November 23, 2021

Lyle Solla-Yates, Chairman, and Members of the Charlottesville Planning Commission
City of Charlottesville
P.O. Box 911
Charlottesville, VA 22902
via email: PlanningCommission@charlottesville.org

Dear Mr. Solla-Yates and Members of the Planning Commission:

Thank you for all of your work on the update of the Comprehensive Plan. We believe the City has taken an important first step in creating the conditions for a more equitable Charlottesville, and it would not have been possible without your many years of perseverance and thought.

As you consider your next critical contribution to equitable and affordable housing—the proposed CIP—we ask that you keep the following in mind:

1. The Affordable Housing Plan, which was adopted by Council, recommends $10 million in annual funding.

2. A full investment will leverage more than $100 million in additional funding from state and federal sources. These are funds that require a local match.

We appreciate that, in total, the proposed CIP includes $7.3 million in housing funding, which will support three critical initiatives: CRHA redevelopment, Friendship Court redevelopment, and the CSRAP supplemental rental assistance program. We support this funding.

We also are concerned about what is not funded. Critical initiatives that are unfunded include:

1. Housing rehabilitation
2. Homeownership
3. Supportive housing
4. An upcoming LIHTC project at the MACAA site

There is $925,000 presently allocated in the draft CIP to the Charlottesville Affordable Housing Fund (CAHF), but this amount is not enough to fund those four initiatives plus the necessary City administrative costs of managing an affordable housing program.

As such, we ask that your motion to recommend the CIP include an additional $2.7 million in funding for the CAHF, inclusive of funds specifically allocated for homeownership, housing rehabilitation, LIHTC, and supportive housing.
Without this investment, millions of dollars of leveraged state and federal funds will evaporate and desperately needed affordable housing efforts will stall. The housing sector only works if we strengthen interventions at all rungs of the housing ladder.

Please recommend a CIP that invests in a comprehensive range of initiatives that encompasses housing and supports for people experiencing homelessness; deeply affordable rental housing; preservation and improvement of the existing housing stock through critical rehab; and affordable homeownership.

Thank you very much for your consideration and for your ongoing work to build an equitable, fair, and dynamic Charlottesville.

Respectfully,

The members of CHAAHC:

- AHIP
- Charlottesville Redevelopment and Housing Authority
- Habitat for Humanity of Greater Charlottesville
- Piedmont Housing Alliance
- Thomas Jefferson Area Coalition for the Homeless