MEETING MINUTES OF THE HYBRID
ARLINGTON COUNTY COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Meeting Recording

May 6, 2026

The Community Development Citizens Advisory Committee convened its meeting at 6:30pm on Wednesday, May 6, 2026.

PRESENT (VIRTUAL)	Lara Malakoff, Chair Robert Burnette Maccoy Kauffman Lincoln Cummings Vidya Battu Elizabeth Lobello
ABSENT	Wendy Thomas, Margaret McGilvray, Bryant Atkins, Jennifer Bodie
STAFF	Caitlin Jones, Jennifer Daniels, Joel Franklin, Nicole Dula, Triina Van

1. *Continuum of Care and Housing Assistance Bureau Presentation (Information)*
Staff welcomed representatives from the Department of Human Services, including Triina Van and Nicole Dula, who provided an overview of Arlington County's homelessness response system and housing assistance programs. The presenters described the Continuum of Care (CoC) as a coordinated system of services, funding, and partnerships designed to prevent and address homelessness, including coordinated entry, outreach, emergency shelter, rapid rehousing, and permanent supportive housing. The Department of Human Services serves as the lead agency and works closely with nonprofit partners to deliver services and manage system performance.

   The presentation highlighted the structure of the Continuum of Care, including governance committees, participation from individuals with lived experience, and alignment with a strategic plan focused on making homelessness rare, brief, and non-recurring. Staff described recent trends in homelessness, noting that while levels declined during the pandemic due to increased resources, they have since risen as those resources have diminished and housing costs have increased. Staff emphasized that system capacity, housing affordability, and service availability all influence outcomes for individuals experiencing homelessness.

   Staff also provided an overview of funding for homelessness services, noting that the majority of resources supporting the system are local, supplemented by state and federal funds. The presentation included discussion of current challenges, including uncertainty in federal Continuum of Care funding due to changes in HUD policy and the evolving funding landscape. Staff indicated that while some funding streams have stabilized in the short term, future funding cycles may introduce programmatic and policy changes requiring continued monitoring and adaptation.

   Nicole Dula provided an overview of Housing Assistance Bureau programs, including housing grants, Housing Choice Vouchers, permanent supportive housing, and tax relief programs. Staff highlighted the significant growth of the locally funded housing grant program over time and noted a key policy change adopted by the County Board to place a budget cap on the program and transition to a waitlist structure beginning October 2026. Staff explained that this change is intended to manage rising program costs and ensure sustainability, but may result in fewer households being served over time.

Committee members discussed the complexity of homelessness and acknowledged that factors such as affordable housing availability, trust in service systems, and individual circumstances contribute to why some individuals remain unsheltered. Staff emphasized that homelessness is influenced by multiple factors, including limited shelter capacity, housing constraints, and personal choice, and that the system aims to provide flexible pathways tailored to individual needs.

Materials:

- Nicole Dula and Triina Van, Arlington County CoC and Housing Programs

2. *FY 2027 Annual Action Plan & Community Development Fund Recommendations (Discussion and Action)*
Staff facilitated a discussion on potential updates to the Community Development Fund Notice of Funding Availability (NOFA) process for FY 2028. Staff explained that significant changes had been implemented in the prior cycle and that the current discussion focused on incremental improvements based on feedback from reviewers and applicants.

One major topic of discussion was the potential creation of a separate funding track or "incubator" pool to support smaller or emerging organizations. Staff described this concept as a way to improve access for organizations with less experience or limited capacity, while maintaining the primary funding pool for established programs. Committee members generally expressed support for exploring this concept but emphasized the need for clear eligibility criteria, including how organizations would be selected for participation and how funding amounts would be structured. Members also noted the importance of balancing accessibility with administrative feasibility and ensuring that any new funding track does not create undue burden for staff or applicants.

The Committee also discussed the importance of organizational capacity and past performance in the review process. While members indicated that the current process generally provides sufficient information, some suggested that earlier access to performance data or clearer context could be helpful. At the same time, members cautioned against creating overly restrictive pre-screening criteria that might limit innovation or exclude smaller organizations prematurely.

Staff sought feedback on application question clarity and alignment with evaluation criteria. Committee members noted that applicants sometimes struggled to clearly articulate the specific community need their programs address, particularly at the local level. Members suggested that application prompts could more strongly emphasize defining the problem being addressed in Arlington and providing evidence to support that need, rather than relying on general or national data.

The Committee discussed the application review format and expressed support for continuing the discussion-based review approach implemented in the prior funding cycle in lieu of applicant presentations. Members noted that the format allowed for deeper analysis and collaborative discussion and supported retaining the ability to revise scores following group discussion.

Staff concluded that feedback from this discussion will be incorporated into proposed revisions to the FY 2028 NOFA, which will be presented to the Committee for further review at the June 2026 meeting.

Materials:

- Caitlin Jones, FY 2027 CD Fund NOFA Debrief

3. *Staff Report*
Staff provided several updates on recent and upcoming activities. The Tenant Summit is scheduled for May 16 at the Sequoia Building and will include workshops and resources for tenants. Staff reported

that the Goodwill redevelopment project closed on April 29, with the County disbursing just over $6 million in HOME funds to support the project, which is anticipated to be completed in approximately two to three years. Staff also noted that the FY 2027-2031 Consolidated Plan and County budget were adopted by the County Board on April 22, and that all Community Development Fund grant programs recommended for FY 2027 were approved. Staff are currently working on grant agreements and anticipate having contracts in place by July 1.

4. *Chair Report*
   Nothing to report.

5. *Member Reports*
   Nothing to report.

   Meeting adjourned at 8:15pm.