



# Arlington County Civic Federation

## The Civic Voice

The Newsletter of the Arlington County Civic Federation  
October 2024 | Volume 109 | Number 02

### October General Membership Meeting

**Location:** Hazel Auditorium, Virginia Hospital Center

**Date:** Tuesday, October 8, 2024 @ 7:00 PM

**Invitation:** Delegates, Alternate Delegates, others associated with member organizations, and the public are invited to attend this meeting.

**Delegates:** All requests for delegate swaps with alternates must be submitted to the [secretary@civfed.org](mailto:secretary@civfed.org) by **Sunday October 6** at 12 noon. No exceptions.

#### Options for attending the meeting:

1. **In-Person** (Delegates, Other Guests): No registration is needed to attend in-person.
2. **Facebook Live** (Other Guests): No registration is needed to watch the live stream which can be found on the [ArlCivFed Facebook page](#).
3. **Zoom** (Delegates): Registration is required ([link](#)) by Monday October 7 at 12 noon. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. The Zoom passcode is 123456, but if you use the links provided after you register you will not have to enter it.

### Meeting Agenda

- 7:00 - 7:05 p.m. Call to order and [September minutes](#) review
- 7:05 - 8:45 Program and Proposed Resolution: Arlington Confronts Climate Change
- 8:45 - 9:00 County Briefing on Election Day Preparedness

Reminder: Parking passes will be provided. Meetings are held in the 'Conference Center' depicted on the map below.

#### \*\*\*PARKING AND ACCESS INSTRUCTIONS\*\*\*

The VHC Director of Security has advised CivFed that we should begin to park in Parking Garage C (map below). You can then walk across to the Oncology entrance and gain admittance until 8 p.m. **After the meeting, you MUST EXIT via the Women's and Infant lobby.**

**ENTER (until 8 p.m.):** Zone C Ground floor Oncology entrance (only open until 8

pm, Monday-Friday)

- Sign into the visitor kiosks (**need driver's license each time**)
- Get visitor sticker and wear at all times when inside the hospital
- Take a right at the double doors by the visitor kiosks
- Take a right at the single door
- Go to elevators and take to lobby floor
- Exit elevators and go left to hall directly behind welcome desk in lobby
- Take a left at the single door and continue down the hall toward a set of double doors
- Go through double doors and go right
- Conference center auditorium is directly ahead

**ENTER or EXIT (24/7):** Zone C first floor Women's and Infant lobby entrance  
(please use this entrance to exit after 8 pm, open 24/7):

- Sign into the visitor kiosks (**need driver's license each time**)
- Get visitor sticker and wear at all times when inside the hospital
- Walk to hall directly behind the welcome desk in the lobby
- Take a left at the single door and continue down the hall toward a set of double doors
- Go through double doors and go right
- Conference center auditorium is directly ahead



## President's Message

This past Saturday, spot storms once again hit our county. Some of these storms dumped massive amounts of rainwater in what seemed like moments to those in the path of this severe weather event. Flooding ensued in parts of Arlington, while other areas scarcely saw precipitation.

This recent deluge was another reminder of our vulnerability to weather events triggered by climate changes that experts still struggle to fully understand.

Your Civic Federation is committed to working with the county to do as much as

possible to ensure that all Arlingtonians and their property are protected against these climate-driven events. Next Tuesday marks the next chapter in our effort to do so.

In a program carefully developed by senior CivFed leadership including members of your Executive Board and committee chairs, we will focus at our October 8 membership meeting on some of the most critical impacts of climate change, including current increases in the intensity, duration and frequency of extreme weather events that cause heat waves, heat islands, and stormwater-related flooding.

Our October 8 meeting will be held as usual in the Hazel Auditorium at Virginia Hospital Center, beginning promptly at 7:00 p.m.

We'll begin by highlighting some of the key facts that frame our Arlington context. Next, several of our ACCF committees will each talk with you about the priorities that their members are working on that support actions that can be taken now to achieve the goal of supporting a livable Arlington that promotes wellbeing and equity as we live with climate change effects.

Next Tuesday, our focus will be primarily on support for the natural environment. We will include time for the audience to add their suggestions, with membership involvement in the discussion a priority.

We will also present a proposed resolution to address the challenge of improving coordination and performance metrics on climate change resilience, working with the County as their staff work to chart a better pathway forward.

Local, state and federal officials have been coordinating to make sure all our residents will be safe on and around Election Day November 5. At the conclusion of our regular meeting, we will receive a briefing on their efforts so far, and on measures community members can take to ensure their families' security and wellbeing. We will have more details in our meeting reminder email that we will circulate on Saturday, October 5.

I encourage you to join us in person or virtually via Zoom next Tuesday, and also for our November 12 meeting. At that session, we will examine and offer recommendations to incorporate 2050 principles that impact our interconnected natural and built environments. We're still developing concepts for November, but we're excited to offer to our membership and to the broader community some serious recommendations on how our county can better deal with the rising threats to our lives and property.

Finally, I want to mention our first annual autumn CivFed picnic, held September 14 at Ft Scott Park in Arlington Ridge. We had a good initial turnout, the weather was perfect, and lots of good fellowship and conversation resulted. Together with the spring banquet, we'd like to offer these events as opportunities for networking and teambuilding. I hope more of you will be able to join us next year.

See you next Tuesday!

Best,  
John Ford  
President

Beautiful weather, lovely location, and abundant amenities all contributed to an extremely enjoyable picnic last week at Fort Scott Park. Hamburgers, cheeseburgers, hotdogs on the grill! Chicken wings, salads, chips, cookies, and ice cold sodas shared by all! Stimulating conversations and opportunities to get to know each other informally. These were the highlights of your 2024 CivFed picnic. Be sure to join us next year.

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## **Annual Certification and Dues**

*by Matt Gloudeman, CivFed Secretary*

In FY24 we passed a resolution which aligned our certification date and dues date to November 20th. We have begun reaching out to the officers of member organizations to complete our online form and pay dues. To expedite the process and keep things simple we will request that each member organization delegate one officer who can provide certification data as well as pay the dues.

Please contact Matt Gloudeman, [secretary@civfed.org](mailto:secretary@civfed.org), with any questions.

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## **Form of Government Subcommittee of the Legislation Committee**

*by Dave Schutz, Form of Government Committee Chair*

### **Oct 15 Form of Government Cancelled**

CivFed has emailed the County Board and its staff to withdraw from the planned Oct 15 meeting on Form of Government. The Board's offer of facilities and support was generous, but that the schedule for completion of the 2050 document has been moved forward into the next year has removed the urgency to hold the meeting now. We remain eager to see a substantial discussion of form of government in the 2050 document now being prepared, and have suggested to staff that the record prepared by the CivFed TiGER task force should enable a strong section to be written. As well, there is a partially duplicative meeting - to which we are looking forward - being held on October 9 "Governing in the 21st Century: Are Local Governments in Sync with their Constituents?" and we told the Board that we think it is a lot to ask of our potential audience to go to two such similar meetings in two weeks. We hope that people interested in Form of Government issues will register for and attend that meeting. It is sponsored by GMU Arlington, Advance Arlington, and Advance's peer organization Agenda: Alexandria. Link is:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/21st-century-governing-are-local-officials-in-sync-with-constituents-tickets-1014874907167>

Two Board members have suggested to Dave Schutz that the way forward for consideration of desirable form of government changes is likely to be through a task force to be convened in the coming year. The establishment of such a task force would align with our interests so the planned meeting no longer seems to have a necessary role in demonstrating public backing for considering changes. Legislation Committee and the FoG Subcommittee are eager to assist in the work of that task force, and also look forward to the County's ability to draw citizens with a broad range of perspectives and ideas for the future governance of our community. If you may be interested in service on this likely task force, let us (or your favorite Board member) know of your interest.

For more information, please contact Chair Dave Schutz at [bod.member6@civfed.org](mailto:bod.member6@civfed.org).

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## **Parks and Recreation Committee**

*Cory Giacobbe, Co-chair for Parks*

ACCF Parks Committee Will Meet October 16

The ACCF Parks Committee will meet on Wednesday, October 16 at 7 pm via Zoom. The main item on the agenda is to plan a presentation on Arlington Parks to take place at an upcoming Parks Committee meeting. Join us to plan the topic and select presenters. Possible topics are: the role of parks in a biophilic Arlington; the role of park stewards in Arlington parks; or, how to achieve Arlington's park and tree canopy goals.

Meeting registration link:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUrcGtqzsrG9ak4tYqwSbsFueTb73RVII0>

-Cory Giacobbe, Co-chair for Parks, ACCF Parks and Recreation Committee

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## **Environmental Affairs Committee**

*Submitted by Mary Glass, Chair for Environmental Affairs Committee*

Environmental Affairs Committee 2024-2025 planning meeting  
October 1 at 7-8 pm

We invite all ACCF members to our Environmental Affairs Committee meeting on October 1, 2024 from 7 to 8 pm. This is an excellent opportunity to share your views on how we can improve our programs and initiatives. Whether it's a suggestion for a new project, feedback on our current initiatives, or ways we can better support you, we want to hear from you.

Agenda Highlights:

- Review of past events and their impact
- Planning for the upcoming FY2024-2025 year
- Open floor for volunteer feedback and suggestions

Potential initiatives:

- Identifying and quantifying the ways natural resources can be preserved and used to mitigate impacts of climate change in Arlington.
- Tracking implementation of the new Forestry and Natural Resources Plan using data from the citizen funded 2023 tree canopy study.
- Liaison with the new Office of Climate Change management in the County Manager's Office.

Register to attend the committee meeting on October 1 at 7 pm here:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYuc-urrjIjGtd6n8fxG5nGcJ4D1zjgY1LR>

Other Ways to Share Your Input: Email us at [environmental.affairs.chair@civfed.org](mailto:environmental.affairs.chair@civfed.org)

## **Public Safety Committee**

*Submitted by Mike McMenamin, Chair*

The ACCF Public Safety Committee will meet Thursday October 3 at 7:30 by Zoom.

The Zoom Registration link

is: [https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMvcuGgpjIpHdbWu5\\_ERSRBI8e9ZhemZPO](https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMvcuGgpjIpHdbWu5_ERSRBI8e9ZhemZPO)

Please join us for this year's kick-off meeting, where we will discuss issues of interest and create an agenda for this year on pertinent topics, such as petty crime and community policing. Contact Mike McMenamin for any questions at [public.safety.sc.chair@civfed.org](mailto:public.safety.sc.chair@civfed.org)

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## **Housing Committee**

*Submitted by Anne Bodine, Housing Committee Co-Chair*

Please join the Housing Committee from 6:30-8:00 pm on Thursday October 17 via zoom.

We will be joined by Marc McCauley of the Arlington Economic Development Office. who will discuss a **proposed change in our zoning code to ease conversions of commercial office buildings for residential use**. This presentation complements an earlier meeting of our committee to explore a real-world case study of Office to Residential (OTR) conversion carried out by developer Lowe in Alexandria. The new zoning changes are being teed up for a County Board vote on October 19.

Arlington is currently experiencing a historic high vacancy rate in its commercial office space (ca. 22.8%), with major implications for its economic and tax base. You can also view [slides](#) that AED (and the county's office of planning, housing and development) produced for a September 25 meeting of the county's Long-Range Planning Committee of the Planning Commission.

Mr. McCauley's presentation will begin at 6:30 and will be followed by committee discussion of a draft resolution relating to a tracking mechanism for housing preservation and production in the county.

For any questions, please contact the Chairs Anne Bodine and Matthew Hall at [housing.chair@civfed.org](mailto:housing.chair@civfed.org)

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## **Planning and Zoning Committee**

*Submitted by Brian Harner, Chair*

The next meeting will be October 24 at 6:30 pm.

Please join us on Zoom using the registration link:

[https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUscu6przgqH9H\\_uBS222qBro9XBq3dPhqJ](https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZUscu6przgqH9H_uBS222qBro9XBq3dPhqJ)

Our October meeting will focus on our planning for discussion of P&Z at the November ACCF General Membership meeting. We will also continue work and topics related to our three subcommittees of 1) Vision and Guiding Principles, 2) Lot



Coverage, Height, and Setbacks, and 3) General Land Use Plan [GLUP] Review. Contact Brian Harner, Chair at [plan.zone.chair@civfed.org](mailto:plan.zone.chair@civfed.org)

**The Subcommittee on Vision and Guiding Principles** will lead continuing discussion of approaches for updating the Comprehensive Plan for 2050. If you are interested in participating in this subcommittee, please contact Jane Siegel at [compplan.sc.chair@civfed.org](mailto:compplan.sc.chair@civfed.org)

**The Subcommittee on Lot Coverage, Height, and Setbacks** will be addressing the study of potential lot coverage reform approved by the County Board with the support of the Forestry & Natural Resources Commission last December, which the County is funding with the addition of a planner position in this year's budget. The subcommittee is also looking at potential reform of the way that the Zoning Ordinance calculates the height maximum of 35 feet for single-family and EHO homes, and the current setback limits in that ordinance. So far 15 civic associations, together with the Arlington Tree Action Group, have joined in support of this study. If you are interested in participating in the work of this subcommittee, please contact Bill Richardson at [lotcov.sc.chair@civfed.org](mailto:lotcov.sc.chair@civfed.org)

**The Subcommittee on the General Land Use Plan Review will meet on Oct 22 by Zoom at 7 pm.** The registration link is: <https://us06web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZYscOyvvrDgpG9ebHRHQqWMT8vN8UfzeOxfP>

The Subcommittee will be addressing our work plan priorities for this year including current issues and trends in zoning changes and areas under review by Arlington County.

If you are interested in participating in the work of the General Land Use Plan [GLUP] Review subcommittee, please join or contact Jack Spilsbury at [glup.sc.chair@civfed.org](mailto:glup.sc.chair@civfed.org) with any questions.

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## **Transportation Committee Report**

*Submitted by Joe Pelton*

The ACCF Transportation Committee which addresses, among other issues, Airline and Helicopter traffic, noise and safety is presenting a resolution for your consideration. This draft resolution is included for reading at the next General Membership Meeting in October and then for consideration by the membership at a future meeting. We hope that the Public Safety and any other Committees that might be interested will also consider this draft resolution for comment. We ask all delegates to please see the draft resolution as provided in this newsletter. It addresses aircraft safety, noise, and pollution--"Time for a Change at Reagan National Airport".

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Joe Pelton, Chair at [airport.noise@civfed.org](mailto:airport.noise@civfed.org)

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## **Forest Glen Civic Association Mini Grant Success Story**

*By President Marti Mefford*



Greetings from the tree filled neighborhood of Forest Glen! Thanks to the diligence and hard work of a long time neighbor Julie Boehler we received a mini grant to rekindle our Neighborhood Association that had become inactive during COVID.

We used the grant to purchase food and supplies for a Block Party on August 24th! To get the word out a small group of neighbors went door to door to distribute information about the block party and the renewed Forest Glen Civic Association. We discovered that everyone we talked to was eager to connect with neighbors face to face again.

It had been several years since our community gathered for a potluck and it was wonderful meeting old and new neighbors. The kids loved the bubble machine and the adults enjoyed catching up with each other as well as meeting the many new families that have moved in over the past few years.

One highlight of the potluck was an interactive poster where folks could vote on what kind of neighborhood events they would like to see happen in the coming year, as well as what they loved most about Forest Glen. The highest number of votes were for a Pumpkin Decorating Party and the Forest was the overwhelming winner for what we love most about our neighborhood.

We look forward to moving forward with social gatherings as well as reconnecting with the greater Arlington Civic Federation.

A big THANK YOU to Arlington County for sponsoring the grant, to Julie Boehler for taking the initiative to apply for the mini grant and to AFAC and the Civic Federation for your assistance with the grant. It was just the catalyst we needed to start meeting again and setting goals for our neighborhood. We elected officers in mid-August and we are working on next steps for FGCA.

If you want to learn more about the re-start or the grant, you can contact Marti at [forestglencivicassn@gmail.com](mailto:forestglencivicassn@gmail.com)

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## **October DRAFT for ACCF Resolution on Airport Safety and Noise**

*From the CivFed Transportation Committee  
September 10, 2024*

### **Time for a Change at National Airport**

1. Whereas Ronald Reagan National Airport has the shortest runway length and one of the most complex landing patterns of any major airport in the U.S, and
2. Whereas it is located in the midst of a densely populated urban agglomeration within the District of Columbia, Arlington, Alexandria and Bethesda, and



many people if Fairfax, Montgomery, and Prince George Counties are taken into account

3. Whereas some 800 take-offs and landings are scheduled every 24-hour period, providing a continuous, significant sonic impact on well over 100,000 persons in the direct flight path of the airport, and many more if the wide area of impact is taken into account.
4. Whereas one catastrophic crash and several near-misses have occurred since 1982, and
5. Whereas air travel is a significant contributor to the build-up of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, and
6. Whereas the United States has committed itself to the reduction of carbon dioxide emissions throughout its transportation sector, and
7. Whereas a percentage of flights are connecting to short-distance destinations that are effectively served by high-efficiency Amtrak trains, and
8. Whereas the Washington area has two other larger airports, with one in Virginia, and both with longer runways and safer landing patterns,

Thus, be it Resolved that for safety, noise and environmental reasons, all local, state and federal elected officials are urged to undertake the following: (a) seek to divert excessive and unsafe levels of traffic to Dulles Airport through increased subsidies for landing fees at Dulles to encourage airlines to use this facility as a departure and destination location; (b) seek increased deployment of increased noise and environmental monitors and more frequent public reporting of results; (c) seek an independent assessment of the noise, environmental impact, as safety of Reagan National Airport in comparison to all other major airports in the US; (d) seek to advance the national schedule for airlines to retrofit aircraft with noise abatement and environmental mitigation equipment; and (e) use all of other legislative and regulatory means available to meliorate the adverse safety, environmental, and noise conditions represented by Reagan National Airport.

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## **October DRAFT for Membership Consideration and Comment 9-25-24**

Sponsored by the Public Services Committee, John Ford, Chair; POC  
Jackie [bod.orgdev@civfed.org](mailto:bod.orgdev@civfed.org)

1. **WHEREAS climate change impacts our community wellbeing, livability and equity** both currently and increasingly through anticipated extreme weather events that increase risks from flooding, drought, and extreme heat;
2. **WHEREAS climate change can adversely impact economic activity**, labor patterns and productivity, increase government costs of infrastructure maintenance and operations, and increase utility costs while diminishing reliability and utility services[i];
3. **WHEREAS addressing climate change requires climate mitigation, adaptation and resilience**[ii];
4. **WHEREAS multiple Elements** of the Arlington Comprehensive Plan (CP) impact climate change mitigation and adaptation efforts that require coordination and prioritization across elements of the Plan;[iii]
5. **WHEREAS there currently is no formally coordinated climate change plan** for mitigation, adaptation and resilience with explicit goals across Arlington County departments, projects, and services with meaningful evaluation tools for prioritization of efforts including metrics to measure progress;
6. **WHEREAS there is Arlington level data and analysis of risk from increased rainfall intensity** but not comparable Arlington data and **risk analysis for extreme heat** and increasing patterns of frequency, intensity and duration of prolonged heat and drought events;[iv]

7. **WHEREAS** extensive science is available to identify and reduce climate change impacts through mitigation, adaptation and resiliency<sup>[v]</sup>;

8. **WHEREAS** the Arlington County Board has allocated resources and appointed an Assistant County Manager for Climate Policy “to successfully lead ‘whole of government’ teams” <sup>[vi]</sup> to build on the previous accomplishments and investments in both operating and Capital Improvement resources including Energy, Green Buildings, Tree Canopy, Natural Resources and Flood Resilience. **Therefore, be it resolved that the Arlington County Civic Federation takes the following positions and recommends and requests actions by Arlington County (AC).**

1 **That AC develop an overarching action plan for climate change**, including an initial focus on adaptation, to establish coordination across the Comprehensive Plan Elements to include priorities, metrics, and performance measures for the critical climate actions for each Element with metrics to be reviewed annually and as part of the 5-year CP review. The intent is to integrate existing climate mitigation plans with complementary adaptation plans;

2 **That AC systematically include representatives of the ACCF** and other community organizations in current and ongoing planning for mitigation and adaptation methods including prioritizing adaptation and resilience measures that best use county resources to deliver timely benefits to our residents as this climate change work continues;

3 **That AC add more Open Public Spaces**, particularly in areas where there is less current open space acreage and less access to Open Public Spaces<sup>[vii]</sup> and track the additions with metrics;

4 **That AC park plans and site plans are required to preserving existing mature canopy as well as increasing ecosystem-enhancing canopy** trees and ground level vegetation, planted in soil and maintained for long-term survival of the plantings; <sup>[1]</sup>

5 **That ACCF supports the Forestry and Natural Resources Plan** and a specific implementation plan and metrics to track the priorities;

6 That AC establish an annual tree planting and preservation goal that will track and report the number of trees planted annually by Arlington on public and private space.<sup>[viii]</sup> The tracking system should also monitor the viability of new trees and trigger replacements as needed;

7 **That Arlington County develop a Heat Risk Assessment and Management Plan (RAMP) comparable to the recently completed Stormwater RAMP** <sup>[ix]</sup>

8 **That AC conduct a proactive examination of conceptual and preliminary site plan locations** to identify potential opportunities for stormwater management and urban heat island mitigation including easements and specific improvements, both those that could be funded as community benefits, and those that AC could fund in coordination with the private development;

9 **That the site plan process and internal priority review be updated to balance CP priorities and site opportunities** in context and not in competition, to make sure incentives and cost benefit consider priorities by location to achieve CP overarching goals; and,

10 **That AC and APS coordinate public open space and built environment** to meet joint priorities for Climate mitigation, adaptation and resilience through both built environment and natural space.

11 **That the County identify and seek legislative authority through VA legislation** for actions that are required to meet the life safety and health requirements of climate adaptation, particularly for extreme heat and stormwater management for urban flooding.<sup>[x]</sup>

<sup>[i]</sup> Heat waves are getting longer and more brutal. Here’s why your AC can’t save you anymore (7-4-2024) <https://www.cnn.com/2024/07/04/climate/heat-waves-air-conditioning-climate/index.html>

[ii] Definitions of Climate Mitigation, Adaptation, Resilience include Congressional Research <https://crsreports.congress.gov/IF11827> · VERSION 2 · NEW White House <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/National-Climatic-Resilience-Framework-FINAL.pdf> ; Center for Climate and Energy Solutions <https://www.c2es.org/document/what-is-climate-resilience-and-why-does-it-matter/> , USDA <https://www.nifa.usda.gov/grants/programs/climate-change-adaptation-mitigation-resilience>

[iii] Arlington Comprehensive Plan <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Projects/Plans-Studies/Comprehensive-Plan> Accessed 9-20-24

[iv] Arlington Risk Assessment and Management Plan <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Projects/Plans-Studies/Environment/Risk-Assessment-and-Management-Plan> accessed 9-20-24

[v] Research areas examples include tree canopy and ground level natural space for water and temperature management, managing the built environment for air flow, green roofs, and other heat reducing features, decrease impervious space and increase the natural space for cooling and water absorption, use of bioretention swales and street trees, planned pathways for overland relief to distribute stormwater for broader absorption and strategic water retention for slowing the inundation rate of high intensity storms.

[vi] Arlington County Website <https://www.arlingtonva.us/About-Arlington/Newsroom/Articles/2024/Jennifer-Fioretti-Named-New-Assistant-County-Manager-for-Climate-Policy-Climate-Policy-Office-Expanded> AND Arlington County Adopted 2025 budget <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Programs/Budget-Finance/FY-2025-Budget-Information>, fy-2025-adopted-all-in-one-budget.pdf, page 4, accessed 9-20-24

[vii] ACCF 2021 Resolution and White Paper on Open Space Equity <https://www.civfed.org/about-us/committees/parks/>

[viii] ACCF Taking Action for Trees May 2022, and June 23 Urban Tree Canopy Assessment <https://www.civfed.org/about-us/committees/environmental-affairs/>

[ix] Arlington Risk Assessment and Management Plan <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Projects/Plans-Studies/Environment/Risk-Assessment-and-Management-Plan> accessed 9-20-24

[x] ACCF 2024 Legislative Priorities Resolution <https://www.civfed.org/about-us/committees/legislation/>

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## **Bond Debt on the Ballot in November 2024 Bond Referenda — How Much Do We Owe?**

*By Suzanne Smith Sundburg, Point of Contact for the Revenue & Expenditures Committee*

Here's the linked list of the 2024 bond referenda for voters' approval of a total of \$272,535 million in new borrowing that will appear on November's ballot, along with a brief description of the types of projects that may be funded: <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Programs/Budget-Finance/Bonds/2024-Bond-Referenda>.

I say "may be funded" because the projects listed for each referendum are examples of projects the borrowed money could be used for. The county and APS aren't obligated to use those borrowed funds for those specific projects listed and may, instead, use these funds for similar projects so long as their purpose is consistent with the category for which the funds were approved by voters. In other words, the county cannot use funds approved by voters for schools to pay for county-related projects, or vice versa.

It's worth noting that general obligation (GO), taxpayer-supported bonds (like the ones listed in the ballot referenda) represent only a portion of the county's overall indebtedness. Charts 1 and 2 below show you the scope of Arlington County's borrowing and long-term obligations. Note that the information (the most recent available) in these charts is already over year old: <https://finpressllc.com/documents/arlington-fos-go-2024> (this 2024 Arlington County bond prospectus is the source for all four charts below)

Chart 2 (part of a larger chart: Reconciliation of the Balance Sheet of Governmental Funds to the Statement of Net Position, June 30, 2023)

Debts in Chart 1 (Debt Statement of Bonded Indebtedness) don't include bond premiums (similar to credit card cash advances borrowed at a higher interest rate), nor the [\\$150-million, variable-rate line of credit](#) that we borrowed to help developer

Jair Lynch purchase the Barcroft Apartments. Arlington County taxpayers backstop the Barcroft debt (should Jair Lynch default). Nor does Chart 1 included the \$39.816 million in debt for the [Ballston Public Parking Garage](#) (which doesn't appear on the list above), which we taxpayers also backstop.

Counting all or nearly all of Arlington County long-term obligations, including debts shown in Chart 2, we owe around \$1.9 billion in long-term obligations (the majority of which is for sums we've borrowed). That works out to around \$7,969 for every man, woman and child currently living in Arlington. (NOTE: According to Census data, the current estimated Arlington population is 238,439: <https://www.virginia-demographics.com/arlington-demographics>.)

Why is the number of residents important? Because the more residents we have, the more money Arlington can borrow while keeping this important debt ratio (net bonded indebtedness per capita) lower. The same is true of budgeted expenditures. The bigger Arlington's budget grows (aka, the more we spend), the better this debt ratio (debt service to total expenditures) appears — and the more we can borrow while still keeping our AAA bond rating and remaining within the limits set by the bond rating agencies (Moody's, Fitch, etc.). See these ratios in Charts 3 and 4 below.

Note that the \$1.9 billion in long-term obligations listed in Chart 2 is lower than the gross debt reported for Arlington by the Virginia Auditor of Public Accounts (VAPA) for fiscal year 2023 (which ended June 30, 2023): <https://www.apa.virginia.gov/local-government/reports/comparative-reports/20724>

According to VAPA, Arlington's gross debt as of June 30, 2023, was \$2.687 billion, or \$11,135 per capita (per person). Arlington had the third largest amount of gross debt in the State of Virginia in 2023, behind only Fairfax County with \$11.608 billion in gross debt (\$10,184.75 per capita) and Loudoun County with \$3.897 billion in gross debt (\$9,041.05 per capita).

Fairfax and Loudoun each has a much larger population than Arlington, which accounts for the lower per capita gross debt figures — despite the larger amount of debt overall. By comparison, the City of Falls Church (with a much smaller population than Arlington) had gross debt of just \$244 million in 2023, but \$15,383 of gross debt per capita.

## **Chart 1**



**Debt Statement**  
**As of June 30, 2023**  
**Bonded Debt Outstanding: <sup>(7)</sup>**

General obligation bonds <sup>(8)</sup>	\$1,262,320,000
Wastewater system revenue bonds <sup>(1)</sup>	93,642,628
2013 IDA Bonds <sup>(4)</sup>	27,550,000
2017 IDA Bonds <sup>(5)</sup>	46,925,000
2020 IDA Bonds <sup>(6)</sup>	21,270,000
Self-supporting Skating Facility Bonds <sup>(2)</sup>	<u>17,945,000</u>
<b>Gross Bonded Debt</b>	<b><u>\$1,451,707,628</u></b>
<b>Less:</b>	
Wastewater system revenue bonds <sup>(1)</sup>	\$93,642,628
Self-supporting Skating Facility Bonds <sup>(2)</sup>	17,945,000
Self-supporting G.O. utility bonds <sup>(3)</sup>	45,315,000
Subtotal	<u>\$138,957,628</u>
<b>Net Tax Supported Debt</b>	<b><u>\$1,312,750,000</u></b>

*Source:* Arlington County Department of Management and Finance.

- <sup>(1)</sup> These bonds (the "Wastewater Bonds") are secured by a pledge of the revenues of the County's water and wastewater system and are not general obligations of the County.
- <sup>(2)</sup> Taxable Economic Development Revenue Bonds, Series 2005 of the Industrial Development Authority of Arlington County, Virginia (the "Authority"), which bonds were refunded on April 22, 2010 by the issuance of the Authority's Taxable Revenue Refunding Bonds, Series 2010 (the "2010 Skating Facility Bonds"), which bonds were refunded on October 29, 2020 by the issuance of the Authority's Taxable Revenue Refunding Bonds, Series 2020B (the "2020B Skating Facility Bonds"). Under this transaction, the Washington Capitals make monthly payments of rent that are approximately equal to debt service on the 2020B Skating Facility Bonds. The County has agreed under a Cooperation Agreement between the County and the Authority that, subject to appropriation by the County Board, the County will deliver to the Authority sufficient funds to make payments with respect to the 2020B Skating Facility Bonds.
- <sup>(3)</sup> With the exception of the Wastewater Bonds, all outstanding utility bonds are general obligation bonds of the County. As a matter of practice, the County pays general obligation utility bonds from its Utilities Enterprise Fund, the revenues of which include water, sewer and advanced wastewater treatment system revenues. In the event that monies in the Utilities Enterprise Fund are not sufficient to pay debt service on the general obligation utility bonds, the County is obligated to pay such debt service from the General Fund or another available source.
- <sup>(4)</sup> On June 3, 2013, the Authority issued \$76,315,000 in revenue bonds for the benefit of the County (the "2013 IDA Bonds"). The 2013 IDA Bonds were issued to refund the outstanding principal amount of the Authority's Lease Revenue Bonds (Arlington County, Virginia Capital Projects), Series 2004, to finance the acquisition of land and property at 2020 14<sup>th</sup> Street North in Arlington, and to refinance the outstanding principal amount of the \$9,016,099 Taxable Variable Rate Note, Series 2010A and \$26,000,000 Taxable Fixed Rate Note, Series 2010B. On October 29, 2020, a portion of the 2013 IDA Bonds were refunded by the Authority's Revenue Refunding Bonds (County Projects), Series 2020B (Taxable). The County has agreed under a Cooperation Agreement between the County and the Authority that subject to appropriation by the County Board, the County will deliver to the Authority sufficient funds to make payments with respect to the 2013 IDA Bonds.
- <sup>(5)</sup> On October 17, 2017, the Authority issued its \$57,865,000 Revenue Bonds (County Projects), Series 2017 (the "2017 IDA Bonds") to, among other things, refund the outstanding principal amount of the Authority's Revenue Bonds (County Projects), Series 2009B (Taxable – Build America Bonds) (the "2009 IDA Bonds") and \$6,820,000 of the Authority's Revenue Bonds (County Projects), Series 2011 (the "2011 IDA Bonds"). Neither the 2009 IDA Bonds nor the 2011 IDA Bonds remain outstanding.
- <sup>(6)</sup> On October 29, 2020, the Authority issued its Revenue Bonds (County Projects), Series 2020A (Tax-Exempt) in the aggregate principal amount of \$26,650,000 and Revenue Refunding Bonds (County Projects), Series 2020B (Taxable) in the aggregate principal amount of \$30,940,000 (collectively, the "2020 IDA Bonds"). A portion of the proceeds of the 2020 IDA Bonds refunded \$19,480,000 of the outstanding principal amount of the 2010 Skating Facility Bonds and \$9,815,000 of the outstanding principal amount of the 2013 IDA Bonds.
- <sup>(7)</sup> On October 31, 2023, the Authority issued its Revenue Bonds (County Projects), Series 2023A (Tax-Exempt) in the aggregate principal amount of \$35,250,000 (the "2023 IDA Bonds"). The 2023 IDA Bonds are not included.
- <sup>(8)</sup> Does not include the Series 2024 Bonds.

**Chart 2**

Long-term liabilities, including bonds payable, are not due and payable in the current period and are not reported in the funds: (Note 9)

Other long-term obligations	(47,830,719)	
Bonds payable	(790,650,000)	
School bonds payable	(541,810,000)	
Credit line for capital	(22,044,776)	
Line of credit	(150,000,000)	
Right to use assets	(125,271,141)	
Compensated absences	(39,403,369)	
Workers' compensation	(4,759,507)	
Premium on bonds issued	<u>(192,864,849)</u>	(1,914,634,361)

**Chart 3**



### Key Debt Ratios

Fiscal Year	Population	Estimated Market Value of Taxable Property Calendar Year Ended December 31 <sup>(1)</sup>	Net Bonded Indebtedness At June 30 <sup>(2)</sup>	Ratio of Net Bonded Indebtedness <sup>(2)</sup> Per Capita	Net Bonded Indebtedness as a percent of Market Value
2019	226,400	\$80,852,761,690	\$1,241,940,000	5,486	1.67%
2020	238,643	84,464,076,903	1,150,410,000	4,821	1.55
2021	240,200	86,351,255,848	1,372,221,500	5,713	1.84
2022	235,500	89,427,906,442	1,270,575,000	5,395	1.71
2023	237,300	93,115,545,701	1,358,065,000	5,723	1.83

Sources: Market value and net bonded indebtedness – Arlington County Department of Management and Finance. Population data – Arlington County Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development, Planning Division.

<sup>(1)</sup> Includes real property, personal property and public service corporation property.

<sup>(2)</sup> Excludes the Series 2024 Bonds, revenue bonds payable by a pledge of the water and wastewater system, Ballston Parking Garage revenue bonds payable from the Ballston Garage Enterprise Fund, the 2019 IDA Line of Credit and the 2021 IDA Line of Credit. Includes subject to appropriation financings including the 2013 IDA Bonds, the 2017 IDA Bonds, the 2020 IDA Bonds and the 2023 IDA Bonds. Excludes unamortized bond premium/discount.

### Chart 4

### Key Debt Ratios

Fiscal Year	Population	Estimated Market Value of Taxable Property Calendar Year Ended December 31 <sup>(1)</sup>	Net Bonded Indebtedness At June 30 <sup>(2)</sup>	Ratio of Net Bonded Indebtedness <sup>(2)</sup> Per Capita	Net Bonded Indebtedness as a percent of Market Value
2019	226,400	\$80,852,761,690	\$1,241,940,000	5,486	1.67%
2020	238,643	84,464,076,903	1,150,410,000	4,821	1.55
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2023	237,300	93,115,545,701	1,358,065,000	5,723	1.83

Sources: Market value and net bonded indebtedness – Arlington County Department of Management and Finance. Population data – Arlington County Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development, Planning Division.

<sup>(1)</sup> Includes real property, personal property and public service corporation property.

<sup>(2)</sup> Excludes the Series 2024 Bonds, revenue bonds payable by a pledge of the water and wastewater system, Ballston Parking Garage revenue bonds payable from the Ballston Garage Enterprise Fund, the 2019 IDA Line of Credit and the 2021 IDA Line of Credit. Includes subject to appropriation financings including the 2013 IDA Bonds, the 2017 IDA Bonds, the 2020 IDA Bonds and the 2023 IDA Bonds. Excludes unamortized bond premium/discount.

**SCHOOL BOARD  
CANDIDATE FORUM**

**Thursday, October 10th, 7pm , Virtual**

MODERATED BY:

 Karina Elwood  
Washington Post  
K-12 Education Reporter

**You're Invited: 2024 Virtual School Board Candidate Forum**  
Submitted by Arlington Parents for Education, Todd Truitt

Join us on Thursday, October 10, 2024, for our Fall School Board Candidate Forum—a great opportunity to hear directly from the candidates about their vision for the future of Arlington Public Schools.

You'll hear from Kathleen Clark, James "Vell" Rives, Zuraya Tapia-Hadley, and Paul Weiss as they share their priorities and plans for improving our schools. (Details on each candidate below!)

We're also excited to announce that Washington Post Virginia K-12 Education Reporter, [Karina Elwood](#), will be moderating this year's event, ensuring a dynamic and informative conversation.

Don't miss out on this important opportunity to get involved and stay informed!

When: 7pm-8:30pm

Register here: [Zoom](#)

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## Police Launch Crime Data Hub as Additional Tool to Stay Informed

*Published on August 23, 2024*

The Arlington County Police Department (ACPD) is committed to community policing, a philosophy and practice that seeks to involve everyone in the safety and welfare of our community. As part of this commitment, ACPD strives to build trust and confidence with those we serve through increased transparency and communications and has launched a [Crime Data Hub](#) as an additional tool for our community to stay informed about reported criminal incidents occurring in Arlington County. [Learn more.](#)

Source: Arlington County's Inside Arlington [Newsletter](#)

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**As the seasons change, it's important to stay prepared for a range of emergencies. Here are some key tips to keep you and your family safe**



Article below from **Tania Bougebrayel Cohn**, Community Engagement and Resilience Manager, Department of Public Safety Communications & Emergency Management, Arlington County Government

- **Heat Safety:** Fall can still bring high temperatures, so stay hydrated, wear light clothing, and avoid strenuous outdoor activity during peak heat. Find more [heat safety tips](#).
- **Stormwater Resilience:** Prevent flooding by clearing storm drains and gutters, and consider installing rain barrels or other flood-mitigation tools around your property.
- **Earthquake Safety:** Participate in the Great ShakeOut on October 17th! Practice “Drop, Cover, and Hold On” to be ready in case of an earthquake. Post your videos and tag @ReadyArlington!
- **General Emergency Preparedness:** Review your [household emergency plan](#), [update your emergency kit](#), and [sign up for Arlington Alert](#) to stay informed about local emergencies.

Find more preparedness tips at: [readyarlington.com](http://readyarlington.com). Stay safe and prepared this October!

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## 2024-2025 Board of Directors

### Officers

President, [John Ford](#)

Vice President, [Nick Giacobbe](#)

Secretary, [Matt Gloudeman](#)

Treasurer, [Benjamin Watts](#)

### Board of Directors

Board Chair, [David Smith](#)

Director at Large, [Allan Gajadhar](#)

Director at Large, [Dave Schutz](#)

Director at Large, [Jackie Snelling](#)

Director at Large, [Jean Hencroth](#)

Director at Large, [Michael McMenamin](#)

Director at Large, [Paul Holland](#)

Director at Large, [Richard McNamara](#)

Director at Large, [Ron Haddox](#)

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## ACCF PUBLIC INTEREST COMMITTEES

- Arts and Culture – Co-Chairs Tina Worden and Sandi Chesrown
- Diversity – Chair TBD - if interested contact [bod.orgdev@civfed.org](mailto:bod.orgdev@civfed.org)
- Environmental Affairs – Chair Mary Glass
- Housing – Co-Chairs Anne Bodine and Matt Hall
- Legislation – Chair Paul Holland
- Parks and Recreation – Chair Cory Giacobbe (Parks)
- Planning and Zoning – Chair Brian Harner
- Public Services – Chair John Ford
- Revenues and Expenditures – Chair TBD
- Schools – Chair Todd Truitt
- Transportation – Chair TBD - if interested contact [bod.orgdev@civfed.org](mailto:bod.orgdev@civfed.org)

Any delegate, alternate delegate, or member of a member organization may

participate on any public interest or support committee. Please contact the applicable committee chair, point-of-contact, or President John Ford if you are interested in participating on ACCF committees.

[Link to Committee Website](#)

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## **Interested in being an Arlington County Civic Federation Delegate?**

The Arlington County Civic Federation was founded in 1916. Today, it has 80+ member organizations dedicated to advocacy and community involvement. The Federation membership reflects the broad array of interests and talents found in the County and is open and welcoming to all groups within Arlington, firmly believing that a broader range of groups creates better problem-solving outcomes for Arlington and its residents. Our purpose continues to be promoting the general welfare of Arlington County and its vicinity in a non-partisan, non-sectarian, non-sectional, and non-political manner.

Arlington County Civic Federation delegates enjoy the full benefits of participation, voting, and serving in Civic Federation leadership positions. If your organization is a member of the Civic Federation, ask if it has open slots for delegates. If it is not a member organization of the Civic Federation, encourage it to join. Here is a link to our website for more details.

[joinus@Civfed.org](mailto:joinus@Civfed.org)

[The Civic Federation's Website](#)

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### **CivFed Calendar FY2025**

#### **October & November**

- 10/1 - Environmental Affairs Committee Meeting
- 10/3 - Public Safety Committee Meeting
- 10/8 - General Membership Meeting
- 10/16 - Parks Committee Meeting
- 10/17 - Housing Committee Monthly Meeting
- 10/22 - GLUP Subcommittee Meeting
- 10/24 - Planning and Zoning Committee Meeting
- 11/20 - Member Certification and Annual Dues Deadline


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