



CITY OF CHARLOTTESVILLE

To be a place where everyone thrives

Human Rights Commission
P.O. Box 911
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902
Telephone: 434-970-3023
www.charlottesville.gov

September 2, 2025

Dear Mayor Wade and City Councilors,

Pursuant to Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance, Sec. 2-433.(c), it is the role of the Human Rights Commission to identify and review systemic issues, policies, and practices of the City of Charlottesville and to advise its boards, commissions, and other public agencies within the City on issues related to human rights.

During our annual planning meeting on March 22nd, Commissioners identified "Housing Access and Stability Across Protected Classes and Economic Status" as the primary focus of our work in 2025. We followed this by convening meetings with multiple stakeholders across the Charlottesville community, including service providers in the area of housing and homelessness. Although every service provider presented new insights, we heard multiple times of our community's need for an adequate homeless shelter, for increased rental assistance, and for increased supportive housing, among other solutions. We did not once hear anyone suggest measures such as those listed in the ordinance you will hear tonight that would act to criminalize homelessness and increase the suffering of our community's most vulnerable.

In the coming weeks, the Commission will share with you our recommendations regarding what the City can do to assist those who face housing insecurity and homelessness in finding stable housing and the support they need to live and to thrive. We are here should you have any need to discuss our findings thus far, and the recommendations that we will deliver.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Heather Roberson Gaston'.

Heather Roberson Gaston
Chair
Charlottesville Human Rights Commission