

2024-2025 COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

Appendix C - Community Walk and Talks



Walk and Talk Methodology

The Walk and Talk's aim was to understand how where we live and spend time impact our health and understand what resources are (or are not) available.

AHD held walks in two neighborhoods in Alexandria. Landmark/Van Dorn neighborhood was selected as it was high on the CDC's Social Vulnerability Index, an index that evaluates a community's vulnerability to disasters or public health emergencies based on factors such as demographics, socioeconomic status, and household characteristics. The Parker Gray/Braddock Metro neighborhood was selected as it is a neighborhood that has undergone gentrification over the past few decades, creating significant shifts in population and structures in the space. For consistency, each activity began at a set meeting point where participants were briefed on the activity and provided historical context of the neighborhood. Trained facilitators led participants in groups of eight to ten on a predetermined one-mile path around the neighborhood. Periodically, facilitators paused the groups to share observations, which were recorded by a facilitator. To help guide the conversations and observations, topic areas and probing questions were provided. Other city agencies participated in this activity so they could also receive input from residents.

Results were analyzed into key themes:

1. AHD organized all attendee responses into CHA Topic Areas. AHD directly transcribed responses to the best of our ability. See all responses below.
2. Using the responses, AHD identified and summarized key takeaways from the different topic areas.
3. Using these key takeaways, AHD identified and added cross-topic summary points of each Walk and Talk into the report. A few direct quotes from participants are included as well.

Parker Gray/Braddock Metro

Key Themes

This neighborhood has a mix of housing **types** and **affordability**.

It feels like the area is **changing**, and may be **pushing out people** who have lived here for years.

The area has infrastructure set up to be **walkable**, and it is for some. But, people had **concerns** about **accessibility** and **upkeep**.

Participants valued green space **availability** and **cleanliness** and had **some concerns**.

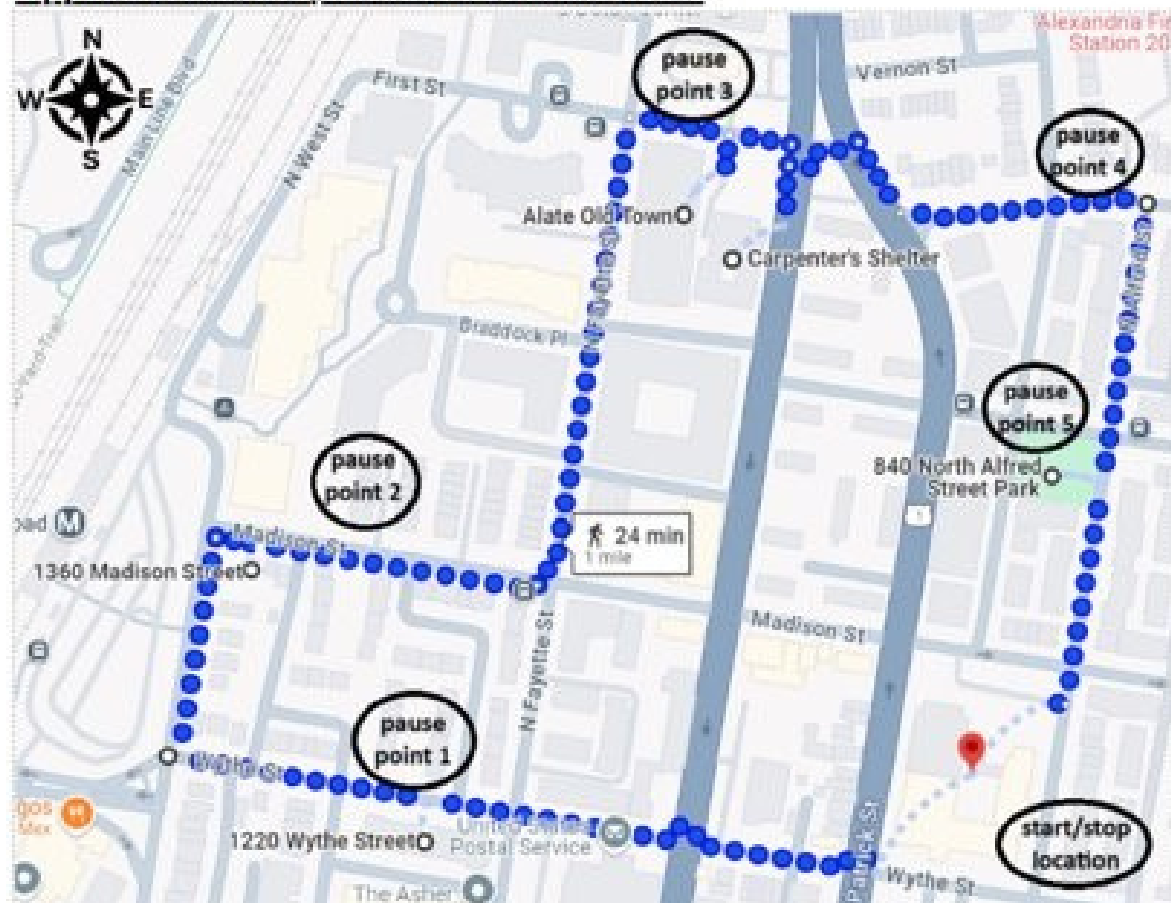
There are community **cornerstone locations** people know. Community members value them and what they can **provide**.

Residents feel that they're **in the dark** on new developments and who to contact for support.

Lower Parker-Gray/Braddock Metro Route



Upper Parker-Gray/Braddock Metro Route



Economic Mobility

Mixed use row & townhouses, variety of housing (3x)

Public housing - living conditions looks unbearable

New housing pushing out existing housing

Construction site has gone well - good building codes new condos building public housing ARHA, HUA

Unhoused woman on bus stop for months (2x)

Might be an unhoused issue How no longer have a group home in this part of town.

Homeless man & cart

Homeless person belongings @ Church on Patrick and Queen

Saw one homeless person items outside Ebenezer church

Unhoused population on Queen at Eisenhower Baptist Church

Homeless living at bus stop

Not a lot of facilities for truly needy (unhoused?) beyond the church. For people who live & walk

Housing in the area is difficult to access for individuals using wheelchairs

New housing pushing out existing housing

Expensive

Housing is very expensive + changing

Mixed economic statuses

Neighborhood & Environment

uneven walking spaces

much sidewalk is unsafe @ Princess & Alfred

too narrow

walking friendly

would like wider sidewalks for stroller, wheelchair

Neighborhood & Environment

Poles in way

Brick is pretty but uneven freezes worse. A little unsafe. Difficult even if you're sober

Inconsistency with brick and concrete, gaps

General concern all over Old Town sidewalks uneven

broken sidewalks [mentioned 2x]

old town is very walkable

Roads didn't have potholes. College and first street do

sidewalk unlevel at point [mentioned 2x]

narrow sidewalk

can walk to coffee, dentist, park, one car family

uneven sidewalks

icy sidewalks

Same issue with sidewalks and the sidewalks concrete are not leveled.

wider sidewalks [2x]

a little scary to walk by rte 1 without a barrier of cars go so fast

narrow sidewalk [2x]

snow on sidewalk

narrow curb cuts & ___ bumps

"community in transition" ppl feel sense of community, but note its changing rapidly

ice

sidewalk not cleared for park

appreciate diversity and density of housing

small single family [homes]

Neighborhood & Environment

redevelopment is needed

deplorable conditions - public housing

this area is probably the main neighborhood that is in the most transition

group discussed stark difference in appearance between new apartments and ARHA homes across the street

attendee called ARHA homes "party central" when asked about noise

grey building on corner in disrepair

mixed use apt building had benches to take a break

"community in transition" ppl feel sense of community, but note its changing rapidly

construction site has gone well - good building codes new condos building public housing ARHA, HUA

varied [housing]

Mixed residences

*appearance of the triple-decker apts that blend into townhousing

mixed use apt & condos

lights are ran - police have been contacted from constant traffic issues

conditions of bike trail no/ICP

narrow ___ bike [lanes]

greenery blocking stop signs

no sound for one way streets crossing can travel more quickly prince & cameron/patrick & henry.

Transportation issues were noticed on a four-way roads, where signings are present on only one side of the street.

no bus stops yet

Montgomery & _ dual lane, people going too fast. might need no left turn on red.

better signage near schools being around

Neighborhood & Environment

signage not great [2x]

crosswalks not well marked

Intersection dangerous - can try to make the light cars roll through. N fayette & pendelton.

stop signs too small.

is this best street for bike path

henry & oronocco , sign for parker gray - need ___ signs

low traffic flow, was not fully stopping at stop, bike not stop

need ____ at intersections esp. on patrick & henry

a few bus stops. not very visible

no signs for metro

transportation is great

something should be places to slow down traffic (intersection)

no bike lane

dash is punctual, transit easily used. alfred/montgomery

safer crossings of route 1

"if you want to take transit, the DASH bus is reliable. Always here on time."

signs about car & truck noise

Some times you're not visible when cars turning at night.

no bike lanes

No bus stops in the area.

stop sign violations b/c of lights ahead

no stores

add pharmacy & grocery store

Neighborhood & Environment

not a lot of green space

some animal/dog droppings [mentioned 2x]

litter on sidewalks/streets

trash receptacles not always available

where do we dispose of trash

overflowing trash cans - a lot of trash - rats prone

trash not completely disposed from dispensers.

animal waste

trash

1 park

wanted more green spaces (more important than public artwork)

low branches on sidewalks

trees

call 311 if trash overflowing

trash can at every bus stop

public urination at Metro stops & at big events, more port o potties at events

dog waste receptacles

trash receptacles are sometimes overflowing

some litter [2x]

we walked by DASH bus stops pretty clean no trash

trash cans available but 1 daily big truck

Some big trashes can be seen in the sidewalks.

more bike parking was avail

Neighborhood & Environment

no physical barrier (parking) on one side of Henry

sidewalks' curbs need bumps

noticed how clean our alleys feel. feel safe walking through them.

not enough lighting

lime scooters laying on side

street within good condition -> concrete. this all used to be warehouses.

1122 Oronoco empty lot

trash on sidewalk

nice park we're standing in. how is it used? the gravel part is more used than the grass. do go poop in it. its supposed to be ___

could use outdoor spaces.

yes- alexandria city has more than other communities

full trash cans

yes but trash cans does not completely empty

trans cans on each corner,

trash should always be properly disposed

declining of snow.

sign about dogs - allowed or not

have doggie bags at corner of every park

branch maintenance. some are too low

are green spaces shared - yes

concerns about unshoveled ice at church owned by ARHA

potholes in street on payne street

people thought the park was very nice

Neighborhood & Environment

trash can full

not well lit @ night

People living in this area have pest control problems. They mentioned facing a significant issue with a lot of mice and rats.

streets need resurfacing

loose utility box @pole on pendelton

Few bench seating at bus stops would be great (and shade).

boys & girls club at 401 Payne

nothing @ historic movie theater except barbershops and Chinese food place

Barbershops were busy

Liberation bookstore - never seen anyone in there.

Historic retail hasn't gotten a lot of attention, weeds and poison ivy near Antioch Church

Goodys & Barbershop are busy

A salon looked nice.

couple empty storefronts

post office didn't want to see. could be used for yoga. during pandemic couldn't get permit to teach yoga.

old white & blue church - not unsafe. yates bought land was elderly black population. closed during COVID now animals live in there. might be still lived in. city gave them a grant for the its a symbol of Alexandria's ___

more diverse businesses along the street - dental, urgent care, restaurants,

snow could be cleared more at cross walk

icy sidewalks

ice

get paint fumes from the auto body shop, what about emissions from all the traffic on route 1

Healthcare Access

can walk to coffee, dentist, park, one car family

inova

some - not a lot [of resources]

not advertised [healthcare options not heavily]

urgent care @pendelton & payne

Injury, Violence, & Crime

Poles in way

Tree roots, powerlines low hanging could be a hazard.

Historic retail hasn't gotten a lot of attention, weeds and poison ivy near Antioch Church

worry about people living there lead paint, unsafe water

get paint fumes from the auto body shop. what about emissions from all the traffic on route 1

branch maintenance. some are too low

People living in this area have pest control problems. They mentioned facing a significant issue with a lot of mice and rats.

uneven walking spaces

much sidewalk is unsafe @ Princess & Alfred

Brick is pretty but uneven freezes worse. A little unsafe. Difficult [to navigate] even if you're sober

Bricks come out, roll ankle

Injury, Violence, & Crime

632 Alfred, tripping hazard

sidewalks uneven

broken sidewalks

sidewalk unlevel at point

steps down to basements fall risks

icy sidewalks

concerns about unshoveled ice at church owned by ARHA

not safe for bicyclists. not continuous enforcement (traffic) is it a resource thing?

some bicyclists run lights - frustrates drivers.

If you're walking alone, cars don't stop for you. Only 15 seconds to cross intersection.

Left turn cars don't see you. left on red is legal.

There are visibility concerns for drivers when pedestrians cross the street.

a little scary to walk by rte 1 without a barrier of cars go so fast

crosswalks not well marked

not enough lighting

potholes in street on payne street

safer crossings of route 1

Some times you're not visible when cars turning at night.

Injury, Violence, & Crime

walking friendly [area]

playground - needs improvement

can walk to coffee, dentist, park, one car family

could use outdoor spaces

swings are squeaky/need oil

1 park

Oral Health

pediatric dentist

dentist

dental & medical on henry

Tobacco & Substance Use

crime has happened throughout the year - marijuana smoking [note: crime not relevant for this category]

Educational Opportunities

preschools, boys & girls [club]

better signage near schools being around

people expressed concerns about needing more communication/notification for development plans/projects

Educational Opportunities

not enough communication

yes its culturally appropriate [communication & signange]

discussion about comms needed to notify residents about new Inova

public meetings/plans - communications needs to given to community

civic associations can provide outreach to community to share information

parks & rec could do more programming

more programming for people would be good

questions about where people could go for affordable care nearby

Disability/Accessibility

Housing in the area is difficult to access for individuals using wheelchairs.

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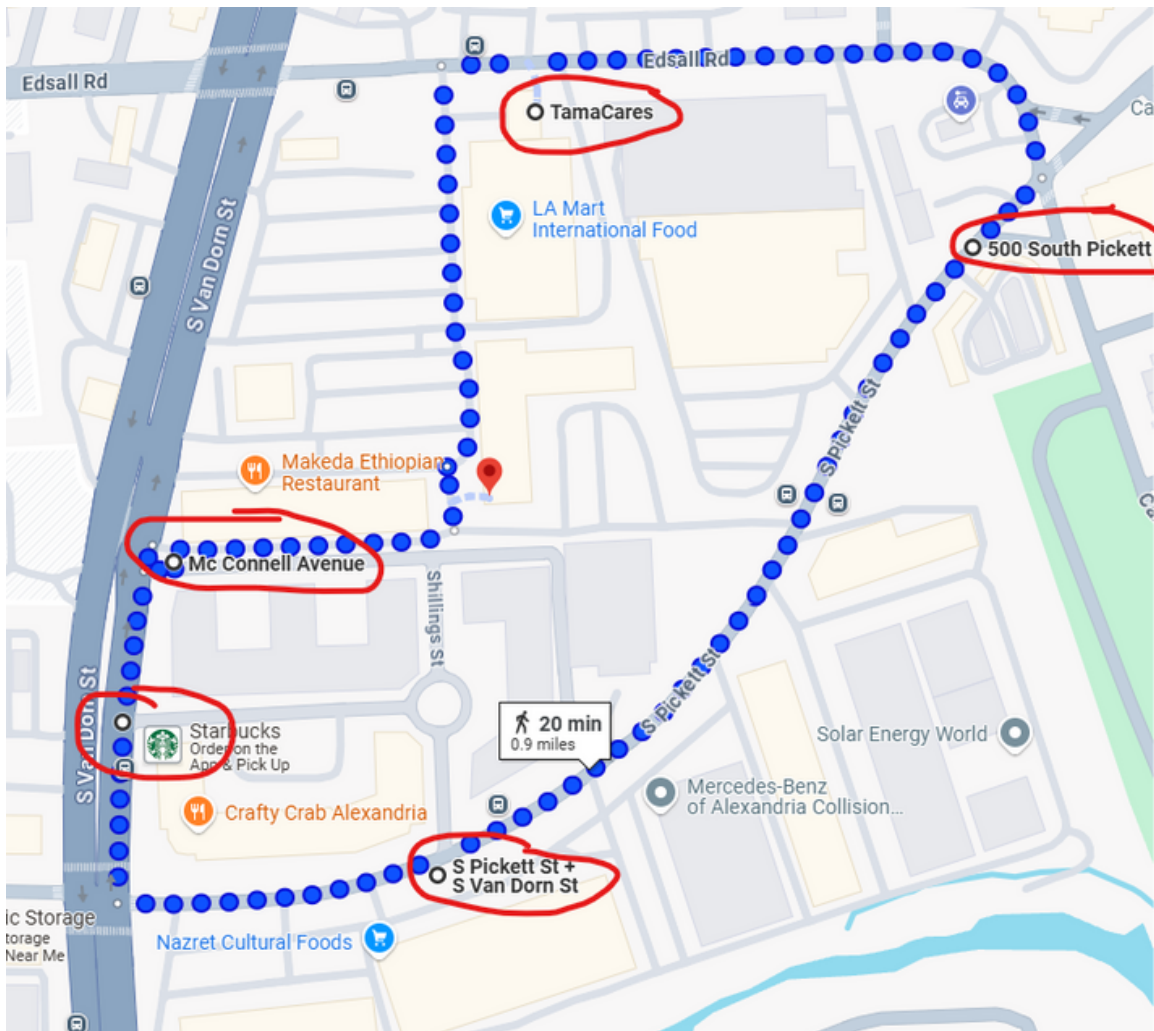
APPENDIX C



Comments from Landmark/Van Dorn Walk and Talk

Key Themes

- There are many **diverse, small businesses** in the Landmark/ Van Dorn area.
- The area **doesn't have enough recreation, community programming, and play areas**, particularly for youth.
- Getting around can be **difficult**, and **dangerous** because there are not enough safe, maintained, and available crosswalks and sidewalks.
- The area has a **mixed layout**, with industrial, residential, and commercial spaces. **More green spaces, shade, and public spaces** would give this area more of a neighborhood feel.



Disability/Accessibility

no spaces for kids

nothing meant for children

not meant for kids

not accessible for disabled

safe for kids

only one handicap parking

Van Dorn pharmacy have handicap are not ADA accessible

mainly car use

Economic Mobility

many homeless people

there are some unhoused people

Healthcare Access

healthcare resources pretty far away

no healthcare resources- nearest is still down the street

no healthcare resources- everything is further down

Healthcare Access

for those with state aid, resources not close

optometrist office, dentist office

no healthcare services

important to have independently owned-pharmacy

no health facilities really here

medicine stop

no medical area

no clinics

no medical offices

many clinics around

medicine shop

Injury, Violence, & Crime

but you have to cross a main street to get here from bus stop

well lit at night

grass is not level, tripping hazard

crime has increased in this area so there are more sirens in the middle of the night m

more traffic crossing for people

unsafe to drive

Injury, Violence, & Crime

dangerous intersection

nowhere to safely cross the street walking

safe for bike and walk, not clean

not a safe crosswalk between Iqra and shopping plaza

one person tripped on a broken curb during the walk

but you have to cross a main street to get here from bus stop

public transportation is easy to use and clean (DASH), safe

broken cables

lifted sidewalk

only 2 light post

cars parked take away visibility to see bikers

not enough light at bus stops

entrance in front of 7/11 is dangerous to cross when walking

once the sun goes down, I'm not taking public transportation

not well lit- doesn't feel safe at night, not many people around

no light at some bus stops

busy car wash beware of cars turning

sidewalk entering van dorn shopping center unsafe- so much so, there is a different path

Injury, Violence, & Crime

sidewalks too close to the street

illegally breaking double yellow line

a lot of car accidents

by the end of the mural, bit of a safety issue with the hill

feels safer

driving too fast

people don't abide by speed limit requirements

a lot of powerlines- wires sticking out

broken sidewalks

signs too close to the sidewalk

a lot of rocks on the sidewalk

speed bump on the grass in front of enterprise

more light posts

no crosswalks to get to the other side

more lighting

crosswalk cars impatient for families to walk

angle to go up on the sidewalk is difficult for someone with a wheel chair

Jaywalking

Neighborhood & Environment

there's a nice stream and trails around here

need more trees- its too hot here and they aren't the right species for the area

there's a metro sign but the station is very far away and it isn't safe to walk from here

rec center and library are far

lack of shade

not any pools or splash pads that are free

locals come here

some shade

no bench or shade on many bus stops

homeless people are attracted to the shaded areas under shops

no shelter

litter

shade is only on one side of the road not the other

more shade available

clean

the first trees we've seen all walk

rainwater and sewage can go into the ocean, but we need more water to seep into the ground

otherwise, there aren't really shaded areas

Neighborhood & Environment

no library

many businesses to make money, not a lot of places to hang out

mostly industrial and commercial

many posters for no reason

in specific areas, there is a lot of trash (Reynolds st.) and glass

could be more benches by the bus stops, also too much trash in the cans

bus stop wouldn't remove ice in winter because nobody would claim responsibility

theres a park but you can't even see it

no signage for parks- some people may not know about parks and rec areas

no signage for anything else really (historical, etc.)

quite a few small businesses but no way to cross the busy street without jaywalking

bus stops don't have any awnings

enterprise replaced community space- restaurant

apartments are nearby

parks are close to each other

many close by retail

no library, no schools, no playground

used to be a lounge area

Neighborhood & Environment

well shaded

better maintained

a lot of commercial area

no playground, church, or mosque

shopping carts all over

Brenmore Park

Cameron station feels too exclusive to be part of the west end

i like that there are a lot of buses and they're free- I went car free!

i dislike s. reynolds- cars are loud (no mufflers)

isolated area- too much traffic

no lights (street lights/lamps)

mainly residential

yard signs

few dumpsters

some parts of road and parking in the mechanic shops need to be repaired

extremely industrial

automotive

not enough trash cans- only one in whole street

Neighborhood & Environment

many Ethiopian restaurants

lots of car dealerships that take up space but doesn't directly contribute to the community

more industrial

industrial area

mainly automotive industries

well maintained buildings

roses

eco-friendly

commercial

mechanic shops

mainly minority owned retail stores

a lot of ethnic businesses

no schools and no playgrounds

no rec centers or programs to help the community

restaurants/ food

small minority businesses in the area

restaurants

not minority

Neighborhood & Environment

newly built homes

mostly apartments

populated but not enough parking

enough restaurants, food, coffee shops

some retail parking

public transportation

apartments and condos- brick and glass similar

different stores and dealerships

near home depot plaza there are more restaurants etc.

a few new, expensive housing has popped up

noticeable difference between trees, housing when we got to this point

all of the street parking that makes it difficult to see driveways

no overnight parking

not many apartment buildings

not many flowers

bus stop needs bench

few dumpsters

not many apartments this side

Neighborhood & Environment

more cross walks- special sidewalk for people with disabilities

gas station

only 1 trashcan in the area

opposite side of the street was not clean and had some litter, was not clear

a lot of traffic

bike lanes are available but no one uses them

bus stop near but no shade or bench

no crosswalk available to access retail area

crack in sidewalk needs repair

sidewalk is narrow and not safe

commercial buildings

no bench in bus stop

less traffic but faster

commercial signs

no trash cans

useless bike lane

no bus stop

no overnight parking

Neighborhood & Environment

crosswalk available but no intersection

poorly managed roads

heavy traffic

narrow parking lot

many high apartments, new

no rec centers, no playgrounds

not a lot of parks to spend time in nature

industrial

traffic is still heavy

bike parking

bus stop nearby

too much parking

lack of parking and double parking

narrow sidewalks until we got to this spot

cars driving pretty fast- really loud

sidewalks not even and not enough space for two people to cross- sucks having to use a stroller

no bike lane- bike station with no bike lane

no recycling, 1 trash can

Neighborhood & Environment

bus stops not really noticeable and no covering

more shade on sidewalks

trashcans

more businesses

wider side walks

narrow sidewalks

supermarket

people don't stop at crosswalks, need more crosswalks at Edsall

people jay walking because there are no cross walks

parking is really crowded

possible crosswalk or light for opportunity for families to walk

possible railing

crosswalk to get to bus stop

wider sidewalk

broken chain through pathway

this bus stop is better covered

no streetlamps

more space for driveway visibility - driveways have stop signs

Neighborhood & Environment

bigger sidewalk

nice bus stop with shelter

sidewalk to get on the bus

cars always honking

bike lane only on one side of the road in front of Eastern Automotive Group

no cross walks

hidden bus stop behind light post

bench at the bus stop

more shade on sidewalks

not a real street by the mural

this intersection is worse but better managed

there are islands/divisions

would like to see more digital signs at the bus station to know where its going

regulars on the bus are nice to see

i like Cameron station

underwhelmed by new apartments on Pickett and Edsall

I'd like more properties generating electricity- solar or wind

Starbucks was the first chain noticed

Neighborhood & Environment

local breakfast place gone

Alexandria and Fairfax county lines- events, aid, etc., change when Fairfax begins

city does not own or maintain property

different communities with jurisdictions

Obesity, Nutrition, & Physical Activity

fitness center but private and expensive

workout/fitness center

has a park for people to sit

no park for kids to play

only boutique fitness centers, no cheap gyms

only a farmers' market at Cameron station but hard to see and is really empty and feels exclusive

a lot of stores (to eat)

bike lane promotes health and nature

lack of pedestrians

safe and convenient to walk

Could be better to walk, very busy especially with driving, people drive fast

wouldn't ride a bike- no place to lock it

Obesity, Nutrition, & Physical Activity

capital share bikes

not safe for kids to play or walk

bike lane marked

not safe for kids to play

Oral Health

Dental clinic

Quality of Life & Well-Being

questionable air quality

trash on the street- not enough trash cans

heavy smell of paint

very clean

little pollution

paint mural is amazing

crowded- a lot of business

doesn't seem like people spend time here

mosques

stores and mosque

diversity

no place to hang out or barbeque

Quality of Life & Well-Being

maintained

nowhere for community to gather

people gather in the retail area behind

much cleaner

more maintained

mural

community space near Starbucks

nice mural but that's not what it looks like here

no space for cultural events to happen

don't really advertise events- only the city email

plenty signs of art

a lot of minority-owned businesses (Afghan Market, supermarket, etc) that are not in other parts of Alexandria

community space near Starbucks - many may not see it

clean

rent increases every year

overpriced housing

need more tenant rights and housing resources

outdated city ordinances for health/AC

Quality of Life & Well-Being

halal grocery stores and LA mart is always packed

yes there are grocery stores and services

no places to get haircut

not safe for kids

more entertainment for kids

no community or parks for children to play- not a safe place for children to play

pretty clean

busy area in sufficient place

not a lot of place to park or get around

sidewalk in front of LA mart seems inaccessible

No prayer areas

Tobacco & Substance Use

quite a few smoke shops and cigar shops

hookah place

smoke shop

cigarette pack on sidewalk

many people purchase tobacco

no health areas

Tobacco & Substance Use

no cigarette smell

cigarette smell

a lot of smoke shops, not a lot of thought about shops that will actually contribute to the community

weed smell

smoke shop

Miscellaneous

we need more people to report to the City (311) so the problems can be resolved