

JOINT CITY-ACPS FACILITIES MASTER PLAN (JFMP)

September/October 2020 Online Community Engagement Follow-up

Following the September 14 – October 11 online community engagement opportunity, the joint City-ACPS project team summarized common themes that emerged from the feedback received (shown below). As with all planning processes, comments and questions received from the community are posted to the [project website](#) verbatim and will be presented to City Council and the School Board for their consideration.

- Respondents to the online engagement totaled 319; 1200+ open ended comments across respondents.

High-Level Themes of Feedback Received

- Limit growth and density
- Prioritize green and open space
- Prioritize schools as single-use sites to allow for growth and outdoor space; concern with collocating other uses on school sites, especially affordable housing
- Improve communication regarding the JFMP
- Provide more examples of colocation of affordable housing

Based on the feedback received, the project team would like to take this opportunity to provide some clarification on the origin and intent of this planning process:

Purpose of JFMP

- Origin:
 - The JFMP was one of 16 recommendations of the [Ad Hoc Joint City-Schools Facility Investment Task Force](#) established by [City Council Resolution 2775](#) and, of those recommendations, was the top priority of both City Council and the School Board as [documented during two joint work sessions](#). The Task Force, School Board, and City Council recognized the magnitude of the need for investment in the City's infrastructure and public facilities – across a spectrum that includes schools, transportation, public safety, human services, affordable housing, and more – which can compete with each other for scarce funding. Because the magnitude of the need is great, efficiency in delivery is essential. Joint planning gives Alexandria the best chance of achieving the most efficient delivery of these needed projects.
 - Funding for joint planning, specifically the JFMP, has been included in the City's and ACPS' FY 2019 Capital Improvement Program
 - Throughout the 34 community meetings held by the Task Force, a major theme of discussions was the importance of “jointness” in City/ACPS service delivery and facility planning.
- Intent:
 - At the direction of the City Council and School Board, the JFMP will serve to guide and provide context for future City and ACPS decision-making and planning with respect to public facilities. It will:
 - Provide a high level view of facility needs to help prioritize the most urgent and, when a facility project is pursued, the City and ACPS can together engage in thoughtful project design and planning as well as take advantage of opportunities to bundle projects for efficiency in execution;

configurations at a high level. They are conducted several years prior to the anticipated launch of a capital project and assist with cost estimating and scheduling ahead of the design process. As with the Jefferson Houston and Patrick Henry modernizations, the feasibility studies are also informing the potential need for swing space to accommodate students during construction.

As a result of discussion at a joint City Council and School Board work session and subsequent City and ACPS staff discussions in the fall of 2019, exploration of colocation of affordable housing on school sites began, particularly in regard to the modernization of Douglas MacArthur and the new High School Project. Exploration of collocating affordable housing on the George Mason and Cora Kelly school sites was never the intent or purpose of the studies, but something requested of the architect to explore following these discussions in the fall.

No decisions, designs or programs related to these modernization projects is decided at the feasibility study stage. A full community process will be launched at the time these projects enter the design phase to allow for input from all stakeholders.

- *Affordable Housing* – Despite the City’s affordable housing goals and initiatives, between 2000 – 2019, approximately 19,000 units of market-affordable rental housing were lost due to market forces and rent increases. During the same 19-year period, median regional incomes increased by 46% while the average cost to rent a 2-bedroom apartment in Alexandria increased by 122% and residential assessments increased by 191%. The City’s investment in affordable housing is critical in providing affordable housing resources to its residents.
 - The City continues to implement the 2013 [City of Alexandria Housing Master Plan](#) goal of preserving or developing 2,000 units with new affordability by 2025 through enhanced land use planning and housing policies, public/ private and nonprofit partnerships, increased leverage of City financial investment, and incentives to secure additional affordable housing through the development process. In 2020, the City endorsed COG's Regional Housing Initiative, which increases the City's target by an additional 2,250 affordable and workforce housing units by 2030.
 - The Office of Housing's strategy to meet the City's affordable housing needs includes exploring opportunities to colocate affordable housing on ACPS sites and other city facilities, when feasible. Meeting the goals of the Housing Master Plan does not depend solely on colocation of affordable housing on ACPS and City-owned sites, of course, but is viewed as an efficient approach to potentially maximize the use public land and funding resources in neighborhoods of opportunity to meet one of the community's greatest needs. Colocation was included as a strategy to facilitate the development of affordable housing in the 2013 [City of Alexandria Housing Master Plan](#).
 - In Alexandria affordable housing is funded, built, and preserved through local tax dollars, state and federal funding, federal tax credit program, partnerships with non-profit housing developers, and private builders.

More information on affordable housing in Alexandria can be found as well as examples of the colocation of affordable housing with public facilities can be found on the [JFMP project webpage](#).