

SERVICE DELIVERY & GOVERNMENTAL TRANSPARENCY

Infrastructure & Operational Enhancements

To improve service delivery, the Proposed Budget continues a focus on improvements in:

- Core infrastructure
- Vital services
- Customer Service

In addition to improvements in the types of services offered, the way in which those services are offered is crucially important. Arlington County, will, for the first time in many years, set basic service expectations, and baseline standards for staff response. While we can't promise every resident will be happy with the responses to questions of County staff, they should expect answers provided in a timely and courteous fashion.

Core Infrastructure:

Streetlight & Trail Light Maintenance

The FY 2017 budget began the process to invest in and improve on the repair, replacement, and management of the County's streetlight and trail light infrastructure. Not typically thought of as an investment in public safety, streetlights and trail lights are critical to our neighborhood safety, transportation network (vehicle and pedestrian users), and vitality of our business community. The County is often criticized for not providing an acceptable level of service to the community for streetlight repairs. As a start, resources were added in FY 2017 to begin to assess and address this growing problem ([click here for FY 2017 budget narrative](#)). Additional resources in FY 2018 continue this commitment.

The County currently owns or maintains approximately 7,350 streetlights, with Dominion Virginia Power (DVP) owning and maintaining 11,300 streetlights and the Virginia Department of Transportation (VDOT) owning 600. The County's ownership of streetlights has increased over time, primarily as a result of new development in the Metro corridors. Over the last 5 years there has been a 40 percent increase in the number of County owned and maintained streetlights.

One significant factor affecting County, DVP, and VDOT streetlights is the underground electrical infrastructure that has been in place in some areas for over 50 years. Increasing costs and service delivery times are directly influenced by this aging infrastructure. The County has made significant progress in bulb outages by installing new energy efficient LED luminaires. However, this newer technology doesn't address pole maintenance and underground issues, which is where our problems continue to persist.

Over the years, the Department of Environmental Services (DES) has managed and maintained the streetlight inventory by "borrowing" resources from traffic operations. With the rapid increase in the streetlight inventory and the aging infrastructure supporting the network, this staffing model is no longer sustainable; dedicated resources must be allocated to this important service program.

Response times for repairing streetlights are much slower than our peer communities. Arlington County currently averages 30 days for minor repairs and up to 120 days for major outages.

In 2016, the County received over 2,300 work requests for streetlight and trail light issues through

its online reporting system. This does not include contacts through other types of communication (e.g. social media, phone calls, emails, and walk-ins). The County must invest the resources necessary to be able to address these issues in a timely manner.

In the County's 2015 Customer Satisfaction Survey, streetlights were one of the top five areas that residents wanted to see improvements in over the next two years.

The FY 2018 Proposed Budget includes the addition of a total of five positions, two vehicles, equipment, supplies and consultant funds for a trail light inventory. This request includes a position to manage the overall program and ensure the program meets its targeted performance metrics. A Design Engineer is added to address complexities relating to aging infrastructure, and three additional staff to handle the increased daily workload. The total cost for these recommended program additions in FY 2018 is \$910,000 – a portion of which is one-time.

Expected Service Improvements:

- Routine outage response time will decrease from 30 days to 3 days
- Major underground repairs will be reduced from 4 months to 1 month

Next Steps in the Streetlight Program:

- Continue to replace older streetlights with LED luminaries
- Finalize the streetlight management plan begun in 2016
- Report progress on improving streetlight repair response times on a regular basis.
- Perform a trail light assessment to inform the County on the repair and replacement needs of the trail light system

Paving Our Roads

The Proposed PAYG Budget includes funding to invest more in paving for our roads (\$3.3 million). With a GO Bond investment of \$11.9 million, this totals a \$15.2 million paving program. The paving funding levels are directly linked to the condition of the roads. The County's current goal is to reach a paving condition index (PCI) of 75-80; an increase of approximately 5 to 10 points. Paving has continued to be the number one priority in the resident satisfaction survey and impacts other county-wide programs including neighborhood conservation and other transportation maintenance capital programs.

Land Acquisition

I have also set aside land acquisition funding (\$2.0 million) to take advantage of opportunities that arise for open space or other non-park uses. There are continuing needs for infrastructure storage and staging areas, along with acquisition of properties to expand existing County park land. The Public Spaces Master Plan, when adopted by the County Board next fall, will help to outline a multi-year acquisition plan for open space.

Synthetic Turf Investments

The County currently has fifteen synthetic turf fields, with a plan to install at least three new fields over the next several years. Due to the growing inventory of fields, FY 2018 is the first year the County will have to invest in the replacement of two fields in one fiscal year (\$1.3 million). The fields at Long Bridge (cost shared with Marymount University) and TJ Middle School (cost shared with Arlington Public Schools) are both due for replacement and will include costs for site work and amenities.

Maintenance of County Facilities

I am investing \$2.2 million for the 84 public government facilities the County currently maintains. The goal of the facilities maintenance program is to provide a comfortable environment with a quality appearance. These dollars will replace and maintain HVAC and roof systems, systems furniture and other facility capital needs.

Transportation Infrastructure

For our ongoing transportation infrastructure maintenance needs, I am including \$3.4 million. These funds will be used to maintain and replace infrastructure for bus shelters, regulatory signage, parking meters, traffic systems and signals and other transportation inventory. These maintenance dollars also include the rehabilitation and repair of the Arlington Transit (ART) fleet, which extends the useful life of the buses an approximate four more years.

Vital Service Improvements:

Public Safety Staffing (Click on the Department name below to view the relevant long-term budget presentation.)

- **Sheriff's Office** - The Sheriff's Office completed a staffing study of its operations in FY 2015 that identified staffing needs both at the detention center and in court operations. The FY 2018 Proposed Budget reflects the third year of a multi-year plan to begin to address these staffing issues. Five Deputy Sheriffs were added in both FY 2016 and FY 2017, in addition to a human resources position to address recruitment and training requirements and a senior position focused on Americans with Disability Act (ADA) requirements.

With the reallocation of funds from the expiring Peumansend Creek Regional Jail (PCRJ) agreement in FY 2017, seven new positions are included in FY 2018. In addition, non-personnel resources (\$50,000) needed with the opening of the new firing range at Dulles Airport and one-time funding for an overhaul of Sheriff uniforms (\$400,000) are provided.

- **Police** - The changing nature of policing in the past 10-15 years has required the Police Department to shift resources over time to areas like tactical training and enhanced officer readiness. Progressive changes in patrol tactics and equipment with regard to active shooter incidents around the country and around the world have caused the Police Department to significantly overhaul its training.

The FY 2018 Budget recognizes the need for shifting resources, armory, and training needs to appropriately prepare the police force for the changing environment of public safety. By reallocating existing resources, the Police department is reclassifying three vacant Public Service Aide positions to free up uniform resources to assist in the growing demands of the County day-time and night life activities (\$40,544). Currently there are three uniform positions providing job duties that could be fulfilled by civilians. Also, through the reallocation of existing resources (\$139,665) and the addition of new resources (\$81,035), the County Manager has augmented the training and armory budget in the Police Department by \$220,700.

- **Fire** - Last year, funding for eight new firefighter / Emergency Medical Technicians positions was added that would bring all 14 fire suppression units to four-person staffing levels. In addition, one advanced life support medic unit (four additional positions) was added to meet the growth in demand for 911 - emergency calls. This year's Proposed Budget includes

funding for two recruit classes (\$1,481,549 in additional one-time and ongoing funding). Two recruit classes are needed for the next several years to keep up with the current attrition rate.

- **Office of Emergency Management** - In response to both internal and external staffing analysis, the FY 2018 Proposed Budget includes an additional three Emergency Communication Center call takers. These positions are being added to continue to mitigate staffing challenges, handle existing call volume, and prepare the organization for emerging 9-1-1 staffing demands. All of these positions are funded through a reallocation of existing resources.

Youth Population Investments

Our community is collectively facing the challenge of a rapidly growing youth population. While much of the focus has been on meeting the immediate needs of enrollment growth for APS, the County faces similar pressures to keep up with the demand in youth-related services. The proposed budget includes modest incremental funding to start catching up on the growing demand:

- *Library services* – Attendance at youth library programs has grown from just under 60,000 annually in 2011 to a projected 97,600 in 2016, an increase of close to 64 percent. Additionally, library staff are unable to make regular visits to early childhood and school aged programs. The Proposed Budget includes an additional youth services librarian to begin to meet this demand.
- *School nurses* – The Proposed Budget includes an additional School Nurse to restore the staffing ratio of one nurse to every two schools which will better enable the County to accommodate increasing school enrollment and clinic visits by students with chronic health conditions.

These are only two examples; parks programs and human services programs are also both struggling to meet youth needs. Additional information will be provided at work sessions.

Funding for these changes is coming from the proposed reduction in the percentage of tax increment revenue allocated to the Crystal City, Pentagon City & Potomac Yard tax increment financing (TIF) area; the proposed reduction from 33 to 30 percent will still provide the funding stream necessary to deliver the CIP commitments in the TIF area.

Customer Service Initiative:

Our goal is to provide exemplary customer service across Arlington County government. Every day, 3,500 employees of Arlington County provide a broad range of information and services to residents, businesses, and visitors. Together, we administer police, fire, emergency management, human services, public works, transportation, parks and recreation, libraries, and many other less-visible services. We also provide a significant amount of technical assistance and support to help residents and businesses do business, access permits, and develop plans with the County. We believe it is important that our customers have a consistent and positive experience when interacting with County government.

Utilizing existing resources, this proposal introduces the CARES initiative, which aims to enhance the Arlington Customer experience and explore opportunities to build efficiencies across the County's information systems. The CARES initiative includes four key objectives:

- (1) Develop and implement county wide customer service training for Arlington staff;
- (2) Create a consistent and coordinated training approach for call center employees;

- (3) Develop a broad set of customer experience performance metrics across the County, which includes consistent measures across all Arlington County call centers;
- (4) Conduct analysis of the current state of Arlington County call center operations, functions, staffing, training, and metrics across Arlington County Government; including identifying opportunities for streamlining and coordinating operational call centers within and across lines of services in the County.

Over the next year, we will launch a new orientation training session focused on customer service and align performance metrics and baseline training requirements for call center staff from different departments across the County. Over the next 18 – 24 months, we will evaluate potential options to coordinate and / or consolidate various call center functions.