



Engaging Arlandria-Chirilagua

Lessons Learned for Engaging Marginalized Populations
in Alexandria Post-Pandemic

03 19 2021 COG Planning Directors Meeting

Why?

- *Protect residents' ability to stay in the neighborhood amidst* anticipated market pressures fueled by Amazon HQ2, Virginia Tech, and PY Metro.
- Commitment to preserving Arlandria-Chirilagua as a *culturally diverse neighborhood – a unique and important part of Alexandria.*
- *Preserve and expand housing affordability and housing options*, including deeply affordable and missing middle.
- Support *existing commercial corridor* and local businesses.
- Build on *neighborhood walkability, safety*, and *transportation options*.
- Connect and *expand the open space network* with more play areas and outdoor living rooms.
- *Empower residents* to have a bigger role on neighborhood decision making.

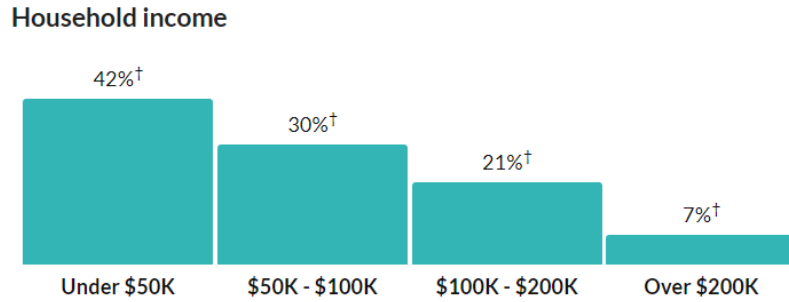


Who?

\$60,756

Median household income

about three-fifths of the amount in Alexandria: \$100,939

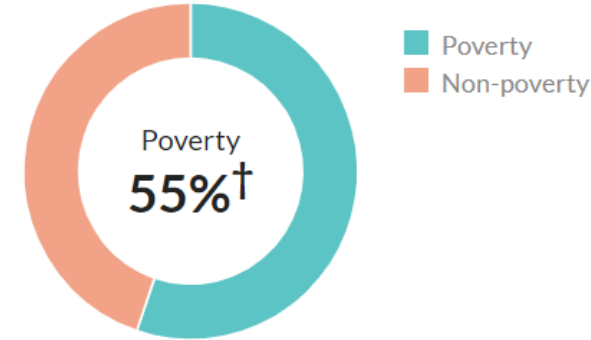


29.7%

Persons below poverty line

more than double the rate in Alexandria: 10.3%†

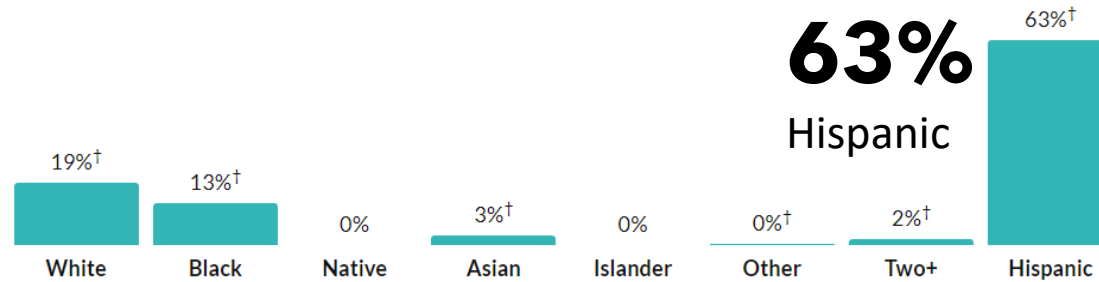
Children (Under 18)



66.4%

High school grad or higher

about two-thirds of the rate in Alexandria: 93%



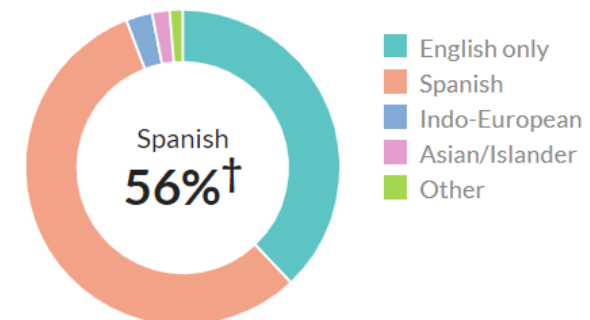
63% Hispanic

46.5%

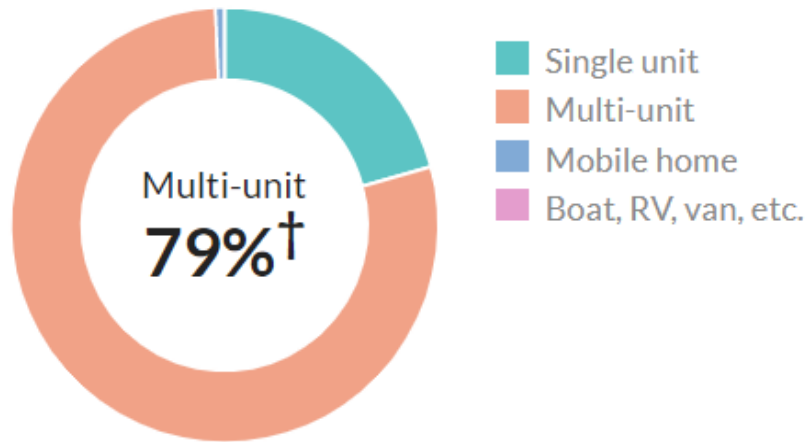
Foreign-born population

more than 1.5 times the rate in Alexandria: 27.2%

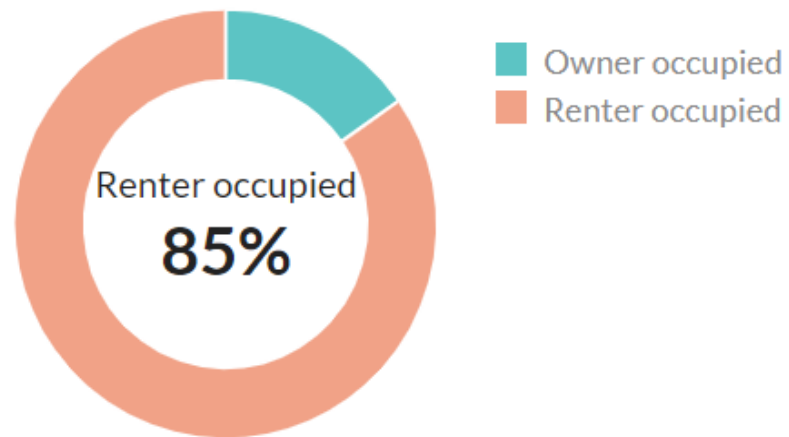
Language at home, adults 18+



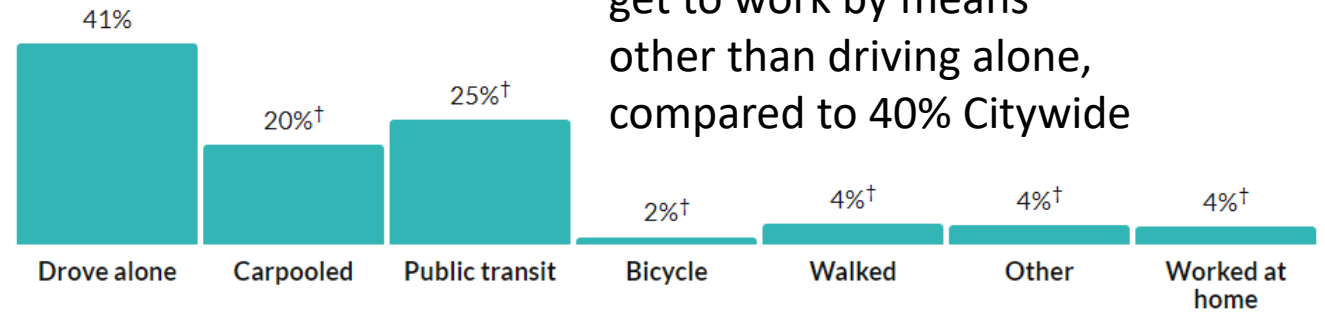
Types of structure



Ownership of occupied units




Means of transportation to work



60%

get to work by means other than driving alone, compared to 40% Citywide

A photograph of a community meeting taking place outdoors in front of a brick wall. Several people are gathered around flipcharts on easels, looking at and pointing to information. A 'NO TRESPASSING' sign is visible on the wall. The scene is dimly lit, suggesting it might be evening or in a shaded area.

How?

What did we consider in developing an engagement strategy

- **Language – Spanish FIRST across all communications and engagement**
- **Community leaders and trust**
- **Residents' availability / comfort to engage with the City**
- **Access / comfort with technology**
- **Health, social, and economic conditions – openness to discussing the topics that were most important to this community specifically**

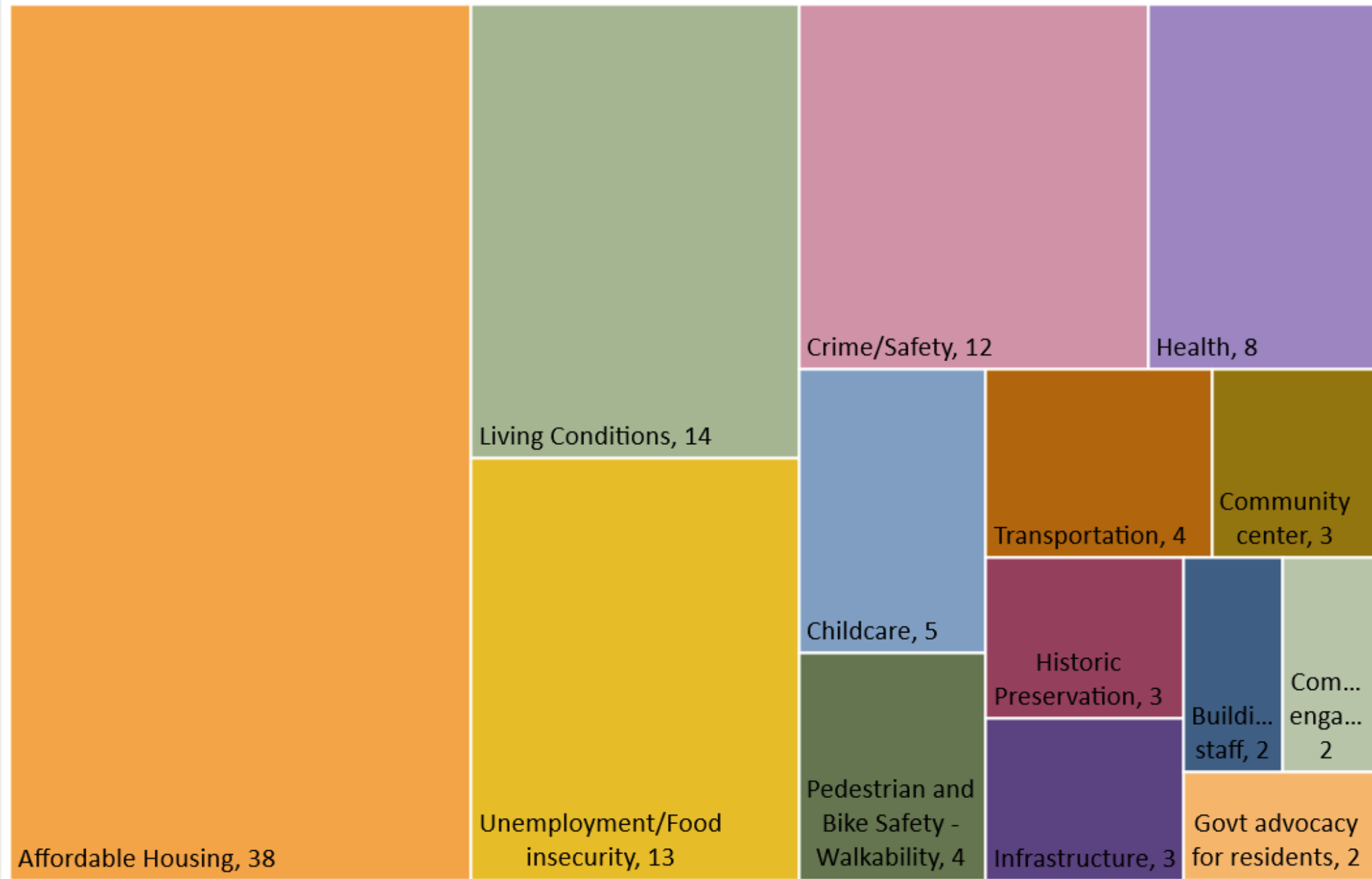
Tactics

Pre-pandemic

- Spanish FIRST
- 3 in-person family-friendly dinner “meetings” – hands-on collaboration
- 3 Pop-ups using Spanish speaking staff at different locations, times of day, day of week
- Low-tech survey – boots on the ground
- Flyers posted on retail and commercial along the main streets
- Met residents early in the morning at bus stops and rode the bus with them
- Met residents at the daily pick-up areas
- Hispanic news media
- Utilized a Spanish speaking consultant to make connections with community leaders, share and implement strategies for engagement, create mini-documentary video



Questionnaire Themes



| Language | Count |
|--------------|------------|
| English | 146 |
| Spanish | 228 |
| Total | 374 |

Tactics

During the pandemic

- Spanish FIRST
- Series of 5 summer outdoor family friendly meetings w/Tenants and Workers United members to develop ideas for Plan goals
- WhatsApp – ongoing communication about the process
- Pop-ups early in the morning at bus stops and daily pick-up areas
- 2 virtual meetings - community
- 4 virtual meetings - community leaders
- Promotion on community groups' social media platforms, including presentations on Facebook Live
- 5 Pop-ups - different times, days, locations with giveaways
- "A" Frame signs and posters on poles at street crossings with QR code
- Graphics in place of words

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COMUNIDAD
TRABAJANDO
UNIDA
PARA CREAR
VIVIENDAS PARA
TODOS
NOSOTROS**

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INFORMACIÓN
ENVÍE UN MENSAJE
WHATSAPP AL
571.358.7569
O ESCANEE EL CÓDIGO QR



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**ARLANDRIA/CHIRILAGUA
¡SÉ EL CAMBIO!**

ÚNETE A NOSOTROS DURANTE LOS SIGUIENTES
DÍAS DE REUNIONES DE PUERTAS ABIERTAS:

FECHAS
OCTUBRE 8 DE 6 A 9 PM
DICIEMBRE 3 DE 6 A 9 PM

Lugar:
FOUR MILE RUN
FARMERS MARKET

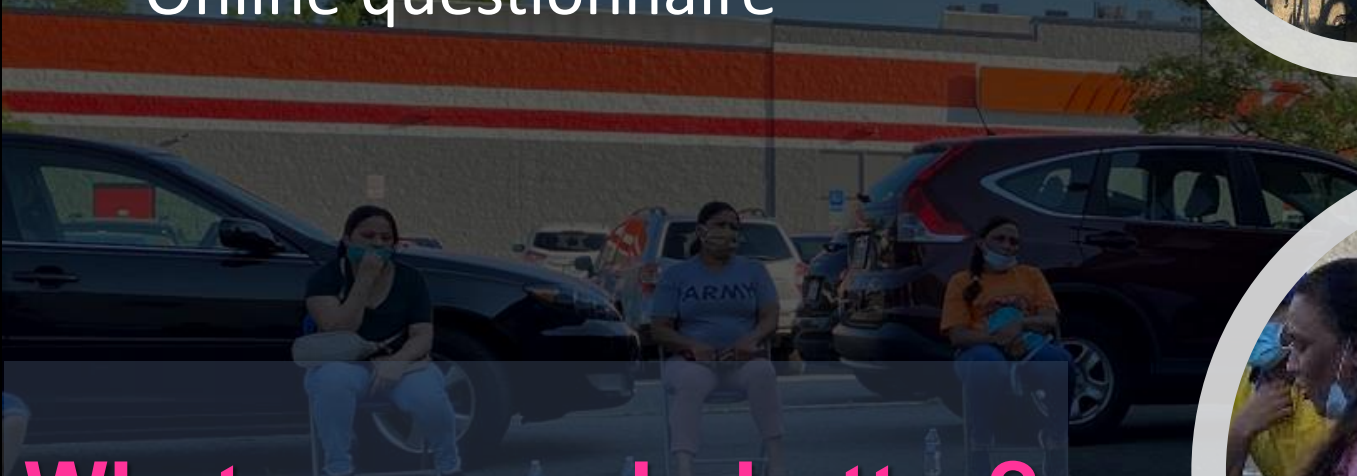
What didn't work well?

- Virtual meetings
- Online questionnaire



What can we do better?

- Simplifying concepts to graphics
- Utilize more video



What worked particularly well here? What applies elsewhere + post-pandemic?

- Truly speaking their language – Spanish speaking staff, all encounters, materials...
- Partnering with community organizations, churches, schools, to leverage trusted relationships, communication platforms and member networks
- 1-1 engagement in places where they are
- What'sApp
- Eye catching signs around the neighborhood
- Compassion for current realities – how a land use planning effort can/can't address non-typical land use needs
- Family meetings + food, special t-shirts and other giveaways, kids activities + babysitters



Mount Vernon Plan Outreach Activity 2019 Video
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zy5LNCdpjaA>

Q+A

Project web page
alexandriava.gov/planning
WhatsApp or Text
at 571-358-7569

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