

Resolution on Immediately Updating the Arlington Tree Canopy Studies

Whereas trees are a valuable natural resource, providing multiple benefits to humans and other species living in Arlington¹.

Whereas, Arlington County is updating its *Forestry and Natural Resources Plan (FNRP)*² to enhance public and private efforts to enhance, maintain, preserve and protect Arlington's trees and natural resources to meet future needs;

Whereas, Arlington County's data on the existing urban tree canopy are obsolete due to rapid community change³ and the County also lacks the analysis capabilities of neighboring comparable jurisdictions,⁴ and that these assessments are nationally recognized as a requirement for effective planning for green infrastructure,⁵ as well as stormwater,⁶

Whereas, the County has already committed \$391,000 for consulting on other research for the FNRP and **without including the benefits of current data on the state of Arlington's tree canopy**; and updated studies can be completed in two to three months at a cost of \$20,000 to \$40,000;

Now, therefore, be it resolved that the Arlington County Civic Federation requests immediate action by the County to prepare an updated, comprehensive tree canopy and natural resources study that provides detailed information on relevant land cover categories including trees, vegetation, open greenspace, and impermeable surfaces. The study should include the capability for analysis of spatial imagery and be immediately applied to the development of the Forestry and Natural Resources Plan and used to monitor its effectiveness over time. Further, as appropriate, the study should be used as a resource for future stormwater planning and other County programs.

Respectfully submitted March 4, 2021 by the Environmental Affairs Committee – Prepared by Mary Glass, Eric Ackerman. Supported by: Nicole Merlene, Suzanne Sundberg, Jesse Boeding, Kit Norland, Ron Haddox, John Ford

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"How many trees do we have in Arlington?" <https://environment.arlingtonva.us/2017/03/how-many-trees-do-we-have-in-arlington/>

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https://www.nature.org/content/dam/tnc/nature/en/documents/Trees4Health_FINAL.pdf

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<https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/oct/12/importance-urban-forests-money-grow-trees>

2) Arlington County Forestry and Natural Resources Plan Project Page -

<https://projects.arlingtonva.us/fnrp/#> <https://projects.arlingtonva.us/fnrp/#>

3) *Tree Canopy Assessment December 2017*, Davey Resource Group –

<https://arlingtonva.s3.dualstack.us-east-1.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/13/2018/01/Arlington-County-Tree-Canopy-Report-2016-.pdf> .

Arlington Tree Action Group Critique of Tree Canopy Assessment -

<https://www.arlnow.com/2018/04/16/arlington-environmental-group-disputes-arlington-tree-canopy-study/>

4) *Land Cover Change Analysis: Fairfax County, VA*, University of Vermont Spatial Analysis Lab,

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/publicworks/sites/publicworks/files/assets/documents/tree-canopy-report-2015.pdf>

5) *Urban Tree Canopy Assessment: A Community’s Path to Understanding and Managing the Urban Forest*, US Forest Service,

https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/fs_media/fs_document/Urban%20Tree%20Canopy%20paper.pdf

6) *Trees To Offset Stormwater - A Study of 12 Communities*, Green Infrastructure Center,

<http://www.gicinc.org/PDFs/TreesStormwaterSummaryReportJune2019.pdf>