

amazon in arlington

What to Know

about housing

Amazon's decision to establish a major new headquarters in Arlington means thousands of new jobs and an improving and diversifying economy. Over time, the project will bring the revenue and resources [to help fund long-term growth in schools, housing and transportation options](#).

Housing affordability is an already existing challenge across the area. Amazon's impending arrival comes as the region is intensifying its efforts [to increase housing capacity and making more investments in affordable housing](#) through actions such as creating committed affordable units (CAFs) and preserving market-rate affordable units.

As an important County priority, Arlington has strong existing commitments to funding and supporting efforts to [create, protect and preserve housing affordability](#). These efforts will be bolstered by revenues generated from Amazon's new presence in our community.

By the numbers

- Combined, Arlington and the City of Alexandria project investment of at least [\\$150 million](#) in housing over the next decade, resulting in the creation and preservation of [2,000 to 2,400 affordable and work force units](#). Of this, Arlington is projecting [\\$7M per year for 10 years with the goal of creating 1,000 units of affordable housing](#) in and around the project area. The \$7M annually is a share of the anticipated Countywide affordable housing investment.
- Arlington currently has nearly [2,000 committed affordable rental units in developments](#) in the pipeline (units coming online, under construction, being renovated, approved awaiting financing, and in the planning process for County Board consideration in 2019).
- In terms of all residential units, Arlington currently has [4,000 units under construction](#), Alexandria has 3,800 and Northern Virginia has a total of 115,000 in the development pipeline.
- In Arlington's transit corridors, established plans call for tens of thousands of additional residential units over time, offering a [range of new housing options](#).
- Only [15%–20% of Amazon workers are expected to live in Arlington](#), with 80%–85% living in other jurisdictions in the region.
- A George Mason University analysis says any housing cost increases would be [well within the expected gains](#) the area had been planning to accommodate, even before Amazon's announcement.

A solid foundation for growth

- Arlington County is committed to policies and programs that [preserve and produce housing for all](#) segments of the community, including those not adequately supplied by the market.
- The Affordable Housing Master Plan (AHMP), adopted in 2015, enables Arlington to respond to the [current and future needs of residents of all levels of income in the County](#). The plan's affordable housing policy is organized around the goals of having an adequate supply of housing, ensuring that all segments of the community have access to housing, and having our housing efforts contribute to a sustainable community.

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- While market forces have diminished the supply of market-rate affordable units, Arlington County's sustained commitment to housing affordability has steadily increased the number of CAFs. The current inventory of [more than 8,000 CAF units](#) has created stability for the families living in these homes.
- As with all qualifying development, new commercial development that comes online to accommodate Amazon will include [corresponding developer contributions](#) to the Affordable Housing Investment Fund (AHIF), Arlington County's main financing program for affordable housing. There are several provisions in place to ensure that affordable housing benefits accompany market-rate housing development.
- Arlington County has a recently established Housing Conservation District to [protect market-rate affordable housing in 12 areas](#) through zoning and financial tools to incentivize continued housing affordability in these locations. Specific tools and an implementation timeline are anticipated to be discussed with the community in 2019. Arlington Ridge/Long Branch Creek, which is near the proposed Amazon headquarters, is one of the areas.

Opportunities for new solutions

- The County is working with state, regional, and local partners to leverage County funds and [identify new and creative ways to collaborate on cross-cutting efforts](#). Possibilities include providing matching funds for homeownership opportunities through public-private partnerships, or working with businesses or individuals to help fund or sponsor specific affordable housing projects.
- The County will continue to coordinate with nonprofit (and for-profit) housing providers to create and preserve housing opportunities for Arlingtonians, as well as to provide critical services to low-income households. As one example, JBG SMITH recently created an [independently governed non-profit, the Washington Housing Conservancy \(WHC\)](#).
- WHC is part of JBG SMITH's Washington Housing Initiative and WHC, along with other non-profit and for-profit providers, could help Arlington preserve market-rate affordable housing as well as [create new housing opportunities for low-income households](#).