

## HUD and VA reach out to D.C. homeless community and Veterans

On Jan. 29, hundreds of volunteers walked the streets of Washington, D.C. in search of the city's homeless. The goal was to find and count as many of them as possible in order to get a snapshot—a "Point-in-Time" count—of the current homeless population. Released in Nov. 2013, HUD's 2013 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress found significant and measureable progress to reduce the scale of long-term or 'chronic' homelessness as well as homelessness experienced by Veterans and families. Meanwhile, local homeless housing and service providers in the District of Columbia reported that the number of sheltered and unsheltered persons had actually increased by 326 individuals since 2010; the year the federal government established a strategic plan to end homelessness. HUD's Belinda Fadlemola, pictured to the left of Secretary Shaun Donovan, volunteered for this year's count as well as coordinated Region III's PIT Count this year. To see video footage from the Washington, D. C. count, [click here](#) and to see the VA's Robert Turtill's photographs, [click here](#).



National Capital Area Field Office Director Marvin Turner appeared with Dr. Dwane Jones, Director of the University of the District of Columbia Land-grant Center for Sustainable Development, in a recent episode of the Universities' television series CAUSES hosted by Sabine O'Hara, Dean of the University of the District of Columbia's College of Agriculture, Urban Sustainability and Environmental Sciences. Their program motto, **CAUSES is—Healthy Cities—Healthy People!** helps guide the school's research-based community education, academic programs, and partnership with government and community organizations. The cable TV-aired discussion is designed to help viewers gain a deeper appreciation for the connection between housing, urban development, and health. To view the episode, [click here](#).



In January, the Arlington County Board (Virginia) unanimously approved **The Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH) proposal to redevelop the Carlyn Springs Apartments and create 71 net new committed affordable rental apartments.** "We are excited to redevelop our 27-unit property into The Springs Apartments, a new five-story, 104-unit, family-friendly affordable property that is close to the Ballston Metro," said APAH President/CEO Nina Janopaul. "APAH and the County are leveraging the land value of this close-in location to create 71 new affordable apartments, an increase of 151 bedrooms, with the promise to keep them affordable for the next 60 years." Rendering courtesy of KGD Architecture. For the complete story, [click here](#).

## MARYLAND

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### HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan Makes Baltimore His First Better Buildings Challenge Visit

Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake and Housing Authority of Baltimore City (HABC) Deputy Executive Director Anthony Scott were joined by HUD Secretary Shaun Donovan, U.S. Senator Ben Cardin (D-MD), Maryland Department of Housing & Community Development Secretary Ray Skinner, HUD's Jane C.W. Vincent and Carol Payne and residents on a tour of Cherry Hill Homes to highlight the energy efficiency updates being implemented as part of the Obama Administration's [Better Buildings Challenge](#). As the President noted in his State of the Union, "Climate change is a fact." In his Climate Action Plan, he has directed the Administration to work with states, communities, businesses and others to reduce energy use. "Being a partner in President Obama's Better Buildings Challenge is an incredible honor," said Mayor Rawlings-Blake. "Our commitment to reduce energy consumption will help create a better environment for our residents and will help protect our planet for future generations." The Better Buildings Challenge was recently extended to include multifamily developments in which building owners commit to a 20 percent portfolio-wide energy reduction over the next decade. HABC was among the first partners to join the Better Buildings Challenge. Nationwide, there are 53 multifamily partners, which represent roughly 200 million square feet and over



## Cyclist Appeal

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because I can concentrate on handling my bike and not worry about whether nearby drivers are in control of their cars.”

Just like Browne, more and more people in the Washington area are getting serious about cycling — according to U.S. census data, the percentage of Washingtonians commuting by bike jumped from 1.2 percent in 2000 to 4.1 percent in 2012, meaning thousands of new commuters are hitting the trails and bike lanes.

### nextweek

To minimize rent expenses, some renters carve up small apartments with furniture and cram in. Read more in next week's Ready to Rent.

Those cyclists are making bike access a top priority in their housing hunts. That's something leaders in the rental market are catching on to — and taking advantage of.

Some chic luxury apartment buildings, such as Ava H Street (318 I St. NE; 877-714-4718, [avahstreetdistrictapartments.com](http://avahstreetdistrictapartments.com)), boast of indoor bike storage and repair rooms, as well as apartments with built-in “gear walls” — space to hang bikes, helmets and more. The Alaire at Twinbrook Station (1101 Higgins Place, Rockville; 301-770-4440, [thealaire.com](http://thealaire.com)), has an in-building bikeshare and bike racks in the parking garage.

“[The Alaire] was the first residential project where we focused



As the Washington area expands its bike infrastructure, the number of cyclists have increased in the region. According to U.S. census data, the percentage of Washingtonians commuting by bike jumped from 1.2 percent in 2000 to 4.1 percent in 2012.

on bike-friendliness as an end in and of itself,” says Tony Greenberg, a developer for JBG who oversees its projects at Twinbrook. “Bike-friendliness as a consumer preference is fairly well established at this point. It's not a fad.”

Cycling infrastructure is increasingly becoming a selling point for Alexandria Realtor Kevin Posner's rental clients.

“We have a fair number of apartment buildings that are close to the Mount Vernon Trail,

and when I mention that amenity, that really grabs their attention,” he says. The Mount Vernon Trail offers a paved path for Northern Virginia cyclists riding into D.C., running 18 miles from Rosslyn to Mount Vernon.

But avid cyclists don't have to rent in big high-rises to make biking feasible.

Smaller buildings may offer ground-level entrances, so that you can roll your wheels into your bedroom. Browne's townhouse has a

covered porch, a perfect space to store seven bikes.

And if you're not sure where the best trails and bike lanes for your commute are, you can comb through D.C.'s bike maps ([1.usa.gov/1k2hDYX](http://1.usa.gov/1k2hDYX)).

Even for experienced riders, bike lanes and trails make life easier by giving them room to zoom without cars in the way, cyclists say. Most trails in the region ban motorized vehicles, though a few connect with bike lanes, which

share pavement with cars.

“Even for those of us comfortable riding in traffic ... there's always some level of risk or insecurity about sharing space with traffic,” says Shane Farthing, president of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (2599 Ontario Road NW; 202-518-0524, [waba.org](http://waba.org)).

Picking a bike-friendly rental can also save on transportation costs, Farthing says. Being willing to bike to a Metro, instead of living on top of one, can save renters hundreds of dollars every month and allow them to live in neighborhoods with more of a quiet, suburban feel.

### Cyclists are making bike access a top priority in their housing hunts.

“The [apartments] around the Metro are some of the most expensive,” he says. “Having a bike is a way you can expand your mobility.”

Browne is one such cyclist who isn't paying Metro fares, thanks to his bike: He hasn't commuted via Metro in two years. He also doesn't own a car.

“Brookland and the Met Branch Trail are nice because they're not really in the middle of things,” he says. “With a bike, it's just very easy to get 15 minutes to the middle of things — without having to live right in the middle.”

LIZ ESSLEY WHYTE (FOR EXPRESS)



This rendering depicts the 104-unit building planned for North Carlin Springs Road.

## Arlington to Lend \$7.8M for Housing

County funding will help a nonprofit build affordable units

### Redevelopment

The Arlington County Board recently approved a \$7.8 million loan to a local nonprofit to build an apartment house primarily dedicated to below-market-rate units for families that can't afford the county's expensive rents.

Arlington Partnership for

Affordable Housing plans to raze the 27-unit Carlyn Springs Apartments and replace them with a five-story, 104-unit complex at North Carlin Springs Road and North Thomas Street.

Ninety-eight of the new apartments would be affordable to people who make 60 percent or less of the area median income. For a family of four, that median is about \$107,000. Current tenants would get rental assistance during reconstruction.

“These are homes that will

stay affordable for generations to come,” Arlington County Board Chair Jay Fisetta said in a Jan. 25 news release.

The building, which is a half-mile from the Ballston Metro, will also house an underground garage ground-floor office space for the nonprofit headquarters.

Arlington County provides a pool of money to be loaned to nonprofits that build and operate affordable housing.

APAH plans in March to seek federal tax credits through the state's housing development authority. If approved, APAH said in a release, construction on the project will start in late 2014, with completion anticipated in 2016.

PATRICIA SULLIVAN (THE WASHINGTON POST)