

Microsoft Teams Transcript – 3.8.23 Loudoun Public Hearing on the Regional Fair Housing Plan

Good evening everyone. Wanted to officially start our public hearing at 6:02 PM Eastern Standard Time. Thank you for coming out this evening. My name is John Hall. I am the department director for the Department of Housing and Community Development. I'm excited to be before you this evening, Loudon County, as you may know, just started a Department of Housing and Community Development last April. So we're less than a year old and I am four months into. My position, so I'm very excited to to present our first Fair housing plan that has been completed in coordination with Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments. He will hear from staff momentarily and they'll go into greater detail, but a little bit of background before we dive completely into tonight's public hearing.

First and foremost, bathroom locations. So the bathrooms are right on the other side of this wall.

I'm just asking if you if you have to leave out if you can use that particular door. That's what we use in the two monitors for the presentations if possible. If not, this door has to stay open because it's a public Poly door needed, but either way that's that's what I think is the main thing I

learned to know. And then secondly, if you can have your cell phones on silent mode or vibrate, something of that nature so we can get through our agenda with with the least amount of interruptions as possible.

And then I have some some scripted things I need to say.

So let me put on my readers here. I wanna first start by introducing, you know, a very dynamic team that's been assembled here with the county about it. The staff here are phenomenal. They're highly dedicated public servants and highly effective in their production. And so could not, you know, get this event done or the the report done or any of the other work that we do without them. So I want to start.

With Brian Regan, who is assistant director next to him is Melinda Niebel, she is actually our newest member and she is our Fair Housing Coordinator, which she just started literally last week and she will be picking up steam and picking up the ball more as we get this particular fair housing plan in motion as well as smaller. But other things that will be doing in the agency. But I just wanted to.

But it's special emphasis with Melissa Niebel as she just

joined us so.

Ohh, we will hear more from her as as the days go on then we

also have here at this table we have Christine Hillock.

As well as Rebecca Keane and then online, if Janet Powell can

hear us, I don't think she can. She's looking down. But she's

the the lady you see on the screen. So OK.

Yes, I can hear you.

Yeah.

So and I guess I didn't feel till they're title, that's why I

need the glasses on. So Jeanette just started with us as well. A

lot of us are new. If you can't tell them that rhythm there. She

just started with us in December. She is our community

actually our entitlement grant manager. So we received

community development block grant funds and we will be

getting home Investment Partnership funds for the very

first time. So we're very excited. So we changed our

title.

TVG program manager, typically entitlement grant manager and

then Rebecca King is our housing finance and development

administrator. Rebecca has done yeoman's work in helping to

coordinate the delivery of this fair housing plan because most

of us were not here when the work was had begun. So I wanted to give a special thank you to Rebecca for all the work that she's doing with watch. I call it watchdog Hillary, but Council of governments.

And you'll hear from Hillary in a second. And then Christine Hillock is our community development specialist. She is our outreach of specialists and it helps us to put pull everything together and hope it to makes sense to the community.

So thank you so much for all the work that you do. And Brian, Brian is my right hand. Thank you, Brian. And I see Andrea is in the audience. You may be here as an individual or an employee, but I want to recognize we do have an additional.

Staff are here this evening. If Andrea, if you call our office, oftentimes you will. You will hear her voice. So thank you, Andrea, for being here.

A little bit more on the the format of tonight's public hearing.

Following a brief presentation, we will accept comments. Please remember that this is not a discussion or question and answer period. We are here to receive any feedback or comments that you have on the on the analysis of impediment, the fair

housing plan that has been published or if anything that you hear during the presentation that you wanted to make a comment on. But it is, it is not a discussion tonight and then advanced signup sheets if you've already signed up to speak.

They will be called first when we get to the public comment section. Then any attendees who would like to speak if you have not signed up, you will be. You will have the opportunity to sign up and then we'll we'll take you in in the order that you sign up.

Please keep comments that you make this evening specific to the Fair housing plan. You can reach out to us at housing@loudon.gov. That's our E address. If you would like to submit written comments to further your your comments that you made made verbally or if you think about something else, you know after you get home that you wanna make sure that we think about or that you wanted to comment on, please submit your comments to housing.

Thatloudand.gov.

Uh. And then please reach out to the State Fair Housing Office so the the Commonwealth of Virginia has a fair housing office and they receive about complaints of allegations of violations. And

we have several handouts here at the table that will give you that information as well as if anyone needs housing resources or if you work with clients or, you know, friends or families who may need housing resources. We have some resources.

Look at the table here as well.

So.

We will.

We will provide a summary of comments after tonight to the Council of governments. I I've referenced Hillary, she's online and will be speaking to us momentarily. So everything that you say tonight and the and the emails that you send with any written documentation will be bundled and forwarded to the Washington Council of Governments for incorporation with our final report that we're going to submit to the US Department of Housing and Urban Development.

Uh, so tonight when you are called for your public comments, we are gonna limit time for to 3 minutes for everyone. We Belinda will be keeping time. She will give you a 32nd, you know.

Can clap or a finger snap? I don't know what her mode is gonna be, but if we see Belinda doing something that that means 30 seconds.

And so we will be recording this entire meeting. This is a public meeting.

It will be recorded and uploaded to our website, so if you would like to go back and view it or if you know others who could not be here this evening and would like to listen to see what happened, they can go to our website and that they will be able to view view this public hearing in its entirety.

Uh, so also, since we are recording this meeting, if you have public comments we will call you up basically where I'm standing we need you to stand in this particular area because we have a microphone and we have the the laptops microphone that needs to be able to pick up what you're saying. So it's on the audio. So if you can, that's why I'm kind of you know, slant it this way. So if you could come and stand here.

If you don't mind, we'd appreciate that.

And then we also have Spanish interpretation available. We have a couple of interpreters who are on standby for Spanish.

I'm not sure if anyone else needs any other languages. We didn't get any requests. I always throw out. I speak French just in case. You never know, but.

So I will at this point turn it over to.

Hillary Chapman. She is the housing program manager with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments.

She will be assisted with Diane. I can't pronounce the last name, so I won't try. But Hillary and Diane from Washington Council of Governments, please take it away.

All done.

Well, thank you so much, director hall. It is a pleasure to be here with all of you this evening. Again. My name is Hillary Chapman. I'm with the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments, or COG. As you may have heard us referred to.

Or wash cog, depending on if you from another part of the country. So. And I just, I still share just as a brief anecdote before we get started. I'm going to be very going to go through some of the regional goals here. I'm joined by Diane.

Helper who is the director of Fair Housing and Community Development Project for the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights under Law. And it's really.

And the the one who was synthesized all of the tremendous amount of information that we gathered both qualitative and quantitative, to put this draft plan together.

And so the two of us are here to to answer any to go over those

sort of the the regional overview.

And before we get into the into the local specifics and I'm just

going to share as a special treat for me to be here as

someone who actually grew up in western Loudon County.

Umm, back when Loudon Valley was the only high school in Western

Loudon, no longer the case. So next slide, please.

So just a really quick overview for those of you who may not

already be familiar what the regional Fair housing plan is.

It is a plan, typically covering five years, designed to develop

meaningful actions to overcome historic patterns of

segregation, promote fair housing choice and foster

inclusive communities free from discrimination. So once this

plan is fully approved by HUD, it will guide local investment

to decisions of federal funds to achieve the goals outlined in

the plan and the key elements of the plan are listed here. And

important to note that in this process, we've been very focused

on not only having.

A robust community engagement process, but also ensuring that

our data and analysis will be tied in a direct way to the

actions to remedy those findings. So next slide please.

And just a quick reminder why we are doing this in the 1st place.

Why does fair housing matter? Why does housing equity matter?

Umm and.

Some of the just a few sampling of those reasons here is that fair housing choice connects you to great, you know, to good outcomes, high performing schools, integrated communities, transit, job centers, healthy and environmentally safe neighborhoods, whereas the barriers can limit.

Umm, uh can barriers can prevent.

Access to good quality schools to job markets, UM limited transportation options, compounded inequities from segregated neighborhoods, and exposure to environmental hazards which contribute to unhealthy neighborhoods. So This is why we want to make sure that we are providing opportunities for everyone to live in the places that suit them best. Next slide, please.

So just a quick overview of who has been engaged. So eight of the Council of governments were a association of 24 member local governments, the governments that have been collaborating here include five Northern Virginia jurisdictions include in Loudon County.

Umm, also, the District of Columbia and in Maryland at the

City of Gaithersburg and Montgomery County. We've also been working collaboratively with our public Housing Authority partners throughout Virginia, the district and and Montgomery as well. And the key team who's been helping us to bring this plan to life, we could not have done it without the lawyers Committee for Civil Rights. As our lead consultant. A chow urban collaborative has been the lead for the community engagement process. The Urban Institute was the lead on the data. The quantitative data collection and analysis. We also had technical assistance from enterprise Community partners and we've and our HUD partners have actually from the Ferret Office of Fair Housing and Equal Opportunity have been with us. Every step of the way, including through a number of changes at the federal level under the previous administration. So next slide please.

Another key group that's been guiding the local governments and the the planned development as the Community Advisory Committee. So the groups that are shown here represent regionally working organizations who serve residents impacted by fair housing choice and the advisory committees role has really been to provide input to the local governments as well as

serve as a bridge to local communities throughout the process. Next slide please.

So and as I alluded to in my previous remarks, Umm this is the first time in 25 years the region has come together to collaborate on a regional fair housing plan.

Umm, it technically began in 2017 when all of the participating jurisdictions executed in MOU and submitted it to HUD to allow us to collaborate across state lines, only to have the rule paused in the beginning of 2018 at the start of the Trump administration. So it has been quite a journey and but we were very fortunate to be working with Loudon and our partners through the region to continue to make decision to move forward.

Brought the consultant team on and began in earnest at the beginning of 2021. As you know, we're in this, we're in this public comment period right now and after this is concluded, they'll be we'll go through a review process with each with six of the 8 legislators.

And finalize the plan before submitting it to next slide please.

So just wanted to give a brief overview of some of the data

that is informed the the the goals and strategies here and the fair housing plan includes sections that are region wide as well as elements that are jurisdiction specific. So this slide includes some demographic data that are not likely new or surprising to any of you, but were foundational in the drafting of loud and counties section of the plan. The Loudon County has a proportionally higher white and Asian population in the region as a whole.

White residents make up 56% of the population. The Asian and Pacific Islander residents make up about 18 1/2% of the counties population. In contrast, black residents make up only a little over 7% of the population, less than 1/3 the percentage at the regional level. And Loudon County is slightly less heavily Hispanic than the broader region.

In 1990, Hispanic and Asian Pacific Islander residents made-up 2 1/2 and 2.4% of the population, respectively, and now Hispanic residents make up 12% of the population, and Asian or Pacific Islander residents make up 16.4% and next slide, please.

So Umm, also related to the demographic information ship previously Spanish is the most prevalently spoken language for

people with limited English proficiency and loud, and also

to reflecting that significant growth in that portion of the

its residents between 2015 and 2019. That excuse me that total

population is increased by over 50%.

And and among non-us residents, India's most common country of

origin, followed by El Salvador. Next slide, please.

OK, this is a select just a few select findings from the

community engagement process this included.

Umm, some of the findings from a survey that was completed by

over 12.

Over 800 respondents, no surprise to anyone, probably

here. One of the things that came up most significantly was

that accessible and affordable housing is very difficult to

find.

Umm, this is also reflected in what the community engagement

process yielded in terms of the top three barriers to housing

choice, lack of affordability, government failure and racial

discrimination.

13% of respondents to our survey reported that they had

experienced discrimination, and of those, about 13 percent, 41%

reported that they thought landlords or property owners.

I'm we're responsible and some of the solutions that the focus groups.

Umm. Suggested or more Spanish speaking housing counselors program information in multiple languages other than English, providing opportunities for seniors to age in place and better compliance and monitoring of landlords for with reasonable accommodations. And next slide, please.

So another region wide finding is that are the Metropolitan Washington region has been has been increasingly experiencing segregation since 1990s.

And it is highest between black and white with modern segregation between Hispanic and White and Pacific Islander and white residents. And we recently learned this is actually somewhat unfortunately unique to our region.

Alright, to the in in terms of other regions nationwide that this is, this is not typical for other other regions. And we've also noted significant disparities in access to opportunity by race and ethnicity.

And that by access to opportunity we mean access to health goods to good schools with proficiency, good high proficiency ratings, healthy neighborhoods. Again, access to

transit.

Opportunities for jobs and.

Umm, a economic development opportunities.

And accesses almost always lower for black and Hispanic residents

than white residents, sort of. Regardless of poverty status.

Next slide, please.

So that leads us to our seven regional goals and strategies.

And I'm just going to share a few quick points before handing

it over to Rebecca to talk about Ludens.

Goals and strategies, but I wanted to just highlight a few

things. One is that there are only 7.

Shared goals and these are goals that each jurisdiction Loudoun

County included, will implement as their own. And these are

these are these were designed. They came together through a

very exhaustive data collection process from quantitative and

qualitative.

Umm and.

Each of these goals are implemented at the local level

that can be sensitive to local context and in some

jurisdictions have goals that are specific only to their

communities, but each jurisdiction not included has at

least seven goals, and the reason that these are somewhat limited is that we felt it was important to choose goals that were most likely to have a greater impact. So rather than having.

22 goals that might have a moderate impact which chose to limit those to that. We thought the ones that would be most meaningful and improving fair housing choice. And with that I'm going to turn it back over to Rebecca to share Loudoun's goals, strategies and actions.

Draft goals and strategies and actions, I should say.

Thank you, Hillary.

So I'm going to run through the regional goals and the Loudoun and specific pieces to start.

With goal #1, which is to increase the supply of housing that's affordable to families with incomes at 60% of AMI or below. So this goal is clearly designed to address one of the most persistent and challenging barriers to fair housing choice, which is the lack of housing that's affordable to low and moderate income households. So some of the strategies identified in the plan that could be used by jurisdictions to address this barrier include trying to do

deeper income targeting. So going below 60% of AMI.

Providing loans to assist home buyers and looking at local government financing and regulatory regulatory tools and Loudon has some specific focus on this goal.

We'd like to expand our current programs to increase affordable housing and implement new efforts from the unmet housing needs strategic plan that the board adopted in September of 2021. And that includes things like utilizing public land, exploring land banks and community Land Trust options, and again continuing to improve and strengthen our existing programs like our affordable multifamily rental housing loan program.

The second regional goal is focused on addressing zoning reform and opportunities to improve land use policies to improve fair housing choice. Some strategies identified in the plan include increasing inclusionary zoning incentives, adopting an affordable housing overlay zone, and something that would be new for the region would be a fair housing equity analysis. As part of reviewing significant development or rezoning proposals.

This is also an area that Loudon has chosen to focus in the plan.

And we call out strategies around removing barriers in our zoning ordinance as the county is currently undergoing a zoning ordinance rewrite right now, we'd like to strengthen the existing affordable dwelling unit program, which is our inclusionary housing program and explore other land use and zoning tools to encourage the development of affordable housing, which are described in detail in our unmet housing needs strategic plan.

The third regional goal is focused on preservation strategies to avoid displacement as cities and counties in the region grow and change over time.

One piece of this is around existing affordable housing communities, low income housing tax credit communities as one example. As they age, they can leave the affordability period and that affordable housing is then lost in the community. So identifying ways to preserve what we have is critical.

And then regional goal #4 is designed to increase home ownership by members of protected classes and reduce inequities and discriminatory practices that limit homeownership. So strategies described in the plan include set asides for homeownership as well as rental units and new

developments for low and moderate income households, supporting financial literacy and home buyer education.

And using less traditional home ownership models, like a Community Land Trust.

Regional goal five is designed to protect the housing rights of members of protected classes under the Federal Fair Housing Act. Strategies in the plan include reducing barriers to accessing rental housing, piloting a right to council program for landlord tenant proceedings, and expanding and increasing support for fair housing outreach, education and enforcement. This was a recommendation strongly supported by the Community Advisory Committee.

This came up repeatedly as an important strategy for each participating jurisdiction to consider how to engage in this work more meaningfully in the future. And I'm gonna come back to this point, so get excited. Wait, which one was that? I'm sorry, regional Goal 5, but five regional Goal 5 to protect the housing rights of individuals with protective characteristics, specifically at the strategy around expanding and increasing support for fair housing outreach, education and enforcement.

So regional goal six is focused on the need to reduce barriers for persons with disabilities, which is one of the most common sources of Fair housing complaint, not just in this region but nationwide.

Strategies to increase Community integration include increasing the amount of permanent supportive housing units and one way is to prioritize community development, block grant and home funds, as Mr Hall was talking about earlier, and using those funds to create permanent supportive housing and then ensuring any project based vouchers include some permanent supportive housing. Additionally, advocating with housing authorities to adopt admissions preferences for individuals with disabilities.

So again, these are all regional goals and regional strategies that every jurisdiction will work on differently depending on their priorities and capacity.

The last regional goal is to expand access and affordability of public transportation for members of protected classes, so some strategies include free bus transportation for lower income households and making recommendations to improve and expand bus routes, particularly across jurisdictional borders.

So this is one of those pieces coming from a regional approach identifying that.

These issues are not.

Cannot be solved by loud and alone in some cases, so we need to work together. And then Loudon does have a more specific focus, as I mentioned on this goal about fair housing outreach, education and enforcement. So we specifically have identified a need to focus on this area and so.

We'd like to I hire a fair housing coordinator, establish a dedicated phone line, an e-mail address for Loudon County Fair housing complaints, and implement a number of strategies from the unmet housing needs strategic plan that would increase support for fair housing in the county. And I would just wanted to highlight, we're already making progress with Melinda here joining us last week as our Fair Housing coordinator, which we've never had. So this is a big accomplishment and we're thrilled, so.

We're already focusing and and moving towards implementation.

So.

Couple of points to close the the presentation part of the evening.

This plan is going to impact Loud and it's going to impact the region and we're thrilled to be a part of it. We do think regional action is critical to addressing our housing supply and affordability challenges and allow them.

Really glad to be working as part of this. This regional effort and then we really want this plan to.

To resonate and be informed by the community, so please send in comments, please share the plan with that in mind. I'll run through a couple of points.

The public comment period is open until March 31st, and then those comments will inform final revisions before coming back to all the legislative bodies. So the Board of Supervisors here will review and approve the final regional fair housing plan and then they will all be combined and submitted to HUD, hopefully by the fall.

And then.

Oh, what did I do?

Bear with me for just a second. There we go, OK.

We did provide copies of the presentation and there are a number of ways to submit written comments on the regional Fair housing plan. There's an online form on COGS website. There is

an e-mail option and a mail option for handwritten comments

and supports available for anyone visually impaired and.

We also included some additional resources that may be helpful or

of interest to this general topic of Fair housing, so.

Anything else to share? Hillary and Diane, we so appreciate you

both joining us cog and the Lawyers committee have been

doing so much work on this project, and we're grateful for

their leadership.

Thanks, Rebecca. I don't have anything to add, I don't know.

Diane, if, if you wanted to to add anything either.

And.

But other than we thank you.

Yes, and I'm so glad you came out today. And most importantly,

we would really like to hear your comments unlike other you

know, public hearings, we actually will address your

comments individually and as part of the plan as long as you

stay on topic, you know if you're if you need a vet for

example, we can't help you, but if it's about how is it housing

and community development related topics, we will address

your comments in the plan.

So it's really important that your voice is heard and we

really wanna hear from you. And thanks so much for being here today.

OK, I will turn it back over to Mr Hall. Thank you, Hillary and Diane.

OK, so we are ready for the public comment period. Just a couple reminders.

Public comments are limited to 3 minutes each and as I move back over here, remember we need you to stand in this area so the microphone and the the laptops will pick up what you're saying and so that we have everybody on this on record. So 3 minutes after those who signed up already, you will be called in just a moment in the order that you signed up that we have anyone here who has not signed up but would like to make public comments. We will ask for those after.

The the the what? I'll call the pre signed. Public commenters have already spoken. OK. Again, this is a public comment session. This is not a dialogue or question and answer period.

We will take all of your comments. We will gather and bundle them up for our portion of the plan and roll them up to the Washington Council of Government. And as Diane was saying, every comment will be addressed in the plan and so.

Whatever your take is on it, you will be able to probably see the theme. It might be categorize it and.

But what I'm trying to say is categorized and themes, so you may not see your specific question in the plan, but it'll be captioned in the theme of of the comments that were generally submitted.

Also, if you if you have more than 3 minutes to say if I encourage you to put it in writing, you can send it to us.

Our E address is housing@loudon.gov.

Uh and Loudon, for those of you who are new to Loudon, like myself, I gotta remember how sell it. It has a a weird spelling to me, Loudoun.

So usually I used to say, Lou Don, but Nope, that was that won't get you that. That won't get your e-mail to us so loud and LUDOU n.gov. So housing that loud in.gov. OK, I will turn it over to Christine.

But.

No, it'll go to the the Washington Council of Governments and the reason for that.

Is it's a regional plan, so they're gonna collect all of the comments from all the jurisdictions in one streamlined

way, so that the lawyers committee can review all of them and respond. And that way we've reflected them, you know, accurately, that's why there's the portal is is 1 portal. It's not. Every jurisdiction has its own portal that makes sense.

That makes sense. Yeah.

Right. But if you would like to submit your comments to us at how the at loudon.gov, we will ensure that it gets rolled up or you can submit your comments directly. So to watchdog, yes, Council of governments.

Alright, OK, so I'm gonna start with anyone who contacted contacted us in advance of tonight's meeting. And that first speaker would be Theos to Mathis.

Good evening. My name is Theo Smartas. I'm the government relations manager for the Latin Chamber of Commerce. Is definitely a privilege to address everyone here. This evening, on behalf of more than 1000 businesses and employers that consists of the chamber's membership here this evening to support the efforts to develop Latins regional fair housing plan in coordination with the COG, the Chamber supports the HTK's continued efforts and expanding its existing housing initiatives, creating new loan programs to help more help

develop more.

They will housing here in Loudon County Lannister, clearly facing housing shortage in a crisis. Portability.

This crisis is devastating to our most vulnerable citizens, is imposing substantial quality of life, economic burdens on our small businesses, nonprofits, government partners and their employees. Lot of needs housing, particularly great diversity and workforce, has options, particularly for those who earn at or below lattice average median income. These includes folks like our teachers, our first responders, our home care workers, our retail hospitality employees, and so forth. Chamber has long advocated the Latin county to have more skin in the game.

Sports own state and housing, private state housing priorities.

We now applaud the candy for taking this step. The 1st and the current fiscal year, and then the pros and the budget for the next decade. Funds equivalent to 1/2 a penny on the tax rate to help tackle that's persistent crisis of affordable housing affordability.

These funds can be used in part to support innovative public

private partnerships to increase the inventory of attainable housing in Latin county.

This is important because of the scale of this crisis. A subset neither the public nor the private sector can address it alone.

The Chamber had also appreciates the county.

Adding dedicated and declared that it believes as those the Chamber membership does, that those who work in Latin county should be able to live and love accounting. Still more work needs to be done to ensure our workforce can also live in our county.

Among those are more flexible land use policies and zoning ordinances that remove barriers to our workforce housing priorities, restrictive land use policies only make it harder and more expensive and more time consuming to build new homes.

We employ you to listen to the perspective of the business community and the public on how the country can develop a fair housing plan that will create a more equitable, inclusive approach to attainable housing and Latin county. Thank you so much for allowing me to say the gospel of.

On that.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Our next is advanced sign up speaker is Shanna Pinkston.

Who's being here? Yeah, whatever you prefer. You can sit or stand either one.

Checking it, even everyone. Good evening home. I'm gonna attempt to just get this done in 3 minutes because.

Umm, I haven't any public speaking in about 10 years and I am dealing with something. Some other issues emotionally so.

Umm.

I am a person living in Loudon County.

The the disability.

And I've been in the country for about 1/2 a decade now.

And.

I want to just focus on three key issues for the meeting.

Phone them. I heard in this slide presentation, but I have prepared my own things that I am actually experiencing right now.

In the last six months of living in this county.

Umm.

I did a lot of research last couple months and I do realize it's coordinated by the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments and I've spoken to those folks.

Umm, I'm also representing the.

With me CMB, what's Independence Center for Northern Virginia?

And that's an advocacy group that works with individuals or families living with a disability.

Umm.

And also working with some other agencies that like not to say right now, but I I've, I've.

One of the focuses on three key things, and that one key issue is the barriers to their housing in this county.

Umm, I'll just quickly go through some of the things that I felt was important to.

Reduce or eliminate those barriers, and one would be so many things you may have read in this slide, but implement fair housing ordinance and Human Rights Ordinance. Developer doesn't need the agency.

Perform fair health and testing quarterly and or yearly.

Provide more in depth warehousing training.

Initiate a complaint slash reporting process for Loudoun County.

Understanding I think this is one of the most important.

Understanding cultural competence.

The second key issue is.

Stakeholders and Community involvement.

Charting the documented and undocumented issue that are currently or previously been going on in Loudon County that have not been addressed.

Connecting the dots to understanding how and where it changes needed most.

Not speaking with and receiving feedback and ideas from tenants, residents, whether past, current or future in Loudon County.

My last key point.

Umm.

And I really thought hard about this because right now my daughter is sitting in the back and she's 10.

And.

I I wouldn't want anyone whether this ability or not a disability while they represented disabled community. You don't have a disability to experience racism or discrimination in any county.

And I think it's important that my third key point is radical thought. Radical thinkers, not just giving a.

Definition of radical thinkers. Those who try to understand things from their root.

Speaking to resolve problems based on basic principles and foundations.

And like the repeat that radical thinkers.

Those who try to understand things from their root.

Seeking to resolve problems based on basic principles and foundations, and lastly, I I'd like to leave you guys with just two.

Things that I thought about to share was.

This issue is systemic from major failings in our society and is in zero ways a reflection of those of us who are going through it.

The last thing I'd like to say and just leave everybody with this thought. When when you leave here and go home.

Housing is such an integral part of community and family well-being.

For all in Loudon County and surrounding counties.

Thank you. Thank you.

And I believe those are the only two advanced signups. So I'll go now and order of anyone who signed up an indicated tonight that they would like to speak and the next speaker would be Julia Gradley.

Hello.

Honey, come up here and then this and individual who has participated in the HUD program for the last 22 years. And I had seen the good, the bad, the ugly, the happy, the sad.

Of every side, from looking for a place.

Taking your money.

Doing your best.

Look the find your place.

Doing your best to fit in with so many different communities.

Of individuals I don't like to say black, white and red Indian.

I see eyes, you know and.

I have done my best to try to bring my little community

together and ask him for.

Actually the things and.

Things.

That support our community where you get to go see your neighbor

and trade a phone call and trade school information and.

Build the community and I'm disabled.

Used to work for zeros. Used to work for Lockheed, but

unfortunately a car accident did me in.

So I'm just sabled.

Don't have it. Don't have the money anymore. I spend the mom.

I raise them, you know, sending the cademy labs, you know, he's smart and he's supporting your community. And one thing I see so much in this little community of mine is the high turnover of you can't afford to live here.

And.

Have you seen your water bill? Have you seen your electric bill? You know there's nowhere to park. There's not enough services.

The bus.

And I just want everybody here to know I love my community, grew up here, graduated from Loudon Valley High School many years ago.

I want to keep this a hometown attitude and.

We we housing in this community bags.

And we need our people who come in and come out to say, Gee, I have no trouble. I worked in New Orleans for a while and they said, jewel, the worst problem is finding a place to live because the living.

So.

How do I help our huge community?

The first thing is, is somebody brought it up.

We need a outline so when we feel like we are getting discriminated against, we can pick up a phone.

Type it in. However, there is no immediate reply confirmation.

Umm, my caseworker at times I don't hear from for weeks, so I give up on that one.

But the most important thing is it's people coming with children. If you're trying to raise them.

And that's our future generation.

And.

Ah.

I just need to take care of my lab account and I don't know how to do it all yourself for years.

There's things you can do with a cognitive impairment that people don't always see.

You know.

And I don't drive, but I got lovely mother back there because it's something. Who takes the hitchhiker?

You know, to meetings and to things going. What can I do to help my community? But this is fair housing and the most important thing. I'm starting on us getting dry is.

All of us who participate as a hug or individual.

Do need that support of. Here's an example real quick. Less than

30 seconds money on your bill wrap up in 10 seconds or 10

seconds. Yeah, we are trying to get to the three minute limit or

something, but I have a water bill that went up 52%.

They checked yesterday and so there's no problem with your

work. That's what I mean about having a.

Follow up.

Plan.

Thank you. OK, I'm just gonna interject for a, a a commercial

brief. So with some of the comments, I just wanna make sure

before you leave tonight, we have some handouts up here. One

of them is for the Commonwealth of Virginia Fair Housing Office.

That gives you the information, the phone number that he

address, how to contact them and how to file a complaint or to

talk to their case managers. Also, if you or friends or

family are in need of housing resources, we also have a few of

those showers up front.

Or how to do services just in case you need them.

Thank you.

That is the last person who said yes that they would like to

Speak tonight on according to the sign in sheet, there was one person who put a question mark and one person who put maybe so is there any? I guess I'll just say is there anyone else who would like to provide public comment.

I was the maybe. OK. OK. You're welcome, Sir.

And I have nothing written.

But.

But I do just wanna share this quickly so I am with the Commission on agent so senior adults are extremely important to me and what I do and so it is very important to me that there are affordable housing for seniors in adults to age in place.

I find that a lot of them don't want to leave where they are, so it's important to find a way to accommodate that request in some way. I know that you can't knock out everything that worked throwing at you, but it is something that we really should consider. I also wanted to say that there's if there's anything that can be done in terms of.

Property tax to help these aging adults. That would be an amazing effort.

And if there's any way that there's a way to just have

someone who can listen, I'm not certain of what the position of the coordinator is, however.

Because they have a difficulty reaching out knowing how to, but they're not Internet people, right? So they need someone to reach out to them. So if there is a resource for that, that would be outstanding.

But those are my comments. They were really quick, but just please consider the aging adult population. Thank you. Thank you.

SO11 last call. Anyone else I wanna forgive, OK.

Yeah.

So many of the frame.

I'm only getting brave because it's so important, but I wanted to call Bert and I'm a realtor and the chairman of the Government Affairs Committee, The Dalles Association of Realtors. Before that, I was a special Ed teacher for many years and.

I'm here. I just got up because it's it is such a universal problem. Everything you said is is I agree with it has to be a public.

Private partnership people at the county with the zoning. I

mean, I have followed all the rewrite.

I don't know that there's anything in there that's going to make it easier for somebody to build affordable, attainable housing.

I think that everyone has to think out-of-the-box.

There's.

It places the county owns. There's so many opportunities people in other jurisdictions. I've even been trying to look into other countries that are doing this on a better basis than we are. There are solutions we don't have to reinvent the wheel, but it is a joint problem. It's a problem in loud enough. This morning I spent the morning at the Echo and the economic summit. I hate to tell you, but.

It's not gonna get better prices, you know, as far as what we're hearing. So we have to think out-of-the-box and come up with solutions that are not obvious this moment.

That's it.

Thank you.

We have another. Please come to the front.

Hello, thank you very much for having me. It's only give a few comments and and some comments also relating to one of your

speakers, maybe a couple of them. I've been a resident of Loudon County for 20 years now. I've got the opportunity. My name is Lee Becky. I'm sorry by the way and I have had the opportunity to travel around the world.

I've traveled more places, probably than most of you have ever traveled and going to places that are more remote than you could probably ever imagine. And seeing people and.

The door at a lot of different cultural differences.

And I have found Loudon County to be one of the most welcoming places I've ever lived.

And it kind of disappoints me to hear so much of the idea of discrimination being brought up about Loudon County.

Because the minorities in my neighborhood.

Black, Asian.

We're happy.

They enjoy them long county. They're not. They don't have can. They don't have contentious feelings about love and county.

They enjoyed living there. We go along. I know them. They know me.

And we have a very good neighborhood.

And so I I hope the effort in this.

What you're doing here is not to.

Put a cloud over Loudon County as if it is somehow a
discriminatory discount place of discrimination because it isn't.

And in comparison to the many cultures that I've had to.

Living and encounter.

It's a great place to live and I am. It's just a little bit
disappointing you're this idea so much discrimination that
somehow loud and counties and discriminatory script
discriminating place based on culture and race.

Because the reality is it is.

Thank you.

Now, now, last call, that's it. Any final final call any anyone
else like to provide public comment?

OK, thank you. OK, before I close out the public hearing, I
wanna thank each of you for coming out this evening. Each of
you who make comments, we appreciate them. We will again
bundle them up, roll them up not only to the Washington Council
of Governments, but also to our.

Fair Housing Plan draft. That's part of it. So they'll get them
twice if you send it to them and give it to us and then we will
be presenting to the Board of Supervisors is that next week

Tuesday, March 14th.

Umm, just this the same presentation, so very similar to presentation and again the analysis of impediments is a plan that we do. Most jurisdictions actually let me back up how how we do this and Hillary, I'm not sure if Hillary had to go or not after she had another beating.

So.

The county of Loudon is an entitlement community, meaning we receive federal grants based on the population size of the county.

In, in an effort to well, in exchange of getting the federal dollars, we have to submit a lot of reports, one of the reports is called a consolidated consolidated plan that basically tells the federal government the dollars that we receive and this is how we are planning to use the money over the next five years.

Every year of those five years, we have to come to the public and give public comment.

To say, how would you like us to spend the money? What are the high priorities? So we do have five year skin and then each year of the five years we do what is called an annual action

plan and that is supposed to still be talking about the five year plan unless there's been an urgent need by the pandemic or you know something like natural disaster happens and we can deviate from it a bit. But basically we come before the public soliciting comments. We roll all those comments up and we submit it.

To the US Department of Housing and Urban Development, that's what this department gets most of its funding from.

So part of the requirement is every five years as well when we do this consolidated plan.

We are to do what we call an analysis of impediments, what is preventing people from finding houses that the cost of rent? Is it the the lack of income, a lot of the things, you know, some of you have said and then on the PowerPoint, the seven key areas is basically what the wash St hassle of government has identified as a common theme for all of the jurisdictions or 7 jurisdictions. Northern Virginia, Southern Maryland and the District of Columbia.

Are we gonna come together as a region to try to tackle some of these impediments that are preventing residents from getting housing, staying in housing, whatever the the

barrier is? So then we will then start to prioritize our funding again at 5 year plan. How we are going to tackle some of these barriers so we get Loudon County, this department, we have two entitlement grants, Community Development block grant. CDBG may have heard that.

Radiation. And then we will be getting for the very first time, which I'm excited about home Investment Partnership.

So that is a participated jurisdiction. Most of that is to build affordable housing. We can build it or preserve affordable housing units, rehab multifamily dwellings or give down payment closing costs system. There's a lot of different activities. So I encourage you to follow what we will be rolling through because that annual action plan is about to go to the board and it'll be a public comment period starting in April. So we'll have probably something similar to this.

Setting or will it be at the board?

At the board level, the public opinion that'll be the board.

It'll be a bigger public hearing me then and then you will be able to see what we're proposing, how we're gonna spend funds for that for the next year, which will be July 1st through June 30th.

Uh, and then again we will, you will have the opportunity to comment on like we need more housing or whatever the needs or down payment closing costs assistance, I mean whatever the eligible activities are for those programs, that is where you can continue to find ways to participate in this process. So you can.

See how we're moving the needle, or at least making some progress.

The second grant that you received, that's the new one.

What is that exactly? It's all home Investment Partnership.

It's an entitlement grant from HUD.

So it basically is to the main requirement is that there has to be an output of a housing unit or the preservation of unaffordable housing. That's the overarching and the comments that we made today. Do you guys take that with you next week when you meet the board or that doesn't get addressed? You don't mention we will, we will.

Post the comments.

The board package has already been submitted, but a lot of times the board may ask did we get any comments? If so, what? What kind of comments that we get so all the comments that we

receive, we're gonna kind of bundle them in categories like, you know housing, you know, discrimination. What I mean, whatever the categories are, we'll say, well, we got comments on these categories, but we'll take all of your comments and roll those up to the Washington Council government. OK. So just to clarify, so next week's meeting is a Finance Committee meeting.

So there isn't. There isn't a public comment period at the committee meeting itself, but we're back. We'll be bringing your. We'll be bringing it back to the full board meeting. Full Board of Supervisors meeting, at which point there will be a comment period, OK. And we will share these comments in our presentation next week. In terms of like a summary of what we heard around the need for more housing affordability and public private partnerships and the discrimination and need for for tenants to have more and residents to have more support and resources around their housing, those are things we'll share next week.

With the board, at least at the Finance Committee level, we're giving them what's called an information item. So we're kind of walking through his chance at this whole this presentation to

get them familiar with the plan and then they'll have the opportunity to ask questions or raise things they want us to kind of incorporate or think about as we move towards implementation. So because I didn't have anything written, would it make sense to then submit something? But pretty much what I said as well that you do have it, yes, I would recommend submitting something written because the more.

More comments are never a bad thing. We're gonna submit what we heard and and everything to to cog as, as Mr Hall said, but more comments are always a good thing.

And public commentary is open through March 31st. So again you can submit those to housing@thousand.gov dot any time between now and then. And I would just comment if anyone wants to watch that board process a lot. [In.gov/BIOS](https://www.in.gov/BIOS) is where all of the board information is posted and where you can find links to watch the board meetings if you want to.

Ma'am, did you have a question? I was just going to ask about documenting your comments in writing and where I could do that.

Yeah, if you if you want to write, write it out, you can drop it in in our office and and we'll scan it and upload it. And

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the office is way right here. Oh, OK. Yeah, right. OK. And on

this entire first floor, we'll grab you the copy of the

PowerPoint, which also has.

That information too, so I would speak, but I'm having asthma, so

I'm I just have to have somebody, of course. Well, OK.

Well, then I am going to officially close the public

comment periods of public hearing at 7:04 PM Eastern

Standard Time.

Thank you again for coming out this evening. You saved.