



Legislation Text

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City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: SEPTEMBER 21, 2021

TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL

FROM: MARK B. JINKS, CITY MANAGER /s/

DOCKET TITLE:
Discussion of Draft Arlandria-Chirilagua Plan Concepts.

ISSUE: Provide feedback on the draft recommendations of the Arlandria-Chirilagua Plan Update.

RECOMMENDATION: Provide feedback on the draft recommendations of the Arlandria-Chirilagua Plan Update.

BACKGROUND: In fall 2019, the City launched a community planning process to update the 2003 Arlandria Neighborhood Plan with a long-term vision for land use, affordable housing, parks and open space, health and sustainability, and safety and mobility. In response to community input, the Plan places special focus on the preservation and expansion of housing affordability and the strength of this unique community and neighborhood business district. Updating the objectives and strategies of the long-term vision for the neighborhood is particularly important with the planned phased arrival of Amazon in Crystal City, and the Virginia Tech Innovation Campus and Metrorail Station in North Potomac Yard.

Community engagement in Arlandria-Chirilagua was conducted in Spanish first with English translation through a variety of in person and online events convened by the City and in partnership with neighborhood organizations, such as Tenants and Workers United, Casa Chirilagua, Cora Kelley and Mount Vernon Community Schools, Padres Activos parent organization, and neighborhood civic associations. In addition, the City held a variety of in-person stationary and mobile pop-ups, open houses, and virtual meetings.

Community feedback was recorded through written and oral comments received through all the venues as well as through three bilingual questionnaires distributed at key points in the process. The second and third questionnaires featured brief bilingual videos to ensure informed and substantive responses.

Passive outreach to raise awareness and encourage engagement included display of posters throughout the neighborhood with directions for how to engage the planning team and provide comments via WhatsApp or other means. Information was also posted on the project web page, City calendar; flyer distribution to area residential and office buildings; the City's eNews service; social media postings; and emails.

DISCUSSION: Feedback from the Arlandria-Chirilagua community over the early portion of the planning process informed development of Plan objectives (below) which in turn served as the basis for developing draft Plan recommendations.

Planning Process Objectives:

1. Preserve Arlandria-Chirilagua as a culturally diverse neighborhood by protecting residents' ability to remain in the community in the context of anticipated market pressures
2. Support the existing commercial corridor, local businesses, and the community's access to daily needs
3. Build on neighborhood walkability, safety, and mobility options
4. Connect and expand the open space network with more play areas and outdoor living rooms

Plan recommendations fall under the following topics:

1. Housing for All
2. Healthy, Sustainable and Resilient (includes Green Building and Infrastructure)
3. Open Space
4. Land Use, Zoning, Retail/Entrepreneurship
5. Urban Design and Building Heights
6. Safety and Mobility
7. Implementation

The draft Plan recommendations will be distributed in Spanish and English for public review and comment beginning in mid-September through early October. In addition to guidance from the Planning Commission and City Council, Staff will solicit feedback from the Transportation Commission, Parks and Recreation Commission, and Alexandria Housing Affordability Advisory Committee, as well neighborhood stakeholders and the public at large. All comments will inform the final draft Plan which will be posted in mid-October in advance of the anticipated November public hearings. As with the planning process, public review of the draft plan will be in Spanish first with English translation.

FISCAL IMPACT: Since the Council is not taking action, this discussion of the Draft recommendations does not have immediate fiscal impact, although it has fiscal implications. Fiscal impact will be discussed in depth as part of consideration of adoption of the Plan, scheduled for November 2021.

ATTACHMENTS:

1. Memo in Spanish
2. PowerPoint in English
3. PowerPoint in Spanish

STAFF:

Emily A. Baker, Deputy City Manager
Karl W. Moritz, Director, Department of Planning & Zoning (P&Z)
Jeffrey Farner, Deputy Director, Department of Planning & Zoning (P&Z)
Carrie Beach, Division Chief, Department of Planning & Zoning (P&Z)
Jose C. Ayala, Principal Planner, Department of Planning & Zoning (P&Z)
Katherine Carraway, Urban Planner, Department of Planning & Zoning (P&Z)