (2) live in severely inadequate conditions, or both.
ZONING: The classification of land by types of uses permitted and prohibited in a given district, and by densities and intensities permitted and prohibited, including regulations regarding building location on lots.
RESTRICTIVE COVENANTS - In real estate transactions, restrictive covenants are binding legal obligations written into the deed of a property contract, usually by the seller. These covenants can be simple or complex and can levy penalties against buyers who fail to obey them
BLOCKBUSTING - a business process in which real estate agents and building developers convince property owners to sell their houses at low prices by telling house owners that racial minorities will soon move into their neighborhoods in order to instill fear in them. The agents then sell those same houses to black families at much higher prices
REDLINING - systematic denial of various services to residents of specific, often racially associated, neighborhoods or communities such as banking , insurance , health care , supermarkets , etc
REVERSE REDLINING - occurs when a lender or insurer targets particular neighborhoods that are predominantly nonwhite or are being blockbuster , not to deny residents services , but rather to charge them more than in a non-redlined neighborhood
GOVERNMENT LOANS denied or lost based on the race of the applicant
EMINENT DOMAIN - the right of a government or its agent to expropriate private property for public use, with payment of compensation.
EASEMENTS - a right to cross or otherwise use someone else's land for a specified purpose
RESTORATIVE PRACTICES aim to repair harm done to individuals and communities. visit https://www.resolutionvirginia.org/restorative-justice

COMMENTARY

A voice for justice and equity for all, especially the voiceless: To help preclude any misunderstanding of my intentions as a LTRB Member, Concerned Resident, Stakeholder, and Cleric please know that (1) as a Board Member I am seeking to fulfill my role as a responsible volunteer who is surfacing a matter of concern in need of a long delayed solution, and a concerned resident I am sharing some troubling information that has been conveyed to me; (3) as a stakeholder, I have reason to believe and want to believe I live in a kind, caring and compassionate city that is willing to acknowledge error and correct it; and as an imperfect person who is endeavoring to fulfill his vows, I am endeavoring to be a messenger for those fearful of picking up on their own behalf until conditions are such they are willing to come forward and risk being misunderstood in order to seek justice and equity for harm done them or those they know and love.

Acknowledge past error by shining a light on it (rather than seeking to burying error in current All Alexandria initiatives). Acting in my various other capacities, my hope remains that a just and equitable outcome will be achieved wherein those harmed (*physically, emotionally and financially*) as well as those causing harm during the 1930s-1960s will be restored holistically in body, mind and spirit.

Suggest the City recognize residents and staff for their courage, compassion and competence in remedying the harmful effects of injustice and inequity during the 1930s-1960s rather than engage in litigious fault finding.

Facing the Facts About Housing Injustice Will Help Pave the Way to Racial Equity

Margery Austin Turner, Solomon Greene, Martha M. Galvez January 26, 2021

<https://www.urban.org/urban-wire/facing-facts-about-housing-injustice-will-help-pave-way-racial-equity>

In a memorandum released ... *President Biden acknowledged what research and evidence have indisputably shown*: the federal government has played a central role in creating and perpetuating today's patterns of racial segregation, neighborhood disinvestment, housing insecurity, and racial wealth gaps. Moreover, these patterns have terrible consequences in that they fuel inequities in health, education, policing, and employment.

Such an acknowledgment is both historic and consequential. No president has so explicitly recognized the federal government's culpability or taken official action to redress the consequences of its actions. And although leaders in the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) and other federal agencies (PDF) have previously recognized federal government's role in creating racial inequity and injustice, progress in addressing ongoing harms has been halting at best.

For too long, the federal government ignored or denied its obligation to redress the harms of racist policies even despite an explicit mandate in the Fair Housing Act to take "affirmative" steps to address the ongoing harms of discrimination, segregation, and exclusion. Over the past four years, the federal government took aggressive steps to gut fair housing protections, including erasing race (and accountability) from HUD's mandate to affirmatively further fair housing.

Evidence can help chart the path forward

President Biden's new memorandum and last week's executive order on advancing racial equity recognize that efforts to erase the nation's history of racism can't eliminate the problems and inequities that racism brought about. Instead, facing the facts about our history is a necessary step toward long-overdue healing and provides the foundation for urgently needed policy changes.

In recent years, Urban Institute research has provided the evidence behind six steps the federal government could take to achieve the goals outlined in the presidential memorandum, redress our nation's history of discriminatory housing policies, and achieve a more prosperous and equitable future.

1. Vigorously enforce the long-neglected statutory mandate to affirmatively further fair housing by requiring local and state governments to develop plans that restore resources and opportunities in historically disinvested neighborhoods and that expand access to exclusive neighborhoods.
2. Expand neighborhood choice by documenting voucher discrimination and identifying ways to enhance the Housing Choice Voucher Program as a tool to help families live in opportunity-rich neighborhoods.
3. Break down exclusionary barriers to housing production and support local inclusionary housing policies by creating incentives for states and localities to reform zoning and land-use regulations.
4. Collect and share disaggregated data so that needs can be accurately identified and progress toward closing equity gaps can be systematically evaluated.
5. Confront emerging and evolving forms of discrimination in today's housing market and reaffirm and enforce the disparate impact standard, which recognizes that groups protected under the Fair Housing Act can experience discrimination through policies and practices even if no evidence exists of an intention to discriminate.
6. Close the racial wealth gap by supporting homeownership and home equity for households of color.
7. Acknowledging the damage done by past federal policies and committing to healing are welcome first steps on the long and difficult path ahead toward long-overdue housing justice. Following the evidence will be the next.

Habitat for Humanity

Five (5) policy solutions to advance racial equity in housing
<https://www.habitat.org/stories/5-policy-solutions-advance-racial-equity-housing>

Housing inequality is a primary culprit behind the large racial wealth gap between Black and white households in the U.S.

Mobilizing public and political will to craft and implement remedies necessary for a more just future is critical to rectifying the years of unjust housing policies that continue to impact families today.

Habitat's Cost of Home campaign provides a vehicle for advocating for anti-racist housing and land use policies at the local, state and federal levels. The following is a non-exhaustive list of housing policy solutions that we can all help push forward to redress the nation's legacy of discrimination against people of color - and especially Black Americans - and to help our nation begin to heal.

1. Increase opportunities for Black homeownership.

To start, we must set a goal of closing the Black homeownership gap within a generation. We can achieve that in several ways, including:

- **Increasing access to down payment assistance.** Discriminatory policies that have excluded Black families from homeownership, education and job opportunities often leave Black parents with less wealth to pass on to their children. Down payment assistance programs, like matched savings programs and advanceable tax credits for low-income first-time homebuyers, can help reduce this common hurdle.
- **Increasing access to affordable credit.** Given the history of redlining and discriminatory lending in the U.S., we must extend mortgage and business credit to underserved, low-income and minority homebuyers and communities. Many tools for rectifying racial inequities in lending exist but need to be strengthened.
- **Investing in affordable homeownership.** Even when down payment assistance is available, unaffordable home prices remain a major obstacle to homeownership. Expanding government grants that finance affordable home construction can help builders like Habitat create lasting, sustainable homeownership opportunities.
- **Retargeting the mortgage interest deduction.** The mortgage interest deduction for homeowners is strikingly inequitable - often only benefiting high-income homeowners with the largest mortgages. It is also quite expensive - historically costing more than all of HUD and USDA's housing programs combined. Restructuring the MID as a tax credit to make it more accessible to low-income homeowners, including homeowners of color, and limiting it to low- and moderate-income households would free up scarce federal resources for other solutions to help those who need it most.

2. Invest in distressed, racially segregated communities.

Many formerly redlined and segregated neighborhoods continue to suffer from disinvestment and economic distress. Reinvestment and tax incentives targeting these communities would help spark recovery and opportunities. But these investments must be carefully designed to ensure they don't price out existing residents and businesses.

One promising idea is tax credits to rehabilitate distressed homes in communities with low home values, to expand affordable homeownership opportunities for residents, such as the Neighborhood Homes Improvement Act. Property tax relief for low-income homeowners and investments in home repairs are also important for ensuring existing residents can remain and benefit as their neighborhoods improve.

3. Stop perpetuating segregation.

Segregation is the legacy of deliberate policy and zoning choices that led to the underinvestment and isolation of communities where Black households lived, and the creation of separate, higher-opportunity communities that excluded people of color. Today's economically exclusionary zoning perpetuates this segregation. Governments at all levels are obligated to increase opportunities for Black households to live in neighborhoods with good schools and safe streets. They can do this by:

- **Reforming zoning to allow mixed-income communities.** By diversifying the types of homes allowed in their communities, localities can make them more racially and economically inclusive. Zoning modifications like lowering minimum home- and lot-size requirements, permitting duplexes and triplexes, allowing apartments in more locations, and/or minimizing discretionary review processes help achieve this. In considering these reforms, again, it is important to be mindful of how zoning changes might inadvertently displace existing residents of color and prevent this from happening.
- **Building and preserving affordable homes in communities of opportunity.** Zoning reforms are necessary but often insufficient alone — governments must also increase investments in affordable homes in non-segregated communities. Local and state governments can help by incentivizing mixed-income housing developments and making public land in well-resourced neighborhoods available at low cost for intentionally affordable homes.
- **Increasing the mobility of families with vouchers.** Federal housing choice vouchers were designed to help low-income households afford modest rental homes in every U.S. neighborhood. But landlord resistance, high deposit requirements and unaffordable moving expenses often restrict families from using them outside of high-poverty, segregated areas. Voucher mobility programs that include landlord outreach and mediation, tenant counseling and moving-cost assistance can dramatically improve access to high-opportunity

neighborhoods for families with vouchers. Scaling these programs would bridge more low-income families to communities of opportunity.

4. Invest in affordable rental housing.

Public investment in rental affordability is critical to address the disproportionately high-cost burdens and housing instability experienced by Black households. Housing choice vouchers are one of the most efficient tools for increasing affordability for very low-income renters, but currently there are only enough to assist 1 of every 4 eligible households. The federal government can quickly alleviate housing cost burdens for hundreds of thousands of Black renters by expanding voucher availability. Charlottesville, Virginia, and other cities have successfully implemented their own housing voucher programs.

5. Minimize the damage of COVID-19 on Black households.

A crucial, immediate step for remedying racial housing disparities is preventing eviction and foreclosure during and after the pandemic. On average, Black renters and homeowners are at higher risk of losing their homes, having entered the health and economic crisis with less access to stable and affordable homes.

Eviction and foreclosure moratoria as well as forbearance options are critical for stabilizing households during the pandemic, and just as critical is assistance to help families make up missed payments after those periods end. Foreclosure prevention assistance targeting low-income homeowners, emergency financial assistance for renters facing eviction, and extended repayment options for renters and homeowners alike are key to their — and our — recovery.