

## **ARLINGTON CIVIC ASSOCIATION BOUNDARIES – ESTABLISHMENT AND ADJUSTMENTS**

***Board Procedure BR2026-011; Replaces BR2023-021***

*Initial approval by ACCF Board of Directors 22 Febr 2023;  
revision approved by ACCF Board of Directors 25 Jan 2026.*

As the organization that includes membership of most civic associations, traditionally, since 1916, the Arlington County Civic Federation [ACCF] has had oversight on the geographic boundaries of civic associations within Arlington County. The principles of the ACCF process in these matters revolve around robust public notice and confirmation from neighboring organizations.

### **I. BACKGROUND**

#### **A. Why are boundaries changed?**

There are four broad reasons for a boundary change process among civic associations.

1. To clarify a disputed or overlapping boundary between two or more civic associations.
2. A geographically-connected group of residents wishes to secede from an existing civic association to form a new civic association or join a geographically-connected adjacent civic association.
3. An existing civic association seeks to annex a geographically contiguous area that is not part of any other civic association.
4. A geographically connected group of residents wants to establish boundaries for a new civic association for an area that is not currently part of a civic association.

#### **B. Who initiates the process?**

The process is initiated by one or more civic associations, or by a group of residents seeking to form a civic association or change to another civic association, by submitting a request to the Civic Federation to change the civic association's organization and boundaries.

#### **C. What is the role of ACCF in the process?**

ACCF's role is to facilitate any negotiations, when necessary, between civic associations, assist in procuring any needed resources, and to ratify any final agreement.

1. The Membership Committee is tasked with assisting in civic association boundary adjustments. The ACCF Membership Committee can be reached at [membership@civfed.org](mailto:membership@civfed.org). (Please note that ACCF is an all-volunteer organization, and if you do not receive a timely response in these matters, please email both [bod.chair@civfed.org](mailto:bod.chair@civfed.org) and [president@civfed.org](mailto:president@civfed.org) for assistance.)

## **II. PROCEDURE**

### **A. Identify current association boundaries.**

1. Refer to the Arlington County website for the most recently updated map at <https://maps.arlingtonva.us/> or [https://arlgis.arlingtonva.us/web\\_files/Maps/Standard\\_Maps/Civic\\_Association\\_Map.pdf](https://arlgis.arlingtonva.us/web_files/Maps/Standard_Maps/Civic_Association_Map.pdf)

### **B. Identify and notify neighbors impacted.**

1. Identify all adjoining civic associations and notify them of the area under review. A list of Arlington County civic association presidents is available at <https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Topics/Community/Civic-and-Citizen-Association>
2. Also, notification of umbrella civic groups such as the Langston Boulevard Alliance, Pike Presidents' Group, and the Arlington Neighborhood Program [ANP] should be made in all cases. Notifications should be sent via email to organization leaders, with follow-up by postal mail when emails go unanswered.
3. The general public in the affected areas should also be notified through flyers and postings at local parks, libraries, and other community locations. Also, notify residents and businesses within the impacted area via flyers.

### **C. Determine specific geographic boundaries.**

1. Determining the association's geographic boundaries is essential. Do geographic boundaries overlap or abut cleanly? Do the boundaries follow streams, permanently paved roads, or trails? Does the area include multiple structures with common interests in a geographic area?
2. Could the area in question logically fit with another association? Also, do the area residents and businesses choose to affiliate with your association or an adjoining association?

### **D. Document proposed governance structure**

1. Is there a proposed governance structure that identifies information as found in basic bylaws, including defining the purpose and membership, establishing a process for electing leadership, managing funds, voting on member actions, and documenting actions?

### **E. Create a mock-up map of the requested changes.**

1. The level of detail necessary varies by the complexity of the boundary change. Simple changes can be made through a hand-drawn mockup. (See Forest Glen boundary adjustment in the December 2015 *Civic Voice*, page 7: <http://www.civfed.org/newContent/2015-12/CivicVoice%202015-12.pdf>)  
For instance, in a far more complex situation, the Shirlington Civic Association was created from part of the Fairlington Civic Association. In this instance, formal mock-ups were requested from Arlington County GIS/cartography. These maps and additional research clarified zoning and building layouts.



# Arlington County Civic Federation

## **F. Provide public notification via the Arlington County Civic Federation newsletter and other public means.**

1. The ACCF newsletter, the *Civic Voice*, is distributed via email to more than 1,000 recipients, including civic and other activist organizations, the elected County Board, and other members of Arlington County staff. See an example of a newsletter notification for Shirlington boundaries, a name change from Columbia Heights West to Arlington Mill, and a boundary adjustment for Arlington Mill on pages 2-4 of the September 2015 *Civic Voice* here:  
<http://www.civfed.org/newContent/2015-09/CivicVoice%202015-09.pdf>
2. Please note that the *Civic Voice* is not published in July or August.
3. Public notifications should allow at least 30 days for changes to be finalized.

## **G. Obtain written acknowledgements from neighboring associations and/or residents or businesses impacted.**

1. Letters of support and acknowledgement from neighboring associations help prevent future questions or conflicts when association officers or other involved parties move on.
2. If adjusting boundaries, meet with businesses, residents, condominium associations, and other stakeholders within the affected area. Disputes arise when condominiums, homeowner associations, and other groups lack information.
3. Provide copies of letters and emails of support from all surrounding neighborhood associations to the ACCF Membership Committee at [membership@civfed.org](mailto:membership@civfed.org).

## **H. Arlington County Civic Federation vote.**

1. Once finalized, schedule a meeting with the ACCF President to present the changes to the ACCF General Meeting. This presentation must be followed by a discussion and a vote by the membership. Again, this allows for any concerns to be voiced in a public forum. Note that ACCF General Meetings are recorded to provide additional transparency.
2. In case of ACCF's summer meeting hiatus or other urgent circumstances, the Arlington County Civic Federation Board can give interim approval of changes at a Board meeting or via electronic vote. The Board vote must be ratified by the General Membership at a subsequent membership meeting.

## **I. Once all prior steps are complete, work with the ACCF President to draft a formal notice of the changes to the County Board and the Clerk of the County Board. This will ensure that the county**

1. Updates official county civic association boundary maps.
2. Updates the Civic & Citizen Associations web page.