

DIGITAL STRATEGY 2027–2030



ARLINGTON
VIRGINIA

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Introduction

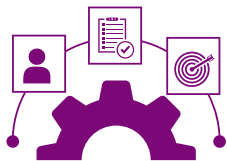
The 2027–2030 Digital Strategy sets Arlington County’s direction for advancing how technology supports services and operations. It focuses on simplifying end-to-end experiences, strengthening enterprise data across departments so information drives action, and maintaining a secure, resilient technology foundation. The Department of Technology Services (DTS) will partner with departments to deliver a prioritized portfolio aligned with the Strategic Focus areas: Seamless Interaction, Actionable Information, and Smart Resilience. Prioritization of work by DTS within these three focus areas will be guided by our Digital Strategy Principles.



Strategic Focus Areas

Through engagement with County leadership and staff and informed by ITAC guidance and sentiment expressed through existing public engagement processes, DTS gathered a broad range of perspectives. Building on efforts already underway, this input helped identify three Strategic Focus Areas, Seamless Interaction, Actionable Information, and Smart Resilience, to guide the 2027–2030 Digital Strategy. The sections that follow introduce each focus area at a high level: a brief description of what we aim to accomplish, a simple statement that is intended to serve as a call to action for DTS and County staff, and guiding language on how the County will benefit and will inform the metrics used to show progress and define success in each area. The tables that follow are intended to provide more specific detail on how to enable the goal and action steps intended to achieve it.

We invite leaders and teams across the County to use this document to align priorities and move forward with shared ownership and coordinated execution across the enterprise. We will use the goals, action steps, and principles as a framework for engagement with our department partners and outside entities. Building on our foundation and providing a framework to align our goals, we can achieve even stronger enterprise-wide outcomes through closer collaboration, shared ownership, and coordinated execution across all departments.



**SEAMLESS
INTERACTION**



**ACTIONABLE
INFORMATION**



**SMART
RESILIENCE**

Seamless Interaction

Seamless Interaction focuses on making digital touchpoints, whether for community members, businesses, or staff, simple, consistent, and accessible across channels and departments. The outcome is a more intuitive end-to-end experience where people can complete transactions and get support faster, with clearer ownership and less rework behind the scenes.

What is DTS doing?

Making digital interactions simple and consistent.

What does success look like?

Faster, simpler transactions and support with improved accessibility.





Seamless Interaction

How Arlington is enabling the goal	Action-focused steps to achieve the goal
Streamline customer experience with the AC Help Center	Simplify help requests by standardizing software purchase processes, reducing handoffs, and aligning support processes across departments so users know where to go and what to expect every time. Tighten onboarding/offboarding touchpoints and roll out practical tech policy guidance so staff get what they need on day one. Software purchase process will include workflow routing and documentation of the policy and guidance.
Build and maintain guardrails for identity and access	Strengthen sign-in protections and device safeguards for data. Extend single sign-on where possible (internal and public-facing) and take steps toward expanding multifactor authentication options for community members who use County services.
Enhance accessibility	Update web and mobile experiences to meet accessibility standards, modernize high-traffic applications, and improve content findability with more intuitive document search.
Enable faster, friendlier customer contact	Improve how community members interact with the County by enabling quicker responses, smoother transitions between digital and human support, and expanded language and communication options.
Streamline high-volume transactions	Reduce manual steps for common services by shifting routine transactions to digital workflows that are intuitive, reliable, and integrated across systems.

Actionable Information

Actionable Information focuses on strengthening how the County defines, governs, and shares data so leaders and staff can quickly access trusted information and turn it into decisions and action. This focus area highlights the need for shared measures, outcome-focused dashboards, and better visibility into what data and tools already exist across departments to reduce duplication and enable cross-department wins. The outcome is a more transparent, AI-ready foundation with authoritative data that is easier to reuse and analyze so planning, performance management, and service delivery can improve faster.

What is DTS doing?

Making data better, more available, and AI-ready and building for the AI enabled future.

What does success look like?

Planning, decision-making, and workflows get faster and better.





Actionable Information

How Arlington is enabling the goal	Action-focused steps to achieve the goal
Trusted shared data foundation	Promote clear standards for how data is defined, governed, and shared so that staff can rely on consistent, authoritative information across the County. Integrate data sharing at the start of technology implementations. Additionally, partner with the Purchasing Department to establish technology standards and strengthen information governance.
Data quality to support AI-ready data and transparency	Educate on the importance of data quality. Expand reporting on Service Center interactions. Explore tools to support data management.
Data sharing and interoperability across departments (reduce silos)	Break down data silos by enabling departments to reuse data, improving coordination across County services. Cultivate a County-wide data analyst community to spread best practices. Stand up shared dashboards for operational metrics.
Roadmap for Artificial Intelligence	Expand and enhance guardrails, policies, and foundational capabilities aligned with the roadmap so AI can be adopted responsibly, securely, and equitably in ways that improve access, reduce barriers, and directly support County business needs.

Smart Resilience

Smart Resilience focuses on keeping the County's technology foundation reliable, secure, and scalable, so essential services continue with minimal disruption and can recover quickly when incidents occur. In this goal, "smart" means making right-sized, risk-informed, and planning investments. Smart resilience means not only maintaining reliable services today, but continuously evaluating change, optimizing resources, and adapting the County's technology environment to remain effective, efficient, and future-ready in a dynamic landscape. Ongoing review and assessment of the County's technology infrastructure helps ensure it remains right-sized for network traffic, storage demands, and application needs. Maintaining a low level of technical debt and optimizing limited resources results in resilient, efficient, and future-ready services.

What is DTS doing?

Equip the County to manage dynamic technology change to keep tech modern, right-sized, and reliable.

How does it benefit the County?

Arlington services are dependable, efficient, and future-ready.



How Arlington is enabling the goal	Action-focused steps to achieve the goal
Cloud modernization and technical debt reduction to keep platforms supportable	Advance the Cloud Strategy Plan to transition aging systems to modern, supportable platforms thereby reducing risks, improving reliability, and lowering long-term maintenance effort and costs. Modernization of existing County applications.
Resilient networks and “always-on” connectivity	Refresh critical network gear through strategic capital expenditure planning. Introduce additional internet service pathways for redundancy. Update the Telecommunications Master Plan to meet future demand.
Cyber resilience and operational readiness	Execute the Cybersecurity Strategy roadmap to build upon the County’s ability to prevent, detect, and recover from cyber incidents by aligning security investments with operational priorities and real-world threats.
Lifecycle management (hardware, OS, backups, asset management)	Proactively refresh end-user devices, decommission unsupported servers, modernize backup and recovery, and broaden hardware/software tracking to improve support and compliance.
Continuity of Operations (COOP) and mission-critical service tracking	Evolve maintenance of an authoritative inventory of critical systems and plan for disruptions so essential County services can continue during emergencies or unexpected events.
Adaptable Workforce	Through education, policies, practices and communication mechanisms, equip staff to adapt to rapid technological change. Expand adoption of use of agile practices.

Digital Strategy Principles

The **Digital Strategy Principles** are practical guardrails that connect day-to-day technology decisions with the County's long-term strategy. They are intended to be applied when shaping the Digital Strategy Portfolio in proposing new initiatives, prioritizing competing work, analyzing solutions, and making trade-offs on scope, risk, cost, and timing. Leadership and teams involved in technology decisions should actively use the principles in routine planning and governance conversations so decisions are faster, more transparent, and aligned across the enterprise, and so work that does not align can be revised, deferred, or stopped. The principles will prompt conversation to confirm ownership and measurable outcomes up front so progress can be tracked and accountability is clear.

1. Deliver clear value aligned with County priorities



Investments are expected to deliver clear value: improved service sectors, supporting residents in need, public safety, resilience, or cost containment.

2. Align work with strategy



Technology decisions and investments should be explicitly tied to current version of the Digital Strategy. Budget requests and resource priorities should be reviewed through the lens of how investment or activity specifically supports the identified strategic priorities.

3. Pragmatic Innovation



Connect technology innovation advancements with concrete use cases. Advance into modern technologies but in an iterative manner where adoption is closely linked to value driven outcomes expressed by other departments.

4. Standardize and Reuse



Prefer shared, standards-based solutions that can be reused and integrated across the enterprise to reduce duplication, complexity, and long-run support costs over unique requirements and expectations. Prioritize solutions that enable future flexibility that will allow intelligent customizations to address business needs while not increasing technical debt and maintenance.

Digital Strategy Principles

5. Prioritize customer needs within standard platforms



Services must be designed around reasonable end-user needs, including accessibility and usability. Design and workflows come from user research, service journey mapping, and continuous testing with real users, both internal and external to the County.

6. Question and simplify before digitizing



Simplify rules, automate where appropriate, and eliminate unnecessary steps.

7. Solution ownership is clear up front



Define clear accountability up front from development through maintenance to be sustainable over time.

8. Work that has measurable outcomes is prioritized



Shift decisions on work from anecdote to evidence. Data is treated as a strategic asset to guide service design, policy decisions, and performance improvement. This includes built-in analytics, feedback loops, and outcome tracking.

9. Work is delivered in an agile manner



Continuous improvement model is expected, not a failure. We deploy small, usable increments rather than large, multiyear “big bang” projects.

10. The Department of Technology Services will review all new and updated technology purchases



Security, privacy, and compliance are non-negotiable design and operating requirements that must be reviewed by DTS for every technology related decision. DTS will also review for interoperability, customer experience, redundancy in existing systems, and future proof technology architectures.



ARLINGTON VIRGINIA

Technology Services

MISSION STATEMENT

Provide excellent customer service through technology leadership and expertise in support of the strategic goals and priorities of Arlington County. Embrace existing and emerging technologies to achieve better business outcomes while incorporating innovation, security, and sustainability.

VISION STATEMENT

Leveraging our passion for technology, deliver innovative world-class digital services and solutions to create a more equitable and sustainable digital experience that makes a difference in people's lives, businesses, and our community.