

CRYSTAL CITY INSIDER

The monthly newsletter of the Crystal City Civic Association



September 2025

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PRESIDENT'S CORNER

Our Sept. 17th meeting will include an update from the county on new parks; a presentation about new roadwork, especially the 15th Street S project; and an overview of renovations of the Water Treatment Plant. The meeting takes place at our normal location (151 15th St. S); join us on Zoom [here](#).

Work on the smaller Whole Foods on Crystal Drive is continuing, but the store is not expected to open this month.

JBG Smith has applied to change two more office buildings into apartments: 1800 and 1901 Clark Street. We have several issues with this plan and have written a memo to the County Board (details on page 3). We strongly support a [memo](#) expressing similar concerns that the Arlington County Civic Federation has sent the county.

- Eric Cassel, CCCA President

Call for Candidates

As a result of term limits, the current President, Vice President, and Treasurer cannot run for re-election. In addition, the Communications Director moved out of Crystal City. As a result, at the Annual Meeting in November, all four positions need to be filled.

While the first three have more obvious duties, the Communications Director oversees the website and computer issues.

If you want more information, please email us at election@crystalcitycivic.org.

CIVIC ASSOCIATION AND LIVABILITY 22202 ISSUES

Reuse of office buildings puts community goals at risk

The following was prepared by the leaders of the Crystal City Civic Association.

JBG Smith has filed an adaptive reuse permit application for 1800 and 1901 S. Bell Street. As we await the full application details, we've identified three critical issues that could undermine the vision for our community as outlined in the Crystal City Sector Plan. Here is a summary of concerns we have expressed in a memo to the County Board:

- **Uneven benefits.** The county's adaptive reuse policy expedites the conversion of office buildings into housing, but the South Bell Street proposal risks prioritizing developer benefits over community goals. Repurposing 1901 S. Bell could delay or scrap creation of Center Park, a 74,200-square-foot civic space central to sector plan. We urge the county to protect plans for this vital neighborhood asset.
- **Lack of a library and Entertainment District.** The sector plan envisions a vibrant Entertainment District with cultural and civic amenities, including a Crystal City branch library and the Synetic Theatre at 1800 S. Bell Street. The proposed conversion of this site to residential (up to 129 units) could eliminate space for the theater and a library, despite \$5.8 million already allocated for a library elsewhere. We advocate reviving the theater and securing a library site, ideally at 1800 S. Bell Street.
- **Neglecting sound planning practices.** The proposal fails to take into account community concerns, such as pick-up/drop-off logistics, and to align with sector plan goals. We urge a transparent review process with robust public input to ensure the project supports Crystal City's long-term vision for an active, mixed-use neighborhood.

We'll keep you informed about opportunities to share your input, including at public hearings and working sessions. We will work to try to ensure this project aligns with our community's vision for a vibrant Crystal City.

INFORMATION AND EVENTS: ARLINGTON AND STATE

Candidates forum launches fall election season

It's an off year for national elections, but county and state races are on the ballot this fall. The election season kicks off Sept. 2 at 7 p.m. with the [Arlington County Civic Federation](#) candidates forum. It will be held at VHC Health's Hazel Auditorium, 1701 N George Mason Drive. To watch on Zoom, register [here](#), or live on the federation's Facebook page, [here](#).

The candidates are:

County Board: Takis Karantonis, Bob Cambridge, Audrey Clement, Jeramy Olmack, Carlos De Castro "DC" Pretelt

School Board: Moe Bryant, James "Vell" Rives IV, Major Mike Webb

House District 1: Patrick Hope (D), William Moher III (R)

House District 2 (which includes Crystal City): Adele McClure (D), Wendy Sigley (R)

The County Board race will follow [ranked-choice rules](#), allowing voters to prioritize up to three of the five candidates on the ballot.

Wanted: 250 stories about the history of Arlington

The Arlington Historical Society aims to collect 250 stories about local history in conjunction with the nation's 250th birthday next year.

"Arlington has a wide history. Do we really know all the history? Do we really know all the stories?" society president Peter Vaselopulos asked at the kickoff event for the project 250 by 2026: Rediscovering the Stories of Arlington."

The society can offer suggestions of areas worth pursuing or writers can propose their own. The suggested length is 300 to 500 words; submission deadline is March 2026. For details, visit [here](#).

Separately, the society is hosting a competition for students to submit essays, poems, videos, or a memorial design about what they believe is the most significant historical event that took place in Arlington and how it relates to America as a whole. For details, visit [here](#).

This will make parents' cry: County's child-care costs tops in nation

If you think your child's day care is ridiculously expensive, you won't be surprised to learn that Arlington County tops the nation in costs. [The Wall Street Journal](#) reports that the average tab for five years of day care here is \$147,000, triple the median cost in the nation. Families in Arlington can apply for child-care subsidies if their household income is 85 percent of Virginia's average income. For a family of four, that means the cap is \$51,360. To apply, visit [here](#). Arlington County offers limited help for families on the

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state's waiting list. The Arlington Child Care Alliance was launched in June to pilot projects to improve children care access and affordability; details [here](#).

Looking at the world through the challenge of parking: an author talk

Besides being one of the banes of urban life, parking is at the root of problems ranging from housing affordability to climate change. Slate staff writer Henry Grabar breaks it all down Sept. 9 in a talk at the Central Library from 6:30-7:45 p.m. as he discusses his book "Paved Paradise: How Parking Explains the World." Based on historical research and his own reporting, Grabar takes an irreverent look at how storing our cars is driving us crazy. Registration recommended. For more on this and other author talks, visit [here](#).

Aurora Hills library offers wide-ranging catalog of activities

From yoga to yarn, board games to afternoon tea, reading and writing groups to intergenerational story times, the [Aurora Hills library](#) offers program for all ages. Job hunters can get help revising their resumes and polishing their search skills. Computer phobes can get tech help. Find event listings [here](#).

The Blue and Yellow Book club meets on Zoom the second Monday of the month at 7 p.m. to discuss popular fiction and nonfiction. Coming up: Sept. 8, "Assistant to the Villain by Hannah Nicole Maehrer; Oct. 13, "Mexican Gothic," by Silvia Moreno-Garcia; Nov. 10, "Braiding Sweetgrass," by Robin Wall Kimmerer; and Dec. 8, "The Three Mothers," by Anna Malaika Tubbs. For more information, contact Hayley at this [link](#).

Volunteer advocates sought to speak on behalf of abused children

The [Court Appointed Special Advocates](#) program is seeking volunteers to help speak for abused and neglected children. "We have encountered a pretty severe increase in the numbers of children that we're seeing coming to [juvenile and domestic relations] courts," Amy Wilker, head of CASA for Northern Virginia Family Services, told [Arlington Patch](#). In the last fiscal year 77 CASA volunteers served 173 children, mainly in Alexandria and Arlington. Particularly needed are men and people who can speak Spanish, Amharic, Arabic, and Farsi. Volunteers undergo 40 hours of training. The next information session is Sept. 10. For details, visit [here](#).

DEVELOPMENT

Renovated hotel features restaurant, expanded meeting space



AC Hotel National Landing opens after 10-month renovation of Crystal City Marriott.

The Crystal City Marriott has been rechristened the [AC Hotel National Landing](#) as the building reopened this summer after a \$35 million, 10-month renovation project. At 355 rooms, it is the largest North American location for AC Hotels, a European-inspired subsidiary of Marriott.

The hotel features a first-floor restaurant and bar, the AC Kitchen & Lounge, with seating indoors and on a renovated patio with fire pits. Full-service breakfast as well as brunch are available; dinner includes Spanish tacos and a menu reflecting executive chef Anoop Nathoo's Mauritian background, according to [ARLnow](#).

The renovated hotel offers 11 meeting rooms spread over 8,800 square feet and a 4,000-square-foot fitness center. It is located at 1999 Richmond Highway.

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Construction starts on townhouses, affordable units at Crystal House



Crystal House 3 features 432 affordable units



Crystal House 7 & 8, known as Highland Row, features 42 three-bedroom townhomes.

Work begins this month on two major phases of the Crystal House Apartments expansion:

Crystal House 3 will add 432 affordable units to the site at the corner of South Eads Street and 18th Street S. The project will include apartments ranging from studios to three-bedrooms targeting people earning 30 percent to 60 percent of area median income. Construction is expected to be completed in winter 2027. For details, visit [here](#).

Crystal House 7/8, marketed by EYA as Highland Row, will feature 42 townhomes, each with three bedrooms, rooftop terrace, and two-car garage. Priced from \$1.2 million, they will go on sale in fall with completion of construction expected by the end of next year. The site borders South Fern Street. Visit [here](#) for more information.

These two projects are part of a five-phase infill redevelopment plan on the 17-acre Crystal House site. The new construction is surrounding the existing pair of x-shaped, 12-story towers built in the 1960s. Overall, 865 additional housing units will be added to the original 828-unit development. EYA said the expansion will include 655 dedicated affordable units. Additionally, two public parks will be built on the site.

For details on progress, visit [here](#).

TRANSPORTATION

Four crashes a day: Vision Zero releases detailed '24 report card

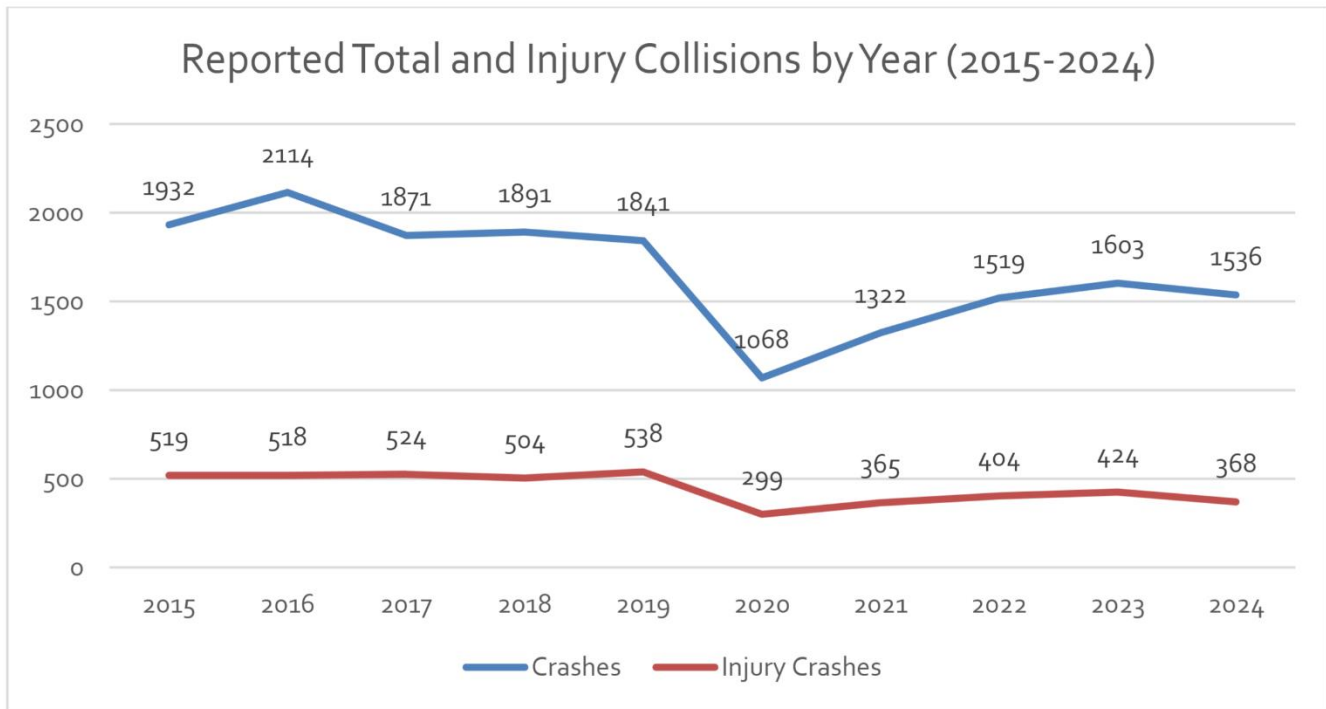


Figure 2: Reported Total Injury Collisions by Year (2014-2024)

On average last year, four crashes occurred each day in Arlington County, 28 percent at night and 16 percent involving high speed. Pedestrians were involved in 7 percent of all crashes, cyclists in 3 percent. Only one crash resulted in a fatality, and it involved alcohol and young persons. Those are among the findings in the Vision Zero 2024 Annual Crash Report.

The report breaks down crashes by such factors as date and time, location, make and type of vehicle, ages of those involved, drug and alcohol use, severity of injuries, and type of roadway. The report does not include crashes on I-66, I-395, or the GW Parkway.

In a section summarizing long-term trends, the study found that over the last decade the number of reported crashes per 1,000 residents fell by 41 percent.

To download the report, visit [here](#).

Watch out for stopped buses ...

Now that school buses are back on the road, here's a reminder of how you can protect students' lives and avoid hefty fines. Drivers must stop for school buses that are loading or unloading passengers on roads or school driveways. Drivers must remain stopped until all students are clear of the road. A violation can lead to a \$250 fine. The only exception is if their car is on the opposite side of a divided roadway, one where a median or other physical barrier separates traffic.

... and slow down near schools

The county has added 10 cameras to the [PhotoSpeed](#) program, nearly tripling the number of electronic eyes on the roads in school zones. The zones were selected based on safety data sources in conjunction with the county's [Vision Zero](#) program, which targets overall pedestrian and vehicular safety. Speed zone cameras are operational when school zone lights are flashing at the start and end of the school day. Digital images and videos are taken of potential violators. A county police officer decides whether to issue a \$100 ticket. For a map of enforcement areas, visit [here](#).

Part of South Eads to undergo micro-surface sealing

Roadwork will restrict parking and travel for a limited time on South Eads Street between 23rd Street S and South Glebe Road in early September. Crews will be conducting micro-surface sealing as part of the county's preventive street maintenance program. The process is described as a quick, economical strategy to protect streets from water penetration and provide a new wearing surface with improved skid resistance. For details, visit [here](#).



PARKS & RECREATION



Guide offers opportunities to exercise mind and body

Sewing to swimming, science to slime, history to harmonies – find something for all ages and interests in the fall Enjoy Arlington guide, published by the Parks and Recreation Department. Browse all that the catalog has to offer through the [PDF](#) and [flipbook](#) versions.

Among the more unusual offerings: Bootlegger’s Guide to Rosslyn, Artillery Games, and the Amazing Hummingbirds of Arlington.

For more information visit the [Enjoy Arlington classes webpage](#).

Art, fitness, social events featured in 55+ Guide

Explore the [Fall 55+ Guide](#) for programs including art classes, fitness programs, and social events. Activities include a lecture explaining AI, a board game night, and a workshop on preparing your garden for fall.

Wondering where to walk or cycle? Download a map

The county is offering detailed brochures for pedestrians and walkers: the [BikeArlington](#) Bicycle Comfort Level Map and WalkArlington’s [Walkabout Maps](#), which features 22 self-guided walks around the County.

DOINGS IN CRYSTAL CITY (AND NEARBY)

Virginia Beer and Wine Festival will return to Water Park

Sample local beers and wines as the Virginia Wine and Beer Festival returns to Water Park, 1601 Crystal Drive, for its second year Sept. 27, 1-5 p.m. Featured are live music, lawn games, and refreshments.

Drink tickets are \$5 with tastings available from such local makers as Loudoun-based Honor Brewing and Solace Brewing Company, Fairfax County-based Bunnyman Brewing, and D.C.-based Chacho Tequila. Guests who reserve a spot for free on [Eventbrite](#) will receive one complimentary drink ticket.



For the family, attractions include lawn games, a photo booth, and face painting. Live music is also on tap.

Celebrate Latin music and culture at Met Park

NaLa Noches, a high-energy celebration of Latin music and culture, showcases live performances handpicked by DC trumpet legend Joe Herrera selected Thursdays 5-7 p.m., at Metropolitan Park, 1330 Fair St. Coming up:

Sept. 18: Salsa with Max Rosado and the 7th St. Band

Sept. 25: Brazilian music with Gigi MacLaughlin

Oct. 2: Boleros with Miramar

Oct. 9: Venezuelan jazz with Fran Vielma

Oct. 16: Salsa with Afredo Mojica

Oct. 23: Psychedelic and traditional salsa with Bio Ritmo



Unleash your dog's inner Picasso

Make art with your pooch, including art prints, pet Polaroids, and portrait drawings by [Brando Gould](#) at Metropolitan Park, South Fern Street, Sept. 9, 5-7 p.m. Vendors will supply refreshments and DeeJay L will supply the music. Details [here](#).

Sip and paint at Water Park

Margaret Jacobson teaches painting al fresco in front of the waterfall at Water Park, 1601 Crystal Drive, Wednesdays through Sept. 24 at 6:30 p.m. Cost is \$15 per person. Details [here](#).

Farmers market open Tuesdays and Saturdays

The twice-weekly farmers market continues at Met Park, 1400 South Eads St., through October. Some 50 vendors offer goods including fresh fruits, vegetables, artisanal breads, teas, baked goods, and more. Produced by [Eat Loco](#), the farmers market is held Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., and Saturdays, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Besides stocking up on goodies, visitors can connect with local farmers and artisans, learning the stories behind their creations. Find the updated weekly layout of the Saturday market [here](#) and of the Tuesday market [here](#).

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‘Mona’ and ‘Wizard of Oz’ to be screened at Met Park

[Metropolitan Park](#), 1330 S Fair St., hosts free outdoor movies every other Friday through Sept. 19 starting at 6 p.m. Coming up: Sept. 5, “Moana”; Sept. 19: “The Wizard of Oz.” Bring your own lawn chair, but keep it on a sidewalk or hardscape. Pets must be on a leash. Food and drinks are offered by local vendors and stores. Restrooms are located next to Toby's Ice Cream.

Artisan market pops up at Water Park

The third of three pop-up events for artisans is slated for Sept. 20 from 5-9 p.m. at Water Park, 1601 Crystal Drive. The Landing Local Artisan Market will spotlight more than a dozen vendors, ranging from candlemakers to jewelers. The event will also feature live entertainment, a mobile bar car, and – as usual – the food and beverages from the Water Park’s kiosks.

MoCA on the Move brings art and music to Met Park

[MoCA on the Move](#) hosts free family events Sundays, 10 a.m.-1 p.m., at the central green of Metropolitan Park. Sponsored by the Museum of Contemporary Art Arlington, the series features live music, light snacks, and art-making activities. In case of rain, the program will be held indoors, at MoCA Arlington’s Innovation Studio + Store, 525 14th S. Coming up:

Sept. 14: Artist Spotlight on [Andrew Barco](#), Flower Pounding Transfers. Music from [Duck Chuck Goose](#)

Sept. 21: Mixed Media Fall Wooden Ornament Decoration. Music from [Caleb Hacker](#)

Sept. 28: Stenciled Ink Prints inspired by the work of [Hedieh Javanshir Ilchi: Here the Waving Flag. Here the Other World](#). Music from [Acoustic Chili Loops](#)

Oct. 5: Fall Theme Paper Mosaics. Music from [The String Mamas](#)

Oct. 12: Sculpt a Clay Monster. Music from [Sean Tracy](#)

Oct. 19: Artist Spotlight on [Allie Tripp](#), Autumn Print Postcards. Music from [Caleb Hacker](#)

Oct. 26: Artist Spotlight on [David Amoroso](#), Calavera Masks. Music from [Duck Chuck Goose](#)

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Get in shape at Metropolitan Park

DC Fray and National Landing offer free instructor-led classes Wednesdays, 8-9 a.m., Sept. 7 through Oct. 26, at Metropolitan Park, 1330 S. Fair St. No experience needed. Frequent participants receive prizes through punch card program. Frequent participants receive prizes through punch card program. Bring your own towels, water bottles, snacks, and mats. Seats are limited; [reservations suggested](#). Coming up:

Sept. 3: [Barre by Pure Barre](#)
Sept. 10 [HIIT/Metcon by E60 Fitness](#)
Sept. 17: [Pilates by Onelife Fitness](#)
Sept. 24: [Zumba by Onelife Fitness](#)
Oct. 1: [Yoga by Onelife Fitness](#)
Oct. 8: [Barre by Pure Barre](#)
Oct. 15: [HIIT/Metcon by E60 Fitness](#)
Oct. 22: [Yoga by Core Power Yoga](#)

Get in shape at Potomac Yard

DC Fray and National Landing offer free instructor-led classes Sundays, 2-3 p.m., Sept. 7 through Oct. 26. No experience needed. Frequent participants receive prizes through punch card program. Classes take place in front of [Social All Day Bar](#), 3500 S. Clark St. Bring your own towels, water bottles, snacks, and mats. Seats are limited; [reservations suggested](#). Coming up:

Sept. 7: Barre by Pure Barre
Sept. 14: (Vinyasa) Flow + small Meditation by Core Power Yoga
Sept. 21: Pilates by Onelife Fitness
Sept. 28: Kickboxing by Onelife Fitness
Oct. 5: (Vinyasa) Flow +challenging balancing poses by Core Power Yoga
Oct. 12: Barre by Pure Barre
Oct. 19: Zumba by Onelife Fitness
Oct. 26: Group Function Fitness by E60 Fitness

For more activities, visit ...

- **Events at National Landing**
- **Arlington Parks and Recreation**
- **Arlington arts events**
- **Arlington Convention and Visitors Services**
- **Events for Kids** Library activities including Family Game Night, Take & Make Crafts, and Sensory Story Time.

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DINING IN CRYSTAL CITY (AND NEARBY)

Panera Bread to open this fall in Crystal City

Panera Bread plans to open in Crystal City by November at 2450 Crystal Drive. The sandwich/soup/salad spot will be located at Crystal and Clark Tower, already home to Mezeh, Subway, New Yorker Grill, and Buffalo Wild Wings. A still-unnamed grocer may locate in the site at some point, according to [ARLnow](#).

Mideast street food eatery coming to Restaurant Row

[Falafel Inc.](#), which has a stand in Water Park, plans to open a fast-casual restaurant serving Middle Eastern street foods at 500 23 St. S. The Restaurant Row location will be in the space where Burke & Herbert Bank closed in 2023. Part of a DC-area chain, Falafel serves chicken shawarma and falafel in wraps and bowls, salads, za'atar-spiced fries, and various sauces and dips. Much of the menu is under \$10. The restaurant donates 5 percent of its proceeds to the UN's World Food Program.



Japanese coffeehouse to open in Pentagon City

A Japanese coffeehouse chain plans to open its first East Coast location in Pentagon City, but no date has been announced. [Takagi Coffee](#) will be located at 721 15th Street S. The chain, which was founded in 1958, touts souffle-style pancakes and rotating café drinks and teas. Its LA branch offers Japanese-style rice plates, omelets, and pasta.

‘Eurofusion’ restaurant eyes winter opening in Pentagon City

A “Eurofusion” restaurant hopes to open by winter in Pentagon City. Ember Kitchen and Spirits will be located at 1301 S. Joyce St., the former location of Irish gastropub Mattie and Eddie’s. “My style draws from European, Mediterranean, Asian, and North American traditions, but I don’t follow borders – I follow flavor,” chef Nikita Greene told [ARLnow](#). Among potential offerings: slow-braised lamb shoulders; sous-vide ribeye with brassica puree; and seared octopus with garlic, ginger, and lemongrass. The restaurant touts its specialty dry-aged meats and its plans to host dancing, live music, trivia, and board games.

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ABOUT CCCA

The Crystal City Civic Association (CCCA) was formed on Jan. 28, 2014. We are a non-partisan, not-for-profit organization with the express purpose of advancing the common interests of the residents of the Crystal City neighborhood in Arlington County, Virginia. CCCA gives a voice to our residents. CCCA officers represent community members at County meetings, function as liaisons to state and local lawmakers, coordinate with the Crystal City BID on important issues and projects, and ensure the needs of residents are met.

CRYSTAL CITY CIVIC ASSOCIATION BOARD

President Eric Cassel

Vice President Tarsi Dunlop

Meeting Secretary Sheryl Eaton

Communications Director Andrew Damitio (by appointment)

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