

AMPUp Advisory Committee November 18, 2025 Meeting Summary

Attending: Angelique Bradford, Grant Cook, Rachel Dunham, Dave Fatula, Rebecca Gruber, Ann LeRoyer, Arthur Prokosch, Stephen Revilak

Staff: Claire Ricker

Consultants: Alison LeFlore (Stantec), Phil Schaeffing (Stantec)

Stantec Update

Mr. Schaeffing would like to start with a recap of the public workshop. 50 people attended the event in-person, with 18 more attending on-line. There have been 97 survey responses so far, and the survey will remain open until November 23. People came and went throughout the meeting, which was the atmosphere that Stantec was hoping to create.

Mr. Schaeffing presents the results of public participation, both via the workshop and the survey. These included:

- 80% of workshop attendees and 77% of survey results show somewhat or high agreement with the revised vision statement.
- 70% somewhat or highly agree with the goals for land use.
- Many attendees felt that all of the land use and housing goals were very important, which will make them a challenge to prioritize.
- A number of people were concerned about mixed-use development reducing the amount of space for businesses.
- People were supportive of context-sensitive density increases.
- Leveraging town owned assets generated the least interest.
- There were mixed responses to allowing two-family homes throughout town, with 70% saying "yes" or "maybe".
- 80% gave "yes" or "maybe" support to 3-6 story buildings on Mass Ave.
- In the area of economic development, there was support for streamlining permitting and enhancing the public realm and commercial districts.
- For transportation, residents were interested in being connected to more destinations.

- There was interest in improving pedestrian and bicycle safety and mixed feelings about the overnight parking ban.
- On the topics of historic and cultural resources and public facilities, there was support for all of the cultural strategies.
- There was agreement on growing the town's commercial tax base but moderate to low support for new growth. These findings are somewhat contradictory and may indicate a need for more education.
- Many emphasized the need to maintain public facilities.

Mr. Schaeffing says the draft plan will set the stage for potential strategies. It will have to be realistic about what Arlington's physical constraints are.

When going from analysis to draft strategies, there was support for more housing and for attainable housing. There was tension around open space and recreation; some respondents wanted more space for active recreation and sports while others preferred more space for passive recreations. In conversations with town staff, Stantec heard that maintaining existing recreational facilities is a challenge and the draft strategies should recognize this.

The next steps will involve getting to the level of specific medium and long-term strategies. Mass Ave and Broadway are the biggest opportunities for redevelopment over time, though there are also opportunities along the bikeway.

For town-owned sites, Russell Common and the Fox library have opportunity, though it may take time to build support for a plan for Russell Common.

Stantec suggests having strategies for accommodating small, irregularly-shaped lots and for streamlining ADU permitting via pre-approved plans.

Stantec heard a lot about regulatory and permitting impediments to economic development, and about use tables that don't recognize more contemporary business types. They recommend that each of the three business districts remain distinct, but consideration should be given to the visitor experience for each one.

On the topic of transportation, goals that resonated included making streets welcoming for all users, connecting residents to destinations, and treating parking as a resource to support larger goals. For open space and recreation, people were supportive of expanding the tree canopy, stormwater management, and maintaining existing natural landscapes. For historic and cultural resources, people wanted improved communications for promoting events. For town building and services, people were interested in making sure that we can maintain what we have, and considering lifecycle costs for facilities.

Stantec has not received notes from the Economic Development Public Forum. Staff will work on providing these materials

Committee members expressed interest in providing detailed feedback on the proposed strategies, and a desire to have strategies whose outcomes are specific and measurable.

Committee members expressed a preference that development not be confined to Mass Ave and Broadway. They felt it would be beneficial to add business opportunities north and south of Mass Ave, on streets such as River Street, Gray Street, Lowell Streets, Pleasant Street, and Mystic St.

Approval of Minutes

The committee approved minutes for their September 25 and October 23, 2025 meetings.

New Business

Ms. Ricker will think about ways to have productive reviews of the comprehensive plan strategies.

The committee's next scheduled meeting would fall on Christmas, so staff will send a poll for a different meeting date.

Open Forum

There were no speakers for tonight's open forum.

Adjourn

Meeting adjourned at 19:43.

Materials Viewed

- Slide presentation from Stantec