



September 28, 2009

The Arlington County Civic Federation was founded in 1916 when six pioneering Arlington neighborhoods successfully banded together to achieve better government, roads, schools, and zoning. Almost one hundred years later, the only thing that has changed is that there are now eighty-two neighborhoods and community groups striving towards the same fundamental civic goals.

The Civic Federation addresses the community-focused issues its members bring forward through its ten policy committees. These committees are led by experienced, thoughtful community leaders. To be effective in their committee's study of issues, these leaders must collaboratively work with the County manager, the manager's staff, and the County's elected officials. The Civic Federation's policy committees include:

- Cultural Affairs
- Environmental Affairs
- Housing
- Legislation
- Parks and Recreation
- Planning and Zoning
- Public Services
- Revenues and Expenditures
- Schools
- Transportation

Like Mr. Carlee, many of Arlington's community leaders responsible for building the consensus needed to make Arlington a world-class community are retiring from civic life. This generational shift will test our community's ability to maintain the broad participation that has been a defining feature its success. The next County manager would benefit from a commitment to promoting civic participation.

As Mr. Carlee has himself said, the new County manager must be a trusted steward of the great community he or she will inherit. However, he or she should not simply protect the status quo. Rather, together with the community, he or she must seek new levels of excellence.

With that in mind, the specific qualities that the Civic Federation recommends for the next County manager are commitments to:

1. Thorough, authentic communication with community groups to discuss challenges and to analyze the effects of proposed solutions
2. Address our community's "digital divide" so that all of its residents may effectively participate
3. Engage more broadly defined stakeholders for addressing issues
4. Address perceived disparities in areas of the community regarding the investment of County resources
5. Developing a management team empowered to make departmental decisions and to engage the communities their departments serve
6. Encourage County staff to work collaboratively with APS staff
7. Independent analysis of issues rather than developing information designed to support predetermined conclusions
8. Expand strategies for addressing regional issues
9. Enhancing the diversity that exemplifies our community

On behalf of the neighborhoods and community groups that make up the Arlington County Civic Federation, I appreciate this opportunity to participate in the process of selecting the next County manager and look forward to working with him or her to meet our community's future challenges.

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