

Arlington Public Works



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS

The Arlington Department of Public Works (DPW) is comprised of seven divisions: Administration, Engineering, Highway, Water/Sewer Utilities, Motor Equipment Repair, Natural Resources, and Cemeteries. With a staff of 79, it is the goal of the Department to provide residents, boards, commissions, and other Town departments with superior Public Works services and support.

Administration

The Administration Division provides the following services: financial (including budget preparation and administration), invoice payment, invoice billing, grant management, and water/sewer reading-billing, personnel and payroll management, customer service, contract administration, oversight of contracted solid waste/recycling and hazardous waste collection services, and oversight of contracted streetlight maintenance on public ways and parking lots.

Accomplishments

- Continued Management of the DPW Facility improvement project including:
 - Site plan for project developed in coordination with ongoing High School Project.
 - Hired Owner's Project Manager.
 - Hired Construction Manager.
- Held nine monthly recycling center events, making public safety protocols and accommodations to protect the public during the pandemic beginning at the end of June.
- Initiated online SignUp Genius registration system for all drop off waste diversion activities.
- Secured School Sustainability Coordinator's position in the school budget for FY2022, including increased capacity for school Green Team activities and youth environmental leadership opportunities.
- Awarded \$40,000 MA DEP education and outreach grant to undertake Recycling IQ Program to improve curbside recycling quality in the areas of town identified as having the highest percentage of contamination.
- Awarded \$42,000 MA DEP Sustainable Ma-

terials Recovery Program grant in recognition of our waste diversion activities. Grant funds are designated for use to continue to support and expand waste diversion.

- Responded to the initial wave of the COVID-19 pandemic by establishing "A" and "B" work shifts and staggering attendance to minimize staff contacts while maintaining essential operations. Acquired PPE for all staff prior to returning to full attendance.

Solid Waste Collection

The Town is contracted with waste hauler, JRM Hauling and Recycling. With JRM as our contractor since 2012 the Town provides weekly curbside and dumpster collection of solid waste and bulky items from residential and business locations. We were able to expand our services to include weekly collection of recyclables and yard waste. Solid waste is also collected from the following municipal locations: Town Hall and eight other municipal buildings, Community Safety, three fire stations, two libraries, ten public schools, over twenty municipal parks, and approximately fifty public trash barrels. The bulky item collection program collects large items like couches, tables, and sinks.

The Town also provides contracted dumpster trash collection at schools, municipal buildings, non-profit organizations, apartment complexes, and condominium complexes.



Arlington Recycles

Recycling

With the advent of weekly mandatory recycling and the addition of weekly yard waste collection, in season, the Department saw a reduction in solid waste tonnage and an increase in the tonnage of materials recycled.

The Department hosts monthly Recycling Center events to collect harder-to-recycle materials that cannot be collected as part of our curbside program. At the Recycling Center, residents can drop off bulky rigid plastic items such as broken trash cans, recycling and storage bins, packing foam (expanded polystyrene coolers and the like), electronic waste/TVs/CRT computer monitors, scrap metal, clothing, textiles, books, and media such as CDs and DVDs. The Department maintains free electronic waste drop off programs during regular business hours.

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Recycling, Solid Waste, and Hazardous Waste Statistics (in tons unless specified)			
Materials	FY2018	FY2019	FY2020
Solid Waste	12,684	12,262	12,225
Single-Stream Recycling	5,111	4,994	5,170
Yard Waste	3,894	2,521	3,045
Electronic Waste	66.84	63.61	47.89
Appliances (units)	513	573	604

Accomplishments

- Food scrap diversion programs:
 - Continued pilot of FEED FiDO (Food scrap Drop Off) 24/7 drop off program, growing the number of participants who have used the program to over 700 households.
 - Distributed over seven hundred additional “food scrap diversion kits” to residents who actively subscribe to private food scrap curbside collection, reaching the initial goal of 2,000 (10%) households.
- Managed contracted curbside collection solid waste, recycling, and yard waste contracts, without interruption, through the onset of the pandemic.
- Provided discounted compost bin program.
- Improved website search ability with the RecycleSmartMa web tool in 2019 which resulted in a 2020 Arlington top hit rate of 16,000 in a single month, gaining MA DEP public recognition.
- Provided discounted rain barrel program.



Recycling coordinator Charlotte Milan and a volunteer at monthly Recycling Center set up under COVID-19 restrictions.

Yard Waste Collection

JRM collects yard waste curbside on a weekly schedule from mid-April through the first week of December. Additional recycling information can be found online at arlingtonma.gov/recycle.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection

2020 marked the twenty-third year of Arlington’s membership in the regional household hazardous waste collection program. Eight monthly collection days were held from April through November. The program continues to collect large quantities of hazardous materials including pesticides, chemicals, used motor oil, antifreeze, oil-based paints and solvents, and household cleaning products. There were 446 carloads from Arlington collected in 2020.

Engineering Division

The Engineering Division continues to provide a wide variety of support services to other DPW divisions, various Town departments, commissions, contractors, public utilities, and to the general public. The Engineering Division works closely with the Highway, Water, and Sewer Divisions upgrading and improving the infrastructure of the Town by providing surveys, engineering design, construction plans, field layouts, and field inspection services. The Engineering Division also provides technical design and specification for municipal infrastructure improvements, oversees contracted maintenance of the Town’s traffic signals, reviews and makes recommendations on the impacts of planned private construction projects, reviews and provides regulation on proposed private way projects and improvements.



New traffic signal at Lake Street and Minuteman Bikeway.

Accomplishments

- Arlington Town Engineer presented with US Environmental Protection Agency Merit Award for work protecting New England’s environment related to stormwater quality. EPA New England’s annual Environmental

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Merit Awards are given to community leaders, scientists, government officials, business leaders, schools, and students who represent different approaches, but a common commitment to environmental protection.

- Worked with other Town Departments to provide technical input and assistance for additional projects, including Arlington High School and Reservoir Beach Projects.
- Prepared, administered, and awarded 3-year contract for Traffic Signal Maintenance. Integrated Town streetlights into contract for ease of service and cost efficiencies.
- Coordinated construction of 2020 Green Infrastructure Improvement Project including twenty (20) infiltration trenches and two bio-retention facilities at the intersection of Milton Street and Herbert Road for watershed and water quality improvements.
- Administered and coordinated the construction of the Lake Street and Bike Path Traffic Signal Project for a new multimodal signalized intersection. Updated Pedestrian Push Buttons at one intersection in conjunction with Arlington Center Sidewalk Project.
- Performed oversight and monitoring for the following Town Capital Projects: road rehabilitation, pavement preservation, water rehabilitation, sewer rehabilitation and sidewalk, curb and handicap ramp work.
- Managed Street Opening Permit Program and monitored on-going utility construction projects by contractors and major utility providers in Town right of ways including Ever-source, Verizon and National Grid. Oversight was performed in a cooperative effort with the Water Division and Police Department. This included reviewing and administering work conditions and requirements including outreach, traffic management and trench repairs.
- Provided technical resource and necessary project and plan review to assist Water Division including: DEP sanitary survey, site plan reviews, unidirectional flushing program, capital water planning and transfer to GIS data collection of cross-connection inspection program.
- Continued to scan plans and records and upgrade organization and usability of system.
- Coordinated and assisted the preparation of the following administrative and regulatory requirements:
 - EPA NPDES Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) Annual Report.
 - Annual Arlington Reservoir Dam Emer-

gency Action Plan

- MWRA Municipal Discharge Permit
- MADEP Sanitary Survey for water distribution system



New sidewalks in Arlington Center were installed over the summer.

Highway Division

The Highway Division of the Public Works Department maintains 102 miles of roads, 175 miles of sidewalks, 175 miles of curbing, eight parking lots, along with numerous guardrails, stairs, walls, and fences. The division oversees solid waste services including trash/recycling collections, bulky items collection/disposal, waste fill disposal, and hazardous waste programs. The Division also performs street sweeping services and maintains traffic lines, signs, and drainage systems (culverts, pipes, manholes, catch basins, and drain channels).

Street Sweeping – Swept all streets two times (spring and fall).

- Sweeping on main streets done weekly (twenty-eight times).

Snow and Ice Control – There were 11 snow and ice events.

- Private contractors used for 5 events.
- 24 inches total snow for season.

Performance Measurements

- Repaired or replaced 37 catch basins.
- Cleaned 280 catch basins. In addition, cleaned all Town catch basins (3,566) utilizing a service contractor.
- Removed and installed 1,300 linear feet of sidewalk.
- Patched over 1,500 potholes using 1,175 tons of asphalt.

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Special Projects

- Placed 150 sand barrels town-wide for winter season.
- Delivered tax bills to post office for Treasurer's Office.
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Water/Sewer Division

The Water and Sewer Division continues to maintain 131 miles of water mains, 117 miles of sewer mains, 9 Sewer Lift Stations, 1,414 hydrants, and numerous valves, and service connections/shut offs. Additionally, the division reads usage meters and prepares quarterly bills on just under 13,000 accounts.

Performance Measurements

- Replaced 711 water meters.
- Provided water use data to the Town Treasurer for billing while changing out meters and electronic reporting equipment.
- Repaired water main leaks at 62 locations.
- Repaired water service lines at 45 locations.
- Replaced 15 hydrants.
- Flushed over 230 locations to clear blockages from sewer mains and services.
- Sampled 14 locations weekly for water quality.
- Provided over 627 markouts for underground excavation work.

Motor Equipment Repair Division

The Motor Equipment Repair Division continues to maintain 105 over-the-road vehicles including three front end loaders, five backhoes, one mini-excavator, two tractors, nine heavy-duty dump trucks, nine small dump trucks, twenty-two pickup trucks, six utility body trucks, ten snow fighters, nine school buses, two street sweepers, two sewer-flushing trucks, one rubbish packer, one compressor truck, one generator truck, two welding trucks, six sedans, three vans, one heavy-duty crane, one rack body, one small multi-use tractor, and one flat bed.

Major Accomplishments

- Assisted in applying for and winning DEP VW Settlement Grant to help replace older less efficient diesel vehicles. Grant award amount over \$275,000 applied to the purchase of 4 vehicles
- Acquired new Department vehicles; Street Sweeper, two 3/4 ton pickups with plows, two 1 ton pickups with plows, 2wd 33,000gvw Dump Truck w/plow, 4wd-44,000gvw Sander.

Performance Measurements

- Provided preventative maintenance and repairs on 150 motor vehicles, including vehi-

- cles assigned to other Town departments.
- Maintained snow and ice vehicles during events.

Natural Resources Division

The Natural Resources Division consists of the Forestry and Parks sections and is responsible for the proper management, care, and maintenance of Arlington's public trees.

Forestry

During the year the division maintains Town trees including those along the Minuteman Bikeway that runs from the Cambridge line to the Lexington line. The division is responsible for the execution of the holiday lights program. The division also cleans and maintains traffic islands around Town. On Massachusetts Avenue the division is responsible for installing event banners. Staff of the division maintains the extensive grounds between the Town Hall and the Robbins Memorial Library.



Trail at Menotomy Rocks Park.

Performance Measurements

- Planted 154 trees. Was not able to do a spring planting of 150 trees due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- Removed 179 trees.

Accomplishments

- Performed significant tree maintenance along ¾ of the Minuteman Bike/Commuter Path (Progress halted by pandemic).
- Treated at-risk trees against Emerald Ash Borer insects.
- Maintained "Tree City USA" designation from the National Arbor Day foundation. Awarded a "Growth Award" (second year in a row) for additional work in protecting and providing for trees in Arlington.
- Developed an Adopt-A-Tree pilot program in collaboration with the Arlington Tree Committee and Amazing Arlington Volunteers. The program allows individuals to "adopt"

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a tree using a web-based program. Those who are involved with the program commit to water their adopted tree, can name it submit photos of its progress.

Park Maintenance

The division maintains thirty parks, twenty-six playgrounds, nineteen athletic field infrastructure open spaces, and public lands including: the Reservoir forested trails and beach facility, North Union Spray Pool, the Town Hall Gardens, the Donald R. Marquis Minuteman Trail, Broadway Plaza, the Robbins House gardens, Menotomy Rocks Park, and twenty-one traffic islands.

Performance Measurements

- Continued to put a priority on prompt graffiti removal.
- Maintained Town-owned sidewalks through-



One of many signs DPW posted across Arlington during the pandemic to encourage compliance to state face covering order. This sign is on the bike path by Magnolia Field.

out the winter.

Cemeteries Division

The Cemeteries Division maintains the sixty-two acre Mt. Pleasant Cemetery and the Old Burying Grounds. Lawn mowing, raking, and tree trimming are done by contracted services. Maintenance of grave-stones, tombs, walls, fences, roadways, trees, and the Chapel is provided by four staff members.

Mt. Pleasant Cemetery is expected to run out of space for new gravesites within the next few years and planning for future interments is a major priority. The new columbarium was completed in 2017. The Town is now able to provide niches for cremain burial on a preneed basis. The cemetery also has space available for green cremain burials.

Mount Pleasant Cemetery Service Types	Amount	Revenues Invoiced
New Earth Grave Site Sales	32	\$64,500
New Urn Grave Sales	1	\$350
Perpetual Care Sales	33	\$16,500
Grave Site Buy-backs	0	\$0
Earth Burials	137	\$137,000
Cremain Burials	76	\$22,800
Columbarium Sales	13	\$21,800
Columbarium Fees	6	\$600
Public Lot	0	\$0
Non-Resident Burials	92	\$46,000
Overtime, Holiday Surcharges	34	\$23,900
Mock Burial	3	\$600
Foundation Charge	39	\$7,800
Disinterments	0	\$0
Veteran Graves – earth/urn	3	\$1,200
Recording Fee	5	\$500
Chapel Use, Misc.	2	\$180
Total Gross Revenues		\$343,730

Major Accomplishments

- Installed new street signs throughout cemetery.
- Began repairs to historic burial vaults and with support from CPA, begin construction of improvements within the Old Burying Grounds.
- Completed significant preventative tree care pruning and removal of unhealthy trees

Recognitions

In conclusion we would like to extend heartfelt thanks to our dedicated Public Works employees who keep our roads repaired and plowed, water flowing, our sewers running, our trash picked up, and our parks attractive throughout the pandemic. Their efforts are an important part of the high quality of life that we enjoy in our community.

TREE COMMITTEE

The Arlington Tree Committee was established in 2010 by the Arlington Select Board. The mission of the Arlington Tree Committee (ATC) is to promote the protection, planting, and care of trees in Arlington.

Work with Tree Warden

The ATC meets monthly with Tree Warden, Tim Lecuire, to discuss ongoing tree-related issues in Town and to provide support to him and his staff.

Updating, Utilizing Inventory & Management Plan

The town-wide street tree inventory completed in 2017, has proven to be a very helpful tool for both the Tree Warden and the ATC. The DPW uses the inventory to streamline tree planting and maintenance and updates it regularly. This year, ATC used the Tree Inventory to establish its new *Adopt-a-Tree* program.



Adopt-a-Tree Program

To improve the watering of new street trees, the ATC (working with the town GIS Office and the Planning Dept) piloted an Adopt-a-Tree program designed to engage residents and businesses in tree watering efforts. Using the Tree Inventory map, people selected a street tree convenient to their home or workplace and committed to watering it for the growing season. Over 100 individuals/families participated. Arlington high school students also participated, earning community service hours. The Adopt-a-Tree program will be run again in 2021.

Article 16. Tree Protection and Preservation Bylaw

This year the ATC developed a packet for builders that includes a sample tree plan and construction guidelines to streamline the Tree Preservation Bylaw process.

Additional Tree Protection Efforts

ATC worked with the Tree Warden to develop guidelines for tree protection during construction in town. Tree protection at Town projects, such as the rebuilding of Arlington High School, have been prioritized. Mature trees along Mass Ave. at the AHS construction site have been carefully protected with sturdy fencing to prevent vehicular traffic or storage of building materials within the Critical Root Zones of the trees.

Community Tree Canopy Program

Since 2017 the ATC has collaborated with the Tree Division to use the Trees Please fund to support a Community Canopy Program. This program, offering native trees at a subsidized cost to residents and businesses for planting on private property, has resulted in the planting of nearly 150 additional trees. Despite the pandemic the 2020 program resulted in 40 trees planted.

Other Tree Planting Initiatives

In 2020, using Trees Please funds, additional trees were planted at Lussiano Playground and at Mt Pleasant Cemetery. Discussions are ongoing with Arlington Housing Authority to add trees to their properties.

Raise Awareness of Trees and their Benefits

- Ongoing publicity using Facebook, Instagram, Google Group to share tree-related info and photographs.
- Updating and maintaining the arlingontrees.org website.
- Publicizing the need to water new trees.

