

SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY

Arlington County is committed to supporting the needs of our community and enriching the lives of the people who choose to live and work here. The County Manager's Proposed FY 2021 Budget recognizes the importance of non-profits, small businesses, and cultural affairs to the fabric of our community, and the desire for new and improved community assets.

New Community Assets

In FY 2021, three new community assets will open providing valued library and recreational services: the new Lubber Run Community Center, Long Bridge Aquatics and Fitness Center, and an enhanced Courthouse Library.

The Lubber Run Community Center, which replaces an aging 1956 facility with a new and expanded community center, is under construction and scheduled to open in fall 2020. The project incorporates several 2015 Community Facilities Study findings. The final building design, which will be at least LEED Building Design + Construction (BD+C) Silver Certificated, and outdoor amenities reflect extensive input gathered from our community throughout 2017 and 2018.

The new community center and updated park offers indoor recreation space that can be programmed for all ages, including a preschool and senior center (previously at the Culpepper site), as well as a new gymnasium and indoor track, outdoor recreation areas, and natural green spaces that were increased by moving parking underground. The Department of Park and Recreation's (DPR) customer service center will also relocate to this more centrally located facility with its better parking options and access to public transit. This new community center also responds to two of the top three indoor facilities priorities (gyms and exercise and fitness equipment) identified in the Public Spaces Master Plan (PSMP).

The Long Bridge Aquatics & Fitness Center has been many years in the making, with the initial concept approved by the Arlington County Board in 2004. It is currently under construction and scheduled to open in early 2021.

There have been extensive, ongoing community engagement efforts since the concept was introduced to ensure that the final building meets the needs and interests of the community, while also staying within budget constraints.

The new center offers a 50-meter pool; 1-, 3-, and 5-meter diving; a leisure pool; health and fitness spaces; and community meeting rooms. Outdoor amenities will also be expanded, with the addition of 10 acres of parkland and the extension of the esplanade. This new center also responds to two of the top three indoor

facilities priorities (indoor swimming pools and exercise and fitness equipment) identified in the Public Spaces Master Plan (PSMP).

The Boeing Company has made a generous commitment to support maintenance and operational expenses for the facility, providing a \$10 million donation to the County. This will allow us to open the facility with no net tax support required and provide programming opportunities for veterans.

In addition to these new community centers, the Manager's proposal includes additional services for the Courthouse library branch, located in the Ellen M. Bozman Government Center. The ongoing renovation of the Bozman Center provides an opportune time to expand the Courthouse Library with a new dedicated children's space in an area currently underserved by full-service libraries. Funding for a children's librarian and a more robust collection is included in the budget (\$75,000). The Courthouse Library will be a full-service location with evening and weekend hours, as well as programming consistent with other branches.

Cultural Affairs – Arlington Community Arts Programs

The Arlington Cultural Affairs Division (CAD) enriches lives by creating, supporting, and promoting the arts. Following Board guidance in April 2019, the County Manager formed the Community Arts Advisory Committee (CAAC) to develop a transition plan for our community arts programs that would "efficiently, effectively and equitably deliver services to its arts and cultural community" while providing greater access for the broader community. The CAAC pursued this question by:

- Cataloguing public and private arts services in Arlington and the region;
- Developing and analyzing alternative management and service delivery proposals, funding sources, and a proposed transition for future operations;
- Evaluating and proposing public-private partnerships; and
- Reviewing a new scheduling process for joint-use theater space to identify efficiencies and increase transparency.

The resulting recommendations from the CAAC included:

- Establishing the Scenic Studio as a community resource with reasonable fees and convenient hours for any group or individual who needs or wants to create large-scale items for performances or teach others how to do so;
- Disposing of the Mobile Stage and contracting with a vendor as a cost-savings measure;
- Exploring contracting with Signature Theatre to develop and manage a combined costume inventory; and
- Creating a Joint Use Operations/Coordination Group (JU-OCG) with Arlington Public Schools to "develop a more efficient and transparent process of scheduling to achieve optimum and equitable use of performance space that minimizes conflict."

In addition, the County continues to explore several of CAAC's recommendations through its programming, organizational structure, and continued conversation with APS and other arts organizations.

The County Manager has adopted most of the CAAC recommendations in his Proposed FY 2021 Budget, including:

- A re-imagining of the Scenic Studio, including more flexible hours that are responsive to the needs of the arts community and ongoing funding for a manager (\$110,692, 1.0 FTE);
- A revised fee schedule for use of the Scenic Studio, using a tiered system based on the size of work stations and with preferential fees for Arlington arts organizations, to promote more efficient management of the studio and increase use capacity for new users by inducing the turnover of available spaces (\$12,900 additional revenue);
- Transitioning the Mobile Stage to a vendor model after this season. There are no anticipated service changes for the upcoming CY 2020 season;
- Piloting a project to have Signature Theater manage the CostumeLab costume inventory rental program (\$70,000, one-time funding); and continue evaluating moving the CostumeLab equipment to CAD's facility at 3700 S. Four Mile Run for potential for community workshops, costume construction, and County programming; and
- Restoration of ongoing funding for the Facilities Manager position (\$101,350, 1.0 FTE), who plays a key role managing the operations of 3700 S. Four Mile Run and scheduling of joint-use space.

The proposed budget also includes one-time funding for additional arts grants (\$30,000) to further support our nonprofit arts community. The budget suggests that the Arts Commission be consulted on the best way to apply these additional funds.

Nonprofit Framework

The County's non-governmental organizations provide valued and essential services to our residents and businesses.

In 2018, we completed the initial steps in evaluating our funding approach for nonprofits when we completed a [comprehensive Countywide inventory](#) of funding levels, type of work performed, and selection methodology for grant or contract award. The Department of Human Services' (DHS) funding for nonprofits accounts for more than 75 percent of total County nonprofit funding. Our efforts since this initial evaluation have focused the processes and evaluation criteria used to award funding and contracts to nonprofits.

In adopting the FY 2020 budget, the County Board directed the County to develop a "tool and methodology to be used to evaluate non-governmental organizations that have current service contracts with Arlington County that request additional and/or supplemental funding for substantially the same scope of work." The Board also

requested ways to evaluate requests from non-governmental organizations that are pursuing scopes of work “not currently supported by public funds.”

Arlington County residents make up a diverse population whose human services needs are not static but have changed over time. Many of DHS’ current contracts and grants are based on previous relationships with nonprofits and are renewed annually without a competitive application process. These legacy contracts and grants often do not consider the County’s changing population and priorities. In addition, since grants have been historically awarded and not competitively applied for, nonprofits that were not originally funded have not been given an open and transparent way to apply for funding from DHS.

DHS has kicked off a collaborative discussion with the nonprofit community to develop a process to competitively award some of its nonprofit contracts for a multiyear period (e.g., three years). The objectives of a competitive process are to ensure that awards are:

- strategic,
- non-duplicative,
- effectively meeting identified needs and priorities in the community,
- focused on outcomes to yield greater accountability, and
- part of a transparent process for County staff, Board members, nonprofit providers, and residents to follow.

Other outcomes of a competitive process include:

- Consolidated application process
- Consistent evaluation methodology and reporting mechanisms that are built into each award
- Performance measures that are results-based and outcomes-focused
- Performance measures that are evaluated through an equity framework

Completion of the competitive funding process and structure is anticipated in fall 2020 and could be incorporated into the FY 2022 budget process. During the discussion of this year’s DHS budget, staff will present further details about these possible approaches, including the criteria to be used and which current funding partners would compete for funds through a grant process or receive funds as part of a sole source or competitively procured contract.

Small Business Support

Small businesses are an essential part of our community. They ensure Arlington is a unique and vibrant place, provide crucial services, and are a foundational element of our economy. In fact, 92 percent of Arlington businesses have fewer than 50 employees and more than half have fewer than five employees.

Since the announcement of the Amazon HQ2 project, the demand for small business services has increased as entrepreneurs seek new opportunities in Arlington’s evolving economy. At the same time, the County anticipates a need for

further support services as some of its existing small businesses, such as those on Columbia Pike, face new challenges.

To meet the needs of this vital component of our economy, the FY 2021 Proposed Budget makes new investments to the County's capacity to provide education, technical assistance, and events for small businesses. The County also recommends strategic investments in Arlington's Partnership organizations. These organizations, in tandem with the County, build the on-the-ground relationships and execute impactful initiatives that help our neighborhood businesses thrive. New proposed investments include:

- **Arlington Economic Development BizLaunch Program (\$35,000 ongoing; \$20,000 one-time):**
Building on the County's FY 2020 Budget, which included funding for a new Small Business Specialist, the FY 2021 Proposed Budget includes \$35,000 in ongoing funding to meet the rising demand for multilingual programming, technical assistance, and events for small businesses countywide, as well \$20,000 in one-time funding to create and deliver programming for small businesses along Columbia Pike.
- **Arlington County Police Department Business Outreach Unit's Business Safety Initiative (\$87,230 ongoing; \$110,000 one-time):**
The Business Safety Initiative focuses on providing the business community a holistic approach to increasing awareness and prevention of workplace violence. The unit will work with other county agencies and private sector entities to develop and implement a catalog of training and resources available to businesses in the County. The budget proposes \$110,000 in one-time funding for training, materials, and equipment, and \$87,230 in ongoing funding for an Administrative Specialist (1.0 FTE) to support the program.
- **Community Partnerships (\$40,500 ongoing; \$70,000 one-time):**
To complement the investments in BizLaunch, the Manager's proposal includes \$60,000 in one-time funding for the Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization (CPRO) to hire a business engagement specialist. CPRO and BizLaunch will collaborate on the design, hiring, and work plan of the new position. The budget also proposes \$15,000 in ongoing funds for staff benefits, \$10,000 in one-time funding for marketing for the Clarendon Alliance, and \$25,500 in ongoing funds for the Lee Highway Alliance for operational expenses.