

[Email livableville@gmail.com if your organization/group would like to sign on to this letter or if you have any questions.]

Dear City Council,

We are writing to support a zoning code that embodies the city's commitments to racial and economic equity, environmental justice, and a more accessible Charlottesville. Zoning is a key to addressing our housing crisis. The city's Affordable Housing Plan calls for a "ladder of housing opportunity," which translates into a zoning code that allows a wide range of housing types and robust investment in affordable housing. The zoning code you are considering is an historic accomplishment and a major step forward for Charlottesville putting its values into action.

Charlottesville's affordable housing crisis has accelerated in recent years, disproportionately impacting Black and Brown community members, displacing low-income residents, and forcing more people into homelessness. Furthermore, the high cost of housing has forced many teachers, firefighters, nurses, bus drivers, and many other community helpers to live outside the community they serve. We need your courage to prioritize the people most impacted by the affordable housing crisis so Charlottesville can be a vibrant city with all kinds of housing for all kinds of people in all kinds of places.

We support the following elements of the zoning code in front of you and request you maintain or strengthen them:

- 1) The Core Neighborhood zoning district and Core Neighborhood Corridor Overlay as tools to prevent displacement and encourage neighborhood-friendly development in and near the Core Neighborhoods.
- 2) Allowing more housing outside of Core Neighborhoods to address racial equity, expand housing opportunities, and improve school integration and outcomes. This includes
 - a) Maintaining R-B and R-C areas
 - b) Adding affordable housing height bonuses of 45' in R-A/R-B and 65' in R-C.
 - c) Keeping Planning Commission recommendations for density, height, and affordable housing bonuses in more intense areas
 - d) Maintain, or increase, current building footprint maximums in R-A/R-B/R-C zones to ensure a wide range of housing types are feasible
- 3) Zoning tools that will help the city reach its climate action goals and promote a healthy, accessible, enjoyable, and environmentally friendly city. These include legalizing more housing types near workplaces and essential services, eliminating parking requirements, and allowing neighborhood scale commercial uses in all zones. Over time these measures will reduce costs and carbon emissions from housing and transportation by providing more goods, services, and homes people can access by walking, biking, shorter drives, and public transit.

Charlottesville needs more affordable housing in every neighborhood. For Charlottesville to be a city welcoming to all, we believe every neighborhood should have the opportunity to incorporate its “fair share” of growth, strengthening affordability across all income levels. Doing so will add crucial diversity to our schools and other public resources — a key contributor to excellence. Allowing more multifamily buildings and townhouses in more areas will foster integration of historically exclusionary neighborhoods and provide opportunity for more people to access quality housing.

Quality streets, sidewalks, public transit, utilities, and schools are vital to our community, but the need for infrastructure improvements is not a valid excuse to reduce opportunities for medium intensity housing. Good land use planning should inform the development of infrastructure. Otherwise, past mistakes and historically biased planning decisions will be repeated. Smarter land use and better infrastructure should complement each other, not be pitched against each other.

We recognize that zoning reform alone will not solve Charlottesville’s housing, transportation, equity, and environmental goals. And we look forward to working with the city to develop complementary policies, budgets, and initiatives necessary to meet those goals.

Thank you for your consideration and service to our community.

Co-signed by:

1. Charlottesville Low-Income Housing Coalition
2. Charlottesville Albemarle Affordable Housing Coalition
3. Fifeville Neighborhood Association
4. Piedmont Housing Alliance
5. Habitat for Humanity of Greater Charlottesville
6. The Haven
7. Blue Ridge Area Coalition for the Homeless
8. AHIP
9. Legal Aid Justice Center
10. The Tonsler League
11. Cultivate Charlottesville
12. International Rescue Committee - Charlottesville
13. Human Rights Commission of Charlottesville
14. Officers of the Charlottesville Clergy Collective
15. Charlottesville Friends Meeting
16. UVA Equity Center
17. Livable Cville
18. Community Climate Collaborative
19. Virginia Organizing
20. Charlottesville Education Association

21. Charlottesville Democratic Socialists of America
22. Indivisible Charlottesville
23. Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) - Charlottesville
24. UVA Student Council Executive Board
25. UVA Graduate Student Council
26. United Campus Workers of Virginia, UVA Chapter
27. Divest UVA
28. UVA Student Planners Association
29. Students for Equity and Reform in Virginia
30. University Democrats at UVA
31. ManifestA Equity in the Built Environment, UVA Architecture