



**Human Rights Commission
Work Session
August 1, 2024
Hybrid Meeting
City Space, 100 5th Street NE, Charlottesville, VA 22902
6:30pm**

Agenda Packet Attachments

1. Agenda
2. Martha's Rules (for reference)
3. Summary of 2024 Expert Panel Legislative Recommendations
4. 2024 Legislative Priority Public Poll Response Summary
5. 2024 HRC Work Plan

Attachment 1



**Human Rights Commission
AGENDA
Work Session
Thursday, August 1, 2024
Hybrid Meeting
CitySpace, 100 5th St NE Charlottesville, VA 22902
6:30pm**

Please take Notice that this hybrid meeting of the Human Rights Commission is for the purposes of planning, developing, and drafting management and administration documents for the Human Rights Commission. This hybrid meeting will be a limited public forum to discuss the agenda items presented below and to ensure the continuity of services provided by the Commission. The Commission Chair may limit public comments or discussion points that are unrelated to agenda items or that pertain to topics outside the scope of this Agenda. This will be a hybrid meeting open to the public, and registration information for remote participation is available at www.charlottesville.gov/zoom.

The Commission welcomes comments and questions and commits to listening carefully and thoughtfully to what is presented. A maximum of sixteen public comment time slots are allotted per meeting. Each speaker will have three minutes to speak. The Commission requests that members of the public refrain from engaging in personal attacks against Commissioners and staff members and asks that comments and questions focus on matters related to human rights within the City.

1. WELCOME

- a. Call to Order
- b. Roll Call
- c. Mission (recited by all): *Act as a strong advocate to justice and equal opportunity by providing citywide leadership and guidance in the area of civil rights.*
- d. Notice: For members of the public participating virtually, if you experience technical difficulties, you may call 434-970-3115, and a staff person will assist you.

2. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC – IN PERSON ATTENDEES ONLY

- a. Public Comment

3. WORK SESSION

- a. Draft legislative agenda recommendations
- b. HRC Annual Work Plan
- c. New Business

4. MATTERS BY THE PUBLIC – IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL ATTENDEES

- a. Public Comment (webinar attendees use the “raise hand” function, phone attendees use *9)
- b. Commission response to Matters by the Public

5. COMMISSIONER UPDATES

6. NEXT STEPS & ADJOURN

*** ACTION NEEDED**

Individuals with disabilities who require assistance or special arrangements to participate in the public meeting may call the ADA Coordinator at (434) 987-1267 or submit a request via email to ada@charlottesville.gov. The City of Charlottesville requests that you provide a 48-hour notice so that proper arrangements may be made.

Attachment 2

Martha's Rules of Order
As adopted by the HRC on February 20, 2020

1. The proposal is presented. Clarifying questions are taken.
 - a. Proposal should always be in writing.
2. Friendly amendments are offered. Discussion is allowed only on the amendments.
 - a. Amendments should be prepared in advance when possible.
3. Speakers in favor of the proposal present their views.
 - a. This is not a time for debate.
 - b. Time limits should be set and enforced.
4. Speakers in opposition to the proposal present their views.
 - a. This is not a time for debate.
 - b. Time limits should be set and enforced.
5. General discussion and/or debate OR small group discussion time on the proposal is allowed.
 - a. Time limit on discussion is set by the group.
 - b. Facilitator helps group identify key issues.
 - c. Motion to table or refer is in order and requires $\frac{3}{4}$ vote.
6. First vote is taken.
 - a. People vote
 - i. In favor of the proposal, or
 - ii. Can live with the proposal, or
 - iii. Opposed to the proposal.
 - b. If a majority of those present votes "in favor" or "can live with," proceed to Step 8.
 - c. If less than a majority of those present votes "in favor" or "can live with," proposal dies.
7. Those voting in opposition are allowed to state their objections and concerns.
 - a. No discussion is allowed, only clarifying questions.
8. The second vote is taken as in Step 6.
 - a. It takes a majority of those present to override objections and pass the proposal.

Attachment 3

Summary of Recommendations from HRC Legislative Panels

Shayla Washington, BRACH

1. Create more truly affordable housing for individuals at or below 30% of the area median income (local).
2. Fund a Homelessness Services Outreach Coordinator position (local).
3. Have City Council provide more funding to agencies who do targeted eviction prevention to reduce the strain on non-profits (local).

Roy Fitch, Downtown Job Center/Home to Hope

1. Create limits for security deposits or prevent those with criminal backgrounds or lower incomes from having to pay more.
2. Build more temporary shelters (local).

George Dillard, NAACP

1. Make affordable housing actually affordable for low-income individuals.
 - a. Instate limits on additional costs like parking.

Elizabeth Stark, Charlottesville DSA

1. Local recommendations
 - a. Provide tenants with relief during crisis situations.
 - b. Increase funding for the Community Resource Line to allow individuals to receive more relief.
 - i. Tie funding to current market rent.
 - c. Create a means for those who do not qualify for the Legal Aid Justice Center nor Central Virginia Legal Aid Society to acquire representation.
 - d. Increase shelter for families.
 - e. Expand wraparound services to be able to address emergencies during non-business hours.
 - f. Adapt services to market-rate rent.
 - g. Share tenant resources in plan English.
2. State recommendations
 - a. Reinstate 14-day pay or quit notices.
 - b. Create an option for payment plan to account for emergencies.
 - c. Create more restrictions on when landlords are allowed to refuse a lease renewal.
 - d. Ensure that tenants may assert issues with unit conditions without fear of retaliation, even during evictions.
 - e. Makes transparent all additional fees on a lease.

Deidre Creasy-Qurindoongo

1. Create some kind of unrestricted funding that is individualizable (local).

Laura Dobbs, HOME

- 1) Limit application fees or allow groups of tenants to submit a single application.
- 2) Require more transparency during the tenant screening process. Require landlords to list minimum criteria before an application, and provide reasons for a tenant's application denial.
- 3) Remove barriers to accessing consumer reports for tenants.
- 4) Limit security deposits or prevent those with lower credits scores from paying larger security deposits in addition to other fees.
- 5) Expand 14-day pay or quit to a permanent status.
- 6) Fund 5000 Families, a state voucher program specific to families with children.
- 7) Increase protections against landlord retaliation. Include harassment, non-lease renewal, etc., as forms of landlord retaliation.
 - a) Prevent eviction or threats of eviction as being used as methods of coercion for rent payments.
- 8) Instate low-income owner occupant property tax relief, which would require localities to provide tax relief to low-income homeowners.
- 9) Specific to voucher holders:
 - a) Calculate income requirements for units based on voucher holder's portion of payment, not overall rent.
 - b) Create a security deposit fund for voucher holders that landlords may use if there is damage after a tenant vacates.
 - c) Prevent application denial or rent renewal on the basis of having received pandemic relief.
 - d) Adjust payment standards for voucher holders.
 - e) Allow voucher holders to use their vouchers in other jurisdictions.

Dr. Elizabeth Johnson, Alexandria Human Rights Commission

- 1) Priorities to protect and support underserved populations:
 - a) Prevent evictions and protect housed individuals and families facing legislative housing challenges.
 - b) Reinstate the 14-day payer quit notice.
 - c) Require full fee disclosure and transparency. Require any fee increases to coincide with the terms of a lease.
 - d) Require that critical lease information be made available in languages other than English.
 - e) Establish a minimum amount owed for eviction filings.

Virginia Jenkot, Virginia Beach Human Rights Commission

Michael Simms, Fairfax County Office of Human Rights & Equity Programs

Katrina Callsen, VA Delegate of District 54

- 1) Support comprehensive probation reform bill that would offer more support to those experiencing re-entry.
- 2) Pursue one percent sales tax increase.
- 3) Allow using Medicaid funds to fund homelessness and gun violence prevention programs.
- 4) Currently researching:

- a) Require police vehicles to have external defibrillators.
- b) Allocate Medicare and Medicaid funds for addressing homelessness and affordable housing.
- c) Allow Jaunt to do collective bargaining.
- d) Fund youth court docket, a diversion program for juveniles moving through the court system.

Creigh Deeds, VA Senator of District 11

- 1) Expand electronic meeting flexibility by allowing localities to create their own policies regarding virtual meetings.
- 2) Support the expansion of renewable energy to remove carbon from energy production by 2050.
- 3) Support the development of increased services for those with mental illnesses and substance abuse.
- 4) Support campaign finance reform.

Virginia Eviction Reduction Program Advisory Committee

- 1) Create an expungement process for tenants who have lost eviction cases in court and have an eviction on their record.
- 2) Require judges to verify whether landlords and tenants have explored the option of a payment plan before ruling on an eviction.
- 3) Require judges to verify whether landlords provided tenants' rights information along with the pay or quit notice before ruling on an eviction.
- 4) Support a state-funded housing voucher program.
- 5) Create enabling legislation for judges to have the option to mandate tenant/landlord mediation prior to ruling on an eviction case.

Attachment 4

Human Rights Commission Legislative Priorities Public Poll Responses

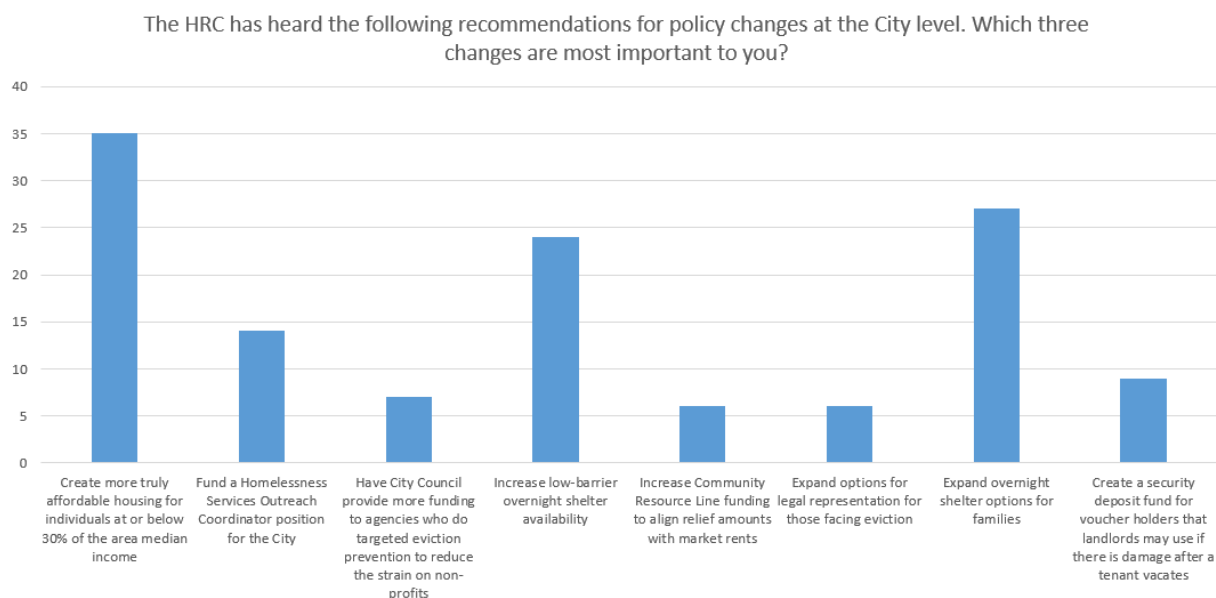
Open 07/23/2024 - 07/30/2024

Question #1:

The HRC has heard the following recommendations for policy changes at the City level. Which three changes are most important to you?

Response summary:

1. Create more truly affordable housing for individuals at or below 30% of the area median income
2. Expand overnight shelter options for families
3. Increase low-barrier overnight shelter availability



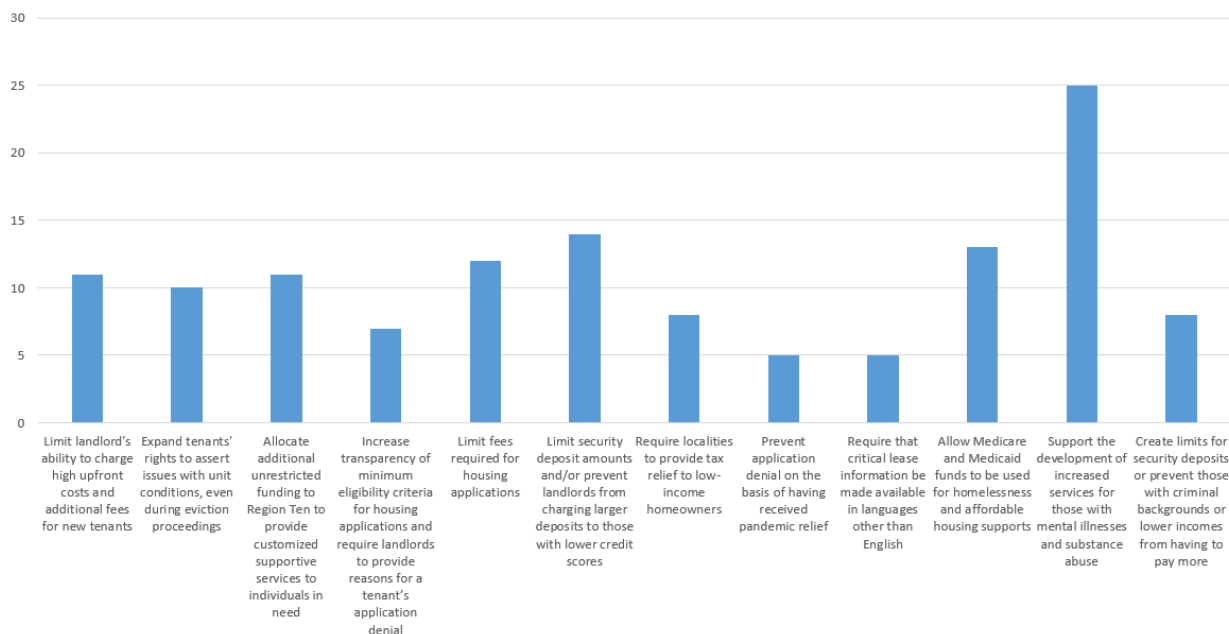
Question #2:

The HRC has heard the following recommendations for state-level policy changes related to housing and supportive services. Which three changes are most important to you?

Response summary:

1. Support the development of increased services for those with mental illnesses and substance abuse
2. Limit security deposit amounts and/or prevent landlords from charging larger deposits to those with lower credit scores
3. Allow Medicare and Medicaid funds to be used for homelessness and affordable housing supports

The HRC has heard the following recommendations for state-level policy changes related to housing and supportive services. Which three changes are most important to you?



Question #3:

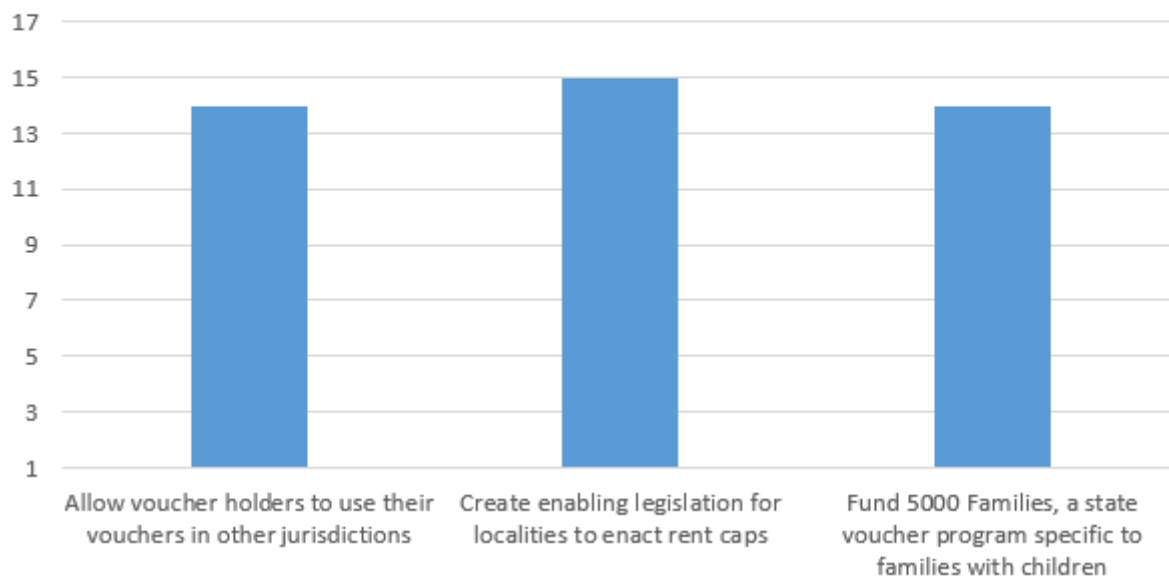
The HRC has heard the following recommendations for state-level policy changes related to vouchers. Which of the following suggested changes is most important to you?

Response summary:

1. Create enabling legislation for localities to enact rent caps

Note: this was most picked by a margin of 1; codifying voucher portability and funding 5000 families were tied for second

The HRC has heard the following recommendations for state-level policy changes related to vouchers. Which of the following suggested changes is most important to you?



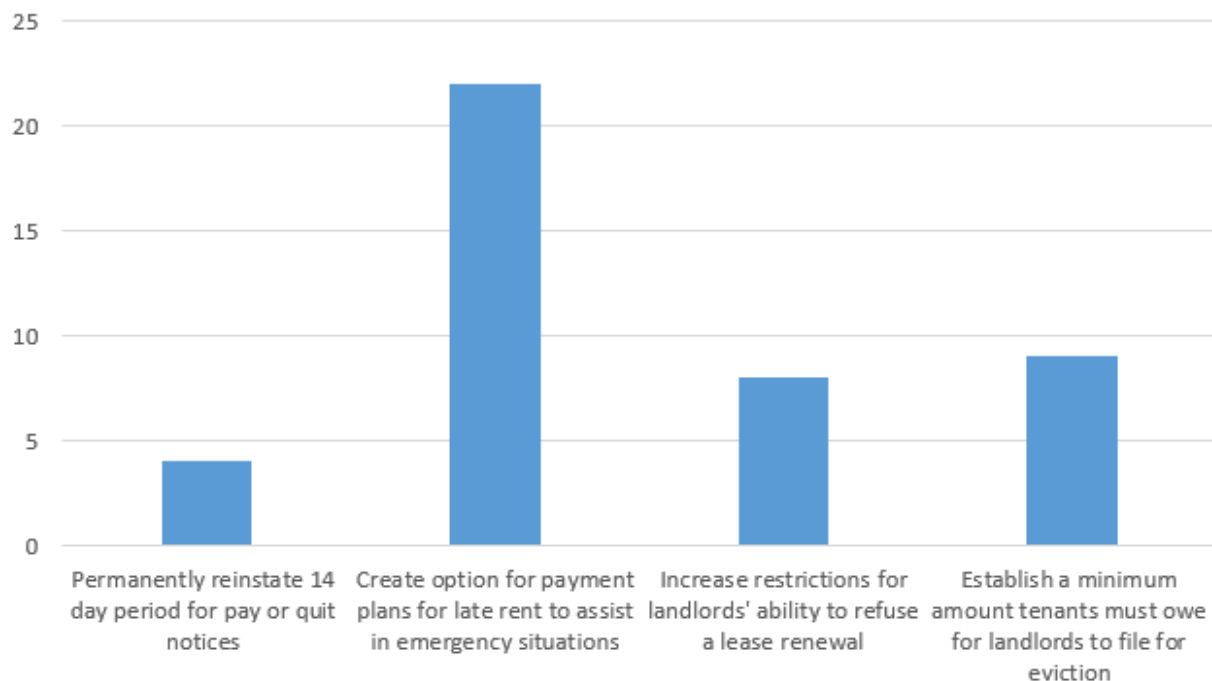
Question #4:

The HRC has heard the following recommendations for state-level policy changes related to eviction prevention. Which of the following suggested changes is most important to you?

Response summary:

1. Create option for payment plans for late rent to assist in emergency situations
2. Establish a minimum amount tenants must owe for landlords to file for eviction
3. Increase restrictions for landlords' ability to refuse a lease renewal

The HRC has heard the following recommendations for state-level policy changes related to eviction prevention. Which of the following suggested changes is most important to you?



Question #5:

I've noticed a different policy or practice that is contributing to housing inequity in Charlottesville:

- Focus on getting rid of short-term rentals (airbnbs) to increase available housing.
- Employment opportunities and employment discrimination in hiring, raises, firing significantly impact the ability of low income and POC residents from accessing housing in Charlottesville. As rents increase, employment opportunities become a key factor in displacement of low income residents. Address the key foundational issues affecting equitable housing. Have a year long study of Charlottesville employers that includes economists, labor experts and employment law experts who understand racial discrimination to make policy recommendations to the City Council.
- Prevent the sale to a developer of the Carlton Avenue trailer park. Spend funds to spruce up units that need it. The facility offers much needed low cost housing.
- The public - including even many engaged community members - default to calling in the police to deal with our low-income and unhoused population. I want to see more support services so that the police are repurposed to focus on real crime prevention and not the problems causing these systemic issues in our community. We need more education to the public about how to engage with these underserved communities, how to pitch in to help, and how to reach out for additional services when a problem is observed.
- Letting developers develop unsuitable land (steep hillsides, in flood prone areas, in a swamp)
- The city of Charlottesville is constantly pushing people out of their neighborhoods to make room for big developers.
- There seems to be a drastic increase in out of town, out of state and out of country investors taking over the development of our city, with only short-term gains seemingly the primary motivation. Very little effort goes to assessing the long-term strain on infrastructure and historic community cohesiveness. The drastic increase of high-end real estate development has marginalized the city and is contributing to homelessness.
- Democrat meddling in free markets. Buying votes with government giveaways.
- The CAHF seems to be a flawed program - allowing developers too much negotiation and flexibility does not adequately supplement the affordable housing initiatives in the city.
- There are areas that are being purchased up and gentrification is rampant. Keep Charlottesville local and affordable and it will pay back the loyalty.
- Lack of affordable housing for working folks who are not classified as poor but still struggle to make ends meet
- Minimum lot sizes, frontage requirements, and the inability of individuals to sub-divide their property.
- Severe lack available rental housing

- For all of the propositions, who is going to pay the money to fund that? Us? Landlords? Tell that to my fil who had squatters for a year, did drugs (evidence was left behind), couldn't pay their water or electric bill and chose to literally poop in the bathtub for months, it took police coming out two times in one day to finally evict them and one claimed stomach problems so the police had to knock on the bedroom door, I mean pounded until she finally came out. Meanwhile the boyfriend was cleaning his truck instead of packing up and getting out. Long story short, he lost control of a car, hit the cop car and she had the nerve to ask us if we would take her dog after she tried to leave it behind. Thousands in lost rent and damages. In addition the "unrestricted " funding to Region Ten, really no matter what entity, is disturbing.
- Housing Developers in the area keep using the land to make luxury apartments no one can afford. It would be nice if some of this land could be used for simple, affordable housing instead.
- A lack of restrictions on a landlord's ability to refuse renewal.
- Rent increases outpacing wage increases.
- Those who make minimum wage have no access to affordable housing and are put on a "waiting list" even after paying a 32 dollar application fee and then not getting any phone calls back or information on availability of rental. Case in point: Hearthwood Apartments
- Require people to have a job or perform some community service (can be as simple as pick up trash on the streets) in order to qualify for housing assistance or overnight shelter use. People must have skin in the game even at a tiny level, it also creates dignity and respect and the sense of having "earned" the service.
- This server is a joke. Does nothing for seniors that are being taxed out of their homes

Question #6:

Is there anything else would you like the Human Rights Commission to think about?

- I would like to see the HRC to a deep dive on employment discrimination in Charlottesville. This would include a survey and interviews with low income and POC as to their experiences with hiring, raises, firing, etc. The research should include an analysis of employment practices of all major employers in the City and County. How is employment discrimination based on race and gender impacting the low-income housing crisis. Look at employment by race at each level upper management, middle management and line workers to determine the extent of employment discrimination in cville. Create jobs programs for CHS students with major employers so HS graduates have some hope of decent employment after graduation. The lack of hope is what is leading to school disengagement and disruptions at school. Many POC students understand that a white HS graduate without a HS diploma is more likely to get a job in cville than a POC student with a HS diploma. This kills hope. The original intent of the HRC was for POC residents to get effective relief in cases of racial discrimination. Is the HRC doing this with employment discrimination? Do you have a FEPA agreement with the EEOC? Are you assertively investigating complaints of employment discrimination?
- These are very bad proposals by the Human Rights Commission!
- Please plan for housing for our homeless neighbors and include medical, psychological, nutritional aid and drug rehabilitation.
- What is causing the increase in homelessness in the downtown area over the past 10-15 years? It seems that more and more people who clearly need mental health services are living on the downtown mall.
- The HRC is on the right path and this survey is proof of that. We need wholistic solutions for our community that provide lasting benefits to everyone who chooses to call this area home.
- getting back to original mission of commission about discriminations
- Fair housing practices for all
- There should be a restriction or limitation placed on the amount of property any individual, institution or corporation can own or develop.
- You are a waste of public resources. Time to close up shop.
- Create more options for folks in middle income brackets to avoid high rent
- Develop a financing mechanism which low-income homeowners can utilize to build pre-approved ADU's.
- Involve Community base organizations that advocate for equity, inclusion and fair housing processes for all citizens.
- Anything which can help tenants keep their homes would be best.
- Single heads of household should have a different rent structure from college students.
- Yes. We desperately need a men's shelter and more mens services. We have a SHE shelter and we need a He Shelter to provide only men (since the SHE shelter serves only

women) with needed services, education, domestic abuse information, counseling, substance addiction treatment. As a whole community, we need more involvement from the affluent members of Charlottesville agencies to be proponents and advocates for a healthier community within Charlottesville city. UVA resides within a community of almost 20 percent of the population being homeless. 23.6% of the population for whom poverty status is determined in Charlottesville, VA (10.3k out of 43.5k people) live below the poverty line, a number that is higher than the national average of 12.5% (datausa.io) Why are we building Hiltons when our community members are sleeping in the streets? This city needs to address this situation immediately. It is sickening to see the number of Teslas in a city that can't even open the Red Carpet Inn supposed shelter this year for those making minimum wage and cannot afford a 1000 rental per month.

- I would like a government commission that actively engages in ongoing communication with tenants about their rental housing situation and relationship with their landlord. Too many landlords avoid or are slow to act on house maintenance which they are responsible for but are quick to evict or raise rent. The relationship is utterly imbalanced in the favor of landlords in the current housing market.

Attachment 5

**Human Rights Commission
Annual Focus Areas, Goals, & Work Plan
March 2024 – February 2025**

Primary Focus Area(s):

1. Housing
 - a. Homelessness
 - i. City policies
 1. Shelter
 2. Wraparound services
 - ii. Expert panel and fact gathering to determine current trends
 - b. Systemic Barriers
 - i. Restrictive housing access policies based on criminal records
 - ii. Excessive rental costs
 - iii. Excessive application fees
 - iv. Source of funds
 1. Rents for market rate units above HUD voucher payment standards
 2. Rental properties in states of disrepair that can't pass HUD voucher inspections

Secondary Focus Area(s):

1. Legislative recommendation
 - a. Removing voter exclusion from state constitution
 - b. Rental application fees
 - c. Rental registry
 - d. Proactive rental inspections
 - e. Legal representation for people facing eviction
 - f. Anything housing related the emerges from primary focus areas
 - g. Amplifying local food justice initiatives
2. Ally/Safe Space training program development
3. Reparations
 - a. Public discussion to determine public interest and priorities of impacted communities

Annual Goals and Ordinance Alignment

Consider developing goals that align with the primary and secondary focus areas, where applicable.

Goals	Human Rights Ordinance Alignment
Adopt an amended draft of the Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance for presentation to City Council by June 2024.	• Sec. 2-433. (a) Individual Assistance • Sec. 2-433. (d) Federal Workshares • Sec. 2-433. (f) Commission Policies • Sec. 2-439.1. Enforcement Authority

Complete public hearing training following the adoption of the revised Charlottesville Human Rights Ordinance.	• Sec. 2-433. (a) Individual Assistance • Sec. 2-433. (d) Federal Workshares • Sec. 2-433. (f) Commission Policies • Sec. 2-439.1. Enforcement Authority
Plan and hold a public panel with experts in housing to focus on homelessness (shelter and wraparound services) and barriers to entering stable housing during the June 6, 2024 HRC Work Session.	• Sec. 2-433. (b) Awareness and Guidance • Sec. 2-433. (d) Federal Workshares • Sec. 2-434. Community dialogue and engagement
Submit policy recommendations to City Council pertaining to housing issues by October. <i>Note: budget-related recommendations should be made by October 2024 for fiscal year 2026.</i>	• Sec. 2-433. (c) City Policies • Sec. 2-435. Systemic Issues
Submit a letter with legislative recommendations focused on homelessness and systemic barriers to housing to City Council by August 20, 2024.	• Sec. 2-433. (e) Legislative Program

March 2023 – February 2024 HRC Work Plan

Actions should support the goals identified above.

Month	Actions
March	• Annual Meeting (3/9)
April	• Work Session (4/4: Carver Rec.) ◦ Finalize 2024 Annual Goals and Work Plan • Regular Meeting (4/18: City Space) ◦ Training: FOIA/COIA/VPRA ◦ Expert panel planning discussion • Actions Between Meetings ◦ June expert panel outreach (OHR staff to work with Chair and Vice Chair to identify panelists) -- DONE ◦ Prepare draft ordinance for review – DONE
May	• Work Session (5/2: City Space) ◦ Review proposed ordinance amendments • Regular Meeting (5/16: City Space) ◦ (Open) • Actions Between Meetings ◦ Finalize June expert panelist list - DONE ◦ Outreach for July Legislative agenda expert panel – Staff working on this ◦ Commissioners talk to individuals in the community regarding work done on reparations – Chair will work on this ◦ OHR staff will collaborate with partners to develop Ally/Safe Space training – in progress ◦ Chair and OHR staff prepare to present CY2023 annual report to Council - DONE

Month	Actions
June	• Work Session (6/6: Carver Rec.) ◦ Expert Panel: Housing, homelessness, and wraparound services. - DONE • Regular Meeting (6/20: City Space) ◦ Proposed: Adopt ordinance amendments – DONE ◦ HRC Research Presentation (Ginny Helmandollar) - DONE • Actions Between Meetings ◦ June 3: Present CY2023 Annual Report to Council (Chair and Director) - DONE ◦ Tentative: VAHR Conference
July	• Work Session (CANCELED) ◦ (Note: the first Thursday in July is July 4th) • Regular Meeting (7/18: City Space) ◦ Expert Panel: Focus Area Legislative Priorities - DONE • Actions Between Meetings ◦ Proposed: Present Ordinance Revisions to Council - DONE ◦ OHR staff finalize training opportunities for HRC public hearings – pending ordinance changes
August	• Work Session (8/1: City Space) ◦ Draft legislative recommendations • Regular Meeting (8/15: City Space) ◦ Proposed: Adopt legislative recommendations ◦ Revisit HRC annual calendar • Actions Between Meetings ◦ Proposed: Present Legislative Recommendations to Council
September	• Work Session (9/5: City Space) ◦ Tentative: Public Hearing training • Regular Meeting (9/19: City Space) ◦ Discuss focus area City policy recommendations based on earlier panels and research • Actions Between Meetings ◦ Amend HRC Rules & Procedures regarding elections and language around annual meetings
October	• Work Session (10/3: City Space) • Regular Meeting (10/17: May need to relocate to Carver Rec for City Council budget session) ◦ Form Officer Nomination Committee ◦ Finalize policy recommendations for submission to City Council • Actions Between Meetings ◦ Submit additional recommendations to Council ◦ Nominating Committee begins nomination process
November	• Work Session (11/7: City Space) • Regular Meeting (11/21: City Space) ◦ Amend Rules & Procedures to reflect new election timeframe • Actions Between Meetings
December	• Work Session (12/5: City Space) • Regular Meeting (12/19: City Space) ◦ Officer Nominations • Actions Between Meetings
January	• Work Session (1/2: City Space) • Regular Meeting (1/16: City Space) • Actions Between Meetings
February	• Work Session (2/6: May need to relocate to Carver Rec for City Council budget session) • Regular Meeting (2/20: City Space) • Actions Between Meetings