

Additional Studies

In the course of this Study, additional topics were raised that were outside of the scope of the charge, or required additional research or time for proper discussion. The Committee recommends that these emerging topics be explored further by the County Board and School Board and the community. Examination of these topics could further impact planning for public facilities and may provide better clarity on the County's vision for the future.

1. Periodically examine the County's development vision as expressed through the Comprehensive Plan

It is timely to review the County's overall vision to:

- assess public support for the current direction of the vision, as articulated by the Comprehensive Plan;
 - better understand the implications, costs and benefits of achieving the vision, particularly the General Land Use Plan, its growth goals and the associated forecasts for population and employment;
 - evaluate growth management strategies to meet the needs of the current and forecasted daytime and residential populations, including those related to housing; economic development; transportation; open space, parks and recreation; schools; health and social services; and emergency services;
 - assess the service and facility implications of alternative growth projections, both higher and lower; and
 - propose a timeline for future review cycles on average of 20-25 years.
2. Evaluate service and facility needs for those 65 and over, and develop new strategies and partnerships that allow for and encourage people to remain in the community as they age.

As the baby boomer generation (ages 51 to 69 in 2015) progresses in age, the number of Arlingtonians over age 65 is expected to greatly increase. It will be necessary to evaluate what facilities will be needed to serve this population, particular those over 85 and/or disabled.

3. Reevaluate the BLPC and PFRC processes

Given the significant facility needs facing the County and Schools in the coming years, this is an appropriate time to assess the purpose, roles and functions of the Building Level Planning Committee (BLPC) and the Public Facilities Review Committee (PFRC). Each entity carries out a role to assist with design and planning of school facilities. BLPC assists the School Board in providing optimal learning environments that are adaptable, energy efficient, environmentally sustainable, and provide adequate outdoor recreational space. Advisory to the County

Board, PFRC generally focuses on site design and how the specific school project (or other County facility) meets broader County policies and addresses local issues. In recent years each committee's role in the review of school projects has become blurred and could benefit from additional structuring of those roles. In addition, currently communication and coordination among the two entities does not exist and almost seems discouraged. An assessment of these groups, their roles and possible areas of collaboration/coordination would benefit future processes and projects.

4. Need to unify disparate neighborhoods and population

Neighborhoods and their populations differ markedly from each other in many respects, and there is a lack of awareness of these differences. Concerted efforts by County leaders in collaboration with citizen leaders are needed to help achieve more unified perspectives and objectives so that Arlington residents are more willing to “pull in the same direction.”