Our Why: Solving for the Need

In the District alone, despite minimum wage being $15 – it would take 88 work hours per week to afford a two-bedroom rental, and even higher numbers in Maryland and Virginia at 102 and 130 work hours, respectively. We are all too familiar with the impacts of rising rents and stagnant wages within our communities, which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis. Faced with this growing challenge, HAND recognizes that we must work in concert as a region to create communities where everyone can thrive, regardless of income level. The Housing Indicator Tool (HIT) is a resource intended to track local efforts to produce affordable rental housing in the Washington Region. We hope that by tracking local action from a regional lens, the HIT will yield more housing options, and facilitate cross-jurisdictional collaboration and participation from private and philanthropic organizations.

To adequately address our region's affordable housing challenges, an Urban Institute report calls for the production of **375,000 net new housing** units between 2015 and 2030, **39% of which should be affordable to middle-income households, and 38% affordable to low-income households.**

The targets used in the tool were produced by the Urban Institute, but are benchmarked to locally produced demographic forecasts generated as part of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's cooperative forecast. This is important because it means we are not dealing with new information. The tool is using what we already know: there is a severe shortage of housing affordable to low- and middle-income households. Thousands of homes will be needed in the coming decade in these price ranges. The HIT not only demonstrates how the region is collectively faring, but also how things are progressing at the local level. Equipped with the knowledge of where we stand in each jurisdiction, we can effectively pivot to increase the housing supply and create a more equitable region.

Have we seen a tool of this kind developed here in the region?

The HIT is the first-of-its-kind. To date, there has not been a tool like this within our region. Other affordable housing data tools provide information from several sources, but the data does not always capture the full picture of what is occurring within a given year. Additionally, many communities track their affordable housing data over time and display it in wide ranges of annual, bi-annual or five-year reports specific to one jurisdiction. The combination of data from ten local jurisdictions within our region differentiates the HIT from other similar resources.

Key Findings from the HIT

All of the jurisdictions still have a considerable amount of work to do to reach the housing targets, particularly for housing affordable to low-and lowest-income households. This is not something they can do individually; rather it will be critical to have private-sector and philanthropic partners at the table.

- No jurisdiction is meeting all of the targets for the middle-income and below categories.
- There are a few instances of meeting a specific income band target (1: DC – low 2019 *130%;* 2: Arlington – low-middle 2019 *102%* & 2020 *95%*).
- Five jurisdictions are meeting specific income band targets (1: Alexandria – low-middle 2019 *60%* & 2020 *70%*; 2: Montgomery County – middle 2019 *66%* & 2020 *46%*; 3: DC – low – 2020 *52%*; 4: Frederick County – low-middle 2019 *57%*; 5: Loudoun County – low-middle 2019 *49%*).
- DC is leading the way in the low income band and produced the largest number of units in the lowest income band.
- Arlington is leading the way in the low-middle income band.
- Alexandria is also performing well in the low-middle income band.
- Montgomery County is performing well in the middle income band.

Before jumping into the HIT, we invite you to read *Compounding Interests, Compounding Inequities: Racism, Housing, and Our Region's Responsibility to Act*. This companion piece provides key context to support the jurisdictional data, highlights on successful models and more. The HIT will allow users to access each jurisdiction's progress and the resources you need to engage decision makers.

Compounding Interests, Compounding Inequities:
Racism, Housing, and Our Region's Responsibility to Act

Housing Indicator Tool: A Dashboard for Measuring
Progress Towards Meeting Regional Housing Needs