



American Planning Association  
**Virginia Chapter**

*Creating Great Communities for All*

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Arlandria-Chirilagua Small Area Plan  
Winner of the Commonwealth Plan of the Year Award**

The Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association (APA Virginia) is pleased to announce that the City of Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning's [Arlandria-Chirilagua Small Area Plan and Community Engagement Process](#) has been awarded the 2022 Commonwealth Plan of the Year Award.

The Arlandria-Chirilagua neighborhood is home to a population that is 65% Hispanic/Latino, with approximately 45% of residents earning less than \$50,000 a year. In 2019, Alexandria launched a community planning process to proactively address concerns of displacement and loss of cultural diversity in the neighborhood from the pressure of nearby development. The planning process, supported by a grant from Virginia Housing, utilized tools and strategies to inclusively engage the neighborhood's residents in safe, convenient, and accessible ways. Planners used WhatsApp, text messaging, social media, culturally oriented posters, mobile pop-ups, in-person and virtual meetings, questionnaires, and short videos to incorporate residents into the planning process. Nick Rogers, AICP, CZA, APA Virginia's Vice President of External Affairs stated "It is encouraging and inspiring to see how this Plan prioritized the Hispanic/Latino population by engaging with the community in Spanish first during the plan's process."



The plan recommends a multi-layered approach to address housing affordability needs, including building height incentives, developer contributions, public/private partnerships, tenant protections, relocation assistance, and expanded homeownership opportunities. The plan calls for 10% of all new development to be provided as affordable units to residents who earn no more than 40-50% of the area median income (AMI).

The Arlandria-Chirilagua Small Area Plan was produced in both [Spanish](#) and [English](#), with a unique vision to implement and enhance community, cultural, and economic opportunities that would enable existing

residents to stay affordably in their community. The advocacy, strategy, and implementation recommendations in this plan exemplify and advance the planning process to create great communities for all. The City of Alexandria Department of Planning and Zoning's Arlandria-Chirilagua Small Area Plan and community engagement process is overwhelmingly deserving of the 2022 Commonwealth Plan of the Year Award.

The planning awards will be presented at the Chapter's Annual Conference on Tuesday, July 19, 2022 at 11:45 AM at the Richmond Marriott Downtown. To view and learn about other 2022 APA VA award winners, please [click here](#).

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#### About the [Virginia Chapter of the American Planning Association](#)

Our mission is to make great communities happen in Virginia by offering continuing professional development and other valuable services to planners that will enable them to excel in their practice. We are committed to raising awareness about the many benefits that planning offers as a foundation for effectively addressing the physical, economic, and social changes that take place in Virginia, and to providing effective leadership in planning advocacy reflective of a diverse geography and population.