

Wesley Housing at ParcView Apartments



Located in the Landmark area of the City of Alexandria, ParcView Apartments is one of several multi-family mid-rise housing options, both rental and condominium. North of the property is the 30-acre Brookvalley Park and Holmes Run, which contain nature paths, picnic areas, jogging trails, a playground, a ball field, and a community garden. A public bus is available at the property's doorstep and the Van Dorn Street Metro station is approximately one and a half miles away.

Residents have easy access to major thoroughfares including Interstate 395 and Route 236 (Duke Street), a commercial roadway with plentiful retail, grocery, and service providers. The property is close to Landmark Mall and is less than one mile from the Charles E. Beatley, Jr. Central Library, the main branch within Alexandria.

ParcView Apartments has been home to some of the region's diverse workforce for many years. Single mothers, young professionals, families, military personnel, and seniors are represented among its households. It is ParcView's proximity to so many resources that attracts many of its residents. They stay, however, because ParcView quickly becomes their home.

Again and again, residents interviewed all came to the same conclusion as to why they stay: *it's a wonderful neighborhood where people look out for each other.*

This neighborhood, forged in the heart of a mid-rise, was threatened when the then owners prepaid its federally-assisted Section 236 mortgage in 1996. Over the next eight years, the owners slowly reduced their commitment to affordable housing, until new vouchers were no longer accepted.

When ParcView came up for sale, Wesley Housing Development Corporation made an offer that would increase the number of family units, add accessible units, and preserve the property as affordable to residents earning 60% or less of the Area Median Income (AMI) for the next 40 years. The organization was able to make the \$31.5 Million offer because of the investment partners who joined the project: the City of Alexandria, the Virginia Housing Development Authority, and Enterprise Community Investment, Inc.

ParcView had been well-maintained, so Wesley Housing was able to utilize the renovation funds to transition some of the one-bedroom units into two-bedroom units to accommodate more families. With more than 20% of residents being seniors—many of them long-time residents—Wesley Housing also employed universal design principles on ten of the new units to provide accessible housing for those seniors wishing to age-in-place and for individuals with physical disabilities in need of an affordable home.

Other renovations included common area improvements and measures necessary to transitioning ParcView into a more sustainable community, with a focus on the conservation of energy, reduction of waste, and resident education. These sustainability measures included replacing all the windows and exterior doors, plumbing fixtures, and all HVAC units that had not been recently updated. Wesley Housing also added water-saving devices to existing plumbing and replaced all internal lights with florescent bulbs and transitioned all exterior lighting fixtures to high-pressure sodium fixtures controlled by light sensors.

For many of the residents who lived through the dust and the noise, the ability to remain in their homes is the true reason to celebrate at ParcView. The improvements, while welcomed enthusiastically, were really just icing on the cake.

