



Housing Leaders Group
of Greater Washington
housingleadersgroup.org

Housing Leaders Group of Greater Washington Progress Report: July 2019

The Housing Leaders Group of Greater Washington (HLG) – a collection of more than a dozen public and private sector leaders concerned about housing affordability – has been meeting since 2014 to examine: 1) the nature of the affordable housing shortage in the Greater Washington region; 2) the relationship of housing affordability to economic growth; and 3) strategies to increase affordable housing for low- and moderate-income households in the region. The co-conveners are **Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers, Enterprise Community Partners, Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, The Community Foundation of the National Capital Region, and Citi Community Development.**

The Challenge

A key finding of a 2014 Urban Institute/Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments study concluded that 250,000 low- or moderate-income households, including 150,000 rental, are severely cost-burdened in the Greater Washington region (paying more than 50% of their gross income on housing costs).

Moreover, 2015 projections from the Center for Regional Analysis at George Mason University show a need for the region to accommodate projected job growth and demographic changes that will bring an expected 149,000 new low-income households to the region by 2023. Many of these new households will work in lower wage jobs in retail, hospitality, healthcare, and construction. The report notes this “...shows a significant increase in the need for low-income housing, especially rental housing.”

The lack of housing affordability is a serious challenge to the region’s quality of life and a deterrent for businesses to locate or grow in the region.

The Solution

The Housing Leaders Group works to elevate the visibility of, and broaden support for bold, thoughtful solutions for the housing affordability challenge by engaging multiple, regional stakeholders to collaborate in new ways. Targeted sectors include philanthropy, local government, state governments, housing developers, employers and business trade organizations, housing research and policy organizations, as well as social service providers, the faith community, and financial institutions.

Based on our examination of the regional landscape thus far, strategies with the most potential for solving the problem are: Reducing costs; Increasing availability of capital; and Updating and innovating land use planning.

Key efforts completed or underway include:

- Launching the Capital Region Housing Challenge, a regional effort to secure one billion dollars of new capital commitments for housing affordability. New capital will be counted above current baseline levels, with equal goals of \$500 million in private sector commitments, and \$500 million in new public commitments, by December 2020.
- In 2018, HLG culminated a 16-month Regional Impact Series of cross-sector dialogues among dozens of public and private leaders and stakeholders, affirming four defined capital, best practice, and communications and engagement solutions to meet regional housing affordability demand through partnerships, public, and private actions.
- Providing programming, speakers, and data to support HAND annual conferences on issues relevant across the DC Metropolitan area, especially regarding the current and future demand for greater housing affordability, political will, and action at the scale of need.
- Organized with Enterprise Community Partners a working forum on *Expanding/Leveraging Local Housing Trust Funds and Doing Development Beyond Local Capital Subsidy*. Panels representing local financial institutions, government, developers and policy leaders identified ways to maximize local capital for housing affordability.
- Participating in the Roadmap for the Washington Region’s Future Economy, which seeks to make the Greater Washington region more economically competitive in the face of declining federal spending
- Supporting Leadership Greater Washington’s ongoing member curriculum on housing affordability, including the 2016-17 Thought Leadership series dedicated to this topic, held in partnership with Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers.
- Briefing local government officials on the housing affordability challenge and potential solutions, and weighing in on public policy decisions that hold promise to increase availability of affordable housing.

Participating Organizations

2030 Group

Bernstein Management Corporation

Citi Community Development

Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development

Community Development Network of Maryland

Community Foundation for National Capital Region

Enterprise Community Partners

George Mason University Center for Regional Analysis

Housing Association of Nonprofit Developers

Leadership Greater Washington

Metropolitan Washington Bankers Group

Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments

Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance

United Way of the National Capital Area

Urban Institute

Urban Land Institute

Washington Regional Association of Grantmakers

Resources

A Guidebook for Increasing Housing Affordability in the Greater Washington Region – Lisa Sturtevant, Ph.D. and sponsored by the Housing Leaders Group, 2017.

"**Much ado about homelessness overlooks much bigger issue of affordable housing**" - *Washington Post*, June 2016. <https://goo.gl/nAcP4B>

Call the Question: Will the Greater Washington Region Collaborate and Invest to Solve Its Affordable Housing Shortage? – Richard Cohen, sponsored by the Housing Leaders Group, 2015. <http://goo.gl/vez8z5>