

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 27, 2023

TO: JOINT CITY-SCHOOLS SUBCOMMITTEE

FROM: KARL MORITZ, DIRECTOR, DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & ZONING
ERIKA GULICK, DIRECTOR, CAPITAL PROGRAMS, PLANNING &
DESIGN, ACPS

SUBJECT: STUDENT GENERATION RATES – JUNE 2023 UPDATE

Summary

Staff from Alexandria City Public Schools (ACPS) and the City of Alexandria (City) regularly update our analysis of the number of students “generated” by different housing types in the City of Alexandria. Among other insights, the analysis sheds light on how many students can be expected to reside in new development projects approved by the City. The latest update shows some significant shifts, particularly in affordable units, from the last analysis completed in May of 2021.

Of the city’s current housing stock, approximately 73% is over 30 years old and that stock houses 89% of ACPS students. In newer market rate development, single family detached homes house the most students (0.19) on a per-unit basis. Newer market-rate multifamily development houses the lowest percentage of ACPS students, with only 3% of ACPS students living in apartment or condo buildings built within the last 30 years.

Background and Analysis

As documented in the Long-Range Educational Facilities Plan (LREFP), student generation rates represent the ratio of enrolled ACPS students who live within Alexandria to the number of residential housing units built within the City. ACPS and Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning (P&Z) collaborate on the calculation of student generation rates using historical enrollment and residential property data to estimate the number of students that are expected to join the school system from new residential development. While the goal is to conduct the analysis on an annual basis, the most recent analysis was done in 2021 due to staff vacancy. The updated student generation rate is a three-year average by housing type and age; accordingly, the 2022 student generation rates are based on student enrollment as of September 30th in the 2020-2021, 2021-2022, and 2022-2023 school calendar years.

Different categories of residential properties have measurably different student generation rates. Given the differences, student generation rates are calculated for each residential property category, as shown in **Table 1**. Student generation rates also vary depending on the age of the building stock. Given the differences, student generation rates for new development are based on properties that were built within the previous 30 years, measured from the beginning of the school year. ACPS also uses student generation rates based on homes that are 30 years or older to anticipate the number of students they can expect to come from older building stock.

This year’s analysis, compared to 2021, shows that rates have remained largely the same in some building categories and have changed slightly in others. Affordable housing building types reflect the largest ratio change in the last 30 years timeframe. Student generation rates increased in Resolution 2876 units from 0.65 to 0.90 (students per housing unit), and other income-restricted housing rate decreased in units from 0.83 to 0.73 (students per housing unit). There are likely a few factors that could account for these changes. This includes units aging out of the under 30-year-old building stock, ongoing affordable housing site redevelopment projects and relocation, or families changing accommodation types, among other potential factors. Next year’s analysis will provide greater insight as to whether these factors are influencing the rate changes and help inform future capacity planning.

Table 1: ACPS K-12 Student Generation by Housing Type and Age

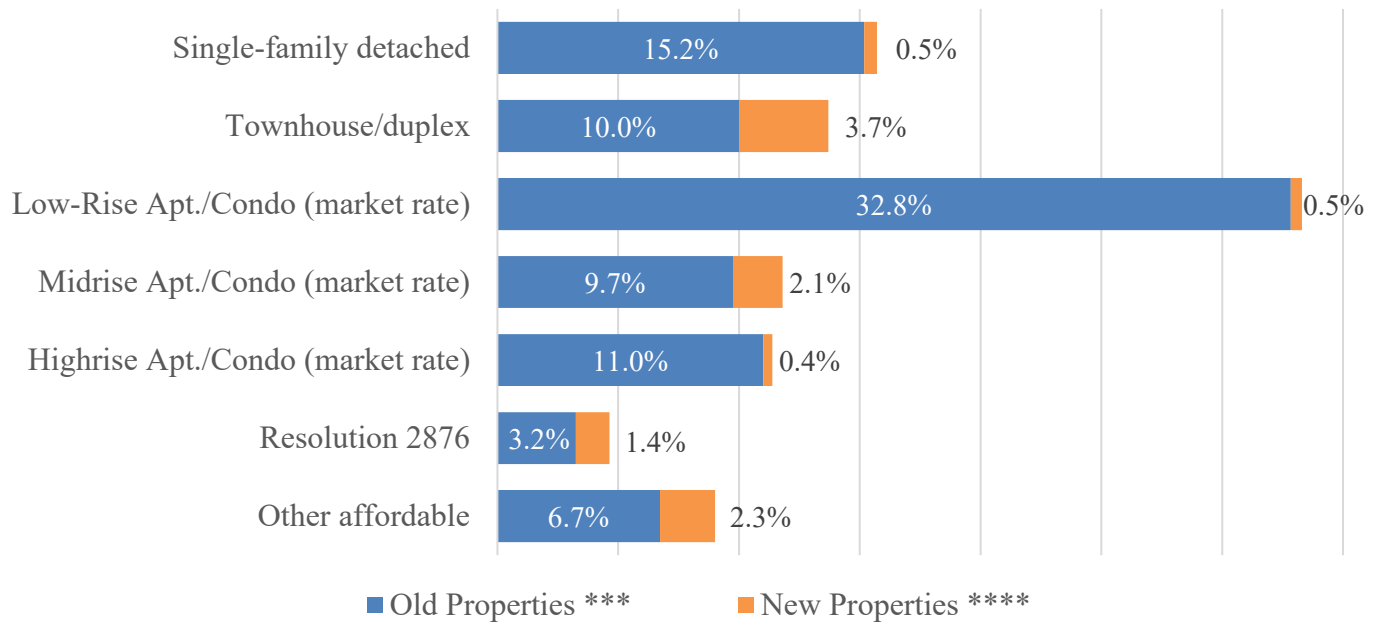
Type of Housing Unit	Old properties (> 30 years old) Per housing unit	New properties (< 30 years old) Per housing unit
Single-Family Detached (market rate)	0.28	0.19
Townhouse/Duplex (market rate)	0.17	0.11
Low-Rise Apt./Condo (market rate)	0.32	0.06
Midrise Apt./Condo (market rate)	0.18	0.04
Highrise Apt./Condo (market rate)	0.14	0.01
Resolution 2876*	0.65	0.90
Other Income-Restricted Housing**	0.33	0.73

* Resolution 2876 units are commonly defined as “Public Housing” units for the purposes of this study.

** “Other Income-Restricted Housing” is defined as properties in which most of the units are income-restricted. These properties exclude senior housing properties.

Figure 1 displays the share of students over that same 3-year timeframe, by residential property type and age. Over these three school years, 89% of students lived in homes that were more than 30 years old. Staff will be conducting additional analysis later this year on student generation rates in terms of income-restricted housing.

Figure 1: Share of ACPS K-12 Students by Housing Type and Age



*** “*Old properties*” refers to residential properties that were over 30 years old prior to the beginning of the current school year.

***** “*New properties*” refers to residential units constructed within the last 30 years before the start of the current school year.