



FY2020 Budget Online Comments

October-December, 2018

Emerging Themes

SECTION 1: BACKGROUND

In October, 2018, following a live Virtual Town Hall with the County Manager in which the Manager laid out the challenges that the FY2020 budget would present, the County launched an online feedback form for the community to provide input into the budget process. This online form was held open for eight weeks as a vehicle for gathering community views. This form received 90 total responses in those two months.

The results were analyzed for emerging themes and presented to the County to help inform his process of putting together a FY20 proposed budget.

This form asked community members respond to four questions:

- 1. What guidance do you have for the County Manager as he strives for a balanced approach between raising taxes and reducing services and/or programs?*
- 2. The County Manager has stated that the budget challenges facing the County will require a multi-year approach. In your opinion, what types of strategies/principles do you believe might offer longer term financial stability for Arlington County? (up to 3 responses)*
- 3. In your opinion, what, if any, types of County services or programs do you believe could be reduced and/or eliminated? (up to 3 responses)*
- 4. What, if any, additional suggestions do you have for the County Manager as he develops his FY 2020 Proposed Budget?*

This document provides a summary of the key themes that emerged overall and from each individual question, in addition to a comprehensive list of the responses in their entirety, organized thematically.

Most Common Themes

Taken together, the key themes that emerged from the online responses were:

- *Good governance, fiscal stewardship*
- *Core Services*
- *Reduce “luxury” or “unnecessary” spending*

Throughout all responses, the emphasis on good governance, responsible fiscal stewardship, and thoughtful long-term planning was universal. Respondents were also generally united in a desire to see the County prioritize its spending on maintaining core services and reduce what are considered to be luxury spending items. However, within those broadly defined categories, individuals revealed a wide variety of priorities for spending, programs, and services.

Two other themes emerged that saw a divergence of opinions:

- *Taxes*
- *Development*

Respondents to the online form were equally split on the question of their willingness to raise taxes to preserve current level of services. Similarly, while development was a common theme throughout, some respondents saw promoting economic development as a priority for creating sustainable budgets going forward while others took a more skeptical view of the role of development in the County.

SECTION II: EMERGING THEMES

Questions 1, 2 and 4 focused on general guidance, strategies, and principals that the County Manager might use in dealing with budget challenges. From these three questions a set of similar themes emerged:

GOOD GOVERNANCE

- [Fiscal Stewardship](#): Slow or reduce borrowing
- [Internal Auditor](#)
- [Reduce Spending Levels](#)
- [Slow or Reduced Borrowing](#)
- [Transparency and Open Government](#)
- [Public Engagement](#)
- [Budget Close-Out Options](#)

REVENUE CONSIDERATIONS

- Opposing Tax Increases
- Support of Tax Increases for Services
- Developer Taxes & Community Benefits
- User Fees and Other Types of Fees
- Real Estate Assessments

COUNTY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

- Prioritize Core Services
- Eliminate Non-Essential Services
- Cross-Agency Coordination
- Efficiencies and Partnerships
- Opposition to New County facilities
- “Gold Plating” at Schools
- Prioritize Schools Investment
- Considerations of Staff Compensation
- Specific Service Recommendations
 - Schools Programs
 - Public Transportation
 - Traffic Calming
 - Affordable Housing (Pro and Con)
 - Libraries
 - Human Services
 - Environment
 - Parks
 - Other

DEVELOPMENT

- Promote Economic Development
- Increase Housing Types
- Concern Over Increase of Density

QUESTION 3 asked for specific programs and services that the County Manager should consider reducing or eliminating. Items included for elimination are listed below with the number of mentions in parenthesis.

TIER 1 (most common)

Affordable Housing (12)

APS Costs (11)

Aquatics Center (10)

Parks (9)

Arts Funding (8)

Human Services (8)

TIER 2

County Staff (5)

Bike Lanes/Trails (4)

Road Surfacing (4)

Neighborhood Conservation Program (3)

Building and Construction (3)

ART Bus (3)

Traffic Calming (3)

Economic Development (2)

Tourism (2)

Sidewalk Modifications (2)

Bus Stops (2)

Employee DROP or retirement program (2)

TIER 3

Contractors (1)

Dog Parks (1)

ESL (1)

Fire Department (1)

IT (1)

Library Programs (1)

Employee Assistance or Incentive Programs (1)

Sister City Program (1)

Lee Highway Alliance (1)

Washington Board of Trade (1)

Neighborhood College Program (1)

Center for Urban Planning Advocacy (1)

Public Engagement (1)

Rosslyn Spectrum (1)

Scooters (1)

Shoplift Theft Offender Program (1)

Sports Leagues (1)

Spraygrounds (1)
Stormwater (1)
Tax Exemptions for Military Widows (1)
Snow Plowing for Trails (1)
Walk Arlington/Bike Arlington/Car Free Diet (1)
Yard Waste pickup (1)
Special Tree Designation (1)

SECTION III: THEMES WITH RELATED COMMENTS

GOOD GOVERNANCE

Fiscal Stewardship

- Stop wasting our money on Democrat politics like subsidizing low cost housing and diversity and discrimination against whites.
- I assume both [tax raises and service reduction] is needed. With raising taxes, I pay both residential and business tax (am a small business owner in Arlington). I hope there are limits to tax increases for small business owners. With reducing services and/or programs, I do not want services reduced for vulnerable populations b/c they are the ones who would struggle the most with services cut.
- Strive to come in under budget each year
- There may be some fiscal advantages to Arlington becoming a City rather than a County. This should be explored.
- Make members of the Board pay for what they've caused.
- Consistent, steady and modest spending.
- Stand up to the Board for once
- Defer what you can until we are financially prepared, get to 95% business occupancy, reign in school board spending
- Don't be swept up in the tide of false economy currently eviscerating our public commons.
- Modesty.

Internal Auditor

- The appointment of an Internal Auditor was a good first step. Each director should be held accountable for their Department and be prepared to defend their requests. Maybe we don't need more \$1M artificial turf additions/upgrades for a few years.
- The most essential step is to increase funding and support for the Auditor to the County Board. Because our budget is squeezed, it is critical that Arlington an unbiased, critical review of all programs, services, policies and practices to determine which ones work, where duplicative programs should be cut, and which programs are inefficient or ineffective and should therefore be ended or made effective. For example, the County faces critical needs for infrastructure due to growth, yet without transparency it appears that the County wastes large amounts of money in its capital projects. \$1.6 million to renovate an existing dog park! \$1.0 million for a bus stop! A feasibility study of a cable

car across the Potomac! Not accounting for the cost of land acquisition, Arlington spends more per pupil for school construction than any county in the state! When tax payers ask why, we are told we need to keep building top quality schools in all parts of Arlington. That is obfuscation. Of course we need top quality school, but taxpayers need to have proper oversight and information from an independent auditor to know that money for school construction is spent wisely, and what is driving the high expenses. We do not need to hire architects, even European architects, to design each school separately -- rather than using single model. We do not need to provide adult-style "community" theaters in schools. We do not need all our schools to meet the gold standard for LEED, unless that is shown to be cost effective. Before requesting tax increases to fund school construction, or spending the latest bond that is sucking the County deeper into debt, taxpayers need independent assessments on how money for school construction is spent, so we can economize and be able to provide top quality schools in the long run. Ensuring the Auditor for the County Board is effective will help County government streamline to improve efficiency, generate substantial savings that could then be reallocated to critical needs. It would also allay the concerns of many Arlington citizens that the County Board is irresponsible with their money, because as things are now the lack of effective transparency makes it look as though County government has something to hide.

- The number one recommendation is to beef up funding and support for the Auditor to the County Board (Dr. Horton). Now more than ever, we need an unbiased, critical review of all programs, services, policies and practices to determine which ones work, which ones are duplicative, and which ones are inefficient and/or ineffective. As an office of 1, Dr. Horton is limited in how much he can help county government streamline and improve efficiency, which could easily generate significant savings that could then be reallocated to other critical funding needs.
- Move towards a more program-based budgeting approach.
- Rigorous examination of county contracts
- Overhaul contracting system
- Ramp up the County Board auditor's capacity to efficiency/effectiveness reviews of programs/projects/etc., and create/improve fiscal impact/COCS analysis as well as other financial analysis to make better informed decisions going forward
- The appointment of an Internal Auditor was a good first step. Each director should be held accountable for their Department and be prepared to defend their requests. Maybe we don't need more \$1M artificial turf additions/upgrades for a few years.

Reduce Spending Levels:

- This is absurd. The fact that we don't have a board that can balance the insanely high taxes we pay and expenses, is astonishing.
- Fund needs. Cut wants & luxury items.
- Arlington cannot be everything for everyone. You just cannot keep spending on every wish list that everyone wants. Example: the aquatics center. \$60 million that we just don't have. Have you figured out how much it's going to cost every year to run? I'm glad the street car was canceled because if it didn't pay for itself, our taxes would have gone through the roof to subsidize it. Did the Board ever stop to consider that?
- Cut the budgets across the board by 10-30%
- Avoid extravagant expenditures

- Stop spending surplus funds on pet projects outside of the budget process; carry forward any surplus funds to the next year's budget; get the school board to produce a budget based on reality
- Review and trim existing costs/More modest government
- We find things to spend money on that are not required - we embellish too much in CIP
- No new spending
- Reduce current spending
- Reduce capital expenditures; Institute across the board reduction in spending on all non-essential programs (maintain police and fire and emergency services).
- Using percentages rather than dollar numbers when allocating spending; Focus on cutting excess spending; Remember the high population of early career professionals that want to continue living here
- Stop spending!!
- curb spending
- Decreased spending
- First and foremost is to prioritize and reduce spending accordingly. Part of the issue is that Arlington doesn't seem to want to acknowledge we've become an urban community. We still offer a lot of services and require developers to design like we are a suburban community. For example, we don't need all the parking that is required by Zoning. There is a need to decide priorities and start saying no to things that aren't a priority. Outside of this, the Arlington Public School spending is out of control. While good schools are important to attracting residents and businesses, we don't need school buildings to be iconic architectural designs - they need to be functional and within a reasonable budget.
- Take on the county board leftists that know no limits on spending.
- Please cut services, please cut labor, please be a good steward of the money we are entrusting in you. Water parks, and resurfacing soccer fields and new white boards that don't really get used in every classroom, and charging for each drain in a new house and planter boxes and retention trenches and paving already paved streets and county staff who don't understand basic lot coverage calculations and a school budget that isn't going to teachers but rather technology spends that aren't needed. I've got more but I think you understand where I'm coming from. Don't threaten cuts, just cut, at least 20% across the board, and preferably 40% in some of the less needed administrative offices.

Slow or Reduce Borrowing

- Any bond issue should be paid off by end of CIP project benefit.
- Reduce planned bond expenditures to maintenance of existing properties.
- Less GO bonds, more revenue bonds
- Take on less debt to benefit profit-centered development
- Stop or slow borrowing
- Cut taxes by 5-10% to build up reserves and pay off debt
- Continue to look at cuts, efficiently - yet if the county keeps issuing GO bonds without increasing revenues, we deserve a bond downgrade and voters should know that we are in a dire long term financial bind.

Transparency and Open Government

- Provide more transparency in the budget documents so that residents can provide more meaningful feedback. In examining the final FY19 budget, I find changes from previous fiscal years but cannot see the totality of what Arlington is spending right now in detail.
- Put the full current budget online with explanatory text so that residents can see and understand every expenditure by Arlington County. Provide more space for residents to list more things that can be changed in the budget.

Public Engagement

- A survey would be a great way to assess what services residents would be willing to part with. I'm a resident and County employee and I haven't seen anything like this.
- Continue to seek input from the people and what would benefit the most.
- Stop asking citizens what they want if you cannot/will not be able to deliver on their suggestions
- Talk more with staff and citizens. Directors don't always really know the minutiae of the day to day.
- Please stop asking citizens what they want -- it only leads them to believe they can have what they want. It is not realistic. No more community outreach.

Budget Close-Out

- All surplus funds from one budget year are to be carried over to the next year. For most of the past 20 years, we have had surplus funds that are given out to pet projects of the Board outside of the budget process. This needs to stop now.
- Do not spend the left over funds from the previous year. Incorporate the money in the budgeting process for the next year.

REVENUE CONSIDERATIONS

Opposing Tax Increases

- Do NOT raise taxes. You present costs as a given, but Arlington is bloated. Cut frills like big subsidies to Signature Theater and fancy, cantilevered structures on new school buildings. Arlington has a billion dollars to pay good salaries and deliver excellent core services: that's plenty.
- Please CUT PROGRAMS AND CUT TAXES. We are SO WASTEFUL compared to even Alexandria....our schools are insane cost per square foot, and we are over loaded in swimming pools....Alexandria has ONE indoor one, why do we keep adding (now Nauck?? If it hasn't been used since the 1960s why do you think replacing it will create use when there is none?) Most of all, I am DONE with the over-manicured, over treated PARKS, including the SPRAYING done with the invasive plant control ---you are poisoning the Four Mile Run watershed for a dubious goal of eradicating plants that have been non-native since the first Europeans arrived in the 1500s. The non-native plants have been planted for centuries in soil heavily polluted by development and top soil razed numerous times, so it is a fallacy that there is a pristine "native" population of

plants here to save to begin with...it is a huge waste when we can't afford rents, college, and healthcare... and the lack of sustainable transportation and sprawl is hastening the inevitable sixth mass extinction (we need to build UP, and stop building OUT!). I was SO MUCH HAPPIER WHEN OUR PARKS "suffered" BENIGN NEGLECT-- I HATE WHAT YOU DID ON COLUMBIA PIKE....PLEASE LET SOME PLACES BE 100% WILD, UNTRAMMELLED, UNCONTROLLED, UNMANICURED like it was even a few years ago when I moved here in 2013.

- Focus on cutting excesses rather than raising taxes. It is already too expensive to live here for most early career professionals. There is no need to punish us further for wanting to live in a good neighborhood with a favorable commute to our jobs. Additionally, consider using percentages of revenue to fund things rather than hard dollar amounts. By assigning a percent of revenue for each item, we avoid going over budget. Consider reducing public funds for things like Fridays at the Fountain or the Crystal City 5k series. Reduced spending for sports and arts are also reasonable asks. It is not the government's job to entertain people. Make the political parties pay for ALL expenses related to primary elections.
- Property tax should not be raised. They are already some of the highest in the country. He should find ways to fill the vacant retail and office space to bring in additional income.
- Keep spending within revenue. Don't automatically raise taxes on residents. Don't automatically pay developers and others with tax avoidance schemes. Arlington is a very desirable place to do business - it's value should not be diminished by giving our tax revenue away to profit making entities.
- Now that state & local taxes are not deductible under federal tax standard deduction/ capped at \$10K for those itemizing, raising local taxes will negatively impact a lot of residents. Remember, tax revenue will rise due to rising property assessments.
- STOP. RAISING. TAXES. Do WHATEVER you have to do to stop raising taxes, learn to live on less.
- Do what most everyone (except Arlington County) does when anticipated expenses exceed income. Tighten your belts! Read- No tax increases!!! I am so tired of property tax increases. My taxes even went up when property values dropped. You just raised the tax rate. What a racket. Every election you have questions requesting more loans/Bonds for work we can't afford to pay for,... and unbelievably, they generally get approved. I vote against all of them every time. Thanks goodness for the few folks on the board who have heard the voices of the voters on tax increases....street cars...gondolas....the list goes on and on. I'm so glad to see some of the life members of the Board gone. I hope you will be different. Thank you for providing this outlet for my thoughts.
- I prefer no tax increases. If services or programs must be reduced, that would be my preference.
- Don't raise taxes. Maintain core services. Reduce "nice to have" programs and/or increase fees.
- Primary objective ought to be to maintain or reduce taxes. The county needs to cut or reduce services; continued yearly tax increases drive people to leave the county for economic reasons and this make it a less economically and ethnically diverse community.
- My property tax went up over 8% in 2018; surely you can manage with that!
- Stop raising taxes (figure it out, you're paid the bucks to do so)
- Keeping taxes level.
- Cut out what you/we can't afford. Get your hand out of my back pocket. I so look forward to the day when I can retire, move away and seriously over charge someone else to live

in my home in Arlington county. God knows in my retirement I won't be able to afford it here.

- Stop raising taxes and imposing fee's. This is getting insane. Maybe consider enhancing areas in South Arlington to increase prop. value. We're getting tired of all the money being spent in N. Arlington.
- DO NOT RAISE TAXES.

Support of Tax Increases for Services

- Residents should be willing to pay more overall for all the county services
- Provide services to citizens that enrich their communities.
- Arlington has the lowest property tax in the area. Why not raise the tax and meet the needs of the county? I am sure most home owners could afford a yearly increase of approx. \$300. This would solve the problem.
- I would be happy to pay higher taxes in order to have excellent schools and parks.
- If we need the programs and services then the taxes need to be raised accordingly, particularly on large landowners and property developers. I realize there is a potential legal challenge to property developer taxes but if all of the neighboring jurisdictions are collecting those taxes then we should be to. Also, stop giving tax credits to get companies to move to Arlington unless there is substantial data supporting such a tax break.
- Increase property and sales taxes. Increase property tax rate for more expensive homes. Charge Churches and golf courses fair property tax bills.
- Do not rob Peter to pay Paul: I live in Arlington because of the high-level of services. Raise taxes, do not cut services.
- I would rather pay higher taxes than cut back on services. The range and kind of services available in Arlington are what makes us a best place to live.
- I would rather see taxes raised than services that make quality of life in Arlington worse. If I had to propose a way to cut spending, it seems like Arlington frequently resurfaces roads that are in no real need of resurfacing.
- If we have to raise tax to provide the basic service including education and safety. Tax should be raised.
- I favor raising taxes to allow programs vital to individuals in enabling them to survive financially in Arlington, and support low-income housing.
- Arlington has lower property taxes than many locations in this Country and residents (I am one) are spoiled by the services and infrastructure that are provided to us. While raising taxes is painful, it must be done and at the same time, we should look at making our roads, public buildings and facilities, and schools a little more ordinary compared to the rest of the world, until a time when we have a more balanced budget. Plus I do not think that we should be afraid to borrow money based on our future revenue stream from Amazon and other companies that will surely come to Arlington. As long as our bond rating is not impacted dramatically, this is something to consider for short-term budget shortfalls- something like an equity line of credit.
- Maintain that which makes Arlington attractive: no cuts to services.
- Increase property taxes.
- Raise taxes on homes.
- Increase taxes, add higher rate for home values above \$1million
- Raise taxes

- Arlingtonians are quite progressive in the services they would like to see offered. This is apparent every election year when we vote to increase spending to receive more services. Tax increases are something the residents can swallow if you tie them to services and promote them as worth the cost.
- Increased tax revenues
- raise tax if necessary to meet minimal service
- Raise taxes as a LAST resort
- Taxes are not bad, so long as residents understand what services they are funding and that they are used efficiently. Be as transparent as possible and examine increased taxes first, if efficiently used funds still aren't enough, and only consider reductions in services if the wider community sees no benefit.
- I favor raising taxes to allow programs vital to individuals in enabling them to survive financially in Arlington, and support low-income housing.
- I'd favor a modest real estate tax increase to help maintain existing services.
- Raise property taxes slightly and fees on services used by wealthy county residents; raise taxes on businesses. Put more money towards affordable housing and social services.

Developer Taxes and Community Benefits

- Heck, this is pretty simple. Since you've sold or given our bedroom community to the commercial sector to do with as they please, turning our once quiet neighborhoods and local businesses into constant noise and bland useless bars and restaurants for those of us who actually live here, just charge those who have benefited to repay your largess. Developers and the contractors and the new businesses who you've given away the store to can now pay you back to show their appreciation while those of us who have lived here for years look for some place to live that is affordable now that you're priced and noised us out of Arlington. Let them pay it back. And maybe return some of the campaign contributions you've all gotten in order to do this. Easy peasy.
- If you're going to raise taxes, just raise them on developers. You've given Arlington away to them, and so they should be happy to oblige. Arlington was a really nice place to live for a long time, with leafy neighborhoods, lots of group houses for those without much money, loads of small local businesses and restaurants, and it was quiet. Us long-term residents were happy. Then the Board decided Arlington should be a crowded, noisy, corporate-controlled urban center. Home-owners who used to do their own work moved out, the rich moved in to houses we had to live through the horrid noise every day as they were built, and now we have to live through the horrid noise as they hire loud contractors to do everything for them. We can't afford to move and can't afford to stay. Virtually all of the local businesses were priced out and replaced by chains that serve mediocre expensive food and sell things we don't need and we have a bar for every citizen. It's great for your campaign contributions, but since you've sold out completely those of us who live here, charge the developers for the largess they're so enjoying from you. Don't charge us because the Board decided to become more than we could afford or wanted to be. And for God's sake, add in a requirement that if you're going to work in a neighborhood use only battery powered equipment instead of the jet engines and generators we have to listen to all day. Stop the make-work by remaking tiny parks that are fine the way they are and trying to remake roads to accommodate the building you already built before thinking it out. Developers have feasted on you; at least make them pay something for it and keep them quiet.

- When developers continue to raze smaller homes in established neighborhoods, they should be required to provide curb and gutter or street paving or some benefit to the community -- even if it's not in the neighborhood they're working.
- Make developers fund what they've caused.
- Preserve our natural areas, stop sacrificing them to build recreational facilities; Control high density residential growth by charging impact fees of developers to cover the full cost of schools, roads, policing, parks and other services and infrastructure for the new residents. Ensure a robust County Auditor who can stop waste, help the County make difficult, informed budget decisions, and increase public confidence in how the County spends its revenue.
- Reduce tax incentives provided to for-profit entities - we are a very desirable place to do business!
- Avoid awarding tax incentives to businesses/Don't burden future tax years
- Commercial properties should be paying more overall compared to residential property owners.
- Developers should be held accountable for empty office space that has been vacant for an excessive amount of time (perhaps 6 - 12 months), which is presumably due to their greed. Arlington is clearly an attractive market for both commercial and retail businesses, but smaller companies (including startups) probably aren't going to be able to afford very high leases. They should be forced to find a tenant w/in a certain amount of time or pay a monthly fine. One example that comes to mind is the old Tuto Benne restaurant, which has been vacant for at least 1 - 2 years.
- Ask property developer to contribute to school and park infrastructure instead of art display. Property taxes for qualified senior citizens should be deferred, but not exempt
- reduce law enforcement costs, reduce tax incentives to developers, increase taxes on real estate management companies (rentals), increase business taxes
- Increase hotel taxes, parking fees and make property tax rate progressive by having higher rate on values above \$1million
- Who should pay for them? Answer: the new large corporations you gave the store away to, such as Whole Foods and now Amazon. If they really want to be here, let them show it. We don't need to reduce services, we need to reduce the need for them, and the residents who have lived here a long time aren't the problem, it's you guys.

User Fees and Other Types of Fees

- Tread lightly when it comes to parking-generated revenue. Recent changes to my neighborhood are unnecessary. Arlington is not DC, and Sundays should stay free and weekday parking shouldn't go past 7 (at the latest). Please do NOT take DC's approach and essentially penalize people for having cars and/or driving. Consider the amount of temporary illegal parking that takes place. I see it all the time in front of my building. Additional revenue could be generated from that if there were more meter officers (vs. simply extending the parking hours).
- Raise property taxes slightly and fees on services used by wealthy county residents; raise taxes on businesses. Put more money towards affordable housing and social services.
- Reduce tax incentives to developers, increase taxes on real estate management companies (rentals), increase business taxes

- Charge households by the volume of garbage generated. Example: number of pickup per month: 1, 2, 3, 4, etc.; number of trash containers per pick up; additional trash outside of containers.
- I would charge more for some services... such as branch pick-up -- first one free, following ones charged, small fees for many services just to begin raising income.
- Pay as you go; no operating costs are financed
- Stop trying to make Arlington into something else -- it was fine the way it was. It's not fine the way it is. Make those who directly benefit pay, not those of us who just live here, we obviously have no say in anything so don't make us pay for what we didn't choose.
- First use services free, second use and up, fees go up
- Abusers pay fees as they incur costs - disorderly contacts, traffic accidents that harm infrastructure, dumping, etc. receive summonses which incur escalating fees tied to frequency
- Entry/ usage fees for the new aquatics center should cover the cost of maintenance and staff; funding proposed traffic circle at Military/Nellie Custis intersection is a waste of money

Real Estate Assessments

- Work with state legislators (local, No. Va., other urban areas) for G.A. authority to set separate property assessment rates for homes & commercial bldgs.
- Assess higher-price houses at real market value. It seems the lower-priced homes are assessed proportionately higher.

COUNTY SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Prioritize Core Services

- A combination, but focus on delivery of core services. We are generous community but need to look at reducing DHS services that go far above and beyond state levels, affordable housing efforts, and the building of new things. We should also carefully evaluate our high cost per student in the APS system.
- Keep branch libraries open. They require minimal revenue and are cost effective core services to the citizens of Arlington County.
- Keep our libraries and park spaces as these are critical to the quality of our community, life and education of our youth. There are not enough places to gather and these spaces add to the value of homes which in turn keeps the taxes at a higher value for the County.
- Focus on the nature centers and schools
- Please don't cut our libraries and nature centers. They are the gems of Arlington.
- Make sure that crucial infrastructure, such as schools, are appropriately funded and cut projects that are nice additions but not necessities.
- Please let's focus on maintaining what we have, not forever expanding services.
- Stop funding "nice to have" projects - concentrate on core services
- Focus on providing essential services, with a priority for public safety and support for the elderly, infirm, children and other at-risk Arlingtonians
- Prioritization; what is important to our citizens? what achieves those values? what doesn't?
- Meet service requirement like school, safety, street.

- Stop taking on new scope.
- Invest in things people will actually use - maintaining sidewalks, not gimmick-y things like the "parklets"
- Prioritize core services (police, fire, schools)
- Focus on long-term realities, not short-term that would be nice
- Focus on maintaining what we have
- Investments in infrastructure - fix before it's in complete disrepair, use energy efficient street lights/traffic lights etc.
- Focus on maintaining existing services, such as regional libraries like the Cherrydale branch open, over expanding other services.
- DO NOT make cuts to local library branches. These little branch libraries make Arlington the wonderful community it is.
- Keep in mind that libraries are a core function of local government, alongside road maintenance, traffic regulation, and police and fire protection. The benefit they provide for citizens more than compensate for their trivial cost.
- Keep all libraries as a cornerstone of county's priorities to encourage more events there, promoting value of reading and education.
- I think the County needs to determine what it wants to be. Is Arlington an extension of DC? Does it want to maintain its more suburban feel? Certain decisions, programs, and services are in direct conflict with each other.

Eliminate Non-Essential Services

- I'd suggest limiting Focus Studies and utilizing the resident satisfaction survey to look at areas that can be reduced or reallocated. Some departments are putting a lot of staff time and money into units/projects that aren't really get the best bang for their buck. While units/projects that are clearly important to citizens are getting budget cuts and staff reductions.
- As a bicyclist and someone who does have concern for the environment, I question the WalkArlington, BikeArlington and Arlington Car Free Diet offices. I see this as marketing which has had limited impact on the use of alternative transportation (where's the data?). If marketing is really needed (I don't think marketing changes behavior) then outsource it. Close the offices and eliminate the hundreds of thousands of dollars spent.
- I would cut the over \$20 million budget for economic development: there is no economic rationale for spending this amount as evidenced by Amazon coming to Arlington for our advantages and not mainly for the subsidies we provided (Maryland offered them \$7 billion)
- Reduce non-essential, feel-good programs like the plastic toys stuck to the sewage treatment plant fence. And the Columbia Pike spike.
- Make hard cuts. We all have to. The county budget has never gotten smaller or stayed the same and not have my taxes.
- Reduce as many services as possible. I would start with administrative functions. I would not make any cuts to labor in the police or schools, but I would significantly cut their operations budgets.
- Reduce services. they do not need to grow and could be reduced.
- Reduce contribution to Affordable Housing back to 2010 rates.
- I think services can be reduced and streamlined. Arlington already provides extensive services/programs. I think low-performing and under-utilized programs and services

should be reduced or eliminated. I also believe the County needs a unified, strategic vision that is used as a guiding document for these sorts of decisions.

- Reduced services and programs; based on priorities some programs and services need to be reduced or eliminated
- Cuts to things we don't absolutely need.
- Decrease entertainment facilities and parks.
- Slow down on neighborhood projects, especially those who've had county support in past
- Slow down on park projects
- REDUCE unneeded programs! People may want them, but do they really need them.
- Don't move forward on projects that the community doesn't want, like the million dollar traffic circle at Nelly Custis and Military Road.
- Don't fund projects the community doesn't want or need.
- I want the spray features in our parks to go away. What a waste of money & water!

Cross-Agency Coordination

- Look for ways to have a more coordinated approach for providing services - having APS and ACG work together to provide a better safety net for children and families. If we had a county-wide prevention strategy that included APS, ACG and non-profits, that could potentially save money in staffing and duplication of efforts.
- Coordinating our work
- Encourage facilities that multiple users can share, such as schools that provide community access to fitness and other facilities, and use of grounds for community gardens

Efficiencies and Partnerships

- Make data driven decisions when evaluating which services / programs to either scale back on or cut. If a program or service's use is disproportionately low compared to its operating cost, then obviously it should be a candidate for cuts. Consider the (long term) cost of not having this data (if this is an issue). Perhaps there are relatively quick and/or inexpensive methods to obtain data that, while not ideal, (small sample size, etc.) may still provide some value (insight).
- Examine programs for redundancy and efficacy. Report to taxpayers on this. Safety, schools, transportation are paramount. Make cuts strategically and by talking to the people who actually work in the field to see what they recommend.
- Ask citizens and civic association to maintain parks in their area.
- I also suggest restoring the neighborhood snow-blower program -- free labor!
- Move all technology to the Cloud to eliminate costs of servers, storage and upgrades
- Focus on investments to make buildings/transportation more efficient up front to reduce costs down the road.
- Greater collaboration with school system, e.g., joint purchasing, demographic forecasts, etc.
- Consider adding school impact contributions as part of the site plan process. This is done in other parts of the Country and I believe it is being used in Falls Church. Look at allowing sponsorship at school and recreational facilities and advertising in some public places for revenue. Fairfax County has sponsors at all of its school sporting events.

- Look at options to close some county offices 1-2 days a week such as Licensing, Bulk Trash
- Eliminate programs and services provided by county employees that can be provided by local businesses, hospitals, and nonprofits.
- Increase telework options for county employees and more resident self service via online portals
- Utilize extra unrented space for schools, daycares, and private businesses.
- Turn existing vacant office space in to schools/community centers
- Make every effort to utilize free help -- volunteers! There are plenty of seniors whose efforts can save the County \$\$\$. The motivation? If they save the County enough \$\$\$ there can be social events.
- Use technology to make county communications and operations more efficient and responsive
- The county should work with surrounding jurisdictions to saturate the market with firefighters through additional recruit classes so they stop being held hostage about staff shortages. Public safety continues to get paid increased amounts even with their enhanced benefit packages. The county should coordinate better with the military veterans to fill these positions. The HR department must do a better job. Public safety is no more valued than the rest of the County staff but we seem to give them a disproportionate amount of attention and resources.
- There are so many "task-forces" right now - good that everyone is trying to work across lines, but the task-forces themselves don't seem to be connected. CCI, D2027, the JFAC, as well as Bridges out of Poverty, the CPN, and who knows what others. This is why coordination would be so helpful - is there someone or some office that is keeping track of all of the work? If so, is there a way to make sure that we all know so we can benefit from the cooperative efforts?
- Think volunteers. Motivate commercial interest in Arlington. Don't replace working items just to replace working items. Think stormwater mitigation. Educate residents on how they can help to beautify and to conserve the County's resources.
- Get a real IT professional to improve boring-but-important core systems — such that the county can reduce labor costs; reduce/eliminate DPR and other discretionary man-made facilities and "amenities," all of which require maintenance dollars we don't have; end the pretense of being able to build "affordable" housing and concentrate on providing meaningful subsidies of existing units

Opposition to New County Facilities

- Stop wasting our money on project like the aquatics center at Long Bridge Park. Not only the upfront cost but will never financially support itself
- As much fun as it would be, in this budget crisis I suggest eliminating the Rosslyn Aquatic Center.
- Reduce the "extras". i.e. the swim facility near Crystal City. Bad idea to have a county owned facility that is planning on losing money each year. Unreal.
- Cancel the long bridge swimming pool. We cannot afford it.
- Stop building a water park. We use the county high school pools and they are empty, most of the time.
- Do both (raise taxes and reduce expenditures). Reduce the county's spending on new construction of affordable housing projects. Also, please do not pursue any more vanity projects such as the Long Bridge pool complex.

- Drop the Aquatic Center plan

“Gold-Plating” at Schools

- Maybe reducing the excess budget items for schools and making them streamline their priorities as well.
- Please talk with APS about reducing spending on new school buildings. We are going to continue to need new schools, but the buildings don't have to be extremely expensive designs that are seen in school like Wilson and Fleet.
- The county board needs to direct the school board that it will not fund excessively expensive new school buildings like HBW in Rosslyn and direct the APS to follow the example of Alexandria and Fairfax in purchasing existing commercial office buildings and converting to school space. The APS has let its costs get out of hand and the county board as the funder needs to stop this irrational process or county taxes will have to rise to very high levels. The county government itself needs to halt any more new buildings that have been excessively expensive. We cannot continue to spend funds on new bricks and mortar and keep the human services we actually need. We don't really need a new Lubber Run Rec center, but merely a remodeled old one. We do need the park and rec employees however.
- Emphasize long term growth of educational facilities and maintenance of existing programs over expansion.
- Stop wasting money on school extravagances, don't do anymore on Aquatic Center until proven it can pay for itself without further subsidies beyond tax free land. Give me tax free land! Fix existing infrastructure vs adding new elements to maintain.
- Halt to more new county/school buildings; think small
- Cautious investment in new non-school services/facilities
- Spend less on school buildings w/ savings for teachers/resources
- Force schools to reduce their overhead costs and defend their budget increases each year (challenge their enrollment growth assumptions).
- Tell APS to stop wasting money on iPads and laptops.

Prioritize Schools Investment

- Fully fund our schools, add an additional high school
- Make school quality/APS a top budget priority. The reputation of the school system increases property values by attracting residents to the county
- Longer term vision for new/expanded schools
- Keeping schools top-rated.
- Fully fund our schools, add an additional high school
- Invest in the future- education :) Most of Arlington's children/students will return to this area post college and it's important to provide them with all of the support and resources necessary to be successful.
- Schools need to be an even greater priority than they are now. Arlington has high property values and is attractive to many people because of the incredible schools that we have. Let's not lose that with large classes, more trailers, and fewer opportunities for our students. We will all feel the ramifications of these cuts.
- Please make schools a priority.

Considerations of Staff Compensation

- Please invest in your human capital. too often, decisions are made that only help in the short term. try to improve the quality of staffing. Money spent on educating the public about the cost of services would benefit citizens and save staff from chasing down the latest crisis (SALT TANK)
- Realizing the manager's tough situation, I would still suggest that Arlington County be strong and take a leadership position by refusing, in difficult fiscal times, to allow the tired old excuse that it has to raise salaries in order to compete against neighboring jurisdictions for staffing. When each of these jurisdictions use this reasoning then the never ending cycle of rising staff expenses continues. I know this doesn't necessarily play well within county staff circles but it is a real issue. Someone needs to say stop.
- Continued competitive salaries and benefits; we still need to excel and provide above-and-beyond service in the areas we do keep
- Increase county worker benefits to maintain a steadier workforce with less turnover (bear in mind, I don't know if this is currently a concern, but a possible solution if so)
- Allow more staff to work part time, adjust benefits accordingly
- More flexible work arrangements - give staff time off (leave without pay)
- Freeze county employee salaries
- Offer less retirement
- Reduce law enforcement costs
- Cut the administrative staff and overhead. Typically this is where the most bloat in numbers and salaries occurs (including yours)!
- County employee benefits should come down closer to area Federal employee levels.

Specific Service Recommendations

Schools Programs

- Please keep programs for my children in elementary school, especially the incredible rec programs for families
- Equitable schools means providing the same instructional and extracurricular opportunities and facilities at all schools. If capacity problems mean we need to add another neighborhood high school, it should have fields/theater/pool comparable to the others.
- Stop trying to make Arlington affordable for everyone. It's not, and the market has determined it shouldn't be - just like McLean, Tysons corner, or any number of suburbs in the DC area - or even many parts of DC itself. Acknowledge that the whole DC area and certain parts of the county (especially), are very expensive places to live. Once this is acknowledged, it should be easier to see and accept that those who can afford to live here after a tax hike may consider moving. That said, ensure that a tax hike benefits ACPS. It's critical that ACPS continue to provide a "high quality" education.
- Continue to value and support education/students/teachers
- Elevating county's stance via creating intelligent and thoughtful citizens.
- Please do not get rid of the Photography Darkroom at TJ Community Center. My friends and I have just heard of it and the classes offered and the separate time we can pay to use it separately, and we want to use it! I would spend so much time there, and I know

people who would do the same, but did not realize this darkroom was here. Please please do not do away with the photography darkroom.

- Provide services that educate and train including library resources.
- Make Clairmont Elem. a neighborhood school - people will move to s. Arlington for a premium, thus increasing home values in that area.

Public Transportation

- Hold Metro accountable by acknowledging that its work culture has quite obviously been one of "non-accountability" for many years and this must continue to change if Arlington is to contribute more. Arlington County is well within its right to ask for *independent verification of progress and/or goal attainment if it is to meet Metro's request for additional / increasing funds. Perhaps this verification could be limited in scope to just stops w/in the county. I say this as a daily Metro rider for ~ 8 years now who has serious concerns about accountability and the power of the WMATA union. It is borderline absurd that WMATA is making cuts and asking us rider to pay more. Perhaps if they offered a better product, they wouldn't have declining ridership.
- I think a continued look at increasing transportation for car-less trips should be a HUGE priority for the county as a whole, especially for staff.
- I see a lot of ART buses driving around mostly empty. How much does the ART system cost per ride?
- Public transportation/bike lanes etc. - help people eliminate cars/traffic!
- We need to improve east falls church station mix
- Keep or increase bus transportation so working people can get to their jobs
- I'm not sure if the County subsidizes ART but I would prefer we not cut funding for ART.

Traffic Calming

- Address transportation to include safe parking. The reality is that people still drive so instead of decreasing, provide access to public lots to revitalize business
- Transportation dollars are treated as free money- this needs to stop. Leveraging other monies that still costs us money is problematic. Cameras throughout the county, elaborate bus shelters, traffic calming everywhere, protected bike lanes, etc.
- Stop spending money on ridiculous things like those dangerous protruding corner curbs and trees in the center island of streets that block oncoming traffic for cars turning left. And the numerous crosswalks on major arteries like Washington Blvd with fast-moving traffic are just plain dangerous - cars aren't expecting them and may not be able to stop for pedestrians!
- Install blinking yellow lights at all mid-block crossings. Many drivers never see pedestrians till its too late and there have been accidents at these either of pedestrians or car to car. Blinking yellow lights would go far to prevent this. They could be pushed on by a button.

Affordable Housing

- **Con**
 - Reduce the county's spending on new construction of CAF housing projects.
 - Reduce affordable housing contribution - we were coerced by external orgs when we had money - now we do not. Principle is WE manage our money not others
 - Stop subsidizing low-income housing
 - It sounds like Arlington is having problem meeting the service to current residents. School population projection indicate that the count CIP is insufficient to meet demand. So why is the county trying to increase affordable housing that will worsen this problem.
 -
- **Pro**
 - Invest in affordable housing (increase AHIF). We need diverse neighbors all across Arlington (e.g. school diversity)
 - Develop a strategy and goal for affordable housing (the County should be leading the vision/strategy and developers, non-profits, etc. should then decide how they fit in that plan).
 - Please protect and do what you can to increase support for AHIF and increase the limit for Arlington Housing Grants to be in line with market-rate housing in Arlington.
 - Invest in affordable housing. With APS' school boundaries, and focus on "demographic balance" as a criteria, education policy IS housing policy. We would have diverse neighborhood schools is the neighborhood was diverse.

Libraries

- Please keep the iconic Cherrydale Library -- a treasure to the entire community.
- Do NOT cut Cherrydale Library. We went through a disastrous plan by the county Board a few years ago to tear it down and build low cost housing there. The public protest demanding that the library be left alone was overwhelming. We pay taxes in north Arlington and public facilities include only a couple libraries and a few small parks. Don't make us come over again to protest.
- Retaining public libraries for learning purposes.
- Please do not cut the library services in Arlington.
- Retain neighborhood libraries.

Human Services

- Preserve basic supports for those with the most economic need.
- Stop having ESL classes for students from any foreign country. Implosion into a language is known to be a better method of learning than teaching English from the original language.
- Developing a county-wide strategy to support children and families
- Those with the least means should not be pushed out of Arlington County.

Environment

- In light of the recent IPCC U.N. report on climate change, coupled with inaction on environmental issues at the federal level, it's becoming clearer that environmental issues are the most important issue to focus on. This means not only continuing Arlington's great green track record, but also doubling our efforts. New county buildings need to be completely energy sustainable (solar generation), more subsidies or credits need to be available for residential buildings to encourage increased investing in sustainable technologies and efficiency upgrades, and new ways to increase efficiencies both in buildings and county transportation need to be pursued. On these issues, the county needs to highlight the dangers of inaction and the benefit of increased taxes.
- If funds surface as a result of elimination of the Aquatic Center, there is a dire need for stormwater improvements. With climate change impacting our basements, we need to route stormwater where it won't do any damage.
- Do opt for green energy solutions/Invest in future cost savings and planetary citizenship
- Increase water and energy efficiency further since these are recurring costs and they are increasing
- Build in rooftop food gardens, trees, community gardens, and other uses that counter climate change and build sustainable systems.
- Preserve green spaces
- Eliminate ALL herbicide spraying programs
- I'm sad that programs like glass recycling are being cut--something I'm willing to pay for due to the long-term benefits to our planet
- Include removing weeds from medians

Parks

- The Rosslyn area needs a Dog Park. With all the existing and planned development of new apartments and condo which will bring in additional revenues and many dogs this area needs a dog park.

Other

- Support unique architecture and business
- Get rid of the deer! I have contracted Lyme disease from it and they are all over the place! When is enough????

DEVELOPMENT

Promote Economic Development

- Support small business, green space, and alternative transportation options. Schools don't need more than 30%. A county with 20 bars and zero vegan restaurants is pathetic.
- Lower your rental rates for businesses then maybe your vacantly rate will decrease and not have our taxes raised!
- Reduce commercial property vacancy and reduce red tape.
- Stop airbnbs from operating and make people use hotels so you get tax revenue

- Attract more corporations to the County
- Try to bring more business to Arlington
- Bring in more business.
- Business friendly to help increase occupancy
- Increase commercial presence to gain a larger tax base there
- Increase tax revenue in S. Arlington by improving the area, thus increasing home value (possibly enforce laws restricting abandoned cars, trash in front lawns)
- I think we a somewhat robust tourism plan, but promote tourism all the way. Especially with new places like Ballston Quarter coming, we should really push this.
- Decrease office vacancy rate.
- Address commercial real estate/ zoning to decrease high vacancy.
- Reduce office space vacancy rate
- Get the empty commercial properties rented -- even if we have to provide one year's rent free in exchange for a 20-year lease.
- No new development until all occupied rates are at least 95%
- Continue to promote safety, do things that will attract great businesses to the area - Target, Cava and other new restaurants great additions!
- Make processes more business friendly
 - Re-evaluate BID processes and cost of building/permits
 - Why does Arlington have a reputation as a tough place to open a business? Reform permitting process, etc. so that businesses can open quicker/more efficiently.

Increase Housing Types

- Allow smart development for multifamily along main corridors (Rte. 29, etc.) Zoning issues
- More housing options will control escalating housing costs in the region. Restrictive development will not. Even town-homes are 1,000,000 here! Ridiculous. And property taxes are out of this world.
- Turn existing vacant office space in to housing/apartments

Concern Over Increase of Density

- The second most important step for balancing between raising taxes and reducing services is to stop encouraging dense residential growth without ensuring the developers raising density are paying for the full impact of the additional residents. The County must stop granting developers "bonus" density on multifamily special exception site plan projects, and instead have developers pay impact fees that cover the cost of schools, roads, parks and other infrastructure needed for additional residents. The County must stop permitting conversion of commercial buildings to multifamily residences unless the County gets an accurate assessment of the impact of those residents on increasing demands for schools, roads, parks, policing and other infrastructure and ensures developers, not taxpayers, pay impact fees to cover those costs. County officials need to actively discourage owners of commercial property from allowing it to sit vacant. Owners of such properties need to adjust their rent to the actual market, rather than inflict empty office space on our County. Property can be converted to multi-family if the full impact of

such a move is properly assessed and the cost paid by the developer, but not because commercial property owners hold the County hostage by allowing buildings to sit vacant. Multifamily residences are a significant driver of student enrollment. You can see the proof in the enrollment data for Arlington Public School, which shows increases in enrollment based on housing type. Increases in density in residential growth does not pay for itself. Residential growth has a net negative impact on revenues due to the high costs for providing services for new residents. County officials have reported to the Arlington County Civic Federation that the cost of new school construction is the single greatest factor putting pressure on County taxpayers. This growth comes from families moving into the new residential development. Until the County starts to appropriately charge impact fees, there can be no balancing of the County's budget. Revenues cannot keep up with the costs of increasing residential development. In addition to the need for increased services like policing, and infrastructure like schools, Arlington needs to base its budget and growth policies on the fact that it is a small, densely populated County with no way to get more land, unless it acquires it from some other use. With more residents, we need more land for schools, fire stations, roads, and parks. Arlington needs to preserve its existing affordable housing. In allowing new multi-family residential development, Arlington should give priority to affordable housing -- because that is the critical housing need, especially given the impact Amazon will have. In doing so, the County must first ensure its budget has the means to cover the impact of such multi-family residences using impact fees from the developer, or payments from taxpayers if they judge the need for affordable housing to be important enough to grant such subsidies. The student generation factor for "affordable" housing has been estimated at 0.58 students/unit. (See p. 11 at http://arlington.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=3286&meta_id=155880http://arlington.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=3286&meta_id=155880).

Perhaps if the County can reduce the cost of school construction to responsible levels, we can absorb the impact. Before deciding its budget, and making decisions on increasing the density of residential housing, the County must perform fiscal impact analysis/cost of community services (COCS) analysis to more accurately project the impact that residential growth has on the County's budget. The County should get expert analysis to determine the point of diminishing returns with respect to raising taxes. In a March 9, 2017, meeting of the County Manager with commission chairs, the Manager acknowledged that an increase in the tax rate could increase the commercial vacancy rate (as well as rents in subsidized housing units). However, he said he had no way to know what the point of diminishing returns was. It is possible to know that. You need that analysis anytime you consider raising taxes. The County must stop building discretionary infrastructure that costs money to maintain. Sidewalks in Arlington fall apart because they are not maintained, sports fields are closed because they are not maintained, parks are over-run with invasive plants that kill precious trees. The County needs to stop building discretionary infrastructure until it is capable of adequately maintaining and preserving the facilities and parks we already have. The top priority of Arlington residents in terms of parks and recreation is for our precious trails and natural areas to be preserved. Being so close to nature is the best thing about living in Arlington. We need to stop spending taxpayer or bond money to destroy that nature in order to build facilities.

- STOP encouraging dense residential growth. Specifically, stop rewarding developers w/"bonus" density on multifamily special exception site plan projects. Stop permitting the conversion of commercial buildings to multifamily residential. In its 10-18-16, presentation to the board AED noted the difficulty of getting commercial landlords

(particularly for Class B&C buildings) to drop rents enough to fill the space. I urge the manager and board to look at all legal means for establishing a penalty for property owners allowing these buildings to sit empty in anticipation that the county will eventually allow them to convert the buildings to multifamily. The fairytale that multifamily isn't a significant driver of student enrollment is easily disproved using 3rd-grade math and APS's own enrollment data showing the increases in enrollment based on housing type. The other fairytale is that residential growth "pays for itself." It does not, and multiple studies show (I can provide a list, upon request) that residential growth (of all types) has a net negative impact on revenues due to the high costs for providing services for new residents. This is particularly true in Arlington because a) we spend an astronomical amount per student, b) we lack sufficient public land on which to build schools, and c) building up rather than out costs more. And schools are not the only service the county must provide. Going forward, a larger population will require more public safety personnel. We also lack public land on which to locate fire stations, which will be needed due to increased congestion of surface roads (documented by a significant worsening of level of service metrics at key intersections). If we continue to build more dense housing and add more residents, we will cancel out any potential benefit gleaned from the Amazon deal. This is particularly true of subsidized housing, which according to a professional demographer (hired to review the county's and schools' enrollment projection methodologies) listed a student generation factor for "affordable" housing of 0.58 students/unit. (See p. 11 at http://arlington.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=3286&meta_id=15588 [0http://arlington.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=3286&meta_id=15588](http://arlington.granicus.com/MetaViewer.php?view_id=2&clip_id=3286&meta_id=15588) 80).

Either hire external professionals to perform fiscal impact analysis/cost of community services (COCS) analysis in order to more accurately project the impact of residential growth, or develop that capacity in house. Hire a reputable economist or similar professional (if such talent is available in house) to determine the point of diminishing returns with respect to raising taxes. In a March 9, 2017, meeting of the manager with commission chairs, the manager acknowledged that an increase in the tax rate could increase the commercial vacancy rate (as well as increase the rents in the county's subsidized housing units). However, he said that he had no way to know what the point of diminishing returns was. There are professionals who can help provide reasonable projections to help the manager and staff understand the potential consequences of raising the tax rate, particularly on top of rising assessments. Stop building more discretionary infrastructure that Arlington cannot afford to maintain. Currently, diamond and other sports fields and courts are out of commission due to lack of maintenance. DPR's inadequate maintenance of its facilities (allowing them to fall into ruin and then to claim that the "only" option is to tear them down) is well known and has been well documented since at least FY09: "The Parks & Recreation program illustrates the tension in Arlington County between the desire to expand and build new facilities at the expense of maintaining what we have. As an example, the top priority project to be funded amongst the Parks Maintenance Tier 1 projects is to replace Bermuda sod and install irrigation on the upper field at the Thomas Jefferson Community Center at a cost of \$150K. This is a joint use facility with the schools and because of the poor condition of the field, the Thomas Jefferson Middle School sports teams are forced to be bused to another middle school in order to play their home games. It is troubling that the Parks & Recreation department cannot maintain one grass field, but was able to locate \$3M to put into the Fairlington Community Center...." See FAAC notes/votes on parks/rec for the 3-6-09 FY09 Budget Work Session at <https://arlingtonva.s3.dualstack.us-east->

1.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/18/2013/10/FY-2009-CB-Work-Sessions-Info.pdf. This fall-down-to-tear-down strategy leads to much higher costs over the long term and robs us of bond capacity that could be allocated otherwise. DPR clearly lacks the budget or the budgetary self-control to properly maintain in good working order its existing facilities and infrastructure. With the fiscal constraints we will continue to face for the foreseeable future, we all know that significantly more operating funds for DPR is simply not in the cards. DPR front-line maintenance employees have been continually asked to "do more with less" with each new facility/"amenity" or other "improvement" that comes online. How much longer does the manager and staff believe that this zero sum game will work? Reducing the man-made "amenities" and facilities/infrastructure is a good way reduce operating/maintenance costs. The county's own scientifically valid 2016 needs assessment survey documented that the majority of Arlingtonians are not asking for expensive outdoor "amenities." They are asking for trails to walk/bike on and the preservation of natural areas and programming. Nature is a lot cheaper to maintain.

- Stop all the residential development and infill. It became too much years ago, not only reducing green space, but also adding significantly to traffic congestion and other crowding. These in turn increase things like road maintenance costs and school crowding, and they place ever increasing demands on public services. These are the unintended consequences of residential development and it's time to recognize them, and fact the fact that the county has limited space!!!
- Stop trying to be a big city. Accept who we are. We were fine. Much cheaper that way. Don't give Amazon millions of our dollars. We have no space for them anyway. As I see it, you basically forced out the military and are now replacing them with Amazon. Amazon can afford to buy Arlington out of petty cash. Let them.
- Build less new/focus more on maintaining existing infrastructure and facilities; minimize residential growth (as much as possible)/promote leasing of existing commercial office space;
- Stop the condo building
- Stop building huge apartment buildings, which overflow schools, in Arlington.
- Residential development has gotten out of hand and increases the cost of county services.
- Stop gentrification
- Reduce development to reduce infrastructure demands; reduce tax breaks for businesses & developers; tax renters in the form of a residency tax similar to property tax
- Clarendon does not need another bank or bar
- Stop building all the time. Back off from this. Take a break
- We don't have to be a city. We're just over three bridges from DC. Being a city is expensive, as you're learning. Was it really worth it? Clearly, not.