

Agenda (see [presentation slides](#) for additional detail)

Background

- Overarching Objective
- Blacksburg's Goals for Affordable Housing & Green Building
- Alignment with Comprehensive Plan and Climate Action Plan
- Citizen-identified Challenges and Priorities
- Growing Affordability Challenges
- Terminology: Income-Levels & Housing Affordability
- Housing Trends in Blacksburg
- Impediments to Low and Moderate Income Housing
- Affordability Challenges
- Population Growth Projections
- Density & Development Patterns
- College Town Housing Market
- Jobs/Housing Imbalance
- VT Enrollment Growth
- Development & Redevelopment
- Clear Guidelines Needed for Developers & Decision Makers

Roles & Responsibilities

- Town of Blacksburg
- Virginia Center for Housing Research
- Community and Stakeholder Team

Timeline & Process

- Detailed timeline at: <https://tinyurl.com/buildingbetterblacksburg>
- Phase 1: Initial Logistics & Engagement (April – Dec 2018)
- Phase 2: Scoping & Strategy Development (Sept 2018 – June 2019)
- Phase 3: Intensive Engagement & Policy Development (April – Aug 2019)
- Phase 4: Policy Refinement & Revisions (Aug 2019 – Feb 2020)

Citizen Comments, Questions & Discussion:

- Why are we not requiring developers to do set-asides for affordable housing, i.e., pursuing a mandate-based path? Other communities have gotten carve-out enabling legislation. We should pursue this. BBB Project Team response: We can do both/and. Statewide enabling legislation of this type hasn't gotten out of committee in the Virginia General Assembly so far, and the GA has been increasingly reluctant to allow enabling legislation that is carved out for a single jurisdiction. Pursuing a voluntary set of incentives tied to standards for affordable housing and green building is a more certain path for us at this time.
- Has the project team considered the importance of including public transportation as a critical facet of housing affordability? BBB Project Team response: Yes, transportation options and access are definitely considered integral to this work and a critical facet of overall housing cost/affordability.

- Energy efficiency is also a critical and neglected facet of housing affordability – it directly impacts unit affordability, particularly in colder months and is so often a neglected means of improving housing stock both for affordability and durability, not to mention health and safety.
- Are folks aware of the announcement of the 1901 group – some sort of computer group? This will create even more demand for housing (800+ jobs, young professional target).
- Population increases are going to mean that housing pressure is going to continue to grow in Blacksburg. This is resulting in concentric waves of poverty, the people least able to afford long commutes are living the farthest away.
- Don't forget that regional approaches to public transportation is a critical need.
- There are many identified obstacles and impediments to creating and retaining low and moderate income housing in the community (land cost, land availability, student housing competition, lack of density incentives, lack of creative design, lack of subsidized funding, lack of community support, community concerns over student housing and/or density). Will this process be effective if it can't address all of these challenges?
- Include BT as a stakeholder to integrate public transit considerations as a part of overall policy development.
- Concern expressed about custodial and maintenance staff at VT – make sure they're not boxed out – many are living in WV and driving in. Do you mean to include this set of the workforce when you're working on housing affordability? We can't just focus on affordability for young professionals, families, and retirees. We need to make sure service, maintenance, and other low-wage workers are taken care of too.
- People are using affordable housing units for game-day housing. How can we address this?
- First responders can't afford to live in the Town that they're supposed to police; on the other hand, police often choose to live outside the community they police.
- In general, working class folks can't afford to live in the communities they serve.
- Could the Town do something to give a thumbs up for detached accessory dwelling units? BBB Project Team (and TC member) response: The Town was uncertain how the accessory dwelling unit ordinance would work, or if it would result in some unintended consequences. At the time of passage, Council thought it would be prudent to allow for a phased implementation, allowing attached ADUs first, then assessing effectiveness and impact, then returning to the ordinance to see if detached ADUs might also make sense.