



**ARLINGTON COUNTY
PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 414
Arlington, Virginia 22201



January 25, 2019

The Honorable Christian Dorsey, Chairman
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Park and Recreation Commission Annual Report for CY 2018

Dear Chairman Dorsey,

The Park and Recreation Commission (PRC) is pleased to submit this calendar year 2018 annual report to the County Board. In our letter of January 2018, we outlined several priority areas and ongoing objectives and report the following progress on each of these:

Completion of the Plan for Our Places and Spaces (POPS): We continued to review the wide range of issues presented in the final draft of the POPS plan. Members met with various community and Board members throughout the year on some of the major remaining issues. The commission received several updates on the plan and provided comments to the POPS Advisory Group. We anticipate providing a final letter of recommendation on the POPS draft in advance of the Request to Advertise hearings.

DPR Planning, Resources, and Budget: In 2018 the commission focused more of its efforts in becoming educated on DPR's organization and budget process. In pursuit of developing a list of PRC budget priorities, we hosted two inquiry and discussion sessions with DPR leadership. We produced two letters on the 2019 and 2020 budgets, which expressed common themes, including the importance of maintaining our current park and recreation facilities and ensuring that adequate budget resources be provided for the growing demand for casual use facilities in our parks.

Land Acquisition/CIP: The commission continued to pursue its ongoing interest in promoting additional land acquisition for recreation and public spaces. PRC members worked with DPR staff to correct and clarify acreage measurements of public space in the county. As stated in our June 2018 CIP letter to the Board, the PRC continues to be alarmed by the overall drop from historical levels in CIP funding dedicated toward land acquisition.

We are heartened by the development of more specific land acquisition guidelines and strategies in the POPS process, but recognize that adequate CIP funding will be required for any strategy to be successful. We also participated in a Civic Federation discussion on the November 2018 Park and Recreation Bond issue.

Apply the Benefits of Parks and Biophilic Arlington Studies: As follow on to the 2015 PRC White Paper, the commission sought to continue to educate residents on the integral role that our parks, recreation and public space resources have on the quality of life, environmental benefits, and economic vitality of our community. A summary of this paper has been included in the POPS draft document. Members of the commission also followed up on our 2017 paper on Arlington’s potential as a “Biophilic” community by providing presentations to other commissions and groups. The principles cited in this paper are referenced in the POPS draft and can be applied to various public space planning processes.

Develop Design Guidelines, Standards, and Needs Assessment Process for Privately Owned Public Spaces: The commission’s ongoing participation in the Site Plan Review and other county planning processes has convinced us of the importance for the county to develop design guidelines and objective standards for determining public space needs. PRC members have participated in the county’s review of design guidelines and their inclusion in the draft of the POPS plan. We anticipate that these guidelines will assist in long term planning, especially as we consider anticipated population increases and demographic changes in our community, and the impacts these changes will have on the demands for parks, public space and recreational needs.

Privately Owned Public Spaces: The commission has successfully pursued the inclusion of guidelines and objectives related to privately-owned public spaces in the POPS draft. We note that unfortunately, this past year the efforts of the Department of Community Planning, Housing (CPHD) to develop an inventory of privately-owned public spaces have been delayed because of budgetary issues. We believe it is important to understand what we already have in order to make better decisions about additional public spaces we need during the development process.

The following are additional areas of accomplishment:

Participate in area and sector planning processes: PRC members participated in area and sector plan groups such as the Four Mile Run Valley Working Group, the Career Center Working Group, the Lee Highway Initiative, the 26th St. and Old Dominion Drive Master Planning Task Force, and the Crystal City Citizen Review Council.

Enhance coordination with other commissions and committees on areas of overlapping interest: PRC designated liaisons to ensure close working relationships on issues of mutual interest with other commissions such as Planning, Urban Forestry, Sports, Environment and Energy Conservation, Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group, the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee the Senior Adult Advisory Committee,

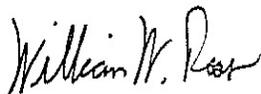
and the Pedestrian Advisory Committee. Likewise, the PRC and Sports Commission held a joint meeting in February to discuss overlapping issues of concern.

The Bill Thomas Award: In April, at the recommendation of the PRC, the County Board honored John Foti, the Friends of Virginia Highlands Park, and Joanne Hutton, with the Bill Thomas Award in honor of residents supporting Arlington parks. We also conducted a review of the scope, nomination requirements, and selection criteria for the award and revised the announcement language to focus honors on those providing direct volunteer service to Arlington parks.

Community Involvement and Engagement: The commission produced a set of guidelines to define its procedures for responding to public comments at PRC meetings and other queries from the community.

Attached is a summary of additional accomplishments in 2018. PRC members have contributed enormous time, talent and expertise over the past year and it is a privilege to work with such a dedicated group of citizens. Likewise, we are grateful for the many talented and dedicated staff with whom we work, both within the Department of Parks and Recreation and in the other county departments.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve Arlington County.
Sincerely,



William Ross, Chair
Park and Recreation Commission

cc: Members, Arlington County Board
Members, Planning Commission
Mark Schwartz, Arlington County Manager
Jane Rudolph, Director, Department of Parks and Recreation
Claude Williamson, Director, Department of Community Planning, Housing and
Development

PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

PRC INITIATIVES

- Biophilic Arlington Paper

PARK AND RECREATION PLANNING PROCESSES

- Long Bridge Park
- Rosslyn Highlands Park
- Jennie Dean Park
- Shirlington Park
- Allie S. Freed Park

PARTICIPATION IN WORK GROUPS, TASK FORCES AND OTHER COMMISSIONS

- Bicycle Element of Master Transportation Plan
- Crystal City Citizen Review Council
- Four Mile Run Valley Working Group
- Joint Facilities Advisory Committee
- Lee Highway Alliance
- Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group (NRJAG)
- Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee (NCAC)
- Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC)
 - Reed School
 - Long Bridge Park
- Plan for Our Places and Spaces (POPS)
- Sports Commission
- Urban Forestry Commission

PLANNING AND SITE PLAN REVIEW PROCESSES

- Crystal Retail North/Block Plan
- American Red Cross
- Pen Place
- Virginia Hospital Center
- Clarendon Market Common Retail (Minor Site Plan Amendment)
- American Legion/APAH
- Best Western Site

PLAQUE/PARK NAMING RECOMMENDATIONS

- Oak Grove Park

BILL THOMAS SERVICE AWARDS

- Joanne Hutton, John Foti, and the Friends of Virginia Highlands Park

ADDITIONAL PRC MEETING PRESENTATIONS

- Urban Tree Canopy Report
- DPR Athletic Facilities Allocations
- DPR Budget and Capital Improvement Plans
- Potomac Yard Park Naming
- Biophilic Arlington
- Rosslyn Highlands Park Playground
- Arlington County and Vicinity Boathouse
- Ballston Pond Restoration
- Shared Mobility Devices