

# Arlington County PUBLIC ART PROGRAM



# PUBLIC ART MASTER PLAN UPDATE

## **PUBLIC ART IS . . .**

The intentional involvement of artists in places and spaces where sufficient resources (time, energy and money) are allocated and the community is engaged.

# BACKGROUND

## SEPTEMBER 2000

Arlington County Board adopts a Public Art Policy

## DECEMBER 2004

Arlington County Board approves the County's first Public Art Master Plan

## MARCH 2005

Arlington Commission for the Arts recommends first set of County-initiated Guidelines to County Manager

## NOVEMBER 2011

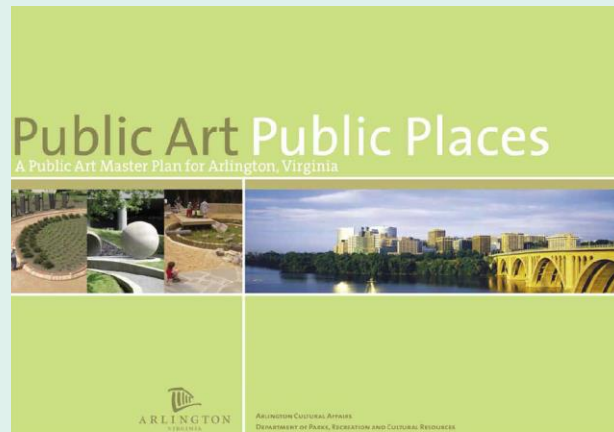
Arlington Public Art program moves from Department of Parks and Recreation to Economic Development

## 2021

Expected Arlington County Board hearing for Public Art Master Plan Update

# BACKGROUND

- Adopted in 2004 as a sub-element of the Comprehensive Plan, supportive to Public Spaces Master Plan, like Forestry and Natural Resources plan.
- Outlines strategy for how public art will improve the quality of public spaces and the built environment.
- Directs that public art should be sited in “prominent locations” and integrated at the earliest design stage.
- Recommends developer contributions be pooled in different areas of the County and used to leverage County and grant funds.



# EVOLVING CONTEXT

*Current Plan is 17 years old. Update will reflect changes since 2004:*

- Cultural Affairs/Public Art program move to AED
- Growth of Public Art Collection
- Establishment of three Business Improvement Districts
- BRAC & recruitment of new industries to Arlington
- Amazon HQ2
- Establishment of Arlington Initiative to Rethink Energy
- Creation of CPHD Urban Design Section
- Interest in temporary public art / creative placemaking / civic engagement

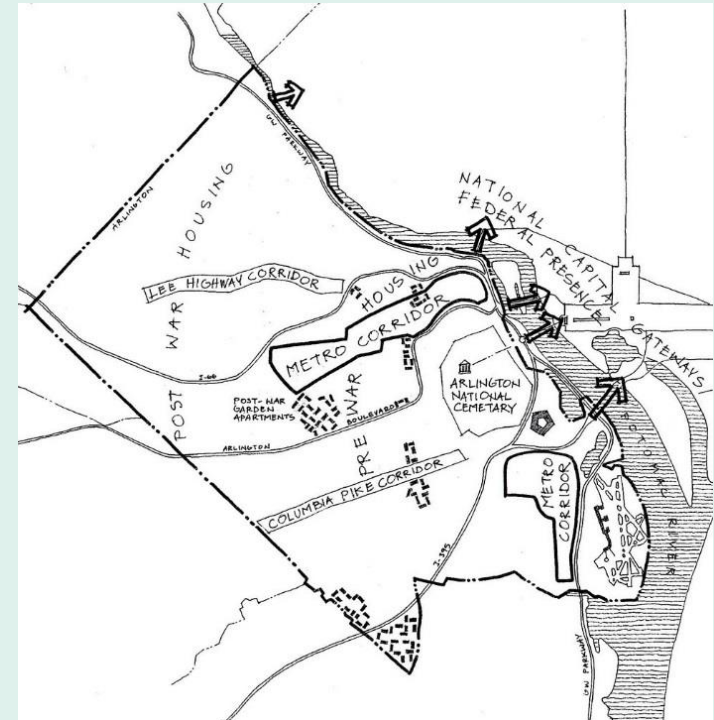
# EVOLVING CONTEXT

## *Planning Processes completed since 2004:*

- Envision Courthouse
- Realize Rosslyn
- Crystal City Sector Plan
- Clarendon Sector Plan
- Historic Preservation Master Plan
- Columbia Pike Form Based Code updates
- Arts & Culture Strategic Plan
- 4 Mile Run Valley
- Public Spaces Master Plan (POPS) update

## *Concurrent Planning Processes:*

- Plan Lee Highway
- Forestry and Natural Resources Plans update



# WHAT THE UPDATE ACCOMPLISHES

- Confirms the vision for public art in Arlington:  
*Arlington's public realm will be distinctive and engaging because it has embraced artistic thinking and excellence in the imagination, design and activation of public spaces and facilities.*
- Validates the values and guiding principles for public art in Arlington.
- Aligns public art activities (focus areas and thematic priorities) with Arlington's Comprehensive Plan.
- Anticipates new opportunities related to public realm and public space planning.
- Imagines how new approaches to public art can engage the community in civic engagement and visioning.



# RESEARCH & ENGAGEMENT

- Benchmarking peer programs in the region.
- Assessment of the Public Art Program’s projects before and after the 2004 master plan was approved.
- Review of County planning initiatives completed since 2004 or underway.
- Review of private development patterns and projections.
- Internal stakeholder group representing: APS; DES Facility Design & Construction; DES Transportation; DES AIRE; CPHD Current Planning; CPHD Community Planning; CPHD Comprehensive Planning; CPHD Urban Design; CPHD Historic Preservation; Libraries; DPR Planning & Development; AED Real Estate Development Group/BIDS; AED Creative Economy/Partnerships; CMO Communications.

## QUESTIONNAIRE: What people say:

We asked people what they thought about public art in Arlington, and 495 people responded.

**Arlington's Most Memorable Artworks**

**Why Public Art in Arlington?**

What GOALS for public art would be most appropriate for Arlington?

Goal	Ranked on a scale of zero to five
Public art has a value in itself.	4.5
Public art is a strategic community resource.	4.0
Public art supports economic development and sustainability.	3.5

**What VALUES underscore the importance of public art for Arlington?**

Value	Ranked on a scale of zero to five
Create an engaging, memorable and visible community.	4.5
Enhance Arlington's image locally, regionally and nationally.	4.0
Promote learning, discovery and creativity for everyone in Arlington.	3.5
Foster a sense of sense of civic purpose and sustainability.	3.0
Support Arlington's efforts to build a diverse, dynamic and resilient economy.	2.5

**The Headlines**

- Respondents overwhelmingly conveyed a positive impression of Arlington, describing it as diverse, vibrant, walkable, green, historical.
- Walkable centers, especially along transit lines, best express what Arlington's all about, respondents said. The Rosslyn-Ballston Corridor, especially Clarendon, were mentioned most frequently.
- Arlington's community parks and national monuments also are important to conveying its identity, according to respondents.
- The artworks that respondents were most familiar with are generally along and visible from major vehicular corridors, particularly at gateways.
- A wider range of artworks were memorable to respondents. They are in a wider variety of locations – not only major transportation corridors, but also busy public spaces and facilities that accessible at the pedestrian scale.
- The most memorable artworks are ones that respondents see on their daily journeys. Other factors include color, aesthetics/quality, prominence of location, the relationship between artwork and site, a dynamic relationship to light or wind, and use or quality of light.
- There is a desire for more artworks in places people gather, such as urban corridors and community facilities.
- There is a desire for public art to have more of a local feel, to reflect more of the County's creative spirit, also for art that is surprising and whimsical.
- There is a desire for public art that is well conceived in relation to its site, and executed at a high level of quality, as an antidote to what is considered by some to be bland architecture in new development.

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# RESEARCH & ENGAGEMENT

- External stakeholder group led by the Public Art Committee.
- Interviews with internal and external stakeholders.
- A public questionnaire (online from April – June 2017 with 495 responses).
- Participation in the PSMP Open Houses.
- Presentations to Commissions and other groups: HALRB, C2E2, Transportation, Arts Commission, NAIOP, PRC, LRPC, EDC, Chamber, BIDs and Partnerships.
- Board Briefings
- Artist-led community engagement activities throughout the County:
  - HOME @Arlington Bookmaking Project with Sushmita Mazumdar held in 13 locations from July – October 2017
  - County Wandering Walking Tours with Graham Coreil-Allen held in Rosslyn, Courthouse, Columbia Pike and Lee Highway



# KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

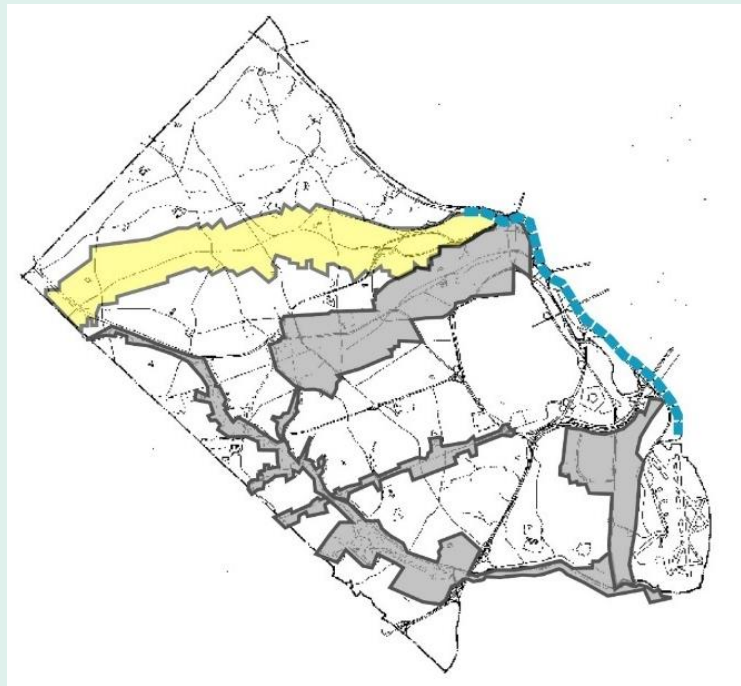
- Consider public art opportunities at the earliest planning stages of County facility and infrastructure projects.
- Develop guidelines for PFRC consideration of public art.
- Add Lee Highway and Potomac Riverfront as focus areas and Sustainability and Innovation as new themes.



*Wave Arbor* by Doug Hollis  
Long Bridge Park Capital Project

# KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- Initiate a major periodic temporary public art exhibition.
- Heighten focus on maintaining & activating the public art collection.
- Undertake of support creative placemaking projects.



Lee Highway Corridor and Potomac Riverfront added as two new focus areas

# TIMELINE AND NEXT STEPS

- January – June 2017: Establishment of internal and external working groups, background research, stakeholder engagement
- February – October 2017: Public engagement activities  
*HOME @Arlington* bookmaking with Sushmita Mazumdar and *County Wanderings* with Graham Coreil-Allen, public meetings with PSMP
- Fall 2017 – Winter 2018: Recommendations  
Locations, themes, project types and implementation  
Internal Working Group, CMO, Public Art Committee, Commissions
- January 2018 – October 2020: Draft plan in progress  
Internal Working Group, CMO
- February 2021: Public Art Committee review
- Winter/Spring 2021: Public comment / Commission reviews
- 2021: Request to Advertise (tentative)
- 2021: County Board adoption (tentative)

