

CIP FY 2001 - 2006

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May 20, 2000

Barbara A. Favola, Chairman
and Members, Arlington County Board
2100 Clarendon Boulevard, Suite 300
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Chairman Favola and County Board Members:

Arlington County's Capital Improvement Program (CIP) Budget is a planning tool which provides funding guidelines for the future infrastructure needs of our community. It is designed to be used in conjunction with the County and School's operating budgets to serve our citizens most effectively and be responsible and responsive stewards of the public trust.

Over the course of the next six years, I recommend funding to implement the County government's proposed FY 2001-2006 CIP at a total of \$400.9 million. This represents an increase of \$24.3 million over the previous County government portion of the CIP. The School Board's funding request for FY 2001-2006 is \$162.2 million, an increase of nearly \$32.5 million from the FY 2000-2005 CIP. By far, one of the largest portions of the FY 2001-2006 CIP is expenditures that would be provided to our public school system.

On January 1, 2000, the County Board met to reaffirm its priorities and

guiding principles adopted in 1998. The FY 2001-2006 CIP has been developed in concert with these goals to:

- *Maintain Top Quality Schools*
- *Foster Economic and Fiscal Sustainability*
- *Cultivate a High Sense of Public Safety*
- *Preserve and Enhance the Quality of Neighborhood Life*
- *Promote a Healthy Community by fostering connections among our diverse citizenry*

County Government CIP Highlights

Major program categories proposed for funding include \$58.5 million for local parks and recreation, \$123.2 million for transportation needs, just over \$5.5 million for storm drainage throughout the County, 44.8 million for

community conservation in our neighborhoods, \$1.6 million for economic development, \$43.1 million for improvement and development of our government facilities, \$41.6 for support of our valuable regional agencies, and just over \$82.6 million towards utility improvements.

Maintain Top Quality Schools

Projects included in the Arlington Public Schools' request include providing additional classroom space, improving building safety, renovating and replacing major building systems or components and funding three multi-use projects with the County government. The entirety of the School Board's proposals with detailed plans is printed as a chapter at the conclusion of this document.

The School Board's funding request for the FY 2001-2006 CIP is \$162.2 million, a \$32.5 million increase from the Schools' CIP approved last year by the County Board.

Foster Economic and Fiscal Sustainability

In our regional programs, Arlington County has reaped the benefits of our partnership with the Northern Virginia Regional Transportation Commission by working with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to build and enhance Metro stops on our critical Metro corridors. Arlington County's Metro contribution encompasses 72 percent of the regional agency portion of the CIP, as WMATA's work is critical to our economic development success. The Arlington County contribution to Metro is proposed to decrease by \$12 million in the FY 2001-2006 CIP, due to state approved bonds for Metro funding, which decrease the need for the County to issue bonds. In addition, funding for the transit needs of Columbia Pike is expected to be identified in order to implement the transit recommendations made as part of the Columbia Pike Initiative in the County's general fund budget.

Also, \$1.6 million has been identified to support downtown development strategies and commercial revitalization in the next six years. Adequate utility undergrounding is critical to effective functioning of businesses within our County. To enhance our economic development opportunities, we propose investing \$18.6 million in utility undergrounding, an increase of \$12.7 million over the last CIP. These improvements will benefit the County and its citizens for many years to come.

Additionally, \$5.0 million is proposed in Fiscal Year 2001 bonds to support Arlington County's partnership with George Mason University (GMU) to fund Phases 2 and 3 of the construction of campus facilities in conformance with the GMU site plan. Enhanced facilities at GMU will help increase business and employment opportunities for the County and improve its attractiveness to outside markets.

Funding is proposed for the purchase of hardware and software to meet the growing technology infrastructure needs of the County. Numerous system upgrades and enhancements are recommended to better support County government operations and maintain the high level of service our citizens have come to rely upon. Funding is included in this CIP for both the physical hardware and software applications, which comprise the informational infrastructure of the County. The investment plan to meet the current and future technology needs of the county is under development and will build on the Y2K emergency investments. Ultimately, the plan will lay the foundation for a comprehensive technology upgrade and replacement based on industry standards and best practices, while being flexible to rapid changes in technology. Specifically, plans will be developed to increase bandwidth for Internet traffic, to continue to implement the County's institutional network (I-net), and to ensure adequate speed and capacity of desktop equipment, scanning and electronic filing, and wireless technologies. Additionally, the County will work towards a fully realized e-government by increasing the ability of residents and businesses to conduct County business over the Internet.

Cultivate a High Sense of Public Safety

Police representatives of the Community Based-Problem Oriented Policing Teams (CB-POP) teams are now involved as partners in the design of proposed public facilities in their neighborhoods.

The proliferation of cellular telephones has resulted in increased use of our emergency 911 system. Therefore, replacing the outdated County analog radio system with digital equipment will be critical in future years. Planning funds are proposed in this CIP for FY 2001.

This proposed CIP includes \$9.5 million in funding for the relocation and renovation of four fire stations, located throughout the County in conformance with the recommendations put forth by the Tri-Data study. The stations are proposed to be located in Aurora Hills, Rosslyn, Lee Highway and Clarendon.

Preserve and Enhance the Quality of Neighborhood Life

In addition, \$12.3 million has been identified for the Neighborhood Conservation project through Fiscal Year 2006 to be used for capital improvements in neighborhoods. As in previous years, funds will be used for citizen initiated projects recommended by the Neighborhood Conservation Advisory Committee.

In FY 2001-2006, \$2.4 million in bond financing is recommended through the Block Improvement Program to assist citizens with construction of neighborhood improvements along public streets. In addition, \$1.2 million is also recommended for the Apartment Conservation program to upgrade public facilities adjacent to affordable housing apartment buildings.

Also of note is the Business Conservation program, designed to increase the economic viability of older commercial areas of Arlington County. Furthermore, \$3.67 million in bond funds are recommended to support this valuable program between FY 2001 and FY 2006.

The County will devote over \$15 million to improved street paving. Also, \$9.2 million will be used to make our streets safer for pedestrian traffic along with \$3.6 million for the installation and maintenance of more

effective traffic and pedestrian signals. Neighborhood Traffic Calming, a major priority of the County Board and our citizens, will receive \$8.2 million in this CIP, an increase of just over \$2 million over FY 2000-2005 CIP levels.

Promote a Healthy Community

Several continuing projects are proposed through the Arlington Public Schools for funding in the FY 2001-2006 CIP, including the Langston Brown recreational and educational facility, which is a joint multi-use property to be designed in conjunction with Arlington County to maximize community benefit. The Schools have proposed \$4.7 million for the Langston Brown project, and the County's contribution to this project is \$4.6 million. Funding for other multi-use projects includes \$5.2 million for the Walter Reed project, \$2 million for the second phase of the Gunston development and \$2.75 million for the Aurora Hills complex. The CIP also includes \$22.8 million to be used for additional park land and facilities acquisition.

The proposed CIP contains just under \$20 million for development of future recreational centers in the County, an increase of over \$8 million, which illustrates the County government's commitment to preserving the Arlington quality of life. Additionally, we have proposed over \$6 million be put towards the continued operation of the brand-new Barcroft Sports Complex and Barcroft Park.

A Plan for the Future

As in prior years, the FY 2001-2006 CIP will utilize a wide variety of funding sources to implement its objectives. Of the total \$563.1 million recommended for funding of capital projects, \$328.2 million, or 58.3 percent, would be proposed to be funded with bonds and the remaining \$234.9 million, or 41.7 percent, from Pay-As-You-Go appropriations and outside revenues (such as state highway aid or developer contributions) and utility hook-up fees. Using bond financing enables the County to borrow at long-term, tax-exempt nominal rates ranging from 4 to 6 percent while spreading the development costs of many new facilities over a period of years. Future tax revenues are used to support the bonds. The County is able to align the repayment period with the projected useful life of the

facilities, also known as financing capital needs through a “Pay-As-You-Go” system.

The goal of this CIP is to preserve the high quality of daily life in Arlington County for many years to come. As in the adopted FY 2001 budget, the increase in funding in the County government portion of the CIP reflects the importance of increasing Pay-As-You-Go funding in good economic times, which will help the budget structure should the economic cycle turn negative.

As in the previous two years, we are in a solid economic position. Unemployment is the lowest that it has ever been in our region and, we have proudly maintained our AAA/Aaa bond rating, a distinction we share with only 23 other counties in the nation. We must continue to build a budget and CIP every year that enables us to preserve that highly coveted recognition.

We look forward to discussing the CIP in detail during the County Board Public Hearing to consider the adoption of the FY 2001-2006 CIP currently scheduled for June 24. The CIP will also be available on-line on the Arlington County homepage at www.co.arlington.va.us.

Respectfully submitted,

William T. Donahue
County Manager