

NOMINEE: 2015 ROSSLYN SECTOR PLAN

A. DESCRIPTION OF AWARD NOMINEE

Rosslyn is a high-density urban center in Arlington, just one Metrorail stop beyond the nation's capital. First emerging as a major office district in the 1960s, today central Rosslyn has 10 million square feet of development, an auto-oriented street network, limited housing, and little activity on nights and weekends. As it starts to transform from an automobile-oriented to a people-oriented place, Rosslyn is poised to further evolve as a regional center of economic opportunity, but faces many challenges, including: aging office buildings forming an unimaginative skyline; few housing options, limited dining or entertainment options; narrow sidewalks, and small and disconnected public spaces. To address these and other issues, the **2015 Rosslyn Sector Plan** reimagines this concentrated urban core in line with people-oriented planning strategies and design principles that emerged from an interdisciplinary, community-based planning approach.

WHY THIS IS WORTHY OF RECOGNITION AS PLAN OF THE YEAR

Through a far reaching and highly-engaged community conversation, the County developed a transformative plan for Rosslyn's future over a three-year period. Rosslyn today has many opportunities for redevelopment that can replace suburban-type office buildings with new development to make a more urban, active, dense, and mixed-use community. Extensive conversations with developers and economic analysis of building form alternatives ensured that transformative recommendations were financially feasible and achievable.

The Rosslyn Sector Plan is worthy of being recognized as Plan of the Year primarily for its key strategies and design concepts that aim to:

- Harness high-value mixed-use development potential for 10 million square feet more of building space, to help fund public parks, a school, fire station, and affordable housing.
- Establish a new 18th Street Corridor that bisects existing long blocks, improves access to the transit station and riverfront, and creates new public plazas and parks in the heart of Rosslyn.
- Rebalance street space to make the area more walkable and bikeable, convert streets to two-way traffic to better balance all transportation modes, and increase the street tree canopy.
- Revamp existing parks and connect them to versatile public spaces like the Esplanade, a multi-use path along the edge of Rosslyn that provides access to an existing riverfront trail system.
- Institute an innovative "Peaks and Valleys" approach to managing building heights, identifying specific areas where additional or limited heights would be appropriate, in order to preserve and frame unique public view corridors to the nation's capital and the surrounding landscape.
- Establish sound guidelines for further planning and development, including recommendations for building height and form, active street edges, and improved public space programming.

HOW IT ADVANCES PLANNING IN THE COMMONWEALTH

The Rosslyn Sector Plan advances planning in the Commonwealth by providing a vision, specific recommendations, and a framework for regulatory updates to re-make an aging central business district designed around cars into a thriving, revitalized mixed-use district for live, work, and play. As other established activity centers across Virginia will age over time, this plan will serve as a helpful guide and reference for how to plan for and incentivize incremental redevelopment that over time can effectively transform an automobile and office-dominated place into a community with a more balanced mix of uses, accessible and enhanced public space network, and built environment equally accommodating of all travel modes.

SUPPORTING MATERIALS

2015 Rosslyn Sector Plan [link](#)

https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2015/12/151208_RosslynSectorPlan-HI.pdf

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Those to be included on award recognition:

Arlington County, Virginia
Goody Clancy
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