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[00:00:04] Good morning. It is 11.02. Good morning. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. It is 11.02, so we will go ahead and get started. We want to make sure we have ample time for discussion. I know there will be a lot of questions and conversation. We are very grateful to be here this morning for the Housing Committee. First of all, you should all have the summary from the November 26th Housing committee just checking with my colleagues to see if there are any comments questions feedback on

[00:00:38] the meeting minutes seeing none thank you we will move forward with our agenda for today we are joined by the director of housing tom fleetwood and his team first of all on the progress on housing initiatives and development always great to see where we're coming along And then we are so fortunate to have both Tom Barnett and David Meyer, former Mayor Meyer, chair of the Continuum of Care Committee, to talk about partners in progress, how to improve our response to homelessness.

[00:01:12] We have left ample time to be able to hear from the recommendations from the Continuum of Care Commission Committee and to be able to have discussions around that. And then we will finish today with a briefing on the tenant relocation guidelines.

[00:01:31] And with that, we do have Gendry Alexander here for us. We will have time for other business and to discuss the agenda for our next meeting. So to that, making sure if Chris Leonard is all good, I get the heads up, hands up.

[00:01:47] So let's go ahead with Tom Fleetwood. Welcome. Good morning, Madam Chairman, members of the board. Tom Fleetwood with the Department of Housing and Community Development. today we are we're going to be covering a number of topics in our initial in our update here there I will speak briefly to our response on homelessness with some headlines recognizing that we have a more fulsome presentation a bit later and miss Shapiro will be taking us through the rest of the of the updates as we go forward with respect to with respect to the our homelessness response

[00:02:23] I'm very pleased to report to you that the new Fair Ridge Family Shelter in the Sully District will open in early April. And we are so pleased with the progress that was made there. And thank you all for your support as we move that forward.

[00:02:42] This will open up as of April 1, additional capacity for single adults experiencing homelessness at the Embree-Rucker Shelter uh in the hunter mill district so uh so moving forward there uh we are also making progress with respect to the replacement of the rucker shelter as well as eleanor kennedy in the mount vernon district uh similarly we continue to work uh to deliver additional uh permanent supportive housing units in the community and are preparing for the startup of the state funded permanent supportive

[00:03:17] housing program on which we've briefed you before turning to our work towards the 10,000 unit goal by 2034 I'm going to turn it over to our deputy director Anna Shapiro thank you madam chairman good morning Anna Shapiro with the Department of Housing and Community Development the this chart you see in front of you shows the progress towards our goal the 13% are the units that have been delivered to date since 2020 when the goal was established and then 15% percent are currently under construction. I'll go into those in a second. You'll see a 10 percent

[00:03:52] number. That's basically those that we are doing due diligence on. We're planning. We're looking at opportunities there. That's in a light hatch because, again, those are very opportunity based and often are very dependent on other sources that come to the table, market conditions, and our partners. So I wanted to just make sure that was clear. In terms of our delivered units, You've seen a lot of these, and you see the new addition to our chart this committee are the ADUs and WEDUs below 60% AMI, as well as FCRHA finance scattered site units.

[00:04:27] And at the end, I'll talk a little bit about the affordable housing dashboard that we have just released. And so these numbers will match up to those exactly. So we've tried to really scour some of those scattered site units that we often don't capture on these charts, but we want to make sure to show them to you when we do the updates in terms of the projects that are currently under construction you'll see almost a thousand units are still under construction in Tyson's they're quite large projects and they're making great progress I think even the exchange is ahead of schedule we also have the great progress on the residents of the government center right

[00:05:05] outside our front door and you can kind of step out and see the progress there and autumn willow senior is also very close to delivering in the first part of this year. The projects that are in pre-development are kind of at a range of status levels. We are very close to closing on Telestar. We've been approved in our bond round with Virginia Housing and are moving quickly towards closing. We also have a lot of planning activities on a wide range of different project types, from senior housing to preservation at the Stonegate Village, as well

[00:05:39] as our new PPEAs that have come out and are currently out for bid at East County Project in the Mason District, as well as the Innovation Dulles Green site in the Drainsville District. And so we're very excited about the response we've been getting from the development community, a lot of questions and a lot of interest on those.

[00:06:01] We also have some new opportunities that we're exploring. We're really looking deeply into the opportunities at the Chantilly Library site, the Centerville park and ride as new opportunities that we're working with our county partners on. We're also going to be, we've also spoken to Supervisor Palachuk on the Judicial Center and the Brookholder site, as well as we've started community engagement at the Crescent Redevelopment.

[00:06:25] We are looking at a one-for-one replacement and then trying to maximize what we can do within the context of that site. And we're very excited to start that process with the residents. This is an overview, so you can kind of see where those units fall within the county.

[00:06:41] As you can see, they're all over the county in all districts, various sizes, and we're going to try to continue to find those great opportunities for amenity-rich locations located near jobs and transit, but also dispersed throughout the county. Our ADUs and WDUs, you saw the number that we included in our progress toward the goal, which was about 75 units, approximately.

[00:07:07] We actually have delivered over 1,300 since 2020, but those are at a range of income, so not all of them count toward the goal. So just to make that clear, the majority of those are over half, are in the 80% below AMI category. But you'll see the breakdown here of 920 new rental units and 384 new for sale units.

[00:07:29] Oh, and we're expecting another 100 as well. We've also made some great progress since bringing on our manufactured housing program manager. And so far, we've convened the Manufactured Housing Roundtable. We've had the first meeting, which the roundtable actually includes at least two representatives from each park.

[00:07:48] We also have -- we're in the final stages of the repair pilot RFP, and that is selecting a vendor to actually conduct the repairs. And that should be completed within the coming month. And finally, in terms of our policy initiatives, as you know, you all helped us adopt the WDU administrative regulations, so we're very excited those are updated and are looking forward to implementing those. We have the tenant relocation guidelines under consideration, which you'll hear more from Gentry Alexander shortly. And then also we wanted to sort of announce that we are opening the housing dashboard, and the affordable housing dashboard will provide kind of a glimpse

[00:08:27] of data, which we have sort of broken down in lots of really kind of interesting chunks the way we've heard questions asked in the past, so feel free to take a look, peruse. We have a few different tabs. We show sort of the full housing picture of committed housing. We also show market affordable. We show the units that are financed and try to break those down in lots of interesting ways, including by district.

[00:08:48] So please do reach out to our office if you have any questions or any challenges with the site. We are going to be able to kind of evolve it as we get that feedback, and we're very excited to preview it here. And that's it. Take any questions if you have. Well, excellent.

[00:09:04] Presentation a very brief and I know we're all pretty excited. I'm sure to get our hands on that dashboard and to play around with it. And we'll have additional questions then. And to that I think we've all

had a chance to see the development both here on the grounds of the government center And I know every time I go by the two and Tyson's it's very exciting to see that they really are coming along Very quickly so appreciate all the work on that to that. Let me start with the chairman and then I'll All right. Any other? Yes. Supervisor Bierman.

[00:09:37] So I asked a budget question several weeks ago that hasn't yet been answered, but I'm assuming you've been working on it. So I was wondering if you could tell us some of the opportunities you think might be unlocked or some of the ways that you would potentially use an extra quarter penny on the real estate tax rate about \$8.5 million, I believe, that was added to the budget for affordable housing.

[00:10:06] What would that actually translate to this year? Supervisor Bierman, thank you for the question. And we are indeed working on the response, and we'll be answering it through the Q&A process.

[00:10:28] by way of a preview, perhaps, you know, we, as the board's aware, so much of what we do is opportunity-driven and responding to opportunities that, you know, that emerge in the market for us to be able to respond to. But as you can see on our development pipeline, we have a number of projects that very well could utilize the additional quarter penny. We are also, we also are looking at a number of strategic acquisition potential opportunities on which to develop

[00:11:04] additional housing. And we also, the housing authority's portfolio also has some significant needs as well that would potentially be addressed with this funding as well. And I'll ask Ms. Shapira to fill in for me where I've missed anything. No, I'll just put a finer point on kind of the project specifically here that we're looking at in particular. So Stonegate Village is one of the ones that we are queuing up for to begin renovation. We're looking at utilizing some federal funds there to start, but we also want to show kind of all our funds kind of partnered together to help us do this renovation and preserve the units for our populations. Also, the East

[00:11:43] County and Innovation RFPs are out, as I said, and so those will require a blueprint investment, most likely, and we will be looking at those proposals when they come in, but those are likely kind of the first through the door that will come in that we are going to explore.

[00:11:58] And I also wanted to point out Agape Senior has scored very well in its first analysis of the 9% tax credit round. We just received the scoring. So we are hoping that that project will get awarded. And that is the first phase of that project. So they are planning to have a second phase as well that would come to us the following year. And so we kind of see that as sort of part of the pipeline as well. Often we have to phase projects because trying to build 250 units at one time is very challenging. And then I will also point out the, well actually those are probably the biggest opportunities at the very moment. So quick follow-up question

[00:12:36] to that. You mentioned federal funding, which may or may not exist. We may or may not have a Department of Housing and Urban Development. So I guess my question is what are the effects of changes at the federal level that you are most worried about and how are you planning and preparing for that and also how would that also potentially affect the amount of money that you are able to spend or that you are doing under the current models and what might need to change supervisor Berman thank you for

[00:13:13] that very easy question I would I would say first of all with respect to our federal funding that much remains unknown, I think, in the continuing resolution through the end of this current federal

fiscal year that absent anything additionally unusual that we expect effectively status quo through the end of this federal fiscal year.

[00:13:44] Wait a second. We've seen that the continuing resolution and the appropriation of funds is completely meaningless to this administration just going to throw that out there go ahead thanks um understood um but we are uh we are optimistic particularly with respect to the voucher program uh that uh at least for now that uh it will you know continue to function uh less certain is the situation with the community development block grant and home funds um so we will be

[00:14:19] keeping a careful eye on that. But, you know, the voucher program in Fairfax County is almost \$90 million a year. And so every month, HCD is pushing out payments to landlords of, you know, in excess of about \$6 million. And so, you know, the contribution that the voucher program in particular makes to the local economy here, and then writ large nationally, is not to be underestimated. And so I think, you know, that is some of the underpinning for the, you know,

[00:14:53] optimism that we have there. I would just, you know, I would also say that in terms of the low income housing tax credit program, that exists in the Internal Revenue Code. It's not a HUD program. And it has traditionally enjoyed, you know, broad bipartisan support. We haven't seen, any evidence of any sort of changes in that regard. But I would also say one thing that

[00:15:25] bears watching with respect to the tax credit program is the corporate tax rate, which is a driver of how attractive purchasing those credits is, and then the resulting equity that they produce. So I think that that bears careful watching and could have an impact on the need for other sources of subsidy. Then finally, I would say with respect to your previous question

[00:15:57] that our continued work towards getting to at least two pennies for housing development has a direct impact on our ability to eventually meet the goals. And I just want to be very candid about that. So thank you, Madam Chairman. Thank you very much, Tom and Anna. I believe we had one additional question from Supervisor Stork. Thank you, and thank you for the report. And I recognize that our objective here is new housing, which is essential for, frankly, in our market because

[00:16:37] We know that we have a dearth of housing, which is one of the reasons the housing prices have been going up and makes it harder for particularly folks who are at the lower income perspective to be able to afford those. But the county has been really, I thought, effective in the past in supporting the preservation of market affordable homes, particularly in the Mount Vernon area.

[00:17:00] I can think of a number of those. And they're not reflected in the report. I'm not, that's fine, but do we have some way of, I mean, is there other work that you're doing along those lines to, again, support preservation of market affordable houses now?

[00:17:18] Thank you for that question. Yes, there is, and we can kind of bring back an additional update for the next housing committee, but we are currently wrapping up, we're in the final stages of our survey. We have a consultant that's doing kind of a full survey of market affordable, which is our kind of biannual survey, so that information should be coming out.

[00:17:36] soon, and we can do that analysis. We also continue to work with the Department of Planning and Development to explore the preservation opportunities on projects that are coming in for redevelopment. And so that's, you know, that sort of goal for one-for-one replacement is something that we're working towards. Those properties are all, there's a number of goals on all the properties, so we're

really looking at what we can accomplish in the preservation space there. We also continue to keep in touch with our market partners on our list of over 20 housing providers that are interested in doing a preservation. It is a challenging market at the moment, and with interest rates and everything, so we haven't seen a lot of opportunities come

[00:18:15] to us in the same way we've seen some of the previous acquisitions, but we are keeping a close eye. And tax credits are, I think, are more challenging than ever, because that's been one of the major sources of funding. I think those redevelopments, those preservations, is that, I know there's some county money in it, but is that the major source of the not-for-profits ability to purchase and automatically preserve sure the tax credit program is really helpful when you need to do a substantial rehabilitation and so often for acquisition it's not it would you know you'd have to kind of like be part

[00:18:51] of the whole part of the whole strategy we are looking at actually preservation of as we talked about our own assets as well because that's a really important it's you know kind of important to keep that hub obviously as a major goal looking at our own portfolio kind of almost you know first making sure everyone's living in their good conditions and updated, and then also looking at the private market. So it's not the major source, is what I heard you just say. So the county and private mortgage companies are the key elements of that? Yes. Yes, there's always a first trust mortgage, and really for a preservation opportunity, you're looking at kind of the cash flow on the property

[00:19:30] and where we would come in, and sometimes the loan requests from us are if the rents need to be further subsidized or if it's not meeting cash flow to preserve the property but typically it's a very very typical transaction in terms of the acquisition itself thank you thank you i would say hearing the questions i've had my one-on-one update on financing and housing it's probably one of the most complicated uh financing structures that we have which is why i think it took about a year and a half to hire someone but i do recommend to all my colleagues if you haven't had a chance to really sit down with Anna and Tom and their team, I probably have to

[00:20:09] go back for a refresher to try to understand all the financing as we figure out how that impacts on the federal level, the rates, and what role our investment makes in that, I think, is really helpful. Maybe there's a way we can make it easier at this level, but maybe starting with those individual presentations, because it really is quite complex.

[00:20:30] Thank you. I think we have Supervisor Lusk, and then we will move on to our next presentation. Yeah, thank you. I just wanted to ask a couple questions. Quickly on the homelessness response, we referenced the replacement to Rucker and Kennedy shelters.

[00:20:46] Just curious to know in terms of the status of the delivery for those, if there's any timelines or updates you can provide with regard to that. Supervisor Lusk, thank you for the question. A couple things on that.

[00:21:02] My understanding is that the Rucker replacement is targeted for FY 2029 is the replacement of the Rucker shelter. We do not quite have a time frame yet on, forgive me, FY 2029 is the Kennedy shelter.

[00:21:21] We do not quite, we do not yet have a time frame on Rucker. Okay, that's fine. Just curious. And then second, I wanted to ask about the repair pilot RFP for manufactured housing.

[00:21:36] So excited that we're moving this along and that it looks like you anticipate making an award this spring. Help me then extend from there. When do you anticipate applications being accepted and

then the process for probably starting some of the pilot repairs? I think we're probably looking at the summer.

[00:21:56] The summer. Okay. That's good. And then last, out of curiosity, I'm curious to know, in terms of the new production preservation, all the units that we have, do we know a number that are ownership?

[00:22:12] Do we have a number that are ownership amongst this group? So there is a small number of ownership units that have been produced under ADUs and WDUs, but all of the multifamily is rental?

[00:22:30] Correct. Would it be possible to add a designation for those that are rental versus owned? We can certainly look at that. Okay. Thank you. All right.

[00:22:45] Well, thank you so much for the questions. Thank you so much to our staff. I do also want to recognize and thank the chairman of the Planning Commission is here. As you know, today we are here talking about our subsidized housing opportunities, but know and I think they've done a really good job of sharing that we are in a housing crisis right so all kinds of housing are absolutely necessary which is what makes this work a little complicated but appreciate as we continue to work with the Planning Commission with DPD and our staff to ensure that we try to catch up with the huge needs we know there are for housing

[00:23:19] in our community and not nationwide so thank you for that and now we will move on to our presentation about improving our response to homelessness as I mentioned earlier we have Tom Barnett and chair Meyer former mayor Meyer of the continuum of care coalition I know we have they have had many meetings and have met with the advocates have had conversations and are currently going to present their response and their recommendations to the board and I do

[00:23:52] I do want to make sure we have ample time for any who may have questions on this and appreciate the work that Tom's team does to help support our homeless population that is homeless. So thank you. Good morning, and thank you for having me here today with Mr. Meyer.

[00:24:09] I'm going to start off with a few updates related to what's timely in the homeless services world and then hand it off to Mr. Meyer to explain the Continuum of Care Board's response to the NAACP's recommendations around encampment enclosures. First off, as Mr. Fleetwood mentioned, the Fair Ridge Shelter is about to open, and we're very excited about this, and we are very grateful for the board members' support, as well as the Planning Commission's vote to approve the use of the hotel.

[00:24:38] We have been preparing at the Amber Rucker space for the arrival of adults coming out of the hypothermia prevention program. We're adding almost additional 50 new beds, which is going to be the first time in 20 years for adults since the hypothermia program started. So we're very excited about that.

[00:24:55] And then come April 1st, we will start to move those adults into Rucker, moving families from multiple family shelters into the new Farage Shelter, as well as the scattered hotel rooms that we've been using as supplemental shelter space. In phase two, which will be a couple years from now, the capital improvement program is going to fund renovations, more substantial renovations to the shelter and allow for the integration of the North County domestic violence shelter into the facility as well to make sure they have a safe and secure place when they are fleeing domestic violence.

[00:25:28] Next up, we can't give any presentation these days without touching, obviously, on federal funding. We're just referencing the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, which on

January 17th, the last day of the Biden administration, announced Continuum of Care awards across the country.

[00:25:48] Fairfax County and its local grantees were awarded over \$12 million to support rapid rehousing, supportive housing, and planning grants. This is a 17% increase, almost \$2 million, in addition to cover the rapidly rising fair market rents that these programs need to pay to keep people in housing.

[00:26:08] However, HUD only committed 90% of the funding needed to support these grants when being renewed. So as a result, the funding for our lowest-ranked 25-bed permanent supportive housing project has been lost, and it will be sunseting in August.

[00:26:24] Fortunately, with our collaboration among our community partnership and using vacant spots and other supportive housing projects, we're going to ensure these individuals do not lose their housing and that they move into these vacancies before the project sunsets. Of course, that means that every one of those vacancies will not be used for individuals that were on the streets or in shelters today.

[00:26:47] We have a lot of uncertainty around when grant agreements will arrive. This award announcement in January is just the first phase. Typically, grant agreements arrive later in the year, but based on these federal or presidential executive orders, we have a great deal of uncertainty and anxiousness among our community partners about how to sustain this funding, especially if those grant agreements never do arrive.

[00:27:11] Not only do these grants support over 44 full-time equivalent positions in local nonprofits and in county staff, but also houses approximately 530 disabled individuals, domestic violence survivors and youth who have experienced homelessness.

[00:27:28] These are 18 projects overall. So the potential impact is huge to our community and poses a great threat. We have been awaiting the awards of the Continuum of Care or COC BUILDS grant program.

[00:27:44] This was a supplemental program announced last year to support more development and operation of permanent supportive housing. We understand through the continuing resolution that these funds may be repurposed and that may be doing essentially this year's business with last year's money.

[00:28:00] And so the CoC bill's money is not likely to ever appear. Beyond the specific CoC funding, we're obviously also looking at looming threats in terms of the grants and contracts being terminated as well as the reductions in force in the federal job market.

[00:28:20] Specifically around homeless services, we're already hearing anecdotal evidence of nonprofits not getting as large or as consistent donations from funders from former years or prior years. Obviously, any lost jobs could result in increased homelessness and increased demand for homeless services. So this is a looming threat. In other news, our community partnership did conduct its annual point-in-time count in January of this year. We expect the results will be, as usual, published in coordination with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments in May at their

[00:28:53] board meeting. The hypothermia prevention program ends in less than a week on March 31st. And as I mentioned, while we have always struggled with enough shelter beds for 20 years, this year is a very notable one in that we are adding almost 50 new beds for these adults coming out of hypo.

[00:29:10] And this is in part due to the Fair Ridge shelter. Finally, our panhandling survey, which the board asked us to pursue has been awarded to the Urban Institute. We expect that the survey is going to be

conducted over spring and summer and that the results will be done in late summer. This is intended, if you remember, for us to learn more about the people who are panhandling across the county, what is driving the increase, and even more importantly, what can we do to reduce panhandling, especially in dangerous areas. So this is an exciting project for us. Before I turn

[00:29:49] it over to Mr. Meyer, I wanted to highlight some of the great things that this rechartered Continuum of Care Board has done since being rechartered last year. As directed, they have been meeting monthly, not just getting oriented to their usual roles and responsibilities, but looking at their bylaws and policies to strengthen programs, to learn more about the local services, but also the gaps in the services, where are the needs currently, what are different types of innovative programs that we could implement here locally, analyzing our shelter supply and demand, identifying the gaps in services, specifically trying to find out

[00:30:26] about the youth who are attending schools and experiencing homelessness, recognizing this is a very vulnerable population that needs to be addressed. We've reviewed the federal strategic plan, formed new committees, including a strategic planning committee, and placing an emphasis on the voices of people who have experienced homelessness in Fairfax County in these discussions and as you will hear in a few seconds vetted these very important recommendations around encampment closures next up through the remainder of this year the continuum of care board with support from the county staff and from a consultant is expected to begin

[00:31:04] its inclusive community engagement and strategic planning efforts and full the solicitation was published in February the proposals were due in March and we're We're already reviewing the various proposals that were received and expecting the engagement will occur in summer and strategic planning in the fall, where the COC Board will synthesize feedback from the community, coming back to the Board of Supervisors with strategic recommendations for your consideration.

[00:31:30] And with that, I will hand it over to Mr. Meyer. Thank you, Tom, and thank you all for the opportunity to meet with you again. It's good to see all of you. I think the good news that you heard this morning from Tom is that the community, the Continuum of Care Board being reconstituted has brought together not only the representatives that each of you appointed to the board,

[00:31:57] but also a cross-section of nonprofits throughout the county who represent both geographically and different kinds of outreach services to the homeless community. And we are very excited about, we're on the cusp of beginning our strategic planning efforts, as Tom just noted.

[00:32:19] And I want to emphasize one more time, there are three elements to this that we are holding up as guiding principles. The first is, obviously, community engagement. And secondly, is ensuring that the persons who've had lived experience and who've been homeless are part of this process.

[00:32:38] And third is that the framework of what we're doing will align with the principles of One Fairfax. This is an overarching guidance for us. I want to specifically speak to the issue of encampment enclosures, which most of you are familiar with.

[00:32:56] From September of 24, we had two significant areas of the county where there were encampment enclosures, one in Ruston and one just east of the city of Fairfax. Some people called it Mantua Park.

[00:33:12] Others called it Towers Park or the Pump House Park. But it's all of the forested areas around the Fairfax County Water Authority pumping station and also between Arlington Boulevard, U.S. Route 50, and 29 near Circle Towers.

[00:33:30] When those two encampments and closures occurred, the NAACP provided the county six recommendations in response to how that went.

[00:33:47] And let me just say before that, a number of us in this community were also caught somewhat unaware of this as well because the motivation on one parcel was privately owned. And so I think communication is critical moving forward and the lesson learned on that.

[00:34:10] But anyway, there were six recommendations from the NAACP, and I'd like to quickly walk through those with you. I want to say that as soon as those recommendations were received by the county, the Continuum of Care Board devoted four meetings to these recommendations over a four-month period.

[00:34:29] In the first meeting, we asked Mary Payden to come and sit at the table with us, and we had an extensive full evening discussion about all of these recommendations. And we ask the Continuum of Care Board members to go back to their respective organizations, reflect on these recommendations, and then we would have subsequent discussions and we have drafted responses to each of them.

[00:34:55] So I'd like to walk through those six very quickly. recommendation number one from them was if an encampment must be cleared, the county should offer residents an indoor shelter with at least overnight accommodation where they can receive food and social services. And vulnerable tent campers, those who are elderly or who have mental or physical health issues, should be offered daytime shelter as well. And homeless campers must be notified as to how they can obtain alternative shelter.

[00:35:27] The board agrees with this, that shelter should be provided for individuals in an encampment before it's closed. The board recognizes that shelter bed capacity is insufficient to meet the current needs of adults experiencing homelessness, and there's a serious negative impact to individuals who, when they are forced to move without a place to go.

[00:35:58] The COC board also acknowledges that a significant increase in resources is required to shelter every adult in need and recommends that, in addition, that at a minimum the Fairfax County should utilize all available existing shelters, including floor space, to provide shelter for persons whose encampments have been closed.

[00:36:21] The use of floor space will be limited by building and fire code requirements, and the nonprofit shelters providers may need additional resources to operate the facility safely with additional guests. Basically, we acknowledge it, we agree with it, but recognize the significant constraints that all of us, all the partners face.

[00:36:45] What I'd like to do is go through all six recommendations, and I know some of you may have some comments or questions. Is that an appropriate way to proceed? The second recommendation is that the time and date of a planned removal must be announced at least two weeks in advance, both publicly in the county's website, press releases, and most especially in the tent encampments through posted notices.

[00:37:10] And the board agrees that it's important to inform residents sleeping outside, as well as the service organizations that would most likely receive them. and that, yes, more than two weeks' notice is preferred.

[00:37:27] The third recommendation is that county employees sent to clear an encampment must include co-responders. These are mental health professionals from the Community Services Board as well as officers trained in de-escalation techniques to carry out the operation without any harm to homeless persons.

[00:37:45] The board is in complete agreement, and we also want to note that this is a best practice already. So there was good alignment on that particular recommendation. Recommendation four, witnesses must be invited.

[00:38:02] These could include representatives from the National Lawyers Guild in D.C. or an attorney or representative of a civil rights group such as the NAACP. We had a lot of discussion on this point, and there are pros and cons to this recommendation.

[00:38:21] and the board finally, after about four months, concluded that they do not agree with this recommendation because the county already has several skilled individuals who would be present when the encampments are being closed. And these skilled individuals include homeless outreach and mental health professionals, as well as police officers who are trained in crisis intervention.

[00:38:47] Adding more groups to this process could become overwhelming for people involved, especially during a sensitive time. In fact, it may be preferred to have a minimum number of witnesses out of respect for the dignity of unsheltered persons and who are, at that point, experiencing a rather traumatic loss of their temporary home or their encampment.

[00:39:10] It's the opinion of the board that thoughtful and capable professionals currently participating are sufficient. The next recommendation is that homeless people who are being displaced should not be arrested.

[00:39:26] Homelessness is not a crime, and we agree. The last recommendation is that belongings of homeless persons who request should be able to put their belongings in storage for 60 days at a known location accessible by transit so the person can retrieve them at no cost.

[00:39:48] We believe that this recommendation is laudable in intent, but the practicalities of implementing this are pretty significant. These challenges include finding storage locations, that there are limited operating hours, limited space available, the storage time frames are different, and property can be lost, damaged, or stolen.

[00:40:16] And there was a survey taken of 14 cities where such programs were attempted, and those challenges that I just listed were noted in that study. So after a lot of discussion, we decided that we did not believe that recommendation had as much merit as it may appear at first glance.

[00:40:41] So those were the recommendations and our responses to that. And if there are any comments or questions about any of those, we can do that now. All right. Well, first of all, thank you so much.

[00:40:58] Tom, I don't know if you wanted to add something. Thank you so much to Tom and your team, to Chair Meyer. I know that these, and at least the encampment that was mentioned near my community has been ongoing for many, many years.

[00:41:15] And as you mentioned, straddles the city and the county line, straddles different properties, has been addressed. And it's one of the hardest things we do, right, is trying to understand how to both

support people and help them find better housing, better shelter, better support, but ensuring both their safety and the safety of residents around there.

[00:41:41] And I just want to, first of all, just commend the team, the many times that we have had Tom's team and send her team out there. I know that they go out, and I was going to ask this question, often for quite a bit of time before even the notices are posted.

[00:41:59] So I know that there is outreach that is done by our provider. So if you could provide us a little bit more information about sort of how that process works. Yes, thank you, Supervisor. The homeless outreach, it really depends on not just their eyes and ears, but those of the community as well.

[00:42:17] and we're always appreciative when we hear about people who may be sleeping outside, whether it be through your offices or through your constituents. And so many times when an encampment has been identified, we might already know about it, have been trying to engage individuals.

[00:42:34] But even if we didn't know about it, it's even better because we can engage those individuals frequently, trying to build some trust and engagement, help them come inside, whether it be shelter or housing or find some other temporary arrangement. And sometimes that requires visiting nights, mornings, all times of the day to try to find people when they're at that site.

[00:42:55] But it's also very important that we're working with the county facility staff, the police, mental health providers, so that we can communicate the expectations and what might be coming down the line, which sometimes provides good motivation to make choices that they may not have made otherwise. So yes, outreach typically occurs far before the encampment is closed.

[00:43:15] Thank you. And the only other thing I want to add, and I'll turn over to my colleagues, is that, you know, and I've really struggled with that piece of what's appropriate, right, what's appropriate as a witness, what's appropriate as a community member, and I think the piece of the privacy and of respecting the individuals and not being a trained professional and making sure that we are continuing to improve those practices, but that we are also out there.

[00:43:41] Finally, my understanding is that when we do send police, I mean, we know they have body-worn camera. Do you know, is there a practice currently as to when police are there engaging? And we know they're often there trying to bring support and safety to them. And the surrounding, we have quite a bit of lower-income community residents that live right in these areas that are also calling our offices for support.

[00:44:04] What is currently the practice of when we do have FCPD out there? And especially if they're not able to, you know, we don't have enough co-responders, if they're not able to have a co-responder with them when they go to an encampment. Sure. So leading up to the date of a closure, we are collaborating not just with the police department, but with the community services board, local nonprofit service providers, all trying to understand the timeline for their activities and communicating with each other to make sure that we're supporting each other.

[00:44:35] And the Community Services Board is an important partner here, obviously, when it comes to mental health services. Their path outreach workers are often going side-by-side with the nonprofit staff who are doing the same work, as well as the health department and their homeless health care work. So this is a very collaborative effort, and there should be no surprises as to when things occur.

[00:44:55] And we're all focused on our specific roles to keep people safe. Thank you. I would say that this discussion has a certain cogency because we're ending the season of hypothermia shelters at churches and other faith locations.

[00:45:14] And so persons are going to be back outside in increasing numbers over the next few weeks. So I'm glad that we're having this discussion today. Thank you. And I just want to add a final note.

[00:45:31] In this area specifically, we have cross-jurisdictional boundaries. We also have cross-police district boundaries. And above everything else, that continued collaboration and communication across our agencies, when that does not happen is when I've seen issues, when there has been perhaps changing of staff and of communication and community conversation.

[00:45:56] So I very much appreciate that you are here as a former mayor of the city of Fairfax, as this is a community that is our shared community, right? Whether they are on the city side or the county side, we really need to ensure that our staff and our leadership are very much in communication and coordination.

[00:46:16] We are all familiar with the MOU and the 911 Regional Response Center for EMS and fire. As I've taken over and started reconstituting the COC board, I've become much more appreciative of the cooperation between our law enforcement agencies as well.

[00:46:35] When homeless people cross from Mantua, cross Pickett Road into the city, they're oblivious to the boundaries. And the coordination between the Fairfax County Police Department and the City of Fairfax Police Department and nonprofits is very commendable.

[00:46:57] And it's something that a lot of residents, both in the county and the city, are not aware of. But I have personally been on site a number of times, and they respond in ways that are compassionate and consistent with the law.

[00:47:20] Thank you. Thank you. All right, I will turn it over to the chairman, and then I'll start on this end this time. Thank you. I'll be brief. First, thank you for reviewing the NAACP comments and over multiple meetings. I you know what I really appreciate here is let's start with the fact that we have a policy now And you know not not many jurisdictions do and the complexities of all the various agencies that have to be coordinated with here Is significant and I think well thought out and our experiences from having done this in the past. I know

[00:47:55] Contributed to that but you know, let's be clear. We had two major encampments that we cleared with compassion and with little complaint. And that only happened because a lot of foresight was given. And I use the term best practices, certainly with mental health specialists, but implementing as many things as we can that create a best practice. And in terms of the region, while we do good, really good coordination with law enforcement, hopefully others can take this policy as potential model for their jurisdictions and try to line them up as closely as possible. Because as you mentioned, when someone crosses the street who's homeless, they're oblivious. But if they're in an

[00:48:34] encampment in one of our jurisdictions, hopefully the same procedures can be followed no matter where they are so that people on both ends of the spectrum have an understanding of what the process is and what the implications are, what their rights are, and what to expect. I guess my question on recommendation number two is the two-week advance. Help me understand, you mentioned the complication of a private owner. If a private owner of property comes to the police department or to the county

[00:49:07] and demands that people be cleared for trespassing on their property immediately, what happens? And so we have kind of, I look at this as three tiers. One, you have private property and expectations of private property owners and what rights do we have to implement our policy if the private property owner is or is not cooperating. Number two, we have VDOT property, and we've run into this issue before where it's state-owned property, not county-owned property. What in the recommendation number two in terms of two-week notice gets steered by the underlying ownership of the property and [00:49:45] the expectations of the property owner? Yes, it should be noted that these policies are really only going to work for public property. When it comes to private property, they have rights as a property owner to enforce no trespassing notices and to have immediate removal if people do not honor that. So these recommendations really are on not just public, but really the county board of supervisors owned. There are wrinkles around schools versus parks and other property ownership, But the state may follow different timelines, as we've seen in prior situations.

[00:50:23] So really, this is on public property and where we have some degree of control over that. So if we have a private property owner, my hope is that we share with them these procedures and seek first their cooperation with process that we use.

[00:50:40] Because, you know, the goal of that private property owner might be to get rid of an encampment immediately. What their goal should be is to make sure we're following a well-thought-out process to try to help solve the problem long-term as opposed to take care of it that day or the next day.

[00:50:57] And so is that part of our process when that intake happens, that complaint comes in on a private property, that we work with them to try to get their agreement to allow us to implement the policy that we've thought out here? Certainly, while we cannot expect them that they must follow this policy, it is something when they call our office, we are asking them to work with us to follow the same model because we know it's successful. And lastly, when it's VDOT or state-owned property, I mean, you mentioned schools and, you know, obviously they might have a different process, but if it's a,

[00:51:31] if it involves VDOT right-of-way, are there substantial changes here that we have to implement to comply with what the state process is for their own property? We essentially follow two parallel paths, right? We respond as a human services system where we're doing homeless outreach and trying to get them help they need. And that we can do regardless of whether the state wants to move on their side on the separate parallel track as they need to decide do they want to close that site or remove the belongings that are there. And so we have extensive contacts at VDOT and other state agencies where we can try to build that collaboration.

[00:52:10] The delays tend to be them deciding when to remove belongings. They have not agreed to a two-week notice, and they don't have a sort of a strict policy there. Okay, I think that's a relationship we should continue to try to build, because one of the unintended consequences here is you move people from private property, but they just move into the right-of-way.

[00:52:33] And then you start over, and now they're in a much more dangerous, precarious location from a safety standpoint. And so I think that the safety piece of this is something that we should be emphasizing with VDOT. And then the last thing I just want to mention, I appreciate the NAACP's concern about a witness.

[00:52:52] And I absolutely agree with you that we have, you know, the best staff, best trained, ready staff to be able to deal with these issues you could possibly imagine. I guess the question is, is if the concern, if a representative of the National Lawyers Guild or some other representative from a legal standpoint, had we considered not categorizing that as a witness, but making sure that as a part of the process, people who are relocated or cleared from the facility are given a point of contact or information about those entities that they can also seek assistance through them?

[00:53:30] Or is there a middle road somewhere between protecting their privacy and also making sure that people who are getting cleared know what rights they have and other contacts that they can reach out to if they have concerns? That's a good question. The challenge oftentimes is when someone who is an observer becomes a participant, and that can happen in a minute second.

[00:53:55] And I'm not suggesting that persons who are observers sit in silence, but we would, under the best of circumstances, it should be more of a collaborative process. And I think the thought was that with a minimum of two weeks' notice, possibly more, it's not like the encampment enclosure happens on a day.

[00:54:23] It is going to happen over a period of two or three weeks, And there would be mental health professionals and other representatives present every day at the site helping them move a few at a time.

[00:54:39] And so that if a resident of the encampment had questions about their civil liberties or any other question about their rights, there could be an opportunity to help that person get connected with someone who could answer that and represent their concerns.

[00:55:06] Yeah, you know, to me it would seem like a way to meet in the middle here is maybe when we post or announce one of these coming up, if an organization wants to voluntarily put their contact information on the posting or, you know, make cards available for when we're going talking to the individuals there to hand them a card that, you know, says, hey, you can reach out to these folks if you have any concerns as well, might be a way to deal with it.

[00:55:32] Because witnessing it for them to step in, like you said, could be very problematic. but if somebody has a challenge that day that they feel like there was a legal right of theirs that wasn't honored, making sure they know that, look, feel that way. You can reach out to these folks and provide them that resource. These are not folks necessarily are going to be able to go online and find all this stuff, and so we might want to be proactively offering another entity's resource to them voluntarily if they need it as a way to meet in the middle on the witness piece.

[00:56:02] I think that's a good observation. Thank you. Yeah, and I support your position on it. I just think that access to those is what we're looking for, at least what I'm looking for, more than somebody necessarily being on the ground that day because of the privacy and other issues associated with it. And finally, I do support the recommendation you have about the storage issue. I can see why that could be a huge liability. I guess the only thing I would ask, and I don't want to put any of the groups on the spot, but if any of our nonprofits wanted to provide this opportunity to the individuals being displaced, there's nothing that would prevent them necessarily from the county side in doing that.

[00:56:39] They'll have their own liability concerns, but maybe something to explore with some of the nonprofits who might have the space and availability to do that. But I am where you are on that, and I appreciate the concern with it. The study of those 14 cities also concluded that it's pretty resource-

intensive to do that, and if you're trying to allocate resources to the most optimal, get the best results, most return for your investment, there are probably other areas where we could use those resources.

[00:57:13] I agree, and I think this would only be on a voluntary basis if one wanted to provide that to these folks. One could do that. There's nothing to prevent them from doing it, but I think it would be very problematic if we took the lead and did that. So I appreciate that. Thank you. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And while you're speaking, I was thinking today is March 25th, I believe, and so March 31st is coming upon us.

[00:57:34] So both thinking about kinds of cards that would be helpful to hand out in the community. I know CEDV has done a great new card for its outreach, but also in social media. You know, I think we know people are not oblivious.

[00:57:50] They often know where they are and what resources are available. But sharing both for our residents who also are compassionate and don't know where to call or how to get support happened this week with a business owner. Where do we turn, right? And so making sure we are capable and having a strategy to really do that outreach, that push out right now in the next coming week, that our offices and that all of our agencies and our partners can really help make sure we know when you see that someone is in need of help,

[00:58:23] whether they're in a car or on the street or in a park or on other property, that they know where to turn to for that compassionate care, I think would be very helpful. To that, I believe we'll start with Supervisor Alcorn and we'll go down the line. I do want to let my colleagues go, we want to make sure we have enough time for this conversation.

[00:58:43] So I know our staff are prepared if we need to do either a quick or a follow-up different time for our final conversation. I think we definitely want to make sure there's time for this one. So Supervisor Alcorn. Thank you. On recommendation number two, I think it's important, a couple of thoughts on this one and then the next one.

[00:59:03] I think these are consensus. I think it's important to acknowledge that there may be situations where there are things going on that would suggest that less than two weeks is appropriate, particularly where there is probably criminal activity going on, and I don't mean loitering.

[00:59:22] And I know we have seen those situations, so I just want to make sure everybody's clear that these are procedures, but they also exist in the real world. Sometimes other things happen or come up that need to be accommodated. So on number three, I think this is good on the co-responders, but I think there's a big piece that's missing here that should be emphasized proactively. And some of this is based on the resident experience.

[01:00:01] You know, in the right circumstances, this can happen without using our police department, without using law enforcement of any type, but frankly, as a community response, in particular with the leadership of our nonprofits, advocacy groups, churches.

[01:00:27] So I think there is a precursor to number three. It's maybe the positive side, which is we should work to actively engage nonprofits, the community, churches, advocacy groups, whoever that's interested in this to basically have a plan and to engage them in a plan to get folks to shelter in a better situation.

[01:00:59] And I think there's a piece to that, too, that I know is not easy, and I know we were talking about witnesses and that kind of thing. But there also needs to be a way for the community to help the community at large.

[01:01:14] So we need to give people a direction that if they care about this and they want to help, we need to be able to provide them an opportunity to do that. And a lot of times that's not us necessarily as Fairfax County, maybe our nonprofit partners, other groups in the community.

[01:01:34] And I think what we've found here, and I want to compliment county staff for doing this, I think what we've found is a model that is led by compassion that, frankly, you know, we're not putting out press releases.

[01:01:52] We're not, you know, basically saying we're the best in the world. But honestly, we're dealing with this in a way that compares incredibly favorably with some of our neighbors and other jurisdictions around the country. So let's build on that.

[01:02:07] I mean, let's don't hide it. But on the other hand, let's build on that and make sure we include those proactive measures in there as well because they can be effective. And then I'm not going to ask about this now, but I do at some point want to come back to the discussion about permanent supportive housing and, you know, the grant that we didn't get and make sure that we do have a long-term plan for how we're going to pay for particularly the wraparound services associated with permanent supportive housing.

[01:02:40] That's maybe a discussion for another meeting, but that's, I know, incredibly important. So thank you. Absolutely. I thought you were going to discuss our very, very effective hypothermia shelter program, which is that partnership, right, between our faith communities and our nonprofits and our community members.

[01:02:57] I got to visit one I hadn't visited recently, and a family that's been helping run it for many, many years. So I think there's a great opportunity there, and we know that our faith community members are definitely looking for more ways to give back right now. Let me turn it over to Chris Leonard, and then we'll come back to our colleagues.

[01:03:14] Just real quick, Chris Leonard, Deputy County Executive, I just wanted to make sure, very clear, especially for a community that is watching from home, on your two-week notice, that is preferred. That is what we shoot for. That's part of our protocols. We do have the ability to waive it, and we have waived it in the past.

[01:03:31] So if we do find public safety, we work with our public safety partners in that. So we do have that ability to waive it, and we have done that in the past. I just wanted to make sure that was clear. Thank you. Thank you. Safety first. So we appreciate that. I'm going to keep going down the line, Supervisor Stork, and if you could try to be efficient for all of us, I will also do the same.

[01:03:52] Sure. I think the core here is prevention. I think we all recognize that. I think that's why we're looking to add more money and dollars to this. I think the challenge, from my perspective, is having a policy and then implementing and executing it consistent with the policy.

[01:04:10] particularly when it comes to minimizing larger-scale encampments because we know that that can happen particularly if we don't address the issue early enough and and that's as I know some of

the folks here know how to well that's a conversation that we had four or five years ago put together I thought a good policy a compassionate policy one that reasonably worked but the challenges in executing it because there's so many other elements to it I mean it's here and it's not noticed for a while, or it's over here, and we talk to the person, and then they're gone for a day or two, then they come back, and how do you get a hold of them?

[01:04:47] How do you work with them? How do you? So for me, the focus is on how do we execute this in a way that's consistently at a higher level, not that we're not going to have challenges or problems or mistakes. I'm not here about that. But to me, the issue is how do we prevent, you know, one or two individuals and encampments becoming something much more than that, which really has a major impact then on all of us.

[01:05:11] So that would be what I would ask you all to take a look at and frankly have some system for making sure that somebody owns it, number one. I mean, and I know, Tom, it's not just you. It's really because I know this process is one that cuts across all of our elements, all of our agencies. So it's not ever going to be just one. But I would look for somebody to have kind of

[01:05:35] ownership, I would also have education internally within the county about what and how people who notice something, how they should report it, whether it's the supervisor's office, because, again, the work that we've done with you all over the last four years, we have a policy that I know is a lot of it is right here, and this is great, and look forward to having a county-wide policy, but it's really, the challenge is doing all that.

[01:05:58] And then the last point, I wanted to give Cameron Wilds a shout-out, Rising Hope. I don't know if you're familiar with Rising Hope. Anybody on the Richmond Highway Corridor knows the work that they've done for years, and before then, Kerry Kincannon. A couple points that he made about this presentation.

[01:06:14] He said that we should explore ways to expand the hypothermia model, making it easier for nonprofits and faith communities to use their buildings for overnight care. And his argument is that, you know, when we open up the hypothermia, the number of people who aren't housed goes down dramatically.

[01:06:34] Maybe there's some kind of system that we have when we see increases in homelessness that we could pull in and bring up. I know we have overflow and other things, but in my mind, let's take a look at that. I know we have about 300 people on a nightly basis that aren't housed, and maybe there's a way of, and I know not all of them necessarily want it.

[01:06:52] Maybe in the middle of winter they do. So I'm looking at how do we kind of address that and make that, again, more of an open and closed kind of, I mean, not open and closed, but expanding and, you know, reducing based upon the needs that exist.

[01:07:09] So thank you all very much. Thank you, Supervisor Stork. Supervisor Walkinshaw. Thank you. Um, just, just one point that I always have to remind myself of, um, there isn't a Fairfax County homelessness, homelessness issue, right?

[01:07:26] It's, it is a regional and national issue. And I say that I was at one of the hypothermia shelters last night. And when you talk to the guests there, you learn the obvious thing that, that we all know that yes, there are some folks who had housing in Fairfax County recently and lost it for whatever reason.

There are also a lot of folks talking to a young woman who recently came to the region from Illinois and made her way to one of our shelters last night, presumably for the

[01:07:59] remainder of the week. And I say that not to suggest we don't have responsibility to care for and serve folks who are physically located in Fairfax County. I say that to point out Our regional work on this is just really critical because if we're expanding shelter capacity, whether it's through hypothermia or permanent shelter capacity, and others in the region aren't, are not, then we're not going to make progress.

[01:08:30] Any new bed that we open will be filled the next day if the region doesn't seriously address this. And I always have to remind myself of this because I get wrapped up in the numbers. How many people are in Fairfax County? Point in time count. So how many beds do we need? But the reality is we can't meet that regional need no matter how many beds we produce.

[01:08:50] And then a lot has great comments been made about the encampments. And thank you, Chair Meyer, for your work on that. I just want to go all the way back to the panhandling survey. and the county executive knows I've been pushing on this for several years and I know others have as well.

[01:09:10] I just want to make sure I understood you, Tom. The Urban Institute is conducting the survey and developing recommendations or they're conducting the survey and you will develop recommendations.

[01:09:27] How is that going to work? And I followed closely Prince William County's efforts And they started going down some of the paths that had been suggested here at this table. And I think they thought it was going to work. And once they started going into the details, it turns out they don't think it's going to work anymore.

[01:09:44] So it is a hard nut to crack. But how is that process going to work between the Urban Institute and you? Because I think it would be great to have somebody really look nationally at what are some strategies that could help. Well, one of the reasons that we are contracting with the Urban Institute is that there are track record in producing authoritative data, doing high-quality studies, and producing sort of national-level recommendations.

[01:10:10] I imagine us working with them, letting their recommendations stand, but also staff may add additional things based on what we are finding works around the nation. Okay, great. Perfect. Thank you. I should say we will need your help all of the board members to help identify these hot spots. We've worked with Department transportation and the police department Suspect you won't have a hard time telling telling us where those are that we have a lot of medians and intersections We're also interested if there are other locations such as shopping areas, etc. Great. Thank you Thank you supervisor Lusk and then Jimenez. Yes, thank you very much

[01:10:49] Madam Chairman, I'll start by saying I appreciate the policy and appreciate the background and the work of the COC committee. Thank you very much for analyzing each of the recommendations and providing the responses that you did. I just want to hearken back to some points that Supervisor Alcorn made, and I just appreciate the responsibility to have a more humane response, to be sensitive to the situation that the individuals are in through no fault of their own.

[01:11:16] And I think that's really, foundationally, where we should be. And I appreciate that that is the policy, that is the framework that we've kind of identified. On recommendation three, when we do the co-

response model, I just wanted to be clear.

[01:11:34] I know we're talking about mental health professionals as it is currently in the co-response model, but I acknowledge that a lot of the individuals that we're serving have co-occurring issues. So it's both the mental health and substance abuse. So how do we handle that other side of the equation for these individuals?

[01:11:53] Sure. So the Community Services Board, as I mentioned, is a very important partner here. And they serve people experiencing both things under the banner of behavioral health, whether it be substance use or mental illness. And that is important because they're often co-occurring.

[01:12:10] Okay. Appreciate hearing that. That makes sense. And I thought that. And then on the side of those, I'm just thinking how loud, but we will have some residents who have pets. What is the program and process for helping those who have needs for housing when they're homeless and they have a pet?

[01:12:31] Sure, and this is something you'll hear nationally as a barrier for folks entering shelter. I would say it doesn't seem to be as prevalent as what I've heard in other communities. that we do have some strong relationships with the animal shelter program and they have sort of a respite care i don't remember the exact name but that helps for people that may need a temporary place for their pets to stay we also try to explore whether they are service animals or even emotional support animals out of compliance with fair housing act and the americans with disabilities act and so we're trying to to do all these things trying to manage their housing plan and it may

[01:13:08] involve a temporary stay for their pet with somebody else. But the goal would be where possible to have the pet and the owner to be able to reside in the same place. That is the ideal goal. Of course, our shelters are limited in space and often in congregate settings where there's adults only. And so things like allergies, all those sorts of pet care issues or something we face. But when people move into housing, that is perfectly easy. Okay. No, appreciate that. And then last, I wanted to ask a question on slide five, which dealt with the report with Fairfax County

[01:13:47] Public Schools on the homeless school-age population. So just if you could help me, what is the current situation with the school-age homeless population? How many are there? And then help me understand what is our protocol, what's our process to support and help those kids? Because oh my gosh, my heart's breaking just to think about this for those young people. So what do we do when we have that situation? Sure. So it's our most important partner is the school's homeless liaisons office. They have a very strong office that helps ensure that children can continue to

[01:14:25] go to their home school and get all sorts of support like tutoring and school supplies while they're experiencing homelessness. They do a lot of transportation to ensure those kids can go to homeschool, or if they choose the school closest to the shelter. In terms of how the schools count homelessness, we've talked in the past about the different definitions federally between Department of Education and HUD, and we don't need to go down that road, but they do count over the course of an entire school year the number of people that are experiencing homelessness. Most folks may be doubled up, living in the houses of others due to economic reasons, hotels, and that's why the

[01:15:05] support to keep the kids in school is so important. And so many of the first referrals to homeless services come out of the schools. School counselors, social workers, the liaison's office will identify that a family is experiencing or at risk of homelessness. So there are partners from the prevention

to the ending of homelessness throughout the entire process. Okay. And then, I'm sorry, I'm just thinking about this out loud, we'll have young people who are in college who might also be homeless.

[01:15:35] So when school breaks and they can't stay in their housing on campus, how are we dealing with that? That is not something that we've explored greatly, but it's something we've heard anecdotal reports about, that during winter break, for example, a student may not have a place to go.

[01:15:53] That's something we can explore more with the schools. My understanding is they are often finding temporary accommodations with family, friends, doormates during those periods. It is an issue to what extent, we don't know. Okay.

[01:16:08] Yeah. We will follow up on that. That's a very interesting question and we have had a brief discussion on that, but we need to focus more on that, so thank you. Yes, sir. I will also just want to let you know that some of you may know this.

[01:16:23] My wife taught in Fairfax County Public Schools for over 20 years, she retired two years ago, she had firsthand experience with students who were experiencing homelessness um she taught chemistry fairfax high school well there was i do you mind if i take a moment this uh this one student wasn't doing his lab work and she said is there you know i noticed you haven't been doing your lab work but i i don't have a place to do it can you tell me more about that and there were no children and there were no other students in the room at the time and he said well i'm i'm

[01:17:00] living alone by myself where I'm sleeping on the floor of a barbershop in the back room of a barbershop. This man's letting me sleep there. Of course, when he said that, that immediately triggered her. She was trained. She understood that she immediately got services engaged within an hour, and he had a place to stay that night. So she had firsthand experience with this, And many teachers in our system do, and there is a framework for them to address that.

[01:17:40] But it just keeps coming and keeps coming every day. And so schools are doing a really commendable job in the face of horrific challenges. Thank you.

[01:17:58] I'll turn over to Supervisor Jimenez. I'm going to submit my questions and make this a lot easier and quicker on everyone. I just have a really quick comment. In our proposed budget, we have cuts to services, case management services. That, to me, is one of the foundations of alleviating the folks that are in our shelters because the idea is that there's different steps.

[01:18:22] And in these different steps, the idea is openings, right? So at some point, we have new openings because folks have moved on, hopefully, which is the goal. Without case management services, that won't happen, and that is a big problem. So I just want to state that. Thank you. Thank you, Supervisor Jimenez.

[01:18:40] Not seeing additional questions. I also want to very much thank the chair for the presentation. I will add that I think we're at a time when we talk about housing and the needs. It has changed so much that the whole region, I believe COG said, needs an additional 75,000 units by 2030.

[01:19:03] 75% of that should be in activity in transit centers and 75% affordable to low- and middle-income households. We know, as our region has grown, keeping up with the demand for housing upstream of getting to the homelessness issue is critical.

[01:19:21] So I think as we have this conversation and we focus both on the needs of the affordable housing, permanent supportive housing, shelters, that we know we need to keep that in perspective of the needs of housing, 30 to 50-year-olds have been leaving our region because it's no longer feasible to live here, to have a family here.

[01:19:42] So I hope and I know that we as a board take that very seriously as we look at all kinds of development and projects in our county. So thank you to that. We have about six minutes. I'm going to turn to Mr. Fleetwood to see if he would like to address the next topic.

[01:20:01] Madam Chairman, I think it would be best handled if we offered individual briefings to your colleagues here in the coming months here, so rather than trying to do it really quickly here.

[01:20:16] That sounds wonderful. I think you're hearing our stomach rumble, and I appreciate that it's a very big topic, especially I think if you have a housing redevelopment or rezoning that's coming along, It's been really helpful, I know, for my team and myself to communicate in our planning commission with the staff as they've been developing these recommendations.

[01:20:37] So to that, yes, Mr. Meyer? As the chair of the COC board, I am willing to meet with any of you individually if that would be helpful. Thank you. We very much appreciate that. With that, our meeting is adjourned.



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