



**ARLINGTON COUNTY
PARK AND RECREATION COMMISSION**

2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 414

Arlington, Virginia 22201

January 21, 2021

Matt de Ferranti Chair
Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Blvd., Suite 300
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Park and Recreation Commission Work Plan for 2021

Dear Chair de Ferranti:

The Park and Recreation Commission (PRC) appreciates the opportunity to update members of the County Board on the commission's work plan for 2021, including priority areas and ongoing objectives:

Implementation of PSMP Directives: PRC members will participate in Public Spaces Master Plan (PSMP) implementation processes, serving as members of the PSMP Implementation Advisory Committee and deliberating, as necessary as a commission in discussions of directives or in public engagement processes.

Updates of the Integrated Forestry Natural Resource Master Plan: The PRC will provide dedicated participation, through its representation on the Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group during the update of this plan.

DPR Planning, Resources, Budget, and CIP: The commission notes that an important responsibility is to offer the board advice on planning and budgeting of DPR programs. We will continue to review and provide suggestions on the department's proposed budget for FY 2022. Understanding the challenges faced by the COVID-19 crisis and the heightened requirements for other county priorities, we advocate that any DPR limitations or cuts consider the need for protection and maintenance of the county's public natural resources and park facilities. Also, we support allocations that balance support of natural resources and casual uses with sports/recreation and programmed uses. We will continue an area of recent focus involving DPR fee structures and implementation of programs in a manner that respects the County Board's recent declaration of commitment to equitable treatment of all Arlington county residents. Finally, we will review the PSMP to offer advice on coordinating its directives with CIP priorities, with an emphasis on the need for additional

land acquisition, coordinated storm water/open space planning, and the fulfillment of longstanding master park plan goals.

Apply Design Guidelines, Needs Assessment and Biophilic Principles to County and Private Open Space Projects: The commission's ongoing participation in the Site Plan Review, Public Facility Review and other county planning processes convinces us that it is important for the county to apply design guidelines and objective standards for determining public space needs. The objective is to ensure that each new development is part of a collective whole to address area parks, public space and recreation needs. The urban design guidelines included in the PSMP should assist in short term development and long-term planning as we consider anticipated population increases and demographic changes in our community.

We will continue to work with county and APS staff, developers, and other commissions to apply biophilic principles, as represented by the county's April 2020 joining of the Biophilic Cities Network, in public and private planning and design processes.

Land Acquisition: The commission will pursue its ongoing interest in promoting additional land acquisition for parks, recreation and open, public space. We look forward to the county's application of the specific land acquisition guidelines, ideas and strategies that are incorporated in the PSMP. The commission recognizes that adequate funding in this year's CIP round will be required to support these strategies.

Additional ongoing objectives include:

The Bill Thomas Award: We continue to look seek out and honor citizen volunteers who meaningfully contribute to our parks and public spaces. In 2021, we will join the County Board in honoring the 2019 winner—Elaine Mills and the 2020, to be selected in early 2021.

Community Involvement and Engagement: The commission will continue to take an active role in responding to community concerns involving park and recreation center planning, usage, maintenance, and recreation opportunities. We will assist residents in conferring with DPR staff to get issues resolved. We also look forward to enhanced discussions with civic groups, sports organizations and other community groups on issues of mutual interest.

Participate in park, public space and recreation facilities planning processes: PRC members will continue to participate in design, park renovation, and park restoration processes such as for the new South Eads/Army Navy Drive park and Clarendon Common renovations. There are also planned postponed or future park processes, such as at Bluemont and Marcey Road Parks, Gulf Branch Park, Sparrow Pond, and 12th St. South that we will be monitoring. We will entertain and discuss proposals for park name changes and memorial benches and plaques, as necessary, while participating in ongoing discussions and provide advice concerning revisions to the county facility naming policies.

Actively engage in planning processes with the county and with Arlington Public Schools (APS): PRC members will continue active representation on the Public Facilities Review (Career Center) and Site Plan Review Committees. For the latter, we acknowledge the continued high level of activity during 2021, particularly for sites that have important open space considerations. Major PRC themes will involve the attainment of suitable community benefits in the form of cash contributions, land donations, or development of publicly accessible private parks and plazas. Understanding the pressures and planning that APS faces for producing more educational space, we look forward to reviewing any APS expansion plans that could have impacts on indoor recreational facilities, outdoor fields and natural spaces.

Participate in area and sector planning processes: PRC members will continue participation in area and sector plan groups such as Plan Lee Highway, the Clarendon Sector Plan review, the Pershing Drive Special GLUP study, the Pentagon City PDSP review, the Crystal City Heights Study, and the Crystal City Citizen Review Council.

Enhance coordination with other commissions and committees on areas of overlapping interest: PRC will continue to seek opportunities to work on issues of mutual interest with other commissions such as Sports, Forestry and Natural Resources, Planning, Natural Resources Joint Advisory Group, Climate Change, Energy and Environment, Arts, Joint Facilities, the Pedestrian Advisory Committee, the Bicycle Advisory Committee and the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee. We will be planning our annual joint meeting with the Sports Commission, plus possible meetings with the Pedestrian and Bicycle Advisory Committees.

Sincerely,



William Ross, Chair
Park and Recreation Commission

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