Courthouse Square
Process

1. Analysis
Our process began with a change from the County Board that eliminated the Courthouse Square Working Group and allowed us to refocus on a process that was more comprehensive.

2. Discovery
We held events to engage people in the community and gain their input and suggestions on how to improve the area.

3. Design Exploration
We explored the area and its potential for beautification and improvement, focusing on the needs of the community.

4. Big Ideas
Through our work in analysis, discovery, and exploration, we began to develop new ideas and concepts for the area.

5. Shared Vision
The final ideas were presented to the community and were adopted as a new vision for the area.

Future steps beyond “improved” will begin to “improve” and “improvement” the spaces. Smaller studies on topics such as pedestrian traffic and environment will be required. We will continue to partner with the community as we carry our vision forward.
Courthouse Square
Concept Presentation Schedule

September
2 – Working Group #11
9 – Transit Advisory Committee
9 – Economic Development Commission
11 – Housing Commission
17 – HALRB
17 – Working Group #12
22 – E2C2
23 – Parks and Recreation Commission
24 – Arts Commission
25 – Urban Forestry Commission

October
2 – Transportation Commission
6 – Bicycle Advisory Committee
13 – Lyon Village Civic Association
14 – Transit Advisory Committee

October – cont.
15 – Working Group #13
16 – LRPC
21 – Clarendon/Courthouse Civic Association
29 – Working Group #14

November
12 – Pedestrian Advisory Committee
12 – Colonial Village
13 – LRPC #2
18 – Radnor/Ft. Myer Heights Civic Association
19 – Working Group #15

December
1 or 3 – PC
9 – County Board Work Session
Courthouse Square
Charge of the Working Group & Staff

1. Circulation
2. Open Space
3. Buildings
4. Cultural Resources
5. Sustainability
Circulation
Circulation & Parking

Charge

Address the overall pedestrian, bicycle and vehicular circulation network, as well as connections to the surrounding neighborhood.

Objectives to guide the future development of a detailed parking program will be defined taking into consideration existing parking supply and demand.
Circulation & Parking

Design Principles

#3 Connect pedestrian circulation in Courthouse Square to improve public transit access.

#4 Encourage optimal use of streets to achieve, an active public realm with safe pedestrian passage.

#6 Accommodate public and County parking needs through means that add value to the Courthouse Square area.
Circulation Goals

- Increase accessibility across all modes of circulation.
- Strive for a managed car free environment within Courthouse Square.
- Develop pedestrian focused streets over time through a shared space design approach.
- Narrow streets to improve active sidewalk uses and pedestrian comfort and accessibility.
- Expand connectivity into and through Courthouse Square without more traffic congestion.
- Enhance connectivity to existing transit and bicycle facilities and surrounding neighborhoods.
- Encourage private vehicles to use perimeter of site for circulation. i.e. Clarendon/Wilson and Courthouse Road.
Circulation & Parking

Parking & Access Goals

- Improve underground Metro access from all directions, and across all transportation modes.
- Provide an adequate and accessible supply of public parking for public safety, government, business, resident and visitor.
- Improve wayfinding and establish a Courthouse Square identity
Circulation & Parking

G1 Plan

- Vehicular circulation
- Pedestrian circulation
- Multi-modal connections
- Points of arrival
Circulation & Parking

Bicycle

- N. Veitch Street intersection Bicycle improvements.
- Add bike lanes on Courthouse Road b/t 15th St. and Clarendon Blvd.
- Further study to determine bike lane design on Wilson/Clarendon and Courthouse Rd.
- Improve connection to Arlington Blvd. trail.
Circulation & Parking

Transit

- Enhanced ART Bus connection on 15th St. near relocated Metro entrance
- Maintain current routes
- Consider the G-1 location for car share
- Possible transit-supporting use in the kiosk
- Taxi stand on Clarendon Blvd at Veitch St.
Circulation & Parking

Pedestrian

- Create a curbless, pedestrian promenade to ease north/south connections
- Create the opportunity for ‘shared’ streets
- Widen and improve sidewalks
- Improve wayfinding
- Improve pedestrian crossings
- Improve above and below ground connections to Metro and Parking

= Pedestrian Improvements
= Accommodate Pedestrian Flow
= ‘Shared’ Street
= Enhanced Pedestrian Crossing
Open Space
Open Space

Charge

The location and use of a public open space that will be an integral component of the County’s government center.
Open Space

Design Principles

#2 Create an attractive accessible inclusive public space that accommodates and encourages civic discourse, and County identity.

#5 Incorporate sustainability best practices throughout all aspects of the development, with particular attention paid to energy and stormwater management in line with Arlington County’s policies. Identify opportunities for efficiencies from district level energy production.

#7 Preserve significant views into and out of Courthouse Square.

#8 Use existing topography to celebrate the plateau, ease pedestrian movements, and create a cohesive experience of the three-dimensional opportunities of the site.

#11 Create opportunities and infrastructure for public entertainment, public discourse, performance, and community gathering.

#15 Augment the existing tree canopy with additional plantings in new open space and streetscapes.
Open Space Goals

- Create a well-designed and well-built civic gathering space for all of Arlington, citizens and visitors alike.
- Activate the Square through investment of time and resources to programming, providing infrastructure and durable and well-designed urban design fixtures to facilitate a flexible and comprehensive variety of uses.
- Maximize amount and variety of interconnected open space settings to accommodate different types of events, gatherings, and concerts. Divide the open space into distinct activity areas.
Open Space Goals

- Plant more trees to increase the tree canopy in accordance with or above and beyond County policy, provide a variety of shade conditions and celebrate the use of native species.
- Provide more green space for large activities and passive enjoyment.
- Provide connections to and from the Courthouse open space to Courthouse neighborhoods and adjoining Rosslyn Ballston corridor.
- Incorporate native plants where possible to increase survival, reduce water consumption and provide food and habit for native wildlife.
Open Space

Open Space Areas – 4 acres total

1. Uhle Street Promenade
2. Central Open Space
3. Metro Plaza
4. Clarendon Blvd Plaza
5. Courthouse Plaza Gateway
6. Judicial Plaza
Open Space

1. Promenade - .9 acres

- Primary north/south connecting element in Courthouse Square.
- Connects pedestrians to the open space and buildings and allows for primary pedestrian circulation.
- Provides new area for the farmer’s market and other programmed events.
2. Central Open Space – 2.0 acres

- A mostly green area that includes grass and trees for passive recreation and programmed events.
- Lawn
- Memorial Grove
- South Square:
  - Market, cultural, civic, or open space uses
  - Connects to open space to the north
  - Activates the south Square
  - Defines 14th Street edge

Central Square = 1.3 acres South Square = .7 acres
Open Space

3. Metro Plaza - .43 acres

- High activity plaza with connections to transit, 15th Street, Courthouse Plaza promenade, 2100 Clarendon Blvd. and the theater site.
- Consider the integration of a formal tree canopy.
- Good location for outdoor seating and public art.
Open Space

4. Clarendon Blvd. Plaza - .40 acres

- Key arrival area into Courthouse Square adjacent to Clarendon Blvd. and 2100 Clarendon Blvd.
- Includes a kiosk or canopy element that provides active frontage (i.e. café, transit support, newsstand).
- Facilitates ART Bus connections.
- Opportunity for public art.
5. Courthouse Plaza Gateway – .25 ac

- Entryway into Courthouse Plaza from the south.
- Potential elevated plaza above Veitch Street that is adjacent to the County building and theater site.
- Extension of Courthouse Plaza space.
- Activate with ground floor mixed use.
- Direct entry into County building and Metro system.
Buildings
Buildings

Charge

Building Location, Use and Design - the location, height, and density of buildings in the study area. The study will incorporate the consideration of a future County office building that includes 300-400,000 sq. ft. and an appropriate floor plate.

The uses of public and private buildings in the study area, including the types of public resources (if any) in addition to government offices that would be best fit to the site.
Buildings

Design Principles

#9 Maximize the opportunity to create active frontage on Courthouse Square and the surrounding area.

#10 Build on existing activities of Courthouse Square to foster an 18 hour a day use throughout the week.

#14 Foster new development that will be distinct to Arlington, and integrate accessible programs, perform sustainably, and embrace the civic nature and cultural significance of Courthouse Square.
Buildings

Buildings Goals

- Design well placed and accessible public and private buildings which frame the place-making nature of Courthouse Square while individually excelling at their individual architectural design merits.
- Encourage a rich mixture of uses which reflect the levels and types of activities existing in the Courthouse area.
- Preserve contributing structures and uses to emphasize the importance of older buildings and current uses to the future of Courthouse Square.
Buildings Goals

- Limit building height to:
  1) minimize impact of shadows on the open spaces.
  2) respect existing scale and massing of adjoining buildings.
  3) respect the views from the National Mall by limiting the maximum height to 210’ to exceptional public uses or benefit only.
- Identify locations for planned and potential County government needs and cultural facilities.
- Use rooftops for public viewing and activities, green roofs and high quality architectural features.
Buildings

Ground Floor Use/Active Frontages

- Maximize the opportunity to create active frontage on Courthouse Square and the surrounding area.
- Minimize the impact of parking and service entries on Courthouse Square.
- Active frontage should include retail, restaurant or cultural uses, transparent façades and pedestrian-oriented design elements.
Buildings

Primary Use

- Encourage a rich mixture of uses which reflect the levels and types of activities existing in the Courthouse area.
- Preserve contributing structures and uses to emphasize the importance of older buildings and current uses to the future of Courthouse Square
- Incorporate affordable housing recommendations that address PL4PG.
Buildings

Maximum Height

- Strayer 190’
- Landmark 210’
- Theater Site 105’
- County Bldg. 180’
- Verizon Plaza 120’
Buildings

Roof Plan

- Consider rooftops for public viewing and activities, green roofs and high quality architectural features.
- Encourage use of roof top gardens and green roofs.
Cultural Resources
Cultural Resources

Charge

The treatment of cultural resources, including historic buildings, the “Soldier” and “Mother’s” tree, public art, and a potential cultural facility.
Design Principles

#12 Celebrate Courthouse Square’s rich history by integrating relevant existing historic and historical elements into new design concepts.

#13 Integrate strategies for education, sustainability, social and physical health, and public art, throughout the area.
Cultural Resources

Cultural Resources Goals

- Preserve existing memorials and markers. Accentuate and improve as area develops.
- Ensure civic purpose of Courthouse Square is celebrated in temporary and permanent features.
- Identify appropriate locations for future cultural facility needs.
- Preserve historic buildings and/or façades where possible to reinforce scale and history of the Courthouse Square area.
- Through better design and location, reinforce and potentially expand current activities in the Courthouse area such as the farmers market.
Cultural Resources

**Recommendations**

**Landmark Block Building Preservation:**
- Relocate and repurpose Simmonds building (Jerry’s Subs) – last remaining example of Lawyer’s Row
- Preserve and restore Investment façade as part of development efforts (County owned) – HRI Important
- Preserve and restore Commonwealth façade (Colonial Revival)
- Preserve and restore First Federal Savings and Loan façade and interior floor/wall clock (Cosi) – HRI Important

**Public Art:** Incorporate public art at key locations in the Square and in the broader study area. Establish rotating art installations. Incorporate interactive sculpture/art that becomes lighting or wayfinding and is engaging for all ages.

**Cultural Facility:** Establish a cultural or civic facility within Courthouse Square either in new buildings at Verizon Plaza, Court Square West or the theater site, or as an iconic building on the south square.
Cultural Resources

Recommendations

**Memorial Trees:** Preserve the Mother (Notable) and Soldier trees and markers by incorporating them into a memorial grove and limiting soil disturbance above and below grade, particularly during the development of the garage and the Square.

**Farmer’s Market:** Enhance the current pop-up farmer’s market and, given demand, construct a more permanent market structure along the southern end of the Square. Design the building for flexible use and open area for event driven activities.
Sustainability
Sustainability

Charge

The incorporation of sustainability including building and landscape technologies, district energy, and an integrated energy master plan.
Incorporate sustainability best practices throughout all aspects of the development, with particular attention paid to energy and stormwater management in line with Arlington County's policies. Identify opportunities for efficiencies from district level energy production.

Integrate strategies for education, sustainability, social and physical health, and public art, throughout the area.

Foster new development that will be distinct to Arlington, and integrate accessible programs, perform sustainably, and embrace the civic nature and cultural significance of Courthouse Square.
Sustainability

Sustainability Goals

- Reduce quantity and improve quality of stormwater runoff.
- Demonstrate best sustainable design practices and conformity to adopted County policies.
- Encourage appreciation of sustainability initiatives as tools to educate the public (i.e. interactive displays to convey energy and transit information).
Sustainability Goals

- Promote health and wellness though high performance green building, abundant vegetated open space, and programming focused on healthy living.
- Lead in the implementation of innovative energy strategies such as district energy to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Restore ecological health with native plantings, tree canopy, reduced light pollution, and heat island reduction strategies.
Sustainability

Stormwater

- Incorporate low impact design solutions into open space and circulation elements.
- Integrate a stormwater management feature at the southern end of the Square.
- Reduce runoff with plantings and stormwater capture.
**Sustainability**

**Integrated Energy Master Plan**

- The IEMP will follow a holistic approach for improving energy usage and generation.
  - Energy Efficiency
  - Renewables
  - District Energy

- The District Energy plan will be finalized concurrent with completion of the Sector Plan Addendum.

- Consider the G-1 level as a location for a District Energy plant.