

A YEAR OF **RESILIENCE** AND INNOVATION



ARLINGTON ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
FY 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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Overlooking the skyline of the nation’s capital, Arlington, Virginia offers an innovative, urban community with access to the nation’s top decision makers, leading technology companies, corporate headquarters and a global workforce.

Arlington Economic Development (AED) continues to develop Arlington as an economically vital, competitive and sustainable community by providing leadership and services to the business, real estate, tourism and cultural affairs sectors of the Arlington economy.

Message from the Director

When I joined Arlington County at the helm of Arlington Economic Development (AED) in January 2020, I envisioned a very different first year on the job. The department was riding the momentum of the recruitment of

the much-heralded Amazon HQ2 to our community. Relationships throughout the region were strong; we had recently formed the Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance (NOVA EDA). Our small businesses were thriving, and our hotel industry was at the top of statewide rankings and was enjoying strong revenue. We had a full agenda packed with marketing trips, events and programming to support Arlington's economy.



Telly D. Tucker, CECD
Arlington Economic Development

Then a global pandemic changed everything.

AED immediately pivoted, refocusing all our efforts to become an essential resource for Arlington's business community throughout the pandemic. We set up a section of our website providing businesses with the information they needed — everything from available relief funding to webinars on transitioning business operations to updated lists of small businesses offering online or takeout options. We held frequent briefings for our major employers, hotels and arts and culture groups. With the support of our partners, the Arlington Industrial Development Authority and the Ballston, National Landing (formerly Crystal City) and Rosslyn Business Improvement Districts (BIDs), we provided \$2.8 million in grant funds to small businesses. The entire experience showed

me firsthand just how innovative and resilient Arlington can be.

It is impossible to do an annual report covering 2019-2020 and not focus on the pandemic, especially the toll that it is taking on our hospitality and retail businesses. But there is another part of the story that cannot be understated. The past year saw protest, calls for justice, and an overall heightened awareness and recognition around racial inequities that still exist in the country. Arlington County leadership and similarly AED renewed their commitments to the importance of diversity, equity and inclusion in the service we provide to the community.

Despite all of these challenges of 2020, Arlington's diverse employer base of federal, research, corporate and tech has proved to be quite resilient, adapting quickly to virtual operating formats. Companies are adding jobs and expanding here in Arlington. While there are still many unknowns as we all work to recover from this crisis, I have no doubt that Arlington, with our innovative companies, educated workforce and incredible location next to Washington, D.C., will thrive.

This may not have been the year I imagined, but I could not be prouder to lead this amazing team and most importantly, support this remarkable community of businesses. Throughout the pandemic, we saw our businesses pivot on a dime — not just to stay in business themselves, but to help their neighboring businesses as well. It's that kind of spirited dedication that shows me that despite the pandemic, Arlington, with its fundamentals of talent, location and infrastructure, will continue to attract and retain employers and maintain its leadership as a place for successful business.

Standing With Our Businesses Through COVID-19

The pandemic required businesses of all shapes and sizes to change their operating models overnight, shocking a community that was so used to connection — with clients, customers, coworkers and associates. While it has not been easy, our resilient businesses continuously demonstrate why Arlington is one of the most innovative communities in the country. Every step of the way, AED has been there to provide programming and support to our businesses.

- 525** Arlington businesses promoted on AED website and social media channels
- 393** Small business grants
- 3,500** Fabric masks created
- 250** Small business counseling sessions
- 198** Restaurants pickup/drop-off zones
- 1,200** Room nights generated from marketing efforts*

*Reflects results through September 2020



“We are excited to be setting up our U.S. headquarters in Arlington. The region boasts a rich combination of security, engineering, and IT skills that we seek, and its proximity to the nation’s capital positions us close to the policy innovation around digital assets and distributed ledger technology in the U.S.”

— Andrew Bliss, Block.one, Chief Operating Officer



National Landing

Business Investment

FY 2020 Business Investment Stats



Business Investment Successes Reflect Arlington’s Increasingly Diverse Economy

Despite the disruptions of the pandemic, Arlington continues to have successes with our proactive business attraction, retention and expansion efforts, guided by AED’s underlying economic diversification strategy that helped win Amazon HQ2 in 2018. During these challenging times, we are fortunate to have a strong employer base of federal, professional services and technology firms in our midst that are faring relatively well during the pandemic.

We saw significant wins within our foundational sectors with the retention of WETA and the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office in Shirlington and Raytheon in Rosslyn. We also saw notable expansions among several key employers, including Nestlé and Mastercard. AED continued growth in our target technology sectors such as Block.one, a blockchain company that placed its U.S. headquarters in Rosslyn, as well as tech startups Scoutbee and Amify in Crystal City.



Expanding Business Retention and Engagement Efforts

Supporting Arlington's existing businesses has always been a core component of the Business Investment Group (BIG), and now, under the leadership of AED's new BIG Director, Marian Marquez, additional staffing capacity is focused on business retention and engagement efforts.

Arlington saw much of its office community adapt to a virtual format, and AED followed suit. Webinars, information sessions, and a variety of resources were made available online. BIG also continued its business engagement efforts virtually, with the Arlington Premiere event, Business Appreciation Month celebration and Collision conference all moving online.

In total, BIG connected with more than 340 Arlington companies throughout the year, totaling more than 580 touch points.

About the Business Investment Group

The BIG team works to attract and retain companies in Arlington and support their growth through value-add services, with a focus on diversifying Arlington's economy and lowering office vacancy.

For more information:

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Amazon HQ2 Update

- **1,000 Jobs**
- **900,000 SF of leased space**
- **2.1 Million SF under construction**

After the 14 month-long public site selection search, the eyes of the nation remain on the progress of Amazon HQ2, which we are pleased to report is progressing on schedule.

Construction began in early 2020 on the 2.1 million SF mixed-use project in Pentagon City, which includes two 22-story towers that will house Amazon's Arlington headquarters along with 65,000 SF of ground floor retail. This project is expected to be completed by early 2023.

The company now leases nearly 900,000 SF of existing office space in Arlington's Crystal City neighborhood. In June, Amazon welcomed its 1,000th employee at HQ2. The early employees are tackling projects across Amazon's business lines including Alexa, Amazon Web Services, Fire TV and Prime Video.



Arlington's Tech Ecosystem

New Economic Development Initiatives on Tech Talent

Talent is the name of the game when it comes to attracting high-growth companies in today's competitive world. Arlington and the region are dedicating more resources to attracting, retaining and growing tech talent. Here at AED, we've created a full-time position specifically to focus on tech talent and related strategic initiatives. We've also joined forces with our regional counterparts to create the Northern Virginia Economic Development Alliance (NOVA EDA), in an effort to collaboratively market the region as a tech powerhouse for companies looking to locate near the ideal talent pool.

"Talent was the biggest driving factor for us. Both tech talent on day one, but also tech talent in the future."

*— Brian Huseman,
VP of Public Policy, Amazon*

Real estate firm CBRE ranked the Washington, D.C. metro area as the #2 tech talent market in North America in its 2020 Tech Talent report.



Startups enjoy the collaborative benefits of working in a coworking space at Ballston's Industrious.

University Investments in Tech Pipeline

Efforts are well underway by the region's universities to leverage Virginia's planned \$1 billion investment in the state's tech talent pipeline.

- Virginia Tech plans to break ground on its new Innovation Campus in nearby Alexandria in 2021 and already has students attending its graduate-level technology programs.
- The design process is underway for George Mason's new Institute for Digital InnovAtion (IDIA), which the Arlington-based campus hopes to have completed for fall 2025. In addition, George Mason launched its new Department of Cyber Security — the first of its kind in the country.



In addition, Marymount University launched “Upskilling for the What’s Next Economy,” to assist displaced workers obtain marketable skills to re-enter the workforce. Marymount’s unique modular approach pulls together aspects from different programs to provide graduate level qualifications in areas of cyber security and data science.

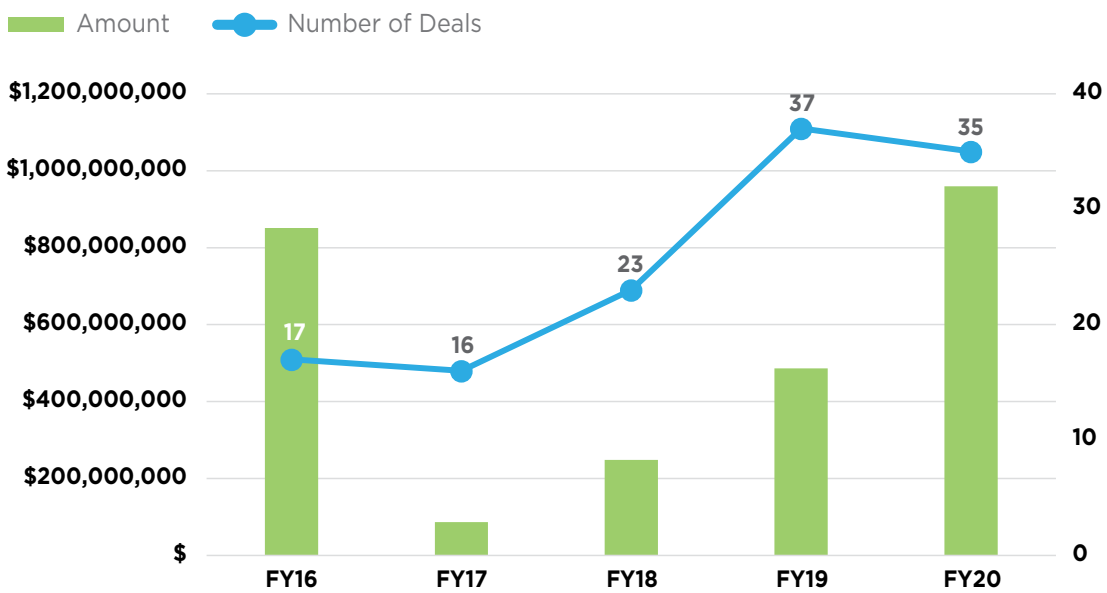


Artist rendering of the new Institute for Digital InnovAtion at George Mason University's Arlington campus

Tech Companies See Steady Increase in Investment Activity

Venture capital is a critical component of a thriving local tech ecosystem because it provides the financial resources that many young companies need to grow. Over the past four years, there has been a steady increase in venture activity in the County, as evidenced by the growth in both the number of investment deals and the total amount of investment.

Arlington Venture Capital Activity



Throughout the lifecycle of tech companies different types of investment activities occur as a company grows and matures (for example seed, series A, merger and acquisition). The table below highlights some of the noteworthy private investment activities in Arlington in FY 2020.

FY2020 Investment Activity Highlights

COMPANY	AMOUNT	TYPE
DivvyCloud	\$145M	M&A
Mobile Posse	\$66M	M&A
Incentive Technology Group	\$255M	M&A
WireWheel	\$10.6M	Series B
Federated Wireless	\$51M	Series C
Shift5	\$2.5M	Seed
Hungry Marketplace	\$20M	Series B
Deepsig	\$9.9M	Series A

Source: The above data charts were compiled from Pitchbook Data, company press releases and various news releases and does not include E*Trade or CEB acquisitions.

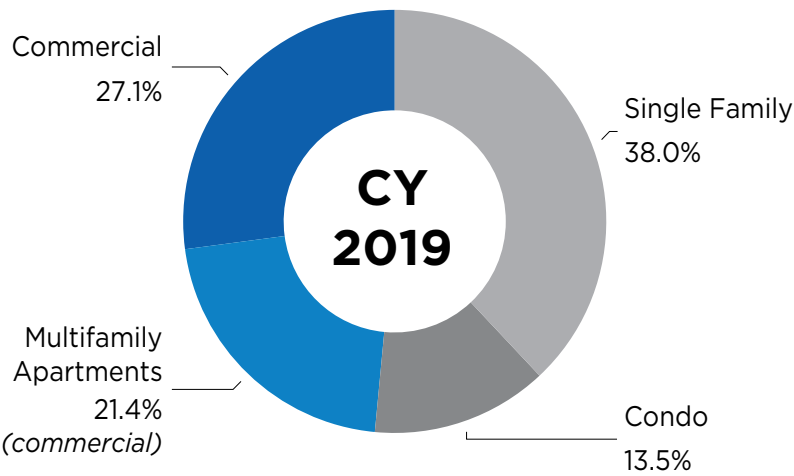


Arlington is home to more commercial office space than the downtowns of Los Angeles, Denver and Atlanta.

Real Estate Development

Arlington Economic Development works throughout the year to support the strength and stability of Arlington’s commercial real estate market. The County’s nearly 50/50% split of commercial to residential property tax base is not only an important ingredient to the County’s economic resiliency — it is a defining feature of Arlington’s mixed-use, walkable community that has attracted workers and businesses to Arlington for a generation.

CY 2019
Percent of Real Property Assessed Values



Source: Arlington County Adopted FY 2020 Budget

New Office Construction Driven by Amazon HQ2

New office construction is dominated by Amazon HQ2. The County recently approved 2M SF of office space as part of Amazon’s Phase 1, and construction began shortly thereafter. Another 2M SF is expected to be approved for Phase 2 in 2021.

Outside owner-occupied Amazon space, new office construction is driven by preleasing. The 190,000 SF 4040 Wilson Blvd. delivered in the Ballston neighborhood in early 2020, after securing anchor tenant Avalon Bay.

FY 2020 Development Pipeline

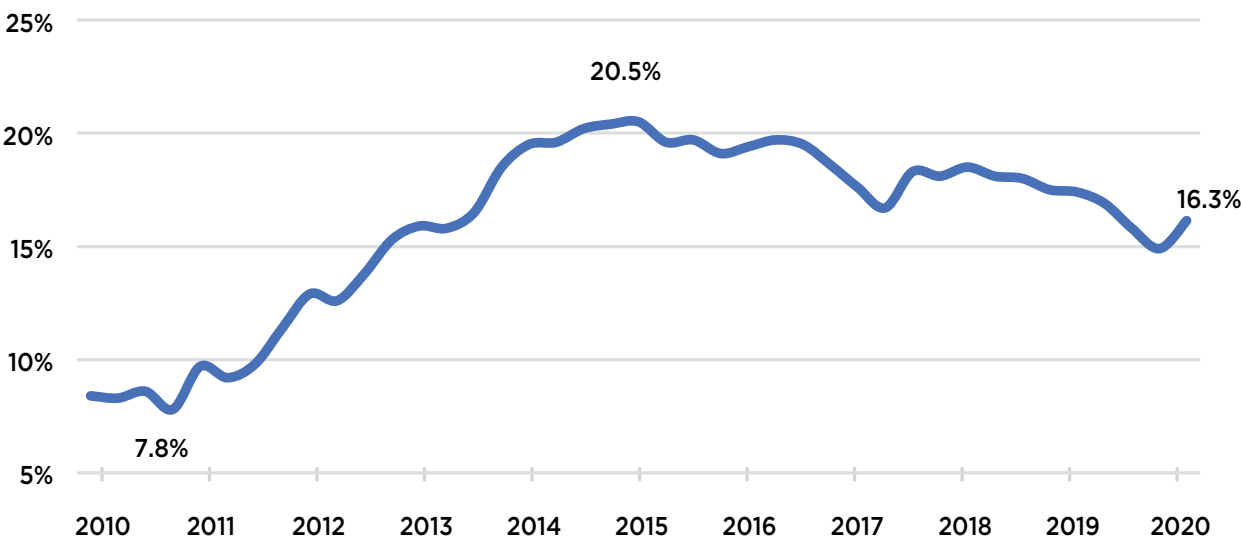
	Approved	Under Construction	Completed
Office (SF)	7,114,608	2,092,566	191,300
Retail (SF)	818,760	265,217	222,400
Residential (Units)	7,566	2,331	2,694
Hotels (Rooms)	1,383	-	335

Source: Arlington Economic Development and Arlington County Dept. of Community Planning, Housing and Development

Office Vacancy Stabilized

In FY 2020, the commercial vacancy rate reached the lowest point since 2012 when federal Base Realignment and Closure (BRAC) actions led to historic office vacancy in the County. This trend reflects the major corporate and tech relocations and expansion over the past 10 years, as well as the retention and expansion of some of the County’s large federal and nonprofit tenants.

Office Vacancy 2010-2020 Q2



Source: CoStar, July 2, 2020



The vertical mixed-use **4040 Wilson Blvd.** was completed in FY 2020. Ballston is experiencing a renaissance with the new construction and redevelopment of a number of commercial, retail and multifamily properties.

Strong Multifamily Residential Pipeline

A strong, growing multifamily apartment sector is a key to Arlington’s economic stability and has continued to perform despite significant increases in new inventory. The strength of the multifamily sector

is indicative of Arlington’s regional position as a high-quality residential location for workers seeking an urban, mixed-use environment with strong amenities and excellent transportation options.



The 256-unit Apex development was completed in FY 2020, replacing 110 existing and adding 146 new committed affordable units to the County.

About Real Estate Development Group

The Real Estate Development Group (REDG) provides technical assistance on commercial office, retail and hotel development opportunities within Arlington and monitors competitive market conditions and structures and manages a variety of public-private partnerships. REDG also provides advice and assistance on enhancing the appearance of commercial properties and serves as a liaison between the development community and Arlington County government agencies.

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Ambar Restaurant in Clarendon

Small businesses are the fabric of Arlington’s community. In fact, more than 90% of Arlington’s businesses have fewer than 50 employees.

Small Business

FY 2020 BizLaunch Stats

8,643 Total clients served

119
Workshops and webinars

2,884
Workshop participants

1,256
Counseling sessions

Record-Breaking Service Levels

Since the Amazon HQ2 announcement, we’ve seen tremendous growth in the demand for services from BizLaunch, AED’s small business and entrepreneurial assistance program. To meet this need, BizLaunch expanded its resources during the first half of FY 2020, adding an additional staff person — bringing its small but mighty team to three employees. As the pandemic set in, BizLaunch services became even more crucial for our small businesses. In FY 2020, BizLaunch served a record-breaking 8,643 clients through its webinars, consultations and other outreach efforts.



BizLaunch en Español workshop

A Commitment to Equity

Arlington’s small business community is as diverse as the Arlington community itself, and BizLaunch celebrates that diversity.

In FY 2020:

- Provided 243 one-on-one counseling session to Spanish-speaking entrepreneurs through BizLaunch en Español.
- Hosted Virginia’s Scaling4Growth program to assist small, women-owned, and minority-owned businesses (SWaM) learn to scale their revenue, job creation and management style.
- Produced targeted programming, technical assistance and translated materials for businesses located on Columbia Pike with the Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization.
- Joined hundreds of female entrepreneurs for “She’s Next,” a program designed to educate women on ways to fund, run and grow a business.

COVID-19 Small Business Assistance

From day one of the coronavirus shutdowns, BizLaunch offered online resources, ranging from webinars on how to telework and set up online operations to helping navigate federal loan assistance. The team was also instrumental in offering tutorial webinars and information sessions with the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, Northern Virginia Black Chamber of Commerce, Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization, Arlington’s BIDs and more.



Shuttle service **FLARE** volunteered to bring food to first responders during the pandemic shutdowns in partnership with the Columbia Pike Revitalization Organization.



GRANT recipient **Compass Coffee**, with two Arlington locations, was able to pivot operations and keep staff employed by making hand sanitizer.

Increased Flexibility for Retail

COVID-19 has had a profound effect on retail operations across the globe. In Arlington our focus has been to provide increased regulatory flexibility so our retail establishments can pivot to new operating models.

When the Governor’s Executive Orders in mid- to late-March eliminated in-person dining for restaurants, Arlington County quickly initiated an online request service for pickup/drop-off (PUDO) zones for takeout or delivery services, free of charge. Arlington stood up an interdepartmental team to assist its restaurants to ease parking restrictions, increase signage opportunities and create special temporary outdoor seating areas (TOSAs) to increase outdoor restaurant seating areas in an era of physical distancing.



Newly created Temporary Outdoor Seating Area (TOSA)

Flexibility Measures for Restaurants

Pickup/Drop-off Zones	198
Temporary Outdoor Seating Area Applications	106
Total Number of Tables Approved	1,140
Total Number of Seats Approved	3,869

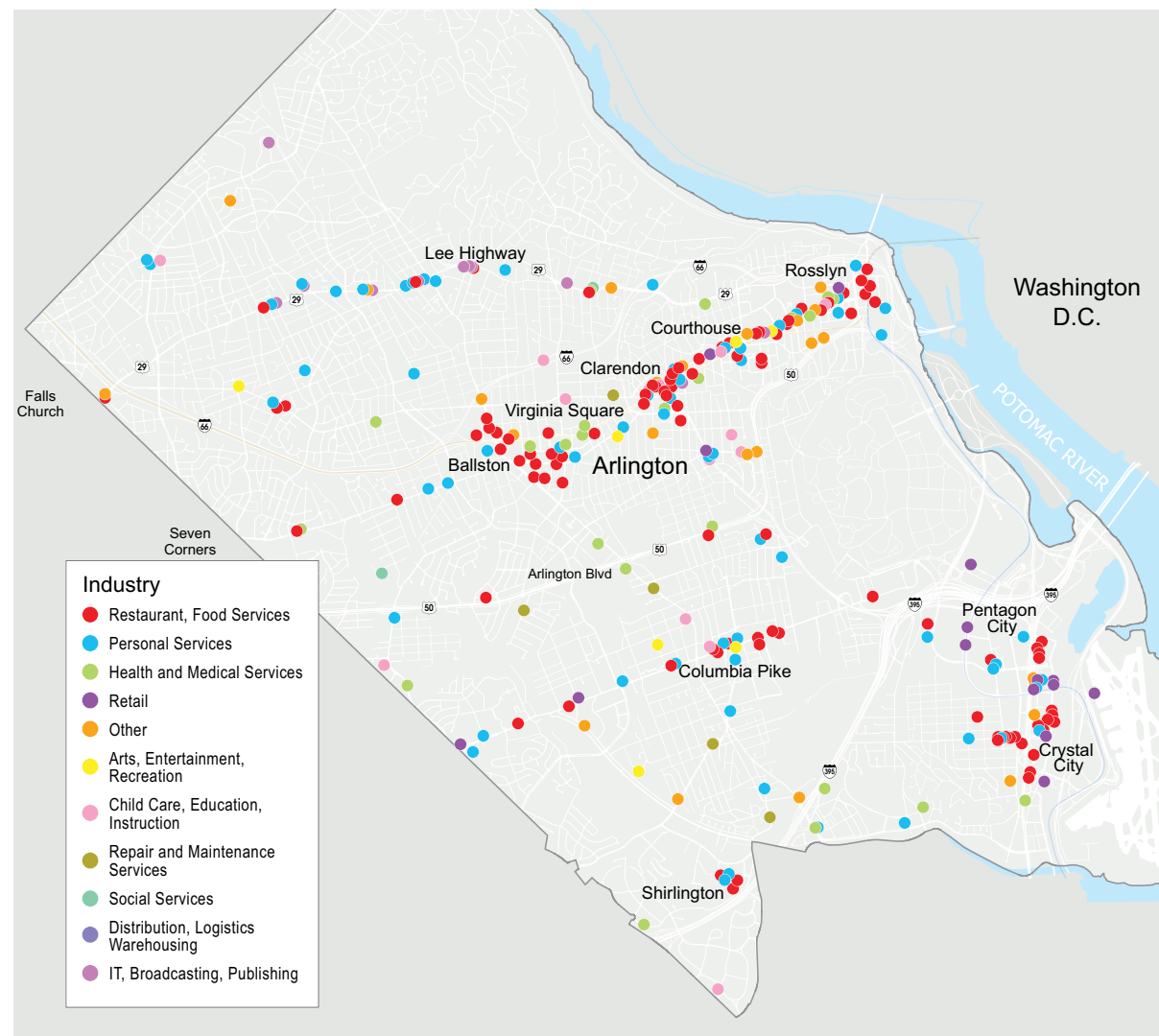
Source: Arlington County Department of Community Planning, Housing and Development, Aug. 2020

Small Business Emergency GRANT

Even more than resources, Arlington businesses needed financial help. Working with the Arlington County Board, AED requested to divert existing funding from the Gazelle Grant program to create the Small Business Emergency GRANT (*Giving Resiliency Assets Near Term*) program, which provided up to \$10,000 of emergency assistance to Arlington's small

businesses. With sub-sequent funding from the CAREs Act, and partnerships with the Industrial Development Authority and the local BIDs, the GRANT fund increased to \$2.8 million. GRANT funding was awarded to nearly 400 Arlington businesses located throughout the County and concentrated along the major commercial corridors.

Location and Industry of GRANT Awards



Source: Arlington Economic Development



“Arlington is a vibrant community that celebrates diversity and encourages small businesses in so many ways. Arlington’s commitment to its community has always been constant. It has been a source of pride for Dama to be part of Arlington, Virginia.”

— Amsale Saife,
Co-owner, Dama Ethiopian Restaurant, Pastry & Cafe

About BizLaunch

BizLaunch is Arlington’s small business and entrepreneurial assistance network. It offers a one-stop-shop for those looking to start or grow a business in Arlington, from taxes and permitting to financing, business plans and more.

For more information:

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United States Air Force Memorial

“The pandemic has taken a heavy toll on Arlington’s hospitality businesses, but our fundamentals are solid and in time we will prevail.”

— Emily Cassell,
Director, Arlington Convention and Visitors Service

Travel and Tourism

Record Performance Through February

FY 2020 was on track to be one of Arlington’s best years ever. From July 2019 through February 2020, Arlington’s hotel performance was very strong, with Average Daily Rate (ADR) and Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR) for most months reaching record highs compared to all prior years. Group room night leads and room nights booked were on track to reach their highest historic levels. Digital marketing provided Arlington Convention & Visitors Service’s (ACVS) best-ever results for hotel bookings and revenue.



The summer-fall 2019 “Arlington is for Fitness Lovers” campaign, funded through a Virginia Tourism Corporation grant, garnered national attention. With the help of 220 fitness ambassadors, the marketing campaign reached over 65,000 people across social and digital channels.





COVID-19 Catastrophic Declines

The impact of the coronavirus pandemic on worldwide travel and tourism was both sudden and dramatic. Arlington's hotel occupancy and revenue dropped precipitously, reaching the lowest levels (both down around 90%) at the end of March. Throughout it all, the hospitality industry demonstrated its resilience and flexibility, becoming a resource of support during the most critical times. The ACVS team helped facilitate connections for employment opportunities for furloughed hotel staff in the medical arena as well as hotels that became a critical part of the COVID-19 response.

Moving Forward, Ensuring Guest Confidence in Uncertain Times

Informing visitors about local health and safety practices has become a top priority for ACVS. National research points to the five-hour leisure drive market and visiting friends and relatives market as the first to potentially return, so ACVS quickly directed resources to a summer-fall campaign, The Insider's Guide to Our Outside. Anchored by Washington Post editorial and digital promotion through the Post and Trip Advisor, the campaign launched in June and is already seeing results.

New Technology to Market Meeting and Convention Opportunities Digitally

ACVS is conducting all meeting and group sales activities virtually, continuing to enhance resources that will help planners book in 2020 and beyond. We have partnered with Threshold 360 to offer free 360-degree video capture sessions for Arlington hotels and meeting venues. These online tours will help meeting planners and attendees experience Arlington from afar, as well as to see firsthand safety measures in place for their future stays.

Looking Ahead

Arlington's hospitality community is strong; it has collectively weathered storms before and is already looking ahead to what's next as the community, region and nation look towards a new normal of travel. We've heard from national and international partners that both leisure and meetings travelers are eager to hit the road again as soon as it's safe to do so. We'll be ready to welcome them to Arlington



About Arlington Convention & Visitors Service

Arlington County's official destination marketing organization, ACVS promotes Arlington to travelers and meeting professionals through marketing, sales and visitor services while serving local hospitality partners and supporting an exceptional visitor experience.

For more information:

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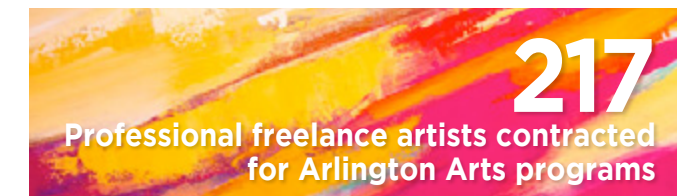
“We bring art to where people are – to parks, farmers markets, and this year, into homes.”

— Michelle Isabelle-Stark,
Director, Arlington Cultural Affairs

Arlington's 2019 Rosslyn Jazz Fest
drew record crowds

Arts and Culture

FY 2020 Cultural Affairs Stats



A Robust Beginning

The 2020 fiscal year started with a full lineup of programs. Anchor performance events, like the Rosslyn Jazz Festival (2019) and the summer 2019 Lubber Run series, were some of the most exciting to hit the stage in the County. The annual Arts Grants program supported 21 organizations and two individual artists in FY 2020 with a total funding amount of \$205,810. Additionally, the Arlington Art Truck began its third season “on the road” with more than 20 activations that reached a total of 4,000 arts enthusiasts of all ages.



The Arlington Art Truck marked its third season bringing art to the community with more than 20 activations.

Pivoting to New Formats to Deliver Programs

COVID-19 has had a profound effect on arts programming and artists, who were forced to reimagine performances and exhibits to align with current public health restrictions. While not the easy or the desirable path, our resilient arts community, partners and staff delivered programming to help the community cope and find a bit of joy and whimsy during this difficult time.

From CostumeLab to mask-making lab:

Sewing resources from the Arlington's dormant CostumeLab were transformed by staff and over 100 volunteer makers who produced more than 3,500 fabric face coverings for County health and social services departments and nonprofits.



By repurposing sewing machines, fabric and other equipment from the CostumeLab, the masks are not only useful, but striking in bold patterns, and luxuriant textures.



Courage, by David Amaroso

Turning digital words into art:

The Words to Art program invited people to submit words that expressed how they were feeling during the pandemic via social media channels. Five Arlington-based visual artists then selected a word to transform into an art piece, shared online.

Delivering concerts to cars and homes:

Through a partnership with local radio station WERA 96.7 FM, popular Lubber Run Concert Series and the Columbia Pike Blues Festival were broadcast on the radio and streamed online.

National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) Funded Program to Reach Underserved Residents

Arlington Cultural Affairs was the recipient of a \$35,000 grant from NEA. The grant will be used to support a multi-cultural artist residency project serving the Columbia Hills and Columbia Grove affordable housing communities in the County. With its partner for this project, Arlington Partnership for Affordable Housing (APAH), the County will select an artist through a curated process to develop participatory arts activities for diverse resident populations, including Arabic, Amharic, Spanish, and English speakers. Activities will culminate in the creation of community-generated public art.



Creative Economy

Creative industries serve as a bridge between the arts and economic development and encourage additional invention and innovation. Arlington's Creative Economy program fosters that connection, offering workshops and events that contribute to small business growth and create unique networking opportunities.

Highlights for the year include:

- 75 Made in Arlington vendors
- 7 Made in Arlington pop-up markets
- 4 Return on Creativity workshops



Hand-crafted chocolates from Artisan Confections





“A key component of placemaking is the creation of a robust public environment with diverse amenities, high quality streetscapes, vibrant public spaces and noteworthy public art. Public art adds enormous value to the cultural, aesthetic and economic vitality of a community by contributing to neighborhood identity, fostering pride, and enhancing the quality of life for its residents and visitors.”

— Andrew VanHorn, JBG Smith

New public art piece *Luminous Bodies*, by Cliff Garten, Esplanade Bridge over I-66, Rosslyn featuring blue lighting to honor COVID-19 first responders

Photo by Elman Studio



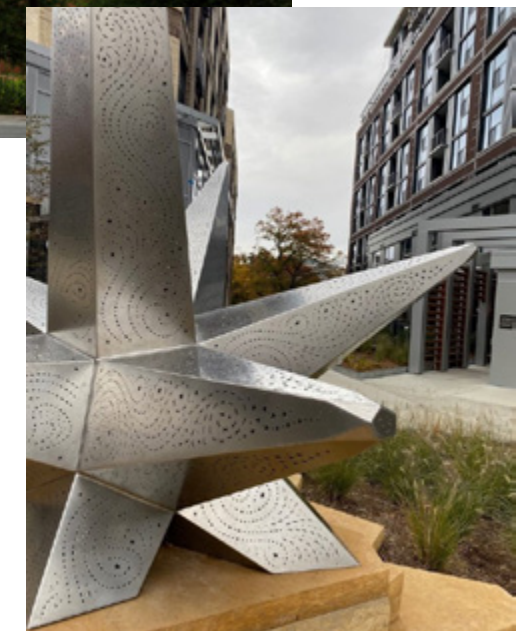
Foon Sham
Ridge, 2019
Oakland Park, Virginia Square
Photo by Elman Studio

A Big Year for Public Art

Arlington is home to more than 70 permanent public art projects. In FY 2020, six new permanent pieces were completed — two public, *Luminous Bodies* (Rosslyn) and *Ridge* (Ballston), and four developer-initiated in commercial projects. Amazon committed \$2 million in public investments as part of the development conditions for phase 1 of HQ2. Working with developers and statewide agencies, as well as County Planning and Transportation staff, Arlington Cultural Affairs is working with the National Landing BID and community members to develop and steward a vision for destination-worthy public art through a comprehensive destination approach for the overall development of the neighborhood.

About Arlington Cultural Affairs

Arlington Cultural Affairs creates an environment that encourages innovation and excellence within the Arlington arts community and provides programs and services that build community and transform lives by enhancing enjoyment and participation in the arts.



Joe O'Connell and Creative Machines
Rising Star, 2019
Gables Pointe 14, Rosslyn

For more information:

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A photograph of an airplane flying over a city skyline. The airplane is white with red and blue stripes on the tail. The city skyline features several tall buildings, including a prominent one with a circular top. The foreground shows a large, modern building with a curved roof. A purple diagonal overlay covers the left side of the image, containing text.

Looking Ahead

The coronavirus pandemic has changed our community — and the world — in ways none of us could have imagined. But Arlington is no stranger to “unprecedented times.” We’ve experienced it before. Arlington has faced challenges after 9/11 as well as after BRAC and sequestration. Every time, the community has come together and demonstrated its strength and resilience. In what should be no surprise, we’re seeing that strength and resilience again now. Arlington is a community of innovators and strategic thinkers who excel at being nimble in the face of adversity. Certain practices may change a bit as a result of this pandemic, but the drive of Arlington’s business community isn’t changing. In fact, that drive is stronger than ever, and it’s going to lead Arlington into new and exciting ventures in the coming year.

AED would like to thank our Partnerships and BIDs, the Economic Development Commission, the Arts Commission, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce and our Arlington County counterparts for your support. Stay informed, learn more about AED and [subscribe to our newsletters](#).