

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, 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

- Management of the DPW Facility improvement project including: Project awarded and construction commenced. Coordinated the temporary relocation of Natural Resources, Engineering, and Inspectional Services to facilitate project activities.
- Held twelve monthly Reuse & Recycling Center weekend events, adding weekday events to accommodate resident demand for recycling harder-to-recycle materials.
- Shared SignUp Genius registration system with the Health Department to assist in their COVID-19 testing and sharps collection scheduling.
- Awarded \$38,000 MA DEP Sustainable Materials Recovery Program grant in recognition of our waste diversion activities. Grant funds are designated to continue to support and expand waste diversion.

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 by appointment during regular business hours and on select weekend dates as well.

Accomplishments

- Continued our four-pronged approach to divert food scraps from municipal trash: distribution of “food scrap diversion kits” to residents who actively subscribe to private food scrap curbside collection, offering discounted pricing for backyard compost bins, continuation of the FEED FiDO pilot program (850 households are registered to drop off fruit, vegetable, and grain food scraps), and food scrap diversion in the school system.
- Managed contracted curbside collection solid

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Recycling, Solid Waste, and Hazardous Waste Statistics (in tons unless specified)			
Materials	FY2019	FY2020	FY2021
Solid Waste	12,262	12,225	12,434
Single-Stream Recycling	4,994	5,170	5,028
Yard Waste	2,521	3,045	3,435
Electronic Waste	63.61	47.89	59.62
Appliances (units)	573	604	836

waste, recycling, and yard waste contracts, without interruption, through the onset of the pandemic.

- Expanded reuse programming to include a seasonal, weekly Swap Shed, and renamed the waste diversion activity location as the Reuse & Recycling Center.
- Received Technical Assistance grant (80 hours) from MA Department of Environmental Protection to assist the Town in preparing for a new solid waste and recycling contract for FY23.
- Hired a Waste and Diversion Compliance Officer for residential outreach and monitoring thus expanding both our enforcement capacity as well as our ability to carry out program updates, expansions, and improvements.
- Provided discounted rain barrel program.

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

2021 marked the twenty-fourth 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 681 carloads from Arlington collected this year.

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 munic-

ipal 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.

Accomplishments

- Performed oversight and monitoring for Town Capital Projects: road rehabilitation, pavement preservation, water rehabilitation, sewer rehabilitation, stormwater improvements, sidewalk construction, pavement markings and curb and accessibility work.
- Worked with other Town departments to provide technical input and assistance for new and ongoing projects, including Arlington High School, Reservoir Beach Projects, and Wellington Park.
- Managed Street Opening Permit Program and monitored ongoing 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, trench repairs, and annual trench inspection program.
- Administered Traffic Signal Maintenance and Street Light Maintenance contract receiving and directing maintenance for traffic signals, streetlights, lighting projects and transfer requirements of streetlights and National Joint Utilities Notification System (NJUNS) Double



A birds-eye view of Wellington Park one of many projects DPW Engineering supported.

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Pole management system, through phone, email, and Request Answer Center.

- Completed construction of the Lake Street and Bike Path Traffic Signal Project for a new multimodal signalized intersection.
- 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.
- On-going scanning and cataloging to digitize plans and records in an electronic format, including upgrade, organization, and usability of system in conjunction with GIS System.
- Coordinated construction of the 2021 Green Infrastructure Improvement Project which included the installation of thirty-four infiltration trenches designed to remove contaminants from stormwater runoff and improve water quality in the Mystic River in accordance with MS4 permit guidelines. This work was funded by a CZM Grant of approximately \$85,000.

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 18 snow and ice events.

- Private contractors used for 8 events.
- 50 inches total snow for season.

Performance Measurements

- Repaired or replaced 38 catch basins.
- Cleaned approximately 3,207 catch basins (with the assistance of contracted help).
- Removed and installed 7,435 linear feet of sidewalk.
- Patched over 1,300 potholes using 1,100 tons of asphalt.

Special Projects

- Placed 150 sand barrels town-wide for winter season.
- Delivered tax bills to post office for Treasurer's Office.
- Constructed Parklets at several locations and on outdoor dining options.



Snow removal operations in Arlington Heights.

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 546 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 52 locations.
- Repaired water service lines at 56 locations.
- Replaced 27 hydrants.
- Flushed over 217 locations to clear blockages from sewer mains and services.
- Sampled 14 locations weekly for water quality.
- Provided over 613 markouts for underground excavation work.



Water Division performing water main work.

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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 with compliance for DEP VW Settlement Grant. (Intended to replace older less efficient diesel vehicles). Grant award amount over \$275,000 applied to the purchase of 4 vehicles. Vehicles to be replaced were disassembled and destroyed in compliance with grant requirements.
- Acquired new Department vehicles; 1 ton pickup with plow, 2wd 33,000gvw dump truck w/plow, 4wd-44,000gvw sander, backhoe/Loader, Tree Dept. boom truck, and utility body pickup.

Performance Measurements

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

Performance Measurements

- Planted 424 trees. The number of planted trees exceeded the annual goal of 300. This was done to make up for a shortfall the previous year related to the Covid Pandemic.

- Removed 112 trees.

Accomplishments

- Continued treatment of at-risk trees against Emerald Ash Borer insects.
- Maintained "Tree City USA" designation from the National Arbor Day foundation. Arlington has been a "Tree City USA" community since 2001. Awarded a "Growth Award" (third year in a row) for additional work in protecting and providing for trees in Arlington.
- Maintained sidewalks adjacent to Town properties throughout the winter.
- Worked with Arlington Tree Committee to support Community Tree Planting Program. Partnership to provide discounted trees for planting on private property (57 trees distributed).
- Continued the Adopt-A-Tree pilot program in collaboration with the Arlington Tree Committee and Amazing Arlington Volunteers. The program allows individuals to "adopt" a tree using a web-based program. Those who are involved with the program commit to water their adopted tree, can name it and submit photos for display on the Arlington Tree Committee website of its progress.



Tree Division planting trees in East Arlington.

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.

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Performance Measurements

- Continued to put a priority on prompt graffiti removal.
- Maintained Town-owned sidewalks throughout the winter.



A cyclist enjoys the Minuteman Bikeway.

Cemeteries Division

The Cemetery Division is responsible for the care and maintenance of the Mt. Pleasant Cemetery and the Old Burying Ground. The Mt. Pleasant Cemetery is an active cemetery comprising 62 acres of land and accommodates an average of 200 burials per year. The Old Burying Grounds is an inactive, historical community cemetery of six acres. Three volunteer Cemetery Commissioners make recommendations to the Town Manager on rules, regulations, and fees.



The chapel at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery.

Mount Pleasant Cemetery Service Types	Amount	Revenues Invoiced
New Earth Grave Site Sales	36	\$78,250
New Urn Grave Sales	5	\$1,750
Perpetual Care Sales	41	\$20,500
Grave Site Buy-backs	0	\$0
Earth Burials	139	\$139,000
Cremain Burials	83	\$24,900
Columbarium Sales	16	\$26,400
Columbarium Fees	13	\$1,300
Public Lot	0	\$0
Non-Resident Burials	100	\$49,525
Overtime, Holiday Surcharges	38	\$25,600
Mock Burial	2	\$400
Foundation Charge	43	\$8,600
Disinterments	0	\$0
Veteran Graves – earth/urn	4	\$1,700
Recording Fee	9	\$900
Chapel Use, Misc.		\$250
Total Gross Revenues		\$379,075

Major Accomplishments

- Completed installation of new street signs throughout cemetery.
- Completed repairs to historic burial vaults and with support from CPA, began construction of improvements within the Old Burying Grounds.
- Planted fifteen trees throughout Mt. Pleasant.
- Defined a “Green Field” area for cremation burials.

Recognitions

The following Public Works Employee completed service to the Town and its residents in 2021 with over twenty-five years of service: John Rousakis, Night Watchman, 32 years of service. The Town is grateful for his dedicated and loyal service.

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. 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.

Tree Committee 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. This year special emphasis was given to addressing heat island issues through tree planting in our hottest regions of town, expanding planting in areas where trees were lost due to development, planting in areas with the lowest “tree equity score,” improving tree watering strategies, and testing for gas leaks prior to planting. Funds collected as a result of the Tree Bylaw are being used to facilitate some of these initiatives.

Updating and Utilizing Inventory and 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 for its 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.) continued with our *Adopt-a-Tree* program designed to engage residents and businesses in tree watering efforts. Using the Tree Inventory map, volunteers selected a street tree convenient to their home or workplace and committed to watering it for the growing season. Over 80 individuals/families participated this year. Arlington high school students also participated, earning community service hours. The *Adopt-a-Tree* program will run again in 2022.

Article 16. Tree Protection and Preservation Bylaw. This year, the ATC worked with the Tree Warden and the Building Inspector to prioritize compliance of the Tree Preservation Bylaw by making the bylaw part of the checklist process for builders. The ATC-developed packet for builders that includes a sample tree plan and construction guidelines also helps 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 are 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 200 additional trees. The 2021 program resulted in 50 trees planted. Additionally, the Tree Committee collaborated with the Arlington Housing Authority to plant 7 trees at Chestnut Manor in Spring 2021 and 8 trees at Menotomy Manor in Fall 2021.

Other tree planting initiatives. In 2021 additional trees were planted at Whittemore Robbins House, the Burial Ground and at Mt. Pleasant Cemetery. Discussions are ongoing with Arlington’s Chamber of Commerce, Arlington’s Planning Department, and other town institutions to make tree planting a priority along our main thoroughfares and in our hottest regions of town.

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 arlingtontrees.org website.
- Publicizing the need to care for and water new trees.

