

Setting a Housing Policy Agenda

Parallel Policy and Planning Efforts

Council on Virginia's Future	
Authority	§§ 2.2-2683 through 2.2-2689, Code of Virginia
Stated Purpose	The Council on Virginia's Future designs the Roadmap for Virginia's Future, a planning and accountability process capable of creating and sustaining a consistent focus--throughout all functions and locations of state government--on those things most vital to Virginia's Future. The Roadmap is a planning process including steps such as: (i) developing a set of guiding principles that reflect public sentiment and are relevant to critical decision-making; (ii) establishing a long-term vision for the Commonwealth; (iii) conducting a situation analyses of core state service categories; (iv) setting long-term objectives for state services; (v) aligning state services to the long-term objectives; (vi) instituting a planning and performance management system consisting of strategic planning, performance measurement, program evaluation, and performance budgeting; and (vii) performing plan adjustments based on public input and evaluation of results.
Current Status	Beginning in 2004, the Council was required to develop and submit an annual balanced accountability scorecard assessing (i) current service performance, (ii) productivity improvement, and (iii) progress against long-term objectives. Since its inception, the Council has submitted interim reports and its initial evaluation documents, the Virginia Scorecard and the Virginia Report, which document progress among an array of agency service areas toward the attainment of long-term objectives.
Relationship to Housing Policy	Housing issues have not been an explicit area of concern within the Council's overall approach and none of the service area measures currently included in the Scorecard relate specifically to either the quality or quantity of housing in Virginia. However, the planning and performance model used by the Council could have relevance in the future as a means for documenting the impact of policies that might be developed relating to Virginia's quality of life.

Economic Development Policy	
Authority	§ 2.2-205, Code of Virginia
Stated Purpose	The Secretary of Commerce and Trade is required to lead a process for developing and implementing a written comprehensive economic development policy for the Commonwealth
Current Status	On Friday, September 29, governor Kaine released <i>Virginia Leading the Way</i> , the new Economic Development Strategic Plan for the state. The Governor issued an Executive Order to initiate the planning process. It provided the general schedule for completing the plan and created a Steering Committee representing a variety of groups interested in economic development. This highly collaborative process provided for interaction among the Governor's Cabinet and key economic and business leaders. During July and August, six public input meetings on the Economic Development Strategic Plan took place across the state. These provided opportunities to receive additional views on critical issues facing the Commonwealth.
Relationship to Housing Policy	Numerous public comments received during these input sessions addressed the absence of or need for affordable housing options as an important challenge to local, state, and regional efforts sustaining the continued economic development of the state. When it was released, the Strategic Plan noted how important it was for workers to live within reasonable commuting distances from their places of employment. It noted that in many parts of the state, the lack of affordable housing options makes this goal almost impossible to achieve. In other cases, particularly in rural areas where there has been little new housing development, limited housing options or long commutes may inhibit investment in new economic development ventures. The Plan concluded that for the state to remain economically competitive, Virginia must be able to ensure that decent, affordable housing is available to workers across the Commonwealth. As part of its goal for enhancing the state's already strong business climate, the Plan recommended a strategy of creating "incentives for the development and preservation of workforce housing to ensue that workers can live in the communities in which they work."

Urban Policy Vision and Priorities

Authority	§ 2.2-206, Code of Virginia
Stated Purpose	The Secretary of Commerce and Trade is required to lead a process that will: 1. Develop a report on the condition of the state's urban areas that: • Reviews of economic and social conditions in Virginia's cities; • Identifies inequities between those urban areas of economic growth and relatively low fiscal stress and those in economic decline with relatively high levels of fiscal stress; • Establishes specific and quantifiable benchmarks for addressing economic and social conditions and inequities within urban areas; • Prioritizes recommendations for specific actions by state agencies intended to meet the established performance benchmarks within a prescribed schedule; and establishing priorities for addressing those conditions. 2. Develop a system for tracking agency progress in meeting the benchmarks during the succeeding biennia; and 3. During the third year of each administration prepare a review and report on the performance of each agency in meeting the benchmarks
Current Status	Executive Order 32 establishes an Urban Policy Task force to participate in accomplishing the requirements of the statute. The Governor recently appointed this 22-member body, which is to provide additional insights on the economic, social and fiscal conditions of urban areas. An appointed senior urban policy advisor will advise the panel as it helps to develop benchmarks for tracking the effectiveness of state programs and recommends approaches encouraging collaboration among metropolitan localities. Public input sessions are being planned
Relationship to Housing Policy	Previous urban policy studies have focused on two types of problems—those relating to older cities in need of revitalization and those associated with rapidly growing and urbanizing communities. Housing is only one area incorporated in earlier studies. Other issues that may be considered in responding to the statute and executive order include the following: preserving existing affordable housing options, preventing or alleviating the concentration of lower-income housing in older urban centers, and meeting the challenges facing high-growth areas that need to build new infrastructure without adversely affecting affordable housing opportunities.

Community Integration Advisory Commission

Authority	§§ 2.2-2524-2.2-2529, Code of Virginia
Stated Purpose	Monitor the progress of all executive branch state agencies toward community integration of Virginians with disabilities in accordance with applicable state and federal laws so that persons with disabilities may enjoy the benefits of society and the freedoms of daily living.
Current Status	The statute codified a process already underway because of the Olmstead study that began earlier in the decade. During the study, teams addressed various aspects of the state's responses to the presence of persons with a variety of disabling conditions. Housing—in terms of its accessibility, affordability and availability--was and remains one area of continued concern.
Relationship to Housing Policy	The <i>Olmstead</i> decision and subsequent actions by Virginia portend a shift away from a relatively high level of institutionalization for persons with disabilities—particularly persons with mental or developmental disabilities—toward greater reliance on community-based responses. The Olmstead study identified housing and its relationship to a variety of supportive services as a resource critical to the full integration of persons with disabilities into communities.