

**Prepared for the  
DC Housing Priorities Coalition  
October 27, 2020**

B23-0736 Comprehensive Plan Amendment Act of 2020  
**Alternative Framing for Talking Points**

**Some Core Messaging Principles:**

*Or: How to persuade those who don't already agree with you?*

**Talk about Systems, not Villains**

- The Council is not the enemy. Inertia and outdated tools are barriers to achieving our best quality of life, including housing affordability, eliminating racial inequity, access to opportunities, and protecting the environment for future generations.

**Center Equity into Every Conversation**

- The Comp Plan centers Equity and we should promote that at every turn. What document has more influence over every aspect of the District's future than the Comp Plan?
- For those who are committed to Equity, the time for action and implementation is now.

**Tell the Story of "Us"**

- Thousands of comments, hundreds of people, dozens of meetings -- the level of engagement for this Comp Plan has been tremendous. Anyone who participated can see evidence that the public process made this document far stronger than it was in 2016.
- This is a community document, reflecting our shared values with more modern, thoughtful and effective ways to achieve them. It comes to the Council having been rigorously reviewed, edited, improved, and refined by many stakeholders with varying perspectives and needs.

**Connect & Elevate (Comp Plan) as Fundamental to achieving shared goals**

- The Framework Element tells the story of Us: our need for more healthy, sustainable, affordable quality of life, access to jobs and opportunities, and having resources and resilience to weather the unexpected.
- The Comp Plan chapters honor and expand upon the Framework Element the Council adopted last year staff and community have been working hard even during the pandemic to bring forward the best ideas and solutions to help District residents and communities as soon as possible.

## Alternative Framing / Messaging:

- Thank you for scheduling the November hearings on the Comprehensive Plan.
- We urge the Council to approve and enact the Comprehensive Plan Amendment Act in 2020
- The Comprehensive Plan governs many decisions and impacts District residents and sectors; residents, businesses, and other stakeholders are **ready to benefit from the good tools and benefits** incorporated into the version before you.
- Fortunately, because of the years of public process and active engagement by residents and constituencies, **this document does not contain many surprises**:
  - It reflects the thousands of comments submitted over countless meetings and discussions
  - It implements our longtime core values through modern and effective, measurable means
  - It honors and expands upon the Framework elements the Council has already adopted.
- In no category is this evolution more apparent than on the topic of **racial equity**.

**The proposed Comprehensive Plan is a fundamental part of the District's commitment to address its legacy of racial inequity.**

It acknowledges the consequences of past and current planning on Black and Brown residents, including:

- Wealth disparities
- health outcomes
- housing security

It explicitly works to reverse redlining, racial segregation, and other discriminatory practices

- Severe housing cost burdens are faced by very-low income District households, who are most likely to represent black and brown communities

It addresses stark racial inequities in the District spotlighted during the COVID-19 pandemic and economic crisis

- The Pandemic has disproportionately sickened and killed black and Latinx residents, cost jobs, and placed many at risk of homelessness.
- **The modern Comp Plan is designed explicitly** to better achieve widely supported District priorities including:
  - greater racial equity and access to opportunity
  - housing affordability
  - economic sustainability and equity
  - public health, including our plans to recover from the worst public health crisis in the past 100 years.

- **We support the Council's desire to review and affirm** that the Comp Plan reflects the community's values and will achieve our priorities across the District. **We are confident this can be done in a timely fashion because the community has done so much work for so long already to submit a Plan worthy of adoption.**
- **We hope the Council will treat review and adoption of the Comp Plan as it deserves - as a time-sensitive priority** to help thousands of District residents, employers, nonprofits, and other stakeholders succeed and have more sustainable opportunities to live, work, and grow. The time is now to move forward with the Comprehensive Plan.
- Thank you for your time and consideration.

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