

C H I L D R E N ' S H E A L T H (1 9 9 8)

The League of Women Voters of Arlington supports:

1. The use of federal and state funds to ensure a primary health provider ("medical home") for underinsured or uninsured children.
2. Public/private partnerships and other innovative programs for the delivery of health care to at-risk children. .

C I T I Z E N A D V I S O R Y G R O U P S (1 9 9 7)

The League of Women Voters of Arlington strongly supports the use of Citizen Advisory Groups by the County Board. To make the groups as effective as possible, the League supports:

1. Appointing members to groups only after appointees have been advised by their group chair of their responsibilities and have acknowledged an understanding of the role they are undertaking.
2. Involving the County Board more directly in the orientation of group members.
3. Developing and maintaining a handbook for orientation of group members.
4. Consolidating and making consistent the policy documents concerning groups.
5. Making the annual meeting of the group chairs with the County Board an opportunity not only for dialogue with the board but also for learning from each other.
6. Ensuring that the role of the staff coordinators is clearly understood.
7. Appointing staff and/or a volunteer entity to act as a facilitator of the groups to encourage their coordination and interaction.
8. Evaluating all groups periodically to ensure that they are meeting the needs of the County Board.
9. Implementing a plan for a continuing media campaign to bring the existence and work of the groups to the attention of the general public.
10. Ensuring appropriate County Board recognition of members of groups for their services. Specific recommendations for achieving these goals are contained in the League's report, *Effectiveness of Arlington County Citizen Advisory Groups*, February 1997.

D O M E S T I C V I O L E N C E (1 9 8 1)

The League of Women Voters of Arlington supports:

1. Provision by Arlington County of a comprehensive domestic violence assistance and prevention program including shelter, counseling, referral, and community education.
2. The use of the Department of Human Services by Arlington County public agencies dealing with spouse abuse in order to provide effective and efficient use of existing services.
3. Adequate services in Arlington County for the protection of children reported to be neglected and/or abused. (1968)

H O M E L E S S N E S S (1 9 9 0 a n d 2 0 0 7)

The League of Women Voters of Arlington supports:

1. An Arlington County goal of providing temporary shelter for everyone in need. Cooperation with other jurisdictions in the region is recommended. Programs for homelessness prevention, transitional housing, housing for physically and mentally disabled, and substance abuse treatment should be priorities for County funding.
2. County funding of a program to avert homelessness by keeping people in their present housing while receiving homelessness prevention services; amendment of the zoning ordinance to allow rooming and boarding houses by use permit.
3. Expansion of the total number of emergency shelter beds on the model of the existing shelters; establishment and expansion of transitional housing programs. Amendment of county zoning regulations to allow single room occupancies.
4. Provision of adequate substance abuse treatment and detoxification programs; the minimization of waiting time for admission to treatment.
5. Establishment of a citizens advisory committee on homelessness. .

H O U S I N G (1 9 9 9)

The League of Women Voters of Arlington supports:

Funding -- Development and continued support by the County of sources of funding and financing for low-cost housing, such as: a fund dedicated to affordable housing of at least \$2 million annually; expanded use of the Industrial Development Authority as a housing finance source; and the seeking of state funds.

Housing for Whom –

1. Efforts in Arlington to retain and expand affordable housing being geared primarily towards those with incomes 50 percent or below the median income.
2. Expansion by the County of methods and programs to protect elderly residents with limited resources from displacement.
3. Increased emphasis by the County on programs to enable low- and moderate-income households to purchase homes, to include expanded marketing of existing programs and increased use of innovative financing.
4. Priority for home ownership assistance being given to first time low- and moderate-income buyers.
5. The development by the County of additional low-cost rental housing for the mentally and physically disabled.

Housing Where/The Impact of Housing –

1. The County offering benefits such as increased density and other incentives to for-profit developers who provide affordable housing on the site of their development. Such incentives should be proportional to the number of affordable units on site and the length of the commitment to providing affordable housing.
2. Funding to make improvements to the general neighborhood atmosphere of areas with large concentrations of "market affordable" housing. The League supports the use of increased bond funding and expanded use of other resources (such as the Apartment Conservation Fund, Neighborhood Conservation Fund and other sources) to make improvements such as curbs, sidewalks, parks, etc. to those neighborhoods.
3. The allocation of County resources, such as the Affordable Housing Investment Fund, exclusively to

nonprofit groups or nonprofit/for-profit partnerships that specialize in developing housing for low- and moderate-income households. Nonprofit groups or nonprofit/for-profit partnerships that receive County resources should agree to maintain the housing at affordable levels for the longest term possible and/or in proportion to the amount of public funding provided.

4. Programs by the County giving high priority, for the purchase of County-owned land by nonprofit groups that specialize in developing housing for low- and moderate-income households.

Preservation of Existing/Decent Housing –

1. The County providing funding (grants or low-interest loans) to owners of multi-unit "market affordable" housing for exterior and interior upgrades and safety enhancements. The County should consider partial or complete property tax abatement for owners who make significant improvements to "market affordable" housing. Users of such programs should be required to maintain a certain number of affordable units in proportion to the funding provided.

2. The County placing more emphasis on and allocating more resources to code enforcement as a tool to ensure that housing is safe and decent for all residents.

3. In order to preserve existing market rate affordable housing, the League supports the County being more pro-active in identifying "at-risk" affordable housing resources and working collaboratively with owners, developers, residents and neighbors to achieve an appropriate solution. The County should provide a safety net (such as a larger tenant assistance fund or expansion of the housing grants program) for low-income renters who might be displaced by redevelopment of older properties or code enforcement.

P L A N N I N G , L A N D U S E A N D E C O N O M I C D E V E L O P M E N T

The League of Women Voters of Arlington supports:

Land Use --

1. Maintaining the predominantly residential character of Arlington County, limiting intense development to specific areas, and confining high density zoning to Metro corridors. (1967 and 1982)

2. Mixed use development in Metro corridors. In order to achieve this goal, specific guidelines should be established which would encourage desired redevelopment and require less time in the process.

3. Including low- and moderate-income housing in the Metro corridors as well as in other parts of the County.

4. Strong retail centers in Arlington County and therefore would support the County policy of providing infrastructure such as water, streets, etc. If further incentives are needed, the League of Women Voters of Arlington is in favor of using public funds to help provide public parking facilities. The County should expect to recover its contribution to a project such as a parking garage. (1982)

5. The acquisition of open space for parks and recreation. (1971) 6. The Neighborhood Conservation Program. (1971)

Planning Process --

1. Short- and long-range planning in Arlington with regular evaluation of the long-range plan; a cost benefit study of land use; provision for adequate utilities and community services in original site plans.

There should be community participation at all phases of long-range planning. (1971)

2. Written urban design standards for areas designated for redevelopment. Special attention should be given to cohesiveness, aesthetic appeal and themes, taking into consideration the idea that different areas have different needs, such as lively viable people places, open spaces, provision for green space, pedestrian passageways, adequate lighting for security. (1983)

3. Adequate opportunity for public review of proposed redevelopment plans and for proposed design standards. (1971)

Economic Development --

Economic development in Arlington provided such development is not in conflict with the principles of land use planning as stated in our positions above. (1998) .

P R E S C H O O L E D U C A T I O N (1 9 8 8)

The League of Women Voters of Arlington supports:

1. Public preschool available free or at a nominal charge to all at-risk four-year olds. "At risk" includes nonnative English speakers plus children from homes with other factors which put the children at risk (drugs, abuse, stress, family structure).

2. Providing preschool for all four-year olds as space becomes available. Parents should pay for the service on a sliding scale based on the family's ability to pay. Families making 100 percent of the County's median income should be required to pay the full fee.

3. Providing transportation only for those at-risk four-year olds who would be excluded from preschool because of a lack of transportation. Arrangements would be made on a case-by-case basis.

4. Providing for at-risk four-year olds' participation in the existing Extended Day Program.

5. Expanding public preschools to other areas of the County, with attention paid to low-income and minority-dominated areas as well as Metro stops and other locations accessible to the working poor. The public preschools can be located in schools or other appropriate facilities.

6. Expanding public preschool beyond the Montessori model, using several pilot projects to test different early childhood education curricula. Teachers for such programs should have specific training and/or experience in meeting the particular needs of young children. .

P U B L I C L I B R A R Y S Y S T E M (1 9 8 5)

The League of Women Voters of Arlington supports:

1. Needed expansion and adequate maintenance of the physical facilities of the Arlington County Public Library System, accompanied by the hiring of adequate staff and the prompt filling of staff vacancies.

2. Improvements by the Arlington County Public Library System of its services to groups with special needs: making library facilities more accessible to the handicapped and providing materials and programs to those with limited English skills (for example, by hiring bilingual staff and providing outreach programs). Continuing assessment by the library of the needs of special groups in the community.

3. Training for staff and patrons to prepare for the effects of new technology in the Arlington County Public Library System. Trained staff should be available to train patrons in the use of new information technology.(2003)

R E C R E A T I O N (2 0 0 0)

The League of Women Voters of Arlington supports Resource Management -- The urbanization of Arlington has made issues of resource management an increasingly significant mission of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Community Resources (DPRCR). To meet these increasingly complex responsibilities, the League of Women Voters of Arlington supports:

1. The update and periodic review by DPRCR of its strategic plan to create a charter that is realistic about limitations and opportunities.
2. The creation and maintenance of an attendance/use records system that captures data needed to identify populations served by the department and clarify which programs have the most broad-based community support.
3. The assumption by DPRCR of additional responsibilities only if it is clear that a program will meet a defined, measurable need, has broad-based community support and if resources are first committed to the implementation of these responsibilities. Broad-based community support is considered involvement at the community base closest to the source of delivery of services.
4. The allocation of adequate funding/staff to the maintenance of natural and man-made resources, without undue reliance on the use of volunteers, as well as continuing exploration of further ways to forge public and private partnerships to acquire additional resources.
5. Exploration of the use of new technologies (e.g., "green buildings") and of new surface materials, such as AstroTurf, to address the concentrated use of athletic fields.

Meeting the Needs and Interests of All --

Given that fees cover the personnel and equipment expenses for programs for those who can pay, DPRCR funds a number of programs and services to meet the needs and interests of those who cannot pay, the League of Women Voters of Arlington supports:

1. An emphasis on information sharing and cooperation to build consensus across the county in order to generate funding for participation of residents who cannot afford to participate in Department programs.
2. Placing a high priority on concern for those residents most in need and locating services near them.
3. The policy of the Sports Division that gives priority to youth and residency.
4. Clarification of priorities in divisions (other than the Sports Division) among populations served: youth vs. adults, residents vs. nonresidents, for example.
5. The allocation of adequate funds for programs designed to meet the nontraditional needs of immigrants and refugees (such as ESL and homemaking classes).
6. Experimenting with new techniques to increase free enrollment and the use of the sliding fee schedule option for those who cannot afford to pay for fee-charging activities.

7. Looking for ways to bring classes that charge fees elsewhere to low-income neighborhoods where they are not offered.
8. Continuing the exploration of opening community center space to private groups or to the schools to provide day care for preschool children.
9. The continuance by the Cultural Affairs Division of reaching out to the community by providing programs to under-served areas with emphasis on programs for youth.

Community Building --

DPRCR's vitality reflects the energy and imagination of staff and residents who have initiated new programs that not only contribute to individual well being, but also contribute to Arlington's sense of community. The League of Women Voters of Arlington supports the initiation by DPRCR of serious public discussion of:

1. The community's and DPRCR's environmental role in maintaining and preserving the landscaping and park areas.
2. Transportation services that will make DPRCR sites and programs more accessible to all.
3. Ways to reduce friction among competing constituencies, challenging community advisory groups to assist in this process.
4. The possibility of constructing a performing arts center at Courthouse Plaza, as long as this item appears in the County's Capital Improvement Plan.
5. The need for and feasibility of constructing a modern community swimming facility.

S C H O O L S / E D U C A T I O N

The League of Women Voters of Arlington supports:

Curriculum --

Curriculum that is designed to include:

- programs that impart basic skills (reading, writing, and computation);
- programs in music and art, science, human relations, social studies, ESOL, special education and programs for the academically gifted;
- programs for early childhood education;
- options in type of school and programs for students, teachers and parents within existing school districts when possible;
- preparation for new programs through staff development and extensive communication between school and community, to be followed by adequate evaluation (1973); and
- career education as a part of all K-12 curriculum. (1996)
- Providing for differences in individual learning needs through separate alternative programs so long as they are not detrimental to the regular program. (1982)
- The continuation of alternative schools, the Exemplary School Projects and the Career Center. (1992)
- Thematically enriching the base curriculum in middle schools and high schools, and encouraging more school projects like those found in the Exemplary School Projects. (1992)

- Initiatives that keep school programs tuned to the technological developments that are changing the way we communicate, develop, receive and record information. Continuing effort should be made to keep the Career Center and all other one-of-a-kind facilities accessible to all. (1992)
- Funding of locally supported programs for the arts and athletics at a level that permits participation of all interested students. (1979)
- Increased emphasis on social studies in the curriculum including:
 - A social studies requirement in each grade beginning in kindergarten and continuing without interruption through grade 12.
 - A strong interdisciplinary and global approach that incorporates information on the controversies that have propelled world events. Materials such as myths, legends and biographies should be used to enrich understanding.
 - More emphasis given to geography beginning Grade 3.
 - World history required in at least two consecutive years in later grades.
 - Economics and geography should be integral parts of every social studies course. Time must be allotted in the school year for the study of the history and economic developments of the twentieth century.
 - Additional electives that could include Advanced Placement courses, regional studies (e.g., African, Asian, Latin American, European studies and history) and current events. (1990)
- 8. The inclusion of foreign language instruction at all levels: At the elementary level various types of programs should be available. At the middle and high school levels, language instruction should build on previous instruction. Adequate lab materials and instruction for various levels should be provided. Language choices should be broad at the high school level. (1987)
- 9. Adherence to Title IX regulations.(2003)

School Bond Issues--

A cost-benefit study prior to a bond decision to determine the desirability of new construction versus renovation and/or the feasibility of the project; early publication of notification of intent to present a bond issue; separate questions on the ballot for each school, unless the plan is an interdependent, integrated package. (1974)

Salaries --

Equal treatment for Arlington school and county employees in any salary adjustment that reflects cost of living factors. Strong consideration of salary increases based on merit. (1979)

School Consolidation --

The consideration of five components when making school consolidation decisions. Those components are:

1. Giving priority to educational considerations over financial considerations.
2. Two classrooms per grade in elementary schools as a prime educational consideration.
3. Full utilization of schools, not limited to three "Rs," space for laboratories and studios, and special education needs.
4. School plants in all areas of the county.
5. Consideration of the future use of buildings before closing schools. (1979)

Program Diversity --

1. Maintaining the present program diversity in the face of shifting enrollment patterns. Exploration of innovative means of providing education (such as interactive cable TV courses, experimental education in the community) with a consideration of their cost effectiveness. (1982)
2. Access to equal educational programs for all groups and equitable distribution of the county's diverse racial and ethnic school population in any kind of reorganization or consolidation. (1982)

Class Size --

1. A maximum class size set by the School Board for each discipline at the secondary level varying according to the discipline. Each class should be assured of adequate supplies, texts, equipment and desks necessary for quality instruction.
2. Allowing principals to make exceptions to the class size specified in the Budget Planning Factors, reporting and justifying such exceptions to the Superintendent and the School Board at the time they occur.
3. Holding principals accountable to consult with staff regarding any possible trade of a teaching position for a non-teaching position in their schools. Use of a discretionary fund for additional instructional positions to discourage possible trade-offs.
Using any available funds in the Schools' budget to reduce class size, where needed. (1988)

Home/School Communication --

Concrete, individualized, home/school communication at all school levels. (1992)

Staff Development --

Resources devoted to a strong staff development program in all disciplines. (1996)

S O U R C E S O F R E V E N U E

The League of Women Voters of Arlington supports:

1. A tax system that is equitable, flexible, progressive and adequate to pay for services; subject to periodic review and examination and efficient to administer. The tax system should reflect community goals and be responsive to economic conditions. (1991)
2. Increased opportunities for citizen participation in all phases of the budget process; provisions for adequate citizen education as to the sources of revenue, county expenditures and fiscal alternatives. (1975 and 1991)
3. Equitable real estate assessments, levying service charges on tax-exempt property, and exploring alternative revenue sources. (1991)

T R A N S P O R T A T I O N

The League of Women Voters of Arlington supports:

1. Public mass transportation subsidy because of the benefits provided to all citizens, which include: the availability of transportation regardless of income, the reduction of traffic congestion and the reduction of air pollution. (1984 and 1992)
2. Meeting operation costs of Metro by farebox receipts plus subsidies coming from five sources:
 1. County - there should be less dependence on the County as a source of funding;
 2. Northern Virginia regional sources;
 3. State - help in financing Metro operating deficits;

4. Federal - help on a continuing basis (1977); and
5. Employer participation in subsidy programs. (1991)

3. Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) policies to reduce operating costs while not lowering the quality of transportation services; studies of cost-saving measures which should include:

- the number of positions in management and operations
- salary levels
- the farecard system, including transfers
- route selections
- alternative structures for the WMATA Board. (1977 and 1991)

4. County support of existing volunteer and special transportation services. (1977 and 1991)

5. Small-bus transportation services being provided by volunteer, private, or business organizations, complementing public transportation, and, as feasible and appropriate, encouragement of expansions of such services, and publicity to promote efficient use. (1991)

6. The enforcement of the standards set in the County's Master Sidewalk Plan. (1978 and 1991)

7. The enactment and enforcement by the County of a sidewalk snow removal ordinance. (1978 and 1991)