

Arlington  
**Community Facilities Study**

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*A resource and facilities plan for our future*

**Subcommittee Reports**

**Report of Economic Sustainability Subcommittee**  
May 27, 2015



# Economic Sustainability Subcommittee

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## Draft Challenges:

1. Sustaining Arlington's Economic Model
2. Sustaining Housing & Affordability
3. Ease of Doing Business

# Sustaining Arlington's Economic Model Background



1. Unique 50/50 real estate tax base
2. Typical 300K sf office building adds \$3.0 million in annual taxes
3. Typical 200 unit apartment building adds \$1.0 million in annual taxes
4. Current office vacancy rate is 21.7% twice the norm.
5. Each 1% improvement will add \$3.4 million annually which is equal to 0.5 cents on the tax rate.

# Sustaining Arlington's Economic Model Challenges



1. Shrinking federal presence
2. Shift in the way business uses office space
  - Collaborative work spaces
  - teleworking
3. Growing competitiveness in the region
  - The Silver Line adds competition in Tysons, Reston and Loudoun
  - Localities are poaching on each other
  - Revitalization in DC

# Sustaining Arlington's Economic Model Opportunities and Solutions



1. Step up marketing by AED and County leadership – funding is needed as an investment
2. Strengthen role of EDC as an advisor to County Board
3. Develop an appropriate role for EDC in project review
4. Include economic impact as a part of the Manager's Report on Site Plan project approvals
5. Allow for more flexibility within designated corridors perhaps through BID's
6. Continue to educate the community on economic model

- Lack of market rate housing for those making between 60% and 120% of AMI
  - Below 60% AMI there are public sector options
  - Above 120% AMI the current market is well served
  - Public sector workforce (teachers, firefighters, social workers, etc) and many in private sector workforce often earn more than 60% AMI but less than 120% AMI
- Supply of market rate affordable housing affected by:
  - Rents rising faster than wages
  - Redevelopment that replaces market rate units with higher cost units

- Loss of market rate affordable housing
  - Housing costs consume larger portion of household budgets – leaving less for spending that would bolster local economy
  - Particularly impacting:
    - Millennials
    - Seniors over 65
    - Workforce housing
- Loss of affordable “starter homes”
  - Harder for people to form households
  - Harder to stay in Arlington through stages of life
  - Weaker ties between residents and the community
  - Intensifies economic stratification

- No public sector funding sources available to help create 60-120% AMI housing
- Private sector incentivized to maximize profit
  - Driven rents higher
  - New units coming online have been higher end
- Land use plans do not currently incentivize or guide the creation of MARKs
- Strong property rights limit tools available to shape private housing development choices

- Ensure completion of Housing Study and updated Housing Master Plan and Housing Implementation Plan
  - Important information to help inform potential approaches
- County should undertake review of policies that could incentivize market creation / retention at 60-120% AMI
  - Consider joint effort by the Economic Development Commission and Housing Commission to look at options
  - Engage development community and finance community in identifying potential options

- Sector plans, or other County plans, should incorporate explicit guidance to positively affect the supply of units available for households with incomes between 60% to 120% AMI
- Arlington Schools should look at longitudinal student data to examine effects of housing stability on student performance

- Community values a robust public input process that is at odds with business preference for speed and predictability
- Arlington has stronger competition from neighbors
  - Value of “proximity” is diminished now that Tyson’s has metro
  - Businesses may no longer be willing to make concessions to Arlington if attractive alternatives are close by
- Arlington has initiated some efforts to help businesses, but negative perceptions persist
  - Business ombudsman
  - Investments in economic development

- Different sizes and types of businesses have different priorities and needs
  - Limits on staff time and financial investments require prioritization among market segments
  - Types of businesses that residents want to attract are not necessarily the types that contribute most to our tax base
- Planning and public review processes are lengthy
- Economic Development Commission and Arlington Economic Development are not well integrated into public-review processes

# Ease of doing Business Recommendations

# 3

- Continue efforts to modernize County processes where possible
- Ensure that economic development concerns are considered in larger policy and planning discussions
- Revise planning approach to find a workable balance between community and business interests

Arlington  
**Community Facilities Study**

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*A resource and facilities plan for our future*

**Report of Demographics Subcommittee**  
May 27, 2015



# Demographics Subcommittee

## Draft Challenges

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1. Projecting growth in Arlington Public Schools
2. Planning for diverse age groups as they evolve: Baby Boomers and Millennials
3. Increasing income disparity and decreasing diversity
4. Finding new ways to communicate
5. Comprehensive planning

# Projecting Growth in Arlington Public Schools Challenges



- Rapidly rising enrollment means APS will need additional facilities to meet the educational needs of its students.
- Arlington is small. Few site options exist for construction of new schools.
- New schools and additions all require considerable public processes, impinge on open space, and are costly.
- Sound planning requires a firm understanding of current and future needs. Accurate demographic data and reliable projections are essential to understanding how many new facilities we need and where they should be sited.

# Projecting Growth in Arlington Public Schools Barriers



- Public confidence in capital improvement planning.
- Statistically small (but acceptable) errors year-to-year add up over time. A 1-2% expected error rate may result in a 10-20% variation over 10 years.
- Tracking student generation factors – most of the growth so far has come from single-family homes. As Arlington urbanizes will more kids live in multi-family buildings?
- Debt capacity. APS cannot build fast enough to meet current needs and does not have the funds to solve the problem through construction alone.

# Projecting Growth in Arlington Public Schools Strategies



- Improve APS and ACG collaboration and information sharing.
- Adopt Consultant recommendations, including:
  - Improve forecasting for years 6-10 by projecting future births in collaboration with ACG cohort demographic data.
  - Perform a longitudinal analysis to determine long-term trends in accuracy of projections.
  - Compute student generation factors by length of home ownership, as well as housing type.
  - Publish an annual report, further detailing projections and methodologies.

### Over 65 / “Baby Boomers” – 3 sub-groups (65-74, 87-85, 85+)

- Projected to increase in % of national/Arlington pop.
  - 85+ cohort has largest projected increases over next 20 yrs.
- 2015-2025 (first 10 year wave)
  - % of 65-74 age cohort working will increase
  - Increased income and changing market for retail services
  - Increased demand for recreation
  - Planning for housing changes for 75-84 age cohort
- 2025-2035 (second 10 year wave)
  - Planning for 85+ needs for assisted services and increased care

# Planning for diverse age groups as they evolve

## Challenges – Baby Boomers

# 2

- Increase % of older old population living alone (particularly female)
- Increase in health care service needs
- **Resources:**
  - First 10-yr wave impact of 65-74 increasing participation in workforce
  - Increases in civic participation
  - High % home ownership
  - Increased average income
  - Potential for new retail service demands
  - Projected increase in new business starts by retired workers

# Planning for diverse age groups as they evolve

## Challenges – Millennials

# 2

- 34-44 age cohort projected to increase as % of population as millennials age
- First 10 year wave: Millennials starting to form households and families
  - Demand for larger housing units/SFH
  - Need for childcare and pre-school
  - Increased need for convenience and services
- Needs/services for under-employed and lower income
- Will a new 24-34 age cohort move into spaces currently housing millennials?
- **Resources:** High % of well educated, well-employed, more culturally diverse?

# Planning for diverse age groups as they evolve

## Recommendations

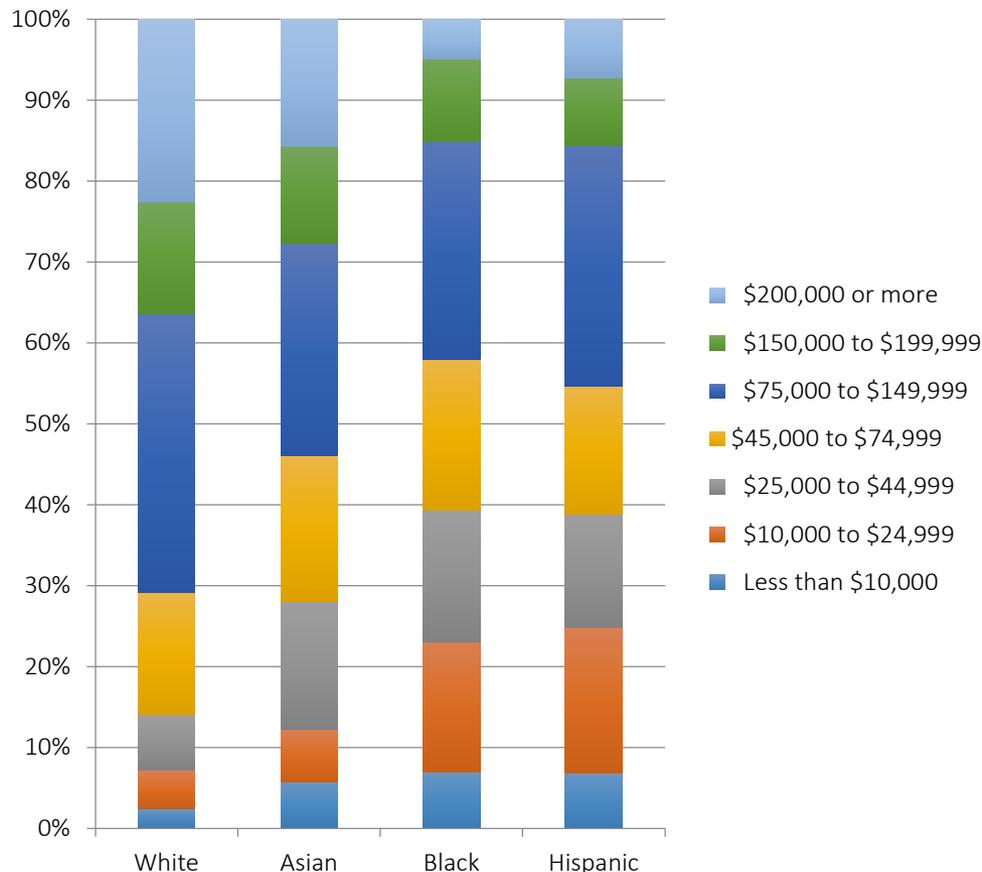
# 2

- Develop better information on age population segments' behaviors and attitudes to support planning
- Identify both the potential resources and the needs of the age sub-groups
- Consider diversity within the age cohorts in needs/resource assessments including income, race, ethnicity, language, culture, health, employment
- Regularly monitor age cohorts as a method for planning, including regular updates on factors impacted by the choices of cohorts as they age

# Income Disparity and Arlington's Decreasing Diversity Overview

3

## Income distribution by race & ethnicity



- Income disparities in Arlington are becoming more pronounced
- Share of low income families has decreased
- Households earning \$200K or more are now the largest group
- A larger percentage of White Households report income > \$150K
- A larger share of Black and Hispanic Households report income < \$45K

# Income Disparity and Arlington's Decreasing Diversity Challenges

## 3

- Income disparity concentrates low-income students in a few schools.
- APS continues to struggle with providing effective academic programs and supports for students from low-income families.
- Coordination between Schools and County is not systemic or consistent to address needs for after-school activities and transportation.

# Income Disparity and Arlington's Decreasing Diversity Barriers

## 3

- The Comprehensive Plan currently does not include an impact analysis on income disparity.
- Schools are not included in any of the planning elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

# Income Disparity and Arlington's Decreasing Diversity

## Recommendations

# 3

- Include a facilities-related element in the Comprehensive Plan that includes schools.
  - Examine impacts and needs related to school communities.
  - Not limited to school capacity but also determining public transportation needs and needs for recreational space (after-school use of facilities).
- Bring together APS, County and non-profits to develop vision and principles for coordinated programming in support of students and families.
  - Programming that provides wrap-around services, academic support, and after-school activities for high-need schools would help mitigate the impact of income disparity.

# Finding New Ways to Communicate Challenges

# 4

- The county is in a transition – increasing differences and preferences within and between neighborhoods
- The financial and resource pull across the county between urban/suburban and generational service needs, housing and lifestyle preferences
- Equitable access to information and input into decision-making processes throughout the county
- Keeping neighborhood identity while meeting the demands of a changing population

# Finding New Ways to Communicate Barriers

# 4

- Ensuring access, representation and input from under or non-represented residents
- Urban myths and the great divide – assumptions over factual assessments.
- County vocabulary, vernacular, definitions, brand
- Communication strategy – reaching those not represented – incorporating cultural nuances, technical access
- Maintaining neighborhood identity while adapting to changes in urban and suburban areas.
- Lack of understanding of generational preferences and differences and how they impact decision making

# Finding New Ways to Communicate Recommendations

# 4

- Consider developing a sustainable county-wide communication strategy that incorporates community communication through
  - Cultural identity
  - Generational norms
  - Technology
  - Vocabulary
  - Graphics
  - Language

# Finding New Ways to Communicate Recommendations

# 4

- Monitor generational data trends and incorporate findings into site and service decisions
- Better understand and represent the impact of wage/income disparity in decision-making and communication
- Examine how to better include a diverse and representative range of stakeholders in decision-making processes county-wide

- Arlington's Comprehensive Plan (CP) is the primary means used to implement the County's vision.
- Arlington's CP currently consists of 10 (soon to be 11) elements.
- Unlike many jurisdictions which have one consolidated Comprehensive Plan, each element of Arlington's CP is developed and reviewed separately.

## Elements of Arlington's Comprehensive Plan

- General Land Use Plan
- Transportation Master Plan
- Public Spaces Master Plan
- Historic Preservation Master Plan
- Recycling Program Plan
- Sanitary Sewer System Master Plan
- Storm Water Master Plan
- Water Distribution System Master Plan
- Chesapeake Bay Preservation Plan
- Community Energy Plan
- *Affordable Housing Master Plan (not yet approved)*

# Comprehensive Planning Challenges

# 5

- CP elements are developed separately, on different time cycles and by different and competing community and staff interests.
- No clear process exists for reconciling competing objectives between CP elements, including community facility needs.
- CP elements often calculate projected growth quantitatively (e.g. number of new residential units/commercial space) with insufficient attention to the characteristics of future residents & workers that may affect county facility & service needs.
- Facility needs prioritization is currently addressed primarily through the CIP process which fails to adequately engage the public & commissions.
- Major community facility needs (e.g. schools, libraries, public safety, trade center services) are not included in any existing CP elements.

# Comprehensive Planning Barriers and Recommendations

# 5

## Barriers

- Updating various elements of the comprehensive plan on a regular basis takes staff time, county resources and requires a long and arduous community process. **Result = outdated plans.**

## Recommendations

- Utilize new tools and mechanisms to help reconcile and consolidate current CP elements into one unified and comprehensive vision (e.g. heat maps, establish service areas, delineate expected service levels, etc.)
- Ensure that all major community needs are covered in elements of Arlington's Comprehensive Plan.
- Consider including a new public facilities CP element to ensure that all county facility needs and priorities—including schools—are transparent and determined with ample community engagement.

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**Report of Facilities Subcommittee**

May 27, 2015



# Facilities Subcommittee

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## Draft Challenges:

1. Limited Land
2. Limited resources – make better use of existing resources
3. Meeting “Back of House” needs
4. Setting Priorities

# Limited Land Barriers



- Land is our most scarce resource
- Land is finite
- Land is expensive
- Prioritization is difficult; special interests are often pitted against one another
- Immediate needs outweigh available supply; difficult for public to take the long view
- Time required to plan and build new facilities may hinder co-location of uses and services

# Limited Land Possible Approaches



- No more single use facilities built in Arlington
- Prioritize public acquisition of property
- Re-imagine current County facilities that are underutilized
- Underground existing surface parking
- Explore public-private projects with developers
- Create joint facilities with nearby jurisdictions (DC, Falls Church, Alexandria)

Make more land.

# Limited Land

## Make more land

1

### Reclaiming Land by Undergrounding/Building Over Roads and Highways

- Not a quick solution
- Not a cheap solution
- Land gained created tremendous value for the cities
- Projects created additional green space in the middle of the cities
- Projects connected one part of the city to another that had been previously cut-off and inaccessible

### Examples over 20 years:

- The High Line | New York City
- The Big Dig | Boston, MA
- The Embarcadero | San Francisco
- Cheonggyecheon | Seoul, S Korea
- Harbor Drive | Portland, OR
- Park East | Milwaukee, WI
- Rio Madrid | Madrid, Spain
- Alaskan Way | Seattle, WA



## San Francisco

### Images from

<http://gizmodo.com/6-freeway-demolitions-that-changed-their-cities-forever-1548314937>





## Seoul, S. Korea



**Images from**  
<http://gizmodo.com/6-freeway-demolitions-that-changed-their-cities-forever-1548314937>



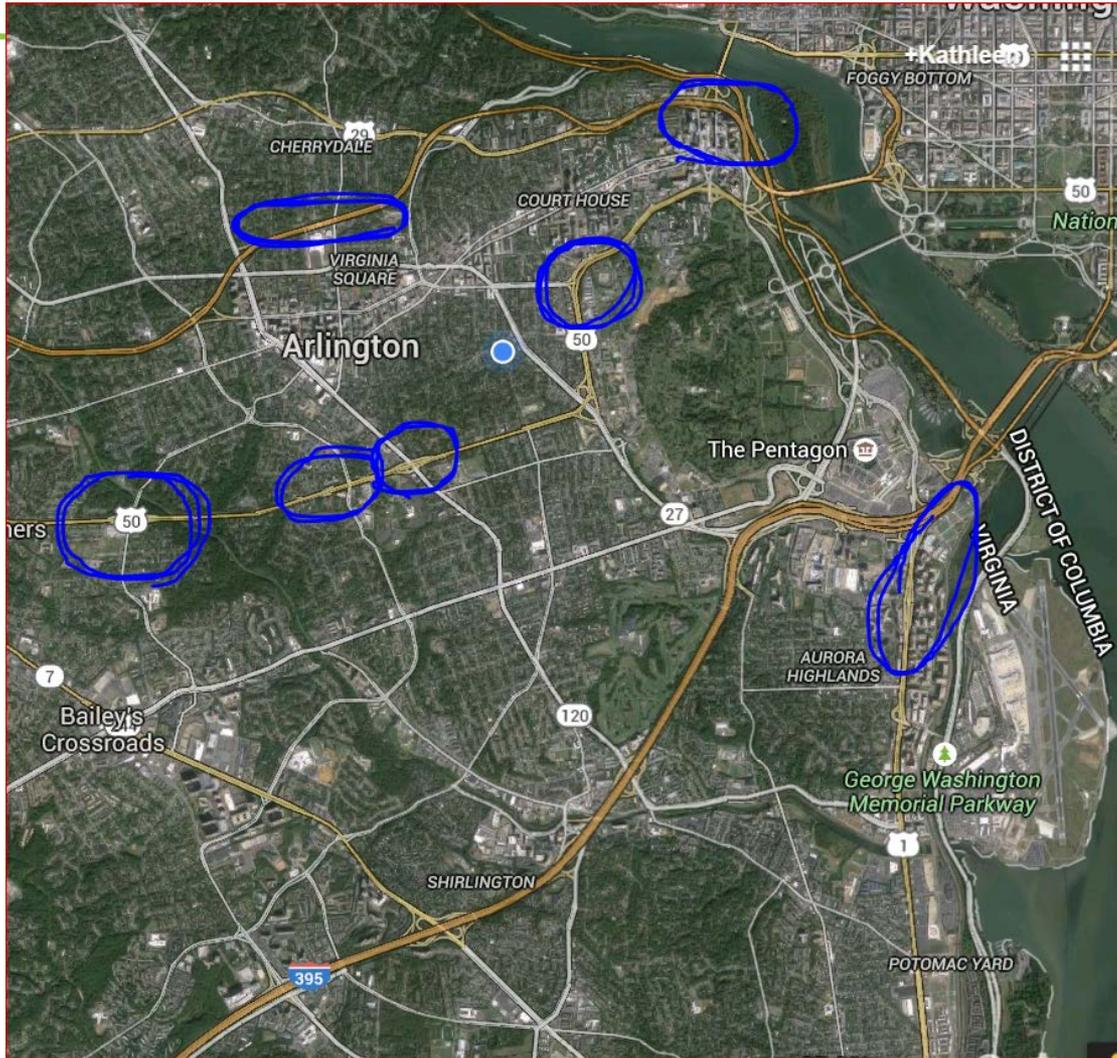
Madrid, Spain

## Images from

<http://gizmodo.com/6-freeway-demolitions-that-changed-their-cities-forever-1548314937>



# Limited Land



## WHERE TO BUILD?

- Over 66 with new acquisition on N Quincy
- Areas of Arlington Blvd where road is already below grade
- Route 29 in Rosslyn and near East Falls Church

## OPPORTUNITIES

- Create park land
- Create affordable housing
- Find land for schools
- Connect North and South

# Limited Resources – Make better use of existing resources

## Challenges

# 2

### **We don't have space to do it all:**

- Our key constraint is land – not money
- Many facilities are serving single constituencies/uses
- Our parks fields and facilities are over booked
- Our schools are over enrolled
- Our ability to park and service our vehicle fleet is limited
- Our industrial services are concentrated in south Arlington
- Much of the public doesn't understand our facilities crisis

# Limited Resources – Make better use of existing resources

## Barriers

# 2

- Perception of competing efforts to master plan for our facilities needs
- Public's lack of understanding of County facility gaps
- Current processes tend to perpetuate and reinforce “turf issues” – County vs APS, north vs south, parks vs DES
- Citizen advocates tend to champion within narrow interest areas rather than solving across broad needs
- Perceived public resistance to multi-use and co-location, especially in residential neighborhoods
- Forecasting models for various needs vary in sophistication/accuracy

# Limited Resources – Make better use of existing resources

## Current examples of desired behavior

# 2

- County departments organically find co-location/multi-use opportunities within context of CIP process
- Schools and parks collaborate to incorporate shared spaces as part of initial design
- Schools are creatively increasing capacity by using existing space more efficiently
- Schools are focusing on technology-enabled instructional techniques
- Parks is maximizing use of all its fields and facilities

# Limited Resources – Make better use of existing resources

## Paths forward

# 2

- Evolve public expectations of service planning and delivery
- Always get creative before building anything new
- All new facilities must serve many uses by design
- No more surface vehicle parking
- Consider converting all playing fields to higher yield turf
- Explore smaller, mobile, and multi-purpose facilities
- Continue to expand definition of usable classroom space
- Expand collaborations with neighboring jurisdictions
- Address zoning barriers to creative solutions
- Integrate some “light industrial” services in single family neighborhoods via creative design

# Meeting “Back of the House” Needs Challenges

## 3

- Storage and Maintenance for Bus Fleets – County and APS
- Parking and Maintenance for new high capacity Columbia Pike and Crystal City Transit
- Storage for Vehicles and Equipment – DES, Parks, Police, Fire and other County and APS
- Trades Center Services – crowded down there

# Meeting “Back of the House” Needs Barriers

# 3

- Total of 13-18 acres needed
- Need larger sites (more than 2 acres each)
- Must be on an arterial street
- Too easily made a lesser priority
- Sometimes not neighborhood friendly uses

# Meeting “Back of the House” Needs Possible Approaches

# 3

- Always see if you can better use what you have
- Building up, under (ground), and over (e.g. I-66)
- Sharing with other jurisdictions
- Encourage shared use to make it more attractive
- Sometimes, just grit your teeth and do it

- To be presented at a future meeting

# Wrap Up/Next Steps

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Please send additional comments/feedback on the Economic Sustainability, Facilities and Demographics challenges, barriers and recommendations to Susan Bell, at [sibell530@hotmail.com](mailto:sibell530@hotmail.com) by May 31.