

LETTER TO ARLINGTON COUNTY BOARD RE: LEE PARK AND FORMER LEE COMMUNITY CENTER/LAC STUDIOS
SEND VIA EMAIL TO: ARLINGTON COUNTY BOARD (Countyboard@arlingtonva.us)

September 13, 2023

The Arlington County Board:

Mr. Christian Dorsey, Chair, Arlington County Board
Ms. Libby Garvey, Co-Chair, Arlington County Board
Mr. Takis P. Karantonis, Member, Arlington County Board
Mr. Matt de Ferranti, Member, Arlington County Board
Ms. Tannia Talento, Member, Arlington County Board

2100 Clarendon Blvd, Suite 700
Arlington, VA 22201

RE: Leeway Overlee Civic Association Comments on Langston Boulevard Area Plan, Draft 1:
June 2023 ("the Plan")

Dear Mr. Dorsey, Ms. Garvey, Mr. Karantonis, Mr. de Ferranti, and Ms. Talento:

I request that Arlington County conduct a public evaluation with public input to determine the short- and long-term uses of the former Lee Community Center (now LAC Studios) and the Lee Community Center Park (located between Langston Boulevard / 24th Street North and North Lexington / North Kentucky Streets) to commence no later than early 2024.

I request that Arlington County maintain its ownership and stewardship of this 1.6-acre block containing the former Lee Community Center and the Lee Community Center Park and that both remain community space. I request any future improvements be 100% dedicated to community space.

I strongly recommend Arlington retain and fully utilize its already-owned parks, especially Lee Center Park. I believe sustainability is a priority, including preserving park green space and maintaining permeable surfaces.

This property and its facilities have been **a community epicenter and a vital and accessible public gathering place and park** in the Leeway Overlee community, initially as one of Arlington's earliest public schools (1926), followed by Lee Community and Senior Center, then the LAC Studios.

It has been used for almost 100 years for children's recreation, beginning when the original elementary school was opened in 1926. It remained a center for recreation when Arlington Public Schools (APS) closed the school in 1971 and transferred the property to Arlington County. It was also true when the former school building housed the Lee Center Children's Cooperative. This legacy continues with its playground equipment, softball diamond, basketball court, and open green space providing neighborhood families with multiple recreational opportunities.

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This is the only public park and playground within the Leeway Overlee Civic Association boundaries and one of the largest County-owned parks along Langston Boulevard. This park is unique in that it is level and is able to accommodate a basketball court and softball diamond, while other County parks along Langston Boulevard do not have comparable improvements due to topographical limitations.

The Leeway Overlee Civic Association community welcomes the opportunity to discuss the many options put forward by Arlington County and the Langston Boulevard Area Plan, Draft 1: June 2023 pertaining to our community in Area 2 of that Plan: specifically, a public evaluation process regarding the future of the Lee Center Community Park and the LAC Studios Building.

Respectfully,

INSERT YOUR NAME HERE