



*Commonwealth of Virginia*  
*Office of the Governor*

## *Executive Order*

### **NUMBER THREE (2026)**

#### **LOWERING THE COST OF HOUSING BY INCREASING SUPPLY**

By virtue of the authority vested in me as Governor under Article V of the Constitution of Virginia and under the laws of the Commonwealth, including, but not limited to, §§ 2.2-103 and 2.2-110 of the *Code of Virginia*, I hereby announce a comprehensive process for addressing housing affordability for all Virginians, including establishing the Commission on Unlocking Housing Production and directing the Secretary of Commerce and Trade, the Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources, and the Secretary of Transportation to establish and lead a comprehensive process to address expedited housing production in Virginia.

#### **Importance of the Initiative**

Across Virginia, housing costs are rising faster than incomes and supply is not keeping pace with demand. Virginia faces a deficit of nearly 300,000 affordable rental homes, and thousands of supported rental homes are at risk of losing their affordability covenants in the next 5 years. At the same time, Virginia's median home price is now over \$400,000, putting homeownership out of reach for many working families. Slow permitting, outdated zoning, labor shortages, and paper-based processes are driving up costs and delaying housing across the Commonwealth. As a result, a shortage of available and affordable homes creates cutthroat competition and drives up prices. This Administration will work to support, encourage, coordinate, and innovate using the fullest powers of state government in partnership with local governments and the nonprofit and private sectors to create practical solutions that meet the housing needs of Virginians.

## **Directive**

Pursuant to the authority vested in me as the Chief Executive Officer of the Commonwealth, and pursuant to Article V of the Constitution of Virginia and the laws of the Commonwealth, I hereby direct the following actions.

### **State Regulatory Review**

I hereby designate the Secretary of Commerce and Trade, the Secretary of Natural and Historic Resources, and the Secretary of Transportation as the Co-Lead Secretaries responsible for implementation oversight and interagency coordination with the Covered Agencies that are required by this executive order to address regulatory barriers to housing production. The Covered Agencies shall include the Department of Housing and Community Development (“DHCD”), Department of Environmental Quality (“DEQ”), Department of Transportation (“VDOT”), Department of Wildlife Resources (“DWR”), Department of Conservation and Recreation (“DCR”), and Department of Historic Resources (“DHR”).

The Co-Lead Secretaries shall promptly coordinate and direct each Covered Agency to conduct a comprehensive review of agency regulations, guidance documents, policies, procedures, and administrative practices affecting residential land development and housing construction in order to:

- Identify and eliminate unnecessary, duplicative, or outdated requirements;
- Improve the efficiency, predictability, and transparency of permitting processes;
- Streamline coordination between agencies and between state and local authorities; and
- Remove regulatory barriers that impede labor recruitment, materials sourcing, and workforce retention.

Each Covered Agency shall submit a written report addressing the agency’s comprehensive review to the Co-Lead Secretaries and the Office of the Governor within 90 days of the Executive Order’s effective date. Each Covered Agency’s written report must:

- Identify duplicative, obsolete, or outdated rules, regulations, and other administrative requirements that should be amended or repealed. For each identified item, the Covered Agency shall provide:
  - a clear legal, operational, or policy rationale for removal or modification;
  - the current impact on housing production timelines or development costs; and
  - whether implementation requires statutory change, regulatory amendment, or other administrative action.
- Identify outdated or conflicting agency guidance documents and implementation memoranda. For each identified item, the Covered Agency shall propose updated or consolidated versions that align with statutory requirements and ensure consistent interpretation and application.

- Identify rules, regulations, program activities, or administrative practices that should be amended to streamline permit review and approval processes. For each recommendation, the Covered Agency shall provide:
  - the current process and timeline;
  - the proposed amendment;
  - estimated time savings; and
  - whether implementation requires statutory change, regulatory amendment, or other administrative action.
- Provide recommendations to improve coordination and predictability, including:
  - Consolidating or streamlining multi-agency permitting processes, including identification of overlapping or sequential review requirements;
  - Improving coordination between state and local permitting authorities, including proposed mechanisms for alignment on standards and timelines;
  - Establishing predictable and enforceable permitting timelines, including identifying any statutory or regulatory barriers to implementation; and
  - Expanding the use of standardized review checklists, objective approval criteria, and pre-approved plans or designs.

Based on their review of the Covered Agencies' reports, the Co-Lead Secretaries shall jointly submit a final comprehensive written report to the Office of the Governor with the Secretaries' recommendations to address regulatory and other barriers related to housing production within 120 days of the Executive Order's effective date.

### **Establish the Commission on Unlocking Housing Production**

I hereby establish the Commission on Unlocking Housing Production to advise on how state laws, regulations, and administrative practices could be revised to increase the production of housing in the Commonwealth. The Commission shall be chaired by the Secretary of Commerce and Trade and consist of representatives from DHCD, Virginia Economic Development Partnership, Virginia Department of Education, Virginia Resources Authority, Virginia Department of Taxation, DEQ, DWR, DCR, DHR, the Department of General Services, VDOT, and other representatives selected at the chair's discretion to ensure inclusion of local government and industry.

The Commission shall review and evaluate the reports submitted by the Covered Agencies to the Office of the Governor pursuant to this Executive Order. The Commission shall meet on an ongoing basis and provide updates to the Office of the Governor every six months on housing production, an evaluation of barriers to production, and suggestions for legislative, regulatory, and administrative changes to remove those barriers and facilitate housing production.

**Effective Date of the Executive Order**

This Executive Order shall become effective upon its signing and shall remain in full force and effect until amended or rescinded by further executive order.

Given under my hand and under the Seal of the Commonwealth of Virginia this 17th day of January 2026.



A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Abigail D. Spanberger".

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Abigail D. Spanberger, Governor

Attest:

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Jennifer B. Moon".

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Jennifer B. Moon, Secretary of the Commonwealth