February 9, 2021

The Hon. Phil Mendelson, Chairman
Committee of the Whole
Council of the District of Columbia
1350 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, D.C. 20004

RE: Housing Priorities Coalition & Partners Urge DC Council to Pass Comprehensive Plan Amendment Act of 2020 (B23-0736)

Dear Chairman Mendelson and members of the DC Council:

The Housing Priorities Coalition (HPC) and fellow stakeholders call on the Council to pass the updated Comprehensive (Comp) Plan as soon as possible. 2020 was a year that none of us ever saw coming, and one that we will never forget. The simultaneous pandemics we face have only exacerbated the very real challenges our city is battling. And yet, one of our most critical tools to address housing affordability, racial equity and a number of other challenges is awaiting adoption by the DC Council. The Comp Plan is a critical mechanism that sets a long-term vision for the District, to help inform decision-making for residents, officials, and stakeholders. The plan is vital to land use, zoning and shaping the District's budget.

As it stands, the Comp Plan is outdated and does not provide the long-term vision for an inclusive city. Written in 2006 and amended in 2011, much has changed over the last decade, and we must adopt an updated plan that reflects today's conditions, opportunities, and challenges. Inertia and outdated tools are barriers to achieving our best quality of life, including housing affordability, eliminating racial inequity, access to opportunities, and protecting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. COVID-19, its economic effects, and civil unrest highlight the need for the Comp Plan to appropriately guide the District through and beyond these events. Simply put, we can't afford to go any longer without an updated Comp Plan on the books.

In October 2019, the Council made great strides by passing key amendments to the Comp Plan's Framework Element. These critical revisions ensure that the Comp Plan prioritizes affordable housing and the prevention of displacement. We thank you for your leadership and are confident that you will move swiftly to pass the remaining updates outlined below.

The proposed updated Comp Plan benefits us all by: setting goals for affordable housing in every neighborhood; increasing capacity for new homes near Metro and along transit corridors in the Future Land Use Map; removing exclusionary language and using a racial equity lens throughout official decision-making; and facilitating construction of more than a thousand affordable homes stalled in legal limbo. The revised plan also takes into account that where an individual lives is still one of the greatest predictors of health and economic outcomes. This updated version helps break down barriers to affordable housing across the City, which is a critical step in the District's racial justice efforts.

The community has spoken. HPC's advocacy is compounded with thousands of comments from stakeholders who share our values on housing affordability and racial equity. This is truly a community document, and it comes to the Council having been rigorously reviewed, edited, improved, and refined.

HPC acknowledges that the Comp Plan is crafted to be a guiding document, and we stand behind the intended outcomes of the proposed update. Further, we are committed to continued advocacy with the Mayor, Council, committees and agencies to hold the City accountable to advancing policy that improves the quality of life for all Washingtonians. We are confident the Council can proceed in a timely fashion because the community has contributed to the extensive work for a Plan worthy of adoption. We urge the Council to treat the review and adoption of the Comp Plan as an urgent priority to help thousands of District residents,

employers, and stakeholders have more sustainable opportunities to live, work, and grow. The time is now to move forward with the Comprehensive Plan.

Sincerely,

Enterprise Community Partners
DC Fiscal Policy Institute
Coalition for Smarter Growth
Greater Greater Washington
United Planning Organization (UPO)
Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC)
Housing Association of Nonprofit Developers (HAND)
Somerset Development Company
Coalition for Nonprofit Housing and Economic Development (CNHED)
Alex Lopez, ANC Commissioner 6E02
Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing
David Cristeal, ANC Commissioner 3F01
DC Environmental Network
Dunford Services, PLLC
Enterprise Community Partners
H Street Community Development Corporation
Housing Options & Planning Enterprises
Housing Up
Institute for Market Transformation (IMT)
Jubilee Housing Inc.
Just Economics LLC
KPG Design Studio
Law Office of Hank Brothers
Low Income Investment Fund (LIIF)
Manna, Inc.
Michaels Development Company
Minim Homes
Mission First Housing Development Corporation
Neighborhood Associates Corporation
New Urban Mobility Alliance
R. McGhee & Associates
Real Estate Solutions
Rebuilding Together DC Alexandria
Tyler House Tenant Association
U.S Vets Homeless Feeding & Housing Services
WARD3VISION
Aaron Parrott
Adam Chamy
Adriana Cordero
Adrienne Ameel
Allison Davis
Amanda Seligman
Andrew Cocke
Andrew DeFrank
Andrew Thomas McCormack
Antoinette Russin
Aprille Ericsson
Ariel Kennedy
Aurora Ferrari
Bob Ward
Brennan Barber
Brian Goggin
Charles Weak
Chris Jamieson
Christine Matthews
Corey Holman
Daphna Atias
Donald Malnati
Dwight .J. Mayes
Ed Carley
Elaine Johnson
Elina Bravve
Elizabeth A. Zgoda
Elizabeth Pomper
Ellen Bass
Ellen Herr
Elnora Brown
Emily Conrad
Evan Davis
Evelyn Fraser
Faye Harbottle
Geoffrey Anderson
Glenn Stanley
Hannah Olsen
Hilary S. Chapman
Ileana Schinder
J.M. Hiatt
James Chapman
Jane Hardin
Janell Pagats
Janine Berger
Jeffrey Levine
Jeffrey Norman
Jenean E. McKay
John Welsh
Jolene Hernon
Jonathan Parker
June Esposito
Kayleigh Campbell
Keith Mellnick
Kevin O'Halloran
Kevin Scott O'Brien
Kimberly Daulton
Kristin Purdy
Kristina Trotta
Larry Brace
Larry Cohen
Leith Bernard
Linda Toth
Liz Borkowski
Louis Thomas
M. Otto Condon
Malcolm Mossman
Marc Gazda
Marci Edwards
Marcie Cohen
Mariana Tamayo
Marlene Berlin
Mary Budarz
Matthew Premysler
Matthias Paustian
Max I. Fuld
Megan Draheim
Melissa Dickson
Melissa L Kim
Michael Gala
Michael Whelan
Mitch Crispell
Natalie Avery
Nathaniel Baldwin
Nick Burger
Noah Bell
Nonna A. Noto
Pam Hill
Pamela Wessling
Pat Munoz
Patricia A. Palmer
Paul Hazen
Paul William Ruppert
Paula Hirschoff
Paula M. Cohen
Penny Parker
Peyton Jane Gibson
Quinn K. Pregliasco
Rachel L. Davis
Ralph Garboushian
Rhys Tucker
Rich McPhillips
Richard Aboulafia
Robert Sheehan
Ronald Eichner
Sauleh Siddiqui
Seth D. Whetzel
Shirley Snowden
Stacey Young
Stephen Varga
Susan Bennett
Thomas Hutcheson
Thor Beck
Tim Lawless
Tom Quinn
Trent Thelen
Troy Rothman
Tyler Sanders
Val Wheeler
Walter Tersch
William Feeney
Yvette Thompson
Yvonne Mwangi
Zachary Ferguson