

ARLINGTON TODAY

Existing Conditions

Arlington Today: Existing Conditions

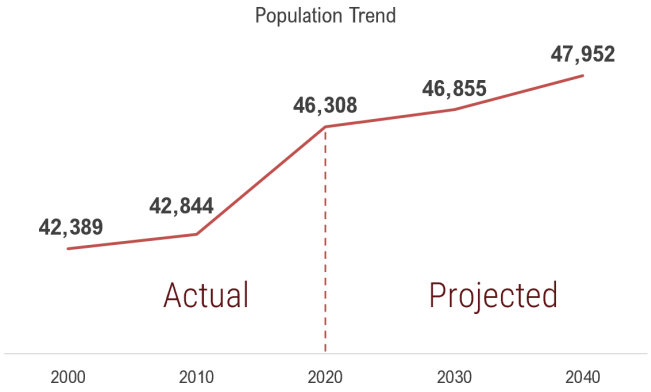
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Demographics

Population

Arlington's population peaked around 53,500 in the 1970 Census. After about three decades of decreasing population between 1970 and 2000, the population stabilized in the early 2000's and began growing again. Arlington's population increased by 8% (3,464 people) between the 2010 and 2020 Census to reach 46,308.

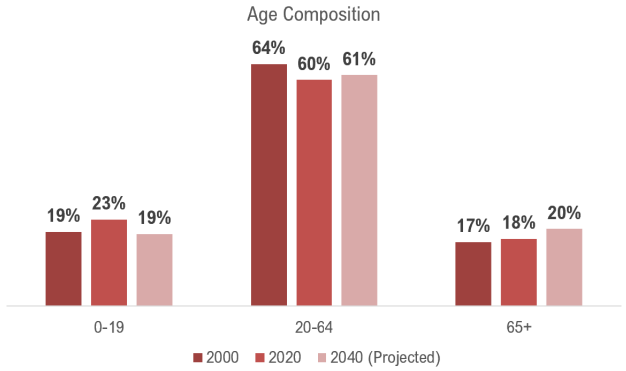
Population projections by the UMass Donahue Institute expect Arlington's population to continue growing over the next twenty years, though at a slower rate than the last decade. These projections are estimates based on several demographic factors such as birth and death rates and net migration patterns. They do not predict the future but are a useful consideration for future planning.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Census Bureau 2020 decennial Census data, UMass Donahue Institute V2024 Population Projections

Age Composition

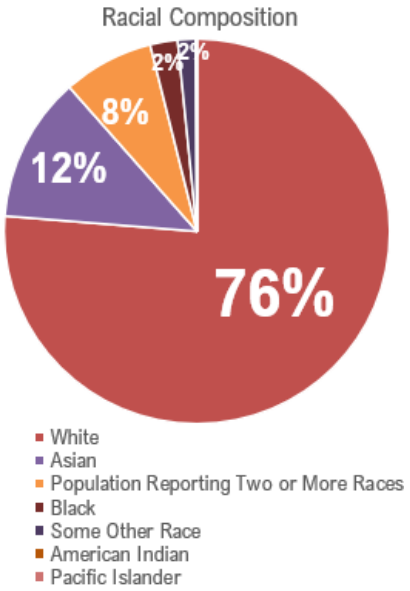
The median age of Arlington residents is 42 years, up slightly from 41.8 years in 2010 and slightly older than Massachusetts' median age of 39.6 years. Since 2000, the proportion of younger and older residents has increased slightly while the proportion of residents ages 20-64 decreased from 64% to 60%. Children under 20 now make up 23% of the population compared to 19% in 2000. This age group is projected to decline in the coming years. People aged 65 and older account for 18% of the population, a slight increase since 2000. This demographic is expected to continue growing over the next two decades. The population of working-age adults (20-64) is expected to stabilize or slightly increase.

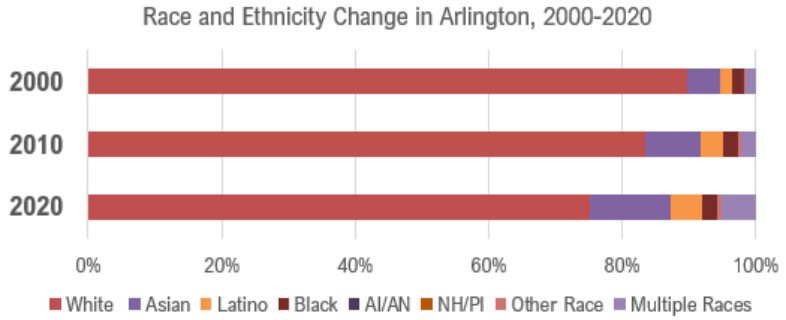


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Census Bureau 2020 decennial Census data, UMass Donahue Institute V2024 Population Projections

Race and Ethnicity

About three-quarters of Arlington's residents identify as white but the community's diversity has been increasing over the past twenty years. Today nearly a quarter of Arlington's population is made up of racial and ethnic minorities. Asians make up the second largest racial group (12%), followed by those who identify as two or more races. About 5% of the population is Hispanic or Latino of any race, up from 3.3% in 2010.

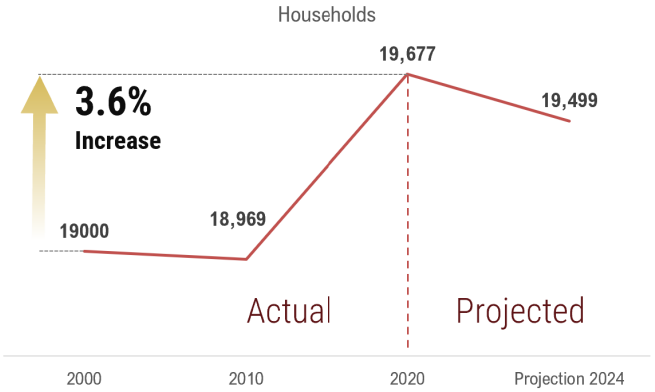


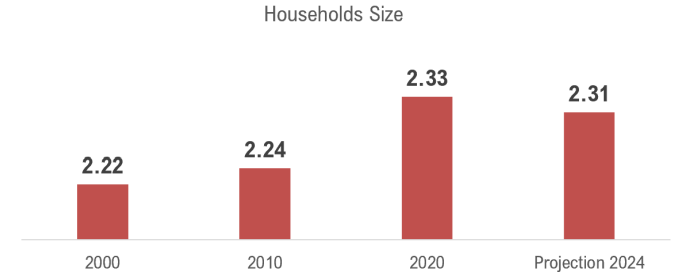


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Census Bureau 2020 decennial Census data

Households

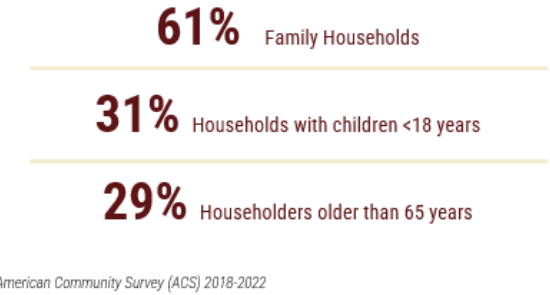
The total number of households in Arlington has grown by 3.6% since 2000 (677 households). The average household size is 2.33 people per household, an increase of 5% over the same period. The Town's average household size remains smaller than Massachusetts (2.45).



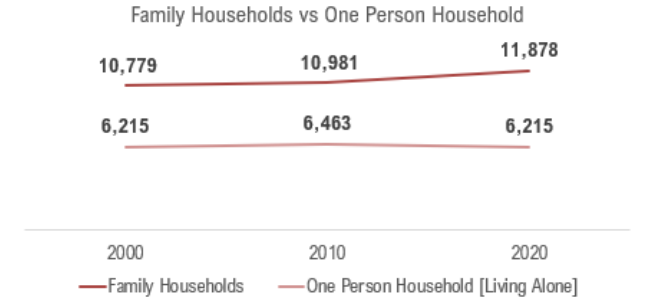


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Census Bureau 2020 decennial Census data, Esri Projection

About 61% of households today are family households*, an increase from 57% in 2000. Just over 30% of households have one or more members under 18 years old. Slightly less than 30% of households include someone age 65 years or older. Roughly one-third of households are one-person households, and the number of these households has remained relatively stable over the last twenty years.

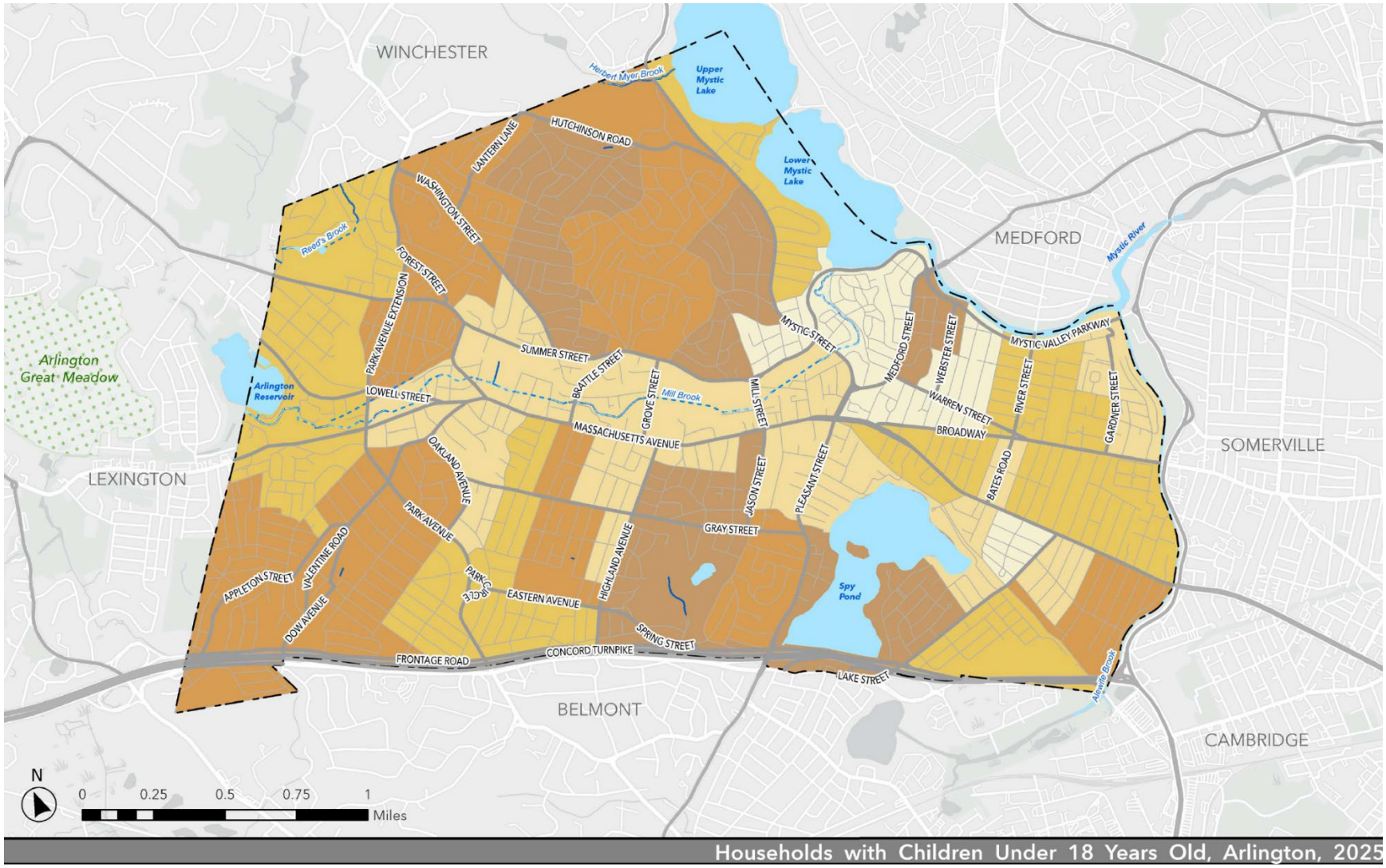


: American Community Survey (ACS) 2018-2022



: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Census Bureau 2020 decennial Census data, American Community Survey (ACS) 2018-

**The U.S. Census defines a family household as one or more people living in the same household who are related by birth, marriage, or adoption.*



Households with Children Under 18 Years Old, Arlington, 2025

Percent of Households with Children under 18 Years Old
- 0.0% - 13.2%
- 13.3% - 20.8%
- 20.9% - 30.9%
- 31.0% - 43.7%
- 43.8% - 67.7%

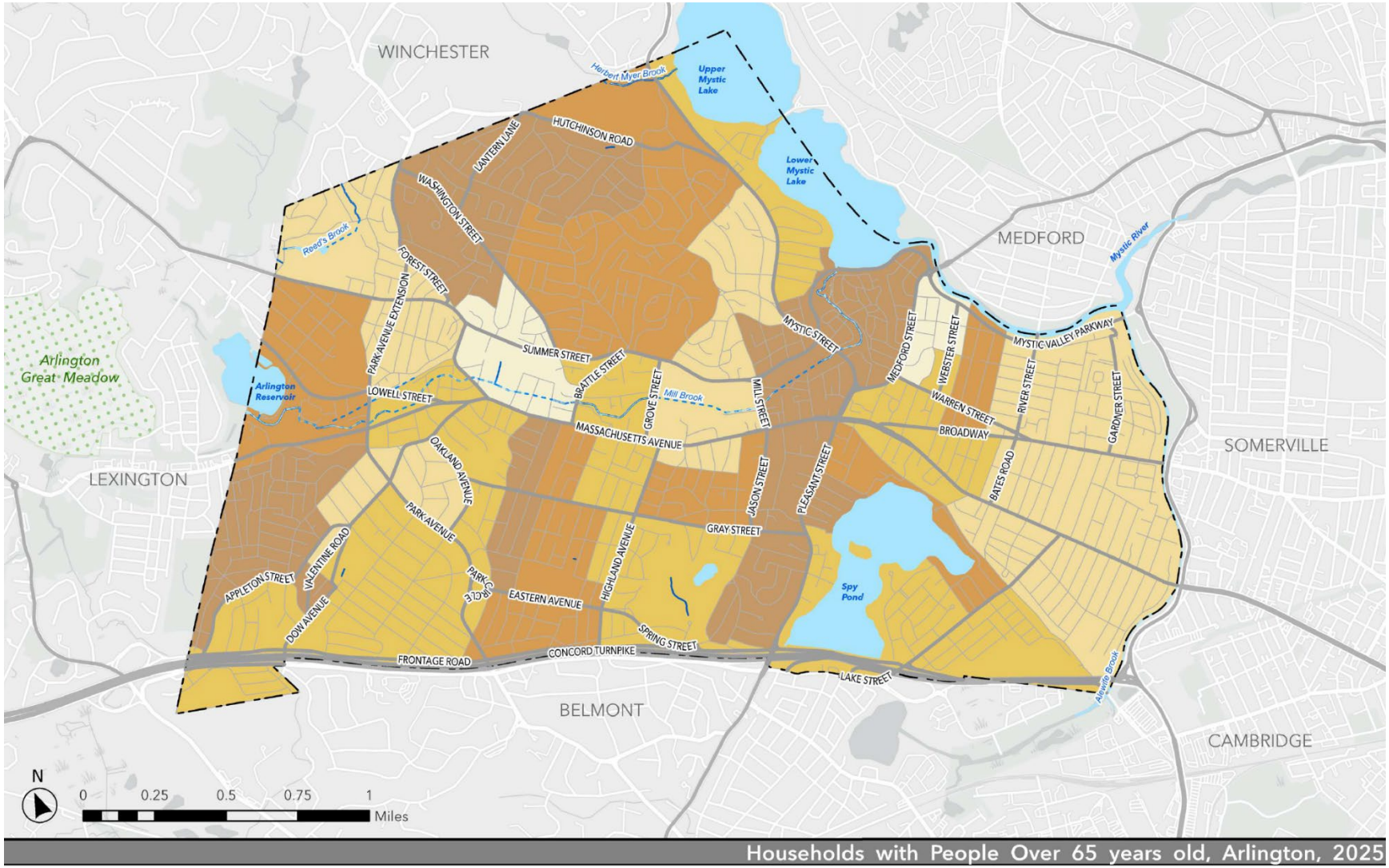
- Surface Water
- Brook/Stream
- Brook/Stream (Underground)

- Town Boundaries
- Major Road
- Local Road

ARLINGTON MASSACHUSETTS

Date: 03.28.2025
Existing Conditions Report
Arlington, MA

Map displays U.S. census data by census block group.



Households with People Over 65 years old, Arlington, 2025

Percent of Households with People over 65 Years Old
- 0.0% - 6.9%
- 7.0% - 21.5%
- 21.6% - 33.1%
- 33.2% - 41.6%
- 41.7% - 67.4%

- Surface Water
- Brook/Stream
- Brook/Stream (Underground)
- Town Boundaries
- Major Road
- Local Road

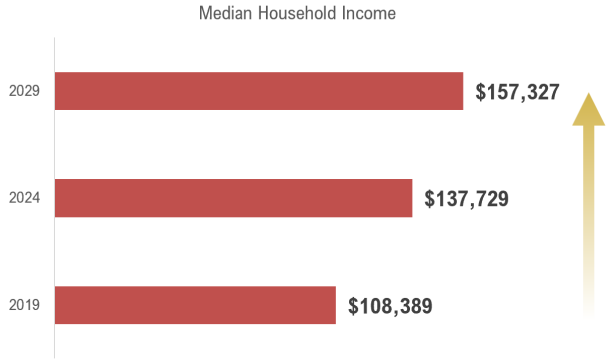
ARLINGTON MASSACHUSETTS

Date: 03.28.2025
Existing Conditions Report
Arlington, MA

Map displays U.S. census data by census block group.

Median Income

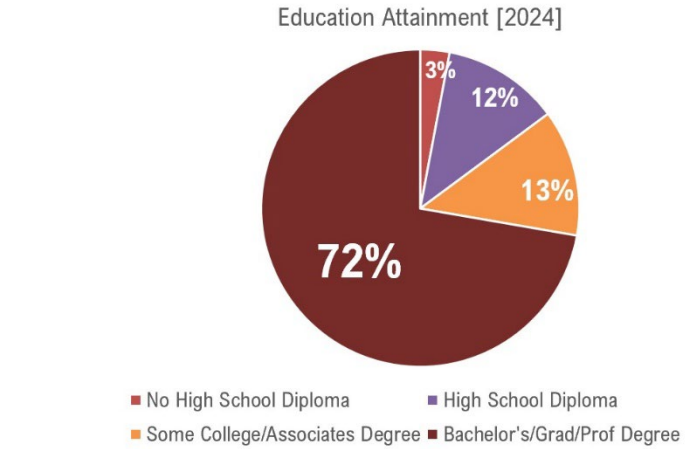
Arlington's median household income has been steadily increasing. Currently at $137,729, it has increased by nearly 47% since 2015 and by 17% in the last five years. However, 5.4% of households are below the federal poverty level, about half the Commonwealth's rate of 10.4%. Projections expect median household income to increase by 14% over the next five years.



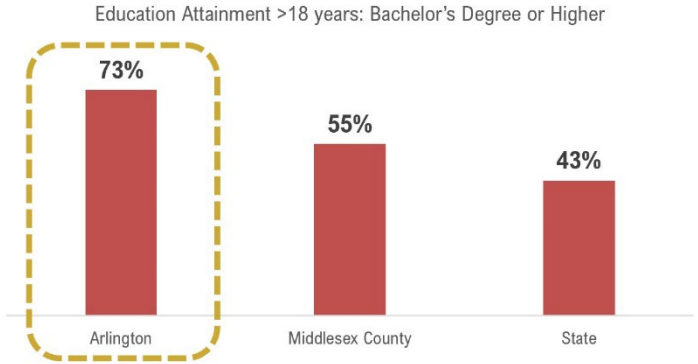
Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 2015-2019, Esri forecasts for 2024 and 2029

Education

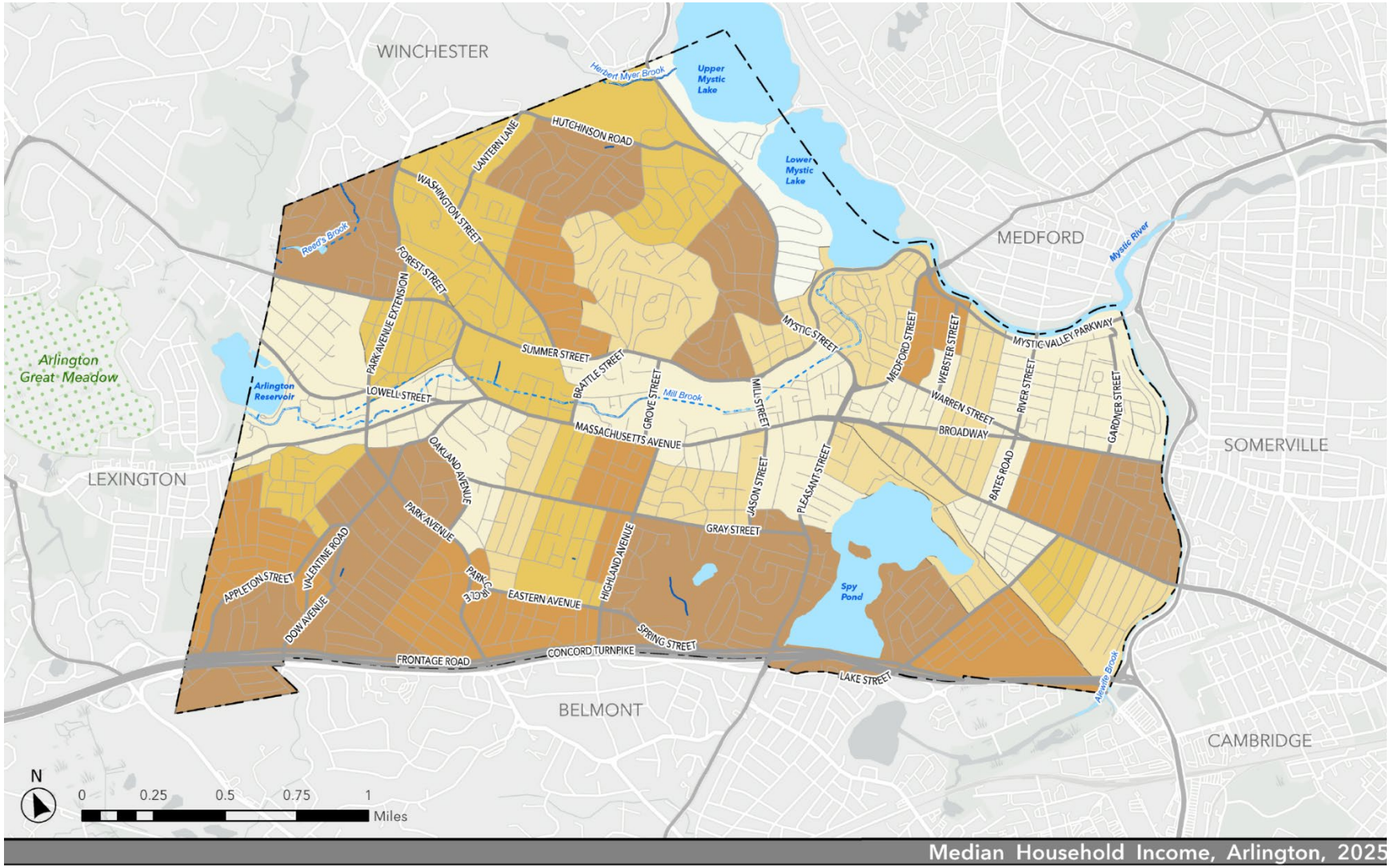
Arlington is a highly educated community with 73% of residents aged 18 or older holding a bachelor's degree or higher, significantly more than that of Middlesex County (55%) and Commonwealth (43%). Additionally, over 40% of Arlington residents hold an advanced degree (graduate or professional), surpassing the County's 28.8% and the Commonwealth's 19.6% advanced degree attainment rates.



Source: Esri 2024



Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 5 Yr 2023



Median Household Income, Arlington, 2025

Median Household Income
- Not Recorded
- $0 - $120,710
- $120,711 - $151,571
- $151,572 - $171,613
- $171,614 - $202,474
- $202,475 - $250,000

- Surface Water
- Brook/Stream
- Brook/Stream (Underground)

- Town Boundaries
- Major Road
- Local Road

ARLINGTON MASSACHUSETTS

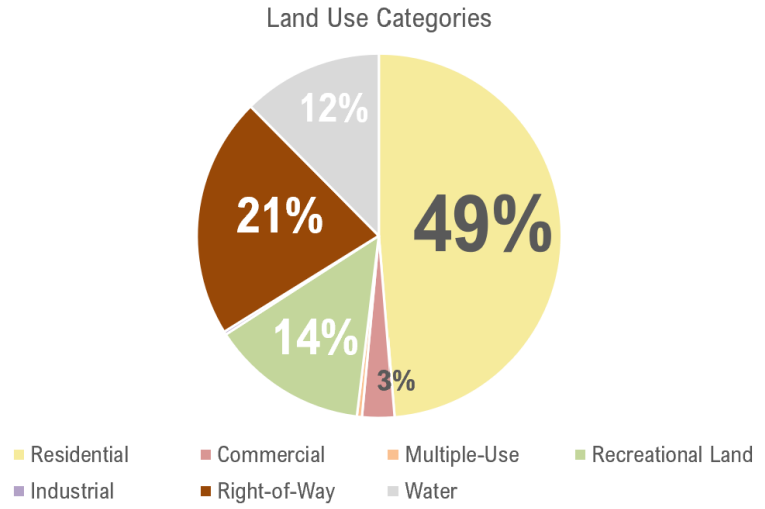
Date: 03.24.2025
Existing Conditions Report
Arlington, MA

Land Use

Existing Land Use

The Town of Arlington covers approximately 5.5 square miles, nearly 95% of which is land and about 12% is surface water. As a predominantly residential suburb of Boston, residential land makes up the largest use category, representing about half. Rights-of-way (streets, etc.) occupy about 20% of Arlington's area. Commercial uses make up significantly less at 3%, and mixed-use and industrial uses are less than 1% combined. Almost 15% of the Town's area is dedicated to open spaces and recreation uses.

Commercial, multiple use, and industrial uses are concentrated along Massachusetts Avenue, Mystic Street, Medford Street, and Broadway and between Massachusetts Avenue and the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway.



LAND USE CATEGORIES	AREA [ACRES]	PERCENTAGE [%]
Residential	1,738	49%
Commercial	100	3%
Multiple-Use	16	0.5%
Open Space and Recreation	498*	14%
Industrial	10	0.3%
Right-of-Way	764	21%
Water	432	12%
Total	3,570	100%

* Town owns 226 acres in Lexington, MA which includes Arlington Great Meadows and a portion of Arlington Reservoir.

Source: GIS Data Set from Town *Map displays U.S. census data by census block group.*

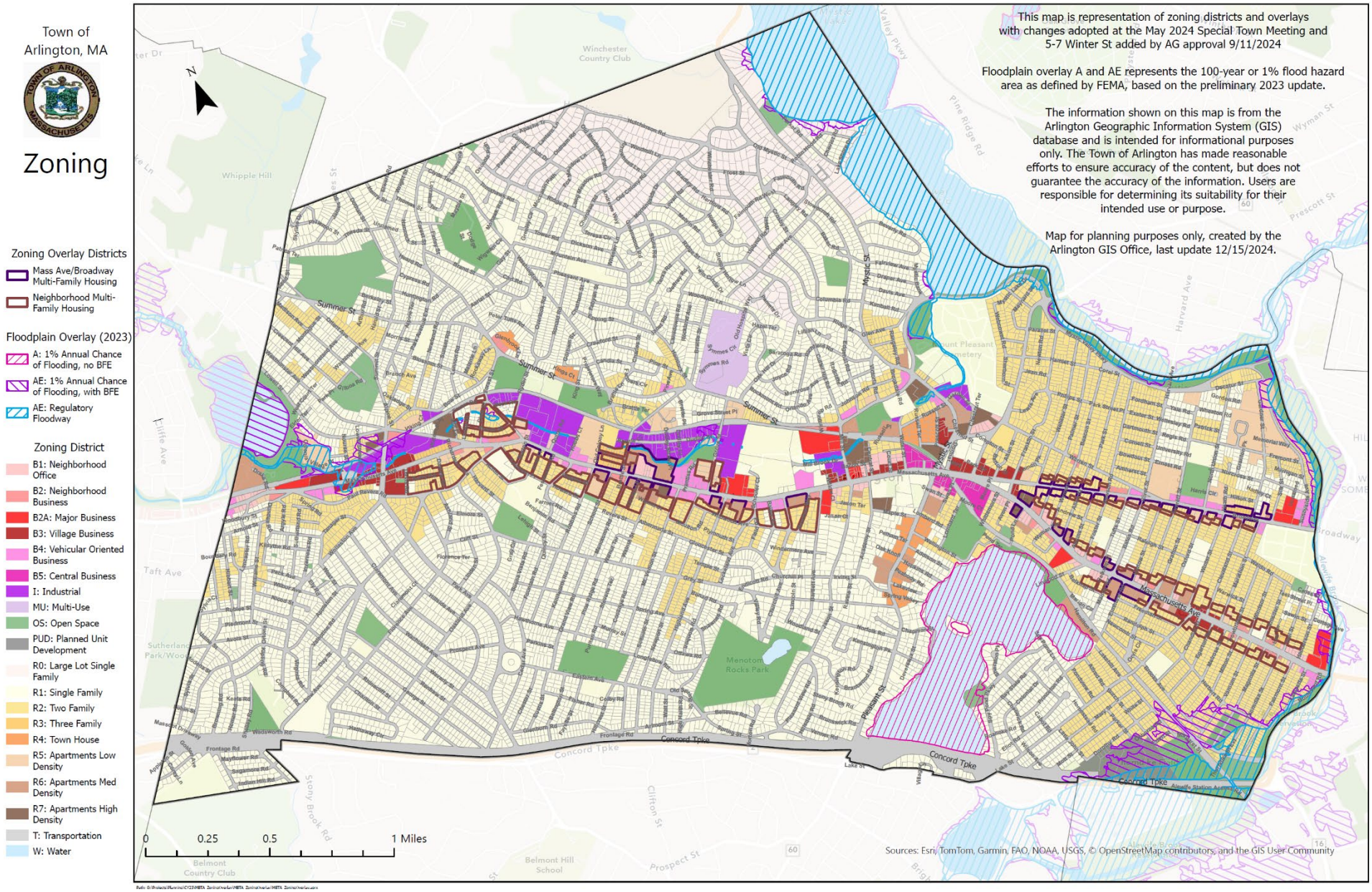
Existing Zoning

In 2018 Arlington recodified its zoning bylaw to improve clarity, consistency, and useability. The bylaw includes nineteen zoning districts and three overlay districts.

Most of Arlington falls within one of the eight residential zoning districts. Only 4% of Arlington is zoned for commercial and 2% for industrial. The multiple-use district makes up just 0.5% of town and about 8% of the town falls within the Open Space District. Much like its distribution of land use, Arlington's non-residential zoning districts are primarily clustered along the Massachusetts Avenue corridor, Mystic Street, Medford Street, and Broadway and between Massachusetts Avenue and the Minuteman Commuter Bikeway. Residential zoning districts surround this main corridor with higher density residential zones located adjacent to these commercial and mixed-use corridors and more broadly throughout East Arlington.

ZONING DISTRICT	AREA [ACRE]	PERCENTAGE [%]
R1 - Single Family	1,803	51%
R2 - Two Family	629	18%
OS - Open Space	271	8%
R0 - Large Lot Single Family	238	7%
I - Industrial	75	2.1%
R5 - Apartments Low Density	64	1.8%
R6 - Apartments Med Density	49	1.4%
B4 - Vehicular Oriented Business	30	0.8%
B3 - Village Business	28	0.8%
B1 - Neighborhood Office	26	0.7%
B2A - Major Business	22	0.6%
R4 - Town House	19	0.5%
R7 - Apartments High Density	19	0.5%
MU - Multi-Use	18	0.5%
B2 - Neighborhood Business	17	0.5%
PUD - Planned Unit Development	16	0.5%
B5 - Central Business	10	0.3%
R3 - Three Family	8	0.2%
T - Transportation	1	0.0%
Total Area	3,570	100%

Source: Town of Arlington GIS


Town of Arlington, MA
Zoning
This map is representation of zoning districts and overlays with changes adopted at the May 2024 Special Town Meeting and 5-7 Winter St added by AG approval 9/11/2024
Floodplain overlay A and AE represents the 100-year or 1% flood hazard area as defined by FEMA, based on the preliminary 2023 update.
The information shown on this map is from the Arlington Geographic Information System (GIS) database and is intended for informational purposes only. The Town of Arlington has made reasonable efforts to ensure accuracy of the content, but does not guarantee the accuracy of the information. Users are responsible for determining its suitability for their intended use or purpose.
Map for planning purposes only, created by the Arlington GIS Office, last update 12/15/2024.
Zoning Overlay Districts
Mass Ave/Broadway Multi-Family Housing
Neighborhood Multi-Family Housing
Floodplain Overlay (2023)
A: 1% Annual Chance of Flooding, no BFE
AE: 1% Annual Chance of Flooding, with BFE
AE: Regulatory Floodway
Zoning District
B1: Neighborhood Office
B2: Neighborhood Business
B2A: Major Business
B3: Village Business
B4: Vehicular Oriented Business
B5: Central Business
I: Industrial
MU: Multi-Use
OS: Open Space
PUD: Planned Unit Development
R0: Large Lot Single Family
R1: Single Family
R2: Two Family
R3: Three Family
R4: Town House
R5: Apartments Low Density
R6: Apartments Med Density
R7: Apartments High Density
T: Transportation
W: Water
N
0
0.25
0.5
1 Miles
Sources: Esri, TomTom, Garmin, FAO, NOAA, USGS, © OpenStreetMap contributors, and the GIS User Community

Residential Districts

The R0, R1, and R2 districts are single- and two-family residential districts. Together, these districts comprise a substantial majority of the residentially zoned land in Arlington. The R3 and R4 districts are established residential areas in or adjacent to the commercial centers along Broadway and Massachusetts Avenue. The R5, R6, and R7 districts are apartment districts in which a variety of uses and different densities of development are allowed. Most of these districts are along Massachusetts Avenue and Pleasant Street, primarily within or adjacent to Arlington Center.

- Large Lot Single-Family (R-0): The Large Lot Single-Family District has the lowest residential density of all districts and is generally served by local streets only.
- Single-Family (R-1): The predominant uses in R1 are single-family dwellings and public land and buildings.
- Two-Family (R-2): The predominant use in R2 is a two-family dwelling or duplex. This district is generally served by local streets only and its neighborhoods are largely walkable and well established. It includes areas that are generally within walking distance of the stores and transportation facilities along Massachusetts Avenue and Broadway.
- Three-Family (R-3): The predominant use in the R3 district is a three-family dwelling. These neighborhoods typically have a small-scale multifamily residential character.
- Townhouse (R-4): The predominant uses in the R4 district are one- and two-family dwellings in large, older houses. Conversions of these old homes to apartments or offices are allowed to encourage their preservation. Townhouse construction is permitted at the same density as the apartment conversions, and at a scale in keeping with the older houses.
- Apartment/Low Density (R-5): The predominant use is two- to three-story apartment buildings located along or near principal arteries. The Town allows small-scale offices on principal arteries only.
- Apartment/Medium Density (R-6): The predominant land uses consist of a mix of apartment buildings up to four stories tall and offices at a smaller scale.
- Apartment/High Density (R-7): This district accommodates apartment buildings up to five stories high and offices of a similar scale.

Business Districts

- Neighborhood Office District (B1): The predominant uses include three-family dwellings, houses with offices on the ground floor, or office structures which are in keeping with the scale of adjacent houses. Primarily located on or adjacent to Massachusetts Avenue, this district is intended to encourage preservation of small-scale structures to provide contrast and set off the higher-density, more active areas along the Avenue. Mixed-use buildings without retail space are allowed in this district. *Note: This zoning designation was voted for removal at the Spring 2025 Town Meeting. The decision is pending approval by the Massachusetts Attorney General as of Fall 2025*.
- Neighborhood Business District (B2): The Neighborhood Business District is intended for small retail and service establishments serving the needs of adjacent neighborhoods

and oriented to pedestrian traffic, and mixed-use buildings. Locations are almost all along Massachusetts Avenue or Broadway.

- Major Business District (B2A): The Major Business District is located along Massachusetts Avenue, Mill Street, Summer Street, and Broadway. These areas generally contain retail and service uses that serve the needs of a large neighborhood area. Customers generally arrive by car, so the Town wants to ensure that ample parking is available to serve the retailer. Mixed-use buildings are allowed in this district, as is medium density housing due to the district's proximity to residential uses.
- Village Business District (B3): The Village Business District's predominant uses include retail, service and office establishments catering to both convenience and comparison-goods shoppers and oriented to pedestrian traffic. Mixed-use structures are allowed in this district. The three locations include portions of the principal business areas of Arlington: Lake Street, Arlington Center, and Arlington Heights.
- Vehicular Oriented Business District (B4): The Vehicular Oriented Business District provides for establishments that are primarily oriented to automotive traffic, which means they require large amounts of land in proportion to building coverage. This district also consists of establishments devoted to the sale or servicing of motor vehicles, the sale of vehicular parts and accessories, and service stations. Arlington has an abundance of automotive and automotive accessory sales and service establishments. As these businesses gradually close, the Town has encouraged conversion of the property to other retail, service, office, or residential use, particularly as part of mixed-use development.
- Central Business District (B5): The Central Business District is a small district in Arlington Center. It includes retail, service, and office uses, and it provides for large scale development. The scale is intended to reinforce the Center's role as the focus of activity in Arlington. Mixed-use development is encouraged, such as the combining of residential and business uses in one building. Activities shall be oriented to pedestrian traffic and to centralized parking.

Other Districts

- Multi-Use (MU): The Multi-Use District allows larger-scale development only when controlled by the Arlington Redevelopment Board through urban renewal plans and Environmental Design Review. Designation as a Multi-Use District requires a minimum of one acre of land.
- Industrial (I): The Industrial District in the Mill Brook Valley allows uses requiring the manufacture, assembly, processing, or handling of materials which because of their traffic, noise, appearance, odor, or hazards would be disruptive to residential and other business uses.
- Transportation (T): In the Transportation District, the principal uses are bus terminals, open space uses, and the Minuteman Bikeway.
- Planned Unit Development (PUD): The Planned Unit Development District provides for large scale, multi-use development upon approval of a development plan and the assembly of a large amount of land.

- Open Space (OS): The Open Space District includes parcels under the jurisdiction of the Park and Recreation Commission, Conservation Commission, Arlington Redevelopment Board, Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), or Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA). Structures, where present, are clearly accessory to the principal open space and recreation functions of the property.

Overlay Districts

- Floodplain District: This district is intended to preserve the natural flood control characteristics and the water storage capacity of existing floodplains and to protect the public from hazard and loss through the regulation of future development of lands adjoining such watercourses. Additionally, it protects the health and safety of the occupants of lands subject to seasonal or periodic flooding in the Mill Brook, Alewife Brook, Mystic River, and Mystic Lakes floodplain.

- Inland Wetland District: This district is intended to preserve and protect the streams, water bodies, and other watercourses, including wetlands. The district protects the health and safety of persons and property against the hazards of flooding and contamination while also preserving and maintaining the groundwater table for potential water supply purposes. It also protects the community against the detrimental use and development of lands adjoining such watercourses and conserves the watershed areas in Arlington for the health, safety, and welfare of the public. *Note: This zoning designation was voted for removal at the Spring 2025 Town Meeting. The decision is pending approval by the Massachusetts Attorney General as of Fall 2025*.

- Multi-family Housing Overlay: Two districts consisting of the Massachusetts Avenue/Broadway Multi-Family (MBMF) Overlay District and the Neighborhood Multi-Family (NMF) Overlay District. The purpose of these districts is to respond to the local and regional need for housing by enabling development of a variety of housing types including those with affordable housing requirements in compliance with MGL 40c Section 3A. The districts also promote multi-family and higher density housing near services and public transportation to ensure pedestrian-friendly development and to reduce dependency on automobiles. They also encourage economic investment in the redevelopment of properties and residential uses to provide a customer base for local businesses.

All residential zoning districts as well as the PUD district permit single-family dwellings by right. The R0 and R1 districts only allow single-family dwellings and group homes by-right. Two-family dwellings are allowed by right in the R2 through R7 zoning districts. Other residential uses including three-family dwellings, townhouses, and apartment buildings require a special permit in residential districts. Three-family dwellings and townhomes are permitted by special permit in the R3 through R7 districts. Apartment buildings are permitted by special permit in the R5 through R7 districts.

Accessory dwelling units are permitted accessory uses in all residential and business districts.

Three-family dwellings are also allowed by special permit in all business districts (B1 to B5). Townhouses are allowed by special permit in all but the B4 district, and apartment buildings in all but the B1 district. Townhouses and apartment buildings are also allowed by special permit in the Multi-Use (MU) and Planned Unit Development (PUD) districts.

Permitted residential uses in Arlington zoning districts

Residential:

Class of Use	R0	R1	R2	R3	R4	R5	R6	R7
Residential								
Single-family detached dwelling	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Six or more single family dwellings on one or more contiguous lots	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
Two-family dwelling, duplex			Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Six or more units in two-family dwellings or duplex dwelling on one or more contiguous lots			SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
Three-family dwelling				SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
Townhouse				SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
Apartment building						SP	SP	SP
Conversion to apartments, up to 18 units per acre, with no alteration to the exterior of the building					SP	SP		
Single-room occupancy building				SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
Group home	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Conversion of one- or two-family dwelling to bed and breakfast	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
Assisted living residence							SP	
Dormitory *(Note: See Section 3.5 if use is for educational or religious purposes)*			SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP

Business:

Class of Use	B1	B2	B2A	B3	B4	B5
Residential						
Single-family detached dwelling						
Two-family dwelling, duplex dwelling						
Six or more single-family dwellings or six or more units in two-family dwellings or duplex dwellings on one or more contiguous lots	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
Three-family dwelling	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
Townhouse	SP	SP	SP	SP		SP
Apartment building		SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
Conversion to apartments, up to 18 units per acre, with no alteration to the exterior of the building	SP					
Single-room occupancy building	SP					SP
Group home	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Hotel/Motel			SP	SP	SP	SP
Conversion of one or two-family dwelling to bed and breakfast	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP	SP
Assisted living residence				SP		
Dormitory *(Note: See Section 3.5 if use is for educational or religious purposes.)*	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y

Other Districts:

Class of Use	MU	PUD	I	T	OS
Residential					
Single-family detached dwelling [A]		Y			
Two-family dwelling, duplex dwelling [A]		Y			
Three-family dwelling		SP			
Townhouse	SP	SP			
Apartment building	SP	SP			
Conversion to apartments, up to 18 units per acre, with no alteration to the exterior of the building					
Single-room occupancy building		SP			
Group home	Y	Y			
Hotel/Motel		SP			
Artists' Mixed Use			SP		
Assisted living residence	SP				
Dormitory *(Note: See Section 3.5 if use is for educational or religious purposes)*	SP	SP			

Housing

Existing Housing Stock

Arlington's neighborhoods developed gradually over the course of more than one hundred years and reflect changes in development styles and socio-economic dynamics. While a variety of housing types exist, in general, most housing units are in single family or two-family structures.

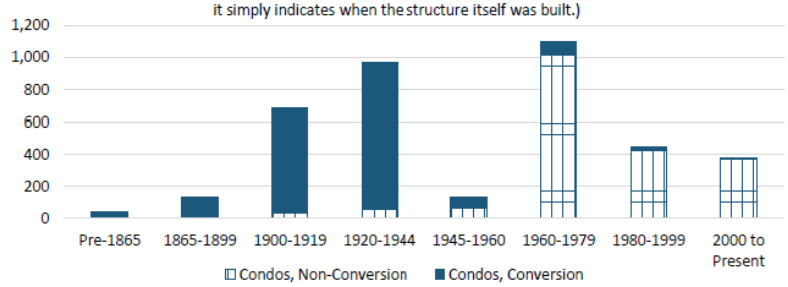
Age & Type

There are approximately 20,400 housing units in Arlington that range in style from detached single-family homes to larger apartment buildings. Single-family homes make up 44% of the local housing stock and two-family homes make up 25%. The remaining units are in small (3+ units) to larger multi-family buildings (30+ units).

The majority of Arlington's housing units were built before 1980 with just under half constructed prior to 1940. Most newer single-family homes replaced older dwellings and tend to be larger and more expensive than their predecessors. Arlington's two-and-three family homes, smaller-scale multifamily (3+ units), and multi-use buildings tend to be older and largely constructed during the early twentieth century. Larger-scale multifamily buildings were built over the last sixty years.

A substantial number of condominiums (condos) also make up Arlington's housing stock. About 28% of existing condos were built as new construction between 1960 and 1979 and nearly half are conversions made to older buildings. The rate of condo conversion has decreased by over 70% since 2016.

Figure 2.14. Condominiums, Year Structure Built
Source: Arlington Assessor's Records, 2021
(Note: For condo conversions, this does not indicate when the conversion took place; it simply indicates when the structure itself was built.)



Source: 2022 Housing Production Plan

Tenure & Vacancy

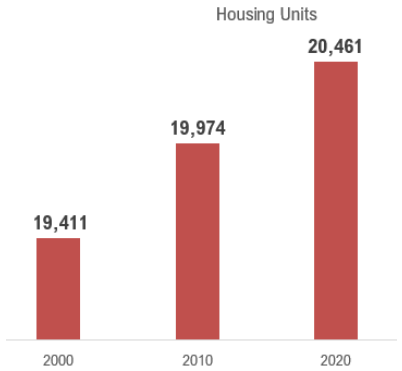
While just under 60% of units are owner-occupied and just over 40% are rental units, housing tenure varies across Arlington's neighborhoods. For example, Turkey Hill has a 73.6% ownership rate and very small proportion of the town's rental housing inventory (7%). East Arlington, on the other hand, has a 42.1% ownership rate and contains 34.3% of the town's rental inventory. As Arlington's 2022 Housing Production Plan (HPP) notes, these differences in tenure are closely linked to differences in household incomes and race, indicating potential barriers to housing equity within the town. About 4-5% of Arlington's housing units are estimated to be vacant.

Length of Residency

Approximately 88% of Arlington residents live in the same residence as one year ago. Of the 12% who lived in a different residence, 7.7% moved from a different Massachusetts city or town, 2.8% moved from a different state, and 1.5% immigrated from abroad.

Development Trends

Arlington's housing stock has grown slightly over the past two decades, averaging about fifty new units per year (5% growth 2000-2020). Most net new units can be attributed to multi-family developments, the demolition and rebuilding of single-family units on subdivided lots, and the conversion of two-family and other smaller multi-family units into condos.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau 2020 decennial Census data

The conversion of two- to three-family or larger buildings into condominiums has also added units to Arlington's housing stock. According to the 2022 HPP, 294 structures were converted to condos between 2016 and 2022, creating 633 new condo units. While this is less than the condo conversion rate reported in the 2016 HPP it is still impactful and contributes to ongoing public perception of the prevalence of tear-down-and-rebuilt projects.

Figure 2.23. Net New Housing Units by Type, 2016-2021
Source: Arlington Department of Planning and Community Development

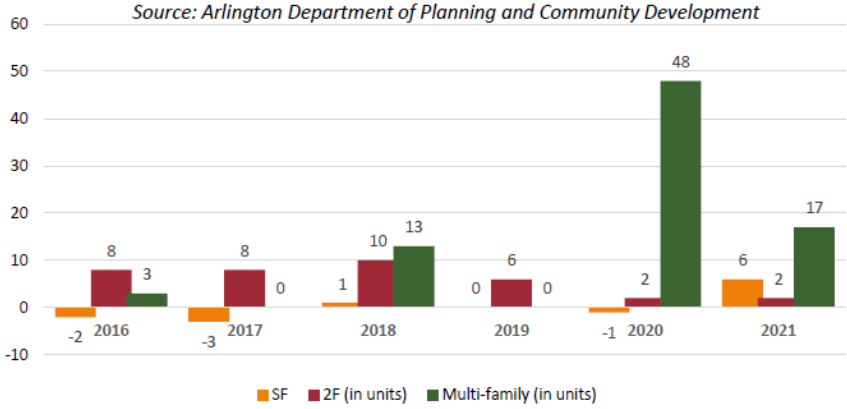
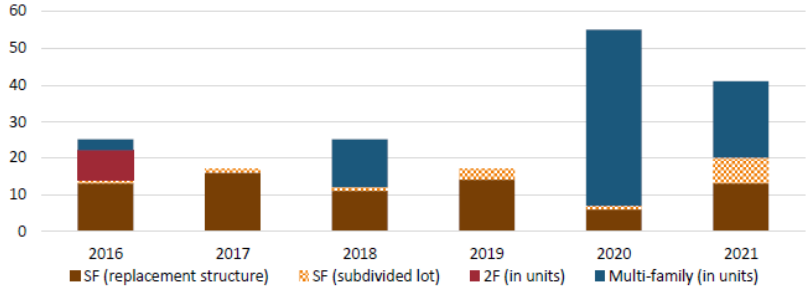
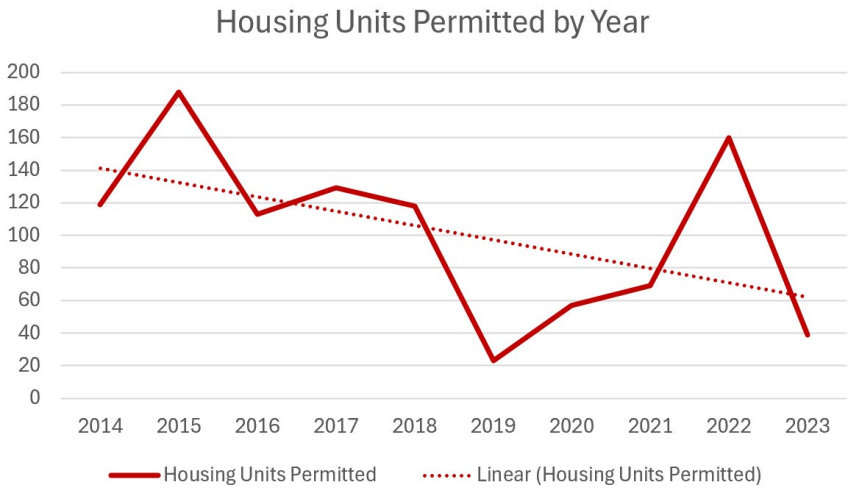


Figure 2.22. Residential Construction Per Year
Source: Department of Planning & Community Development



Source: 2022 Housing Production Plan

The pace of residential development has slowed somewhat over the past decade based on available building permit data. Approximately 1,000 units were permitted between 2014 and 2023, 86% of which were multi-family units and 14% were single-family units. 2015 saw the most units permitted with 188, while 2019 saw the fewest with only 23. Among the multi-family units permitted in this period, about 85% were in buildings with five or more units and 15% were in duplexes.



Significant Recent and Planned Housing Development

The Artemis: 124-unit multi-family development on a two-acre former industrial site. The complex includes adaptive reuse of two historic buildings and new construction. One-quarter of units (33) are reserved for households earning no more than 80% of the Area Median Income.

The Residences at Mill Brook: The development includes 50 homeownership units, of which 13 (25%) will be available to households earning no more than 80% of Area Median Income. The development is expected to be completed by the end of 2025.

10 Sunnyside Avenue: The proposed development which is due to break ground during the fall of 2025 includes 43 rental units, 100% of which will be affordable at no more than 60% of Area Median Income.

Housing Costs

In 2020 the median home sale price in Arlington was $862,000, but prices have since climbed to $960,000 influenced by pandemic dynamics and Arlington's competitive market. As discussed in Arlington's 2022 HPP, home sale prices, on average, have come in at 105% of the seller's asking price (~$560 per square foot), propelled by buyers who are willing and able to pay top dollar for the residence they want. This dynamic is a challenging obstacle for many first-time homebuyers.

Median rent is $2,043 per month, reflecting an 18% increase since 2019. This surpasses the statewide median rent and is rapidly nearing Boston's rental prices.

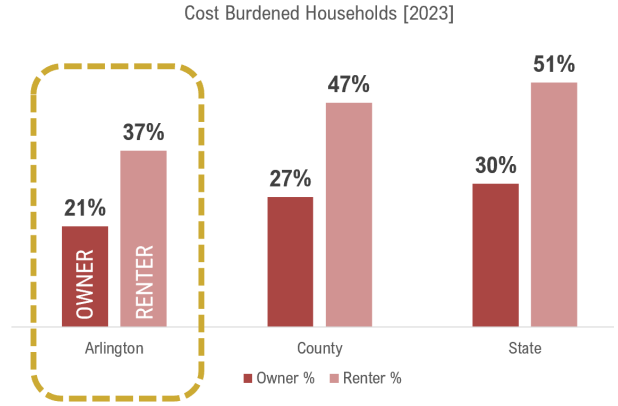
Limited housing supply paired with high demand for housing has driven prices up across Massachusetts and the dynamics in Arlington are no different. As a suburban town with access to Boston and a high-quality public school system, Arlington is an attractive place to live. The Covid-19 pandemic and rise of remote work has further escalated the cost of housing and preferences towards suburban living over more urban areas. This has created greater competition, further escalating home prices in response to high demand and a high willingness to pay from prospective home buyers. These trends can be observed in Arlington's home prices between 2020 and 2022. While this has increased property values for existing homeowners, it has significant implications for local housing affordability.

Cost-Burdened Households

Arlington includes a number of cost-burdened households that are struggling to find housing that they can afford. About 21% of owner households and 37% of renter households are considered cost-burdened and spend 30% more of household income on housing costs. Arlington has a relatively lower share of cost-burdened owner and renter households compared to Middlesex County (27% owner/47% renter) and the Commonwealth (30% owner/51% renter).

People aged 65 years and older in nonfamily households (living alone or with non-relatives) experience the highest rates of cost-burden and severe cost-burden among Arlington's Low- and Moderate-Income (LMI) households. Among non-LMI households, larger families tend to be more cost-burdened than other household types.

Over the last decade, the number of Arlington's cost-burdened households has generally decreased. This could be due to cost-burdened households being forced to move elsewhere for more affordable options, higher incomes, or another combination of reasons. However, this downward trend has not been experienced to the same degree by renters compared to owners. While the proportion of cost-burdened renters has decreased since 2010, it has been at a slower rate than observed among homeowners. Renters, especially one- and two-person households, are increasingly facing higher rents.



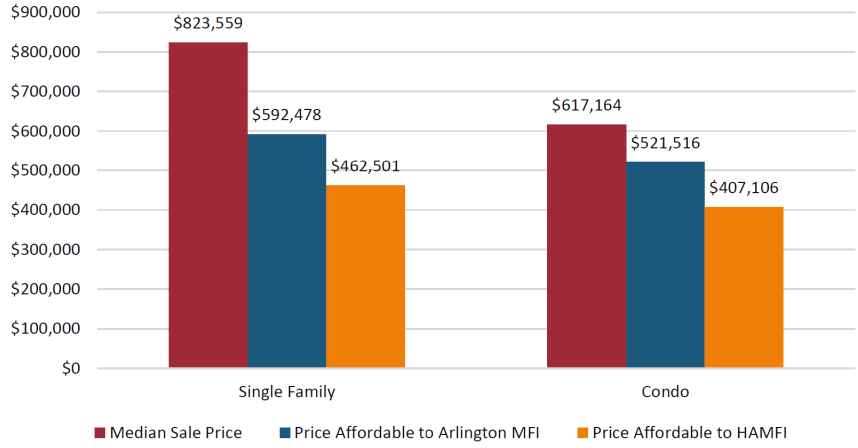
Source: American Community Survey (ACS) 5 YR 2023

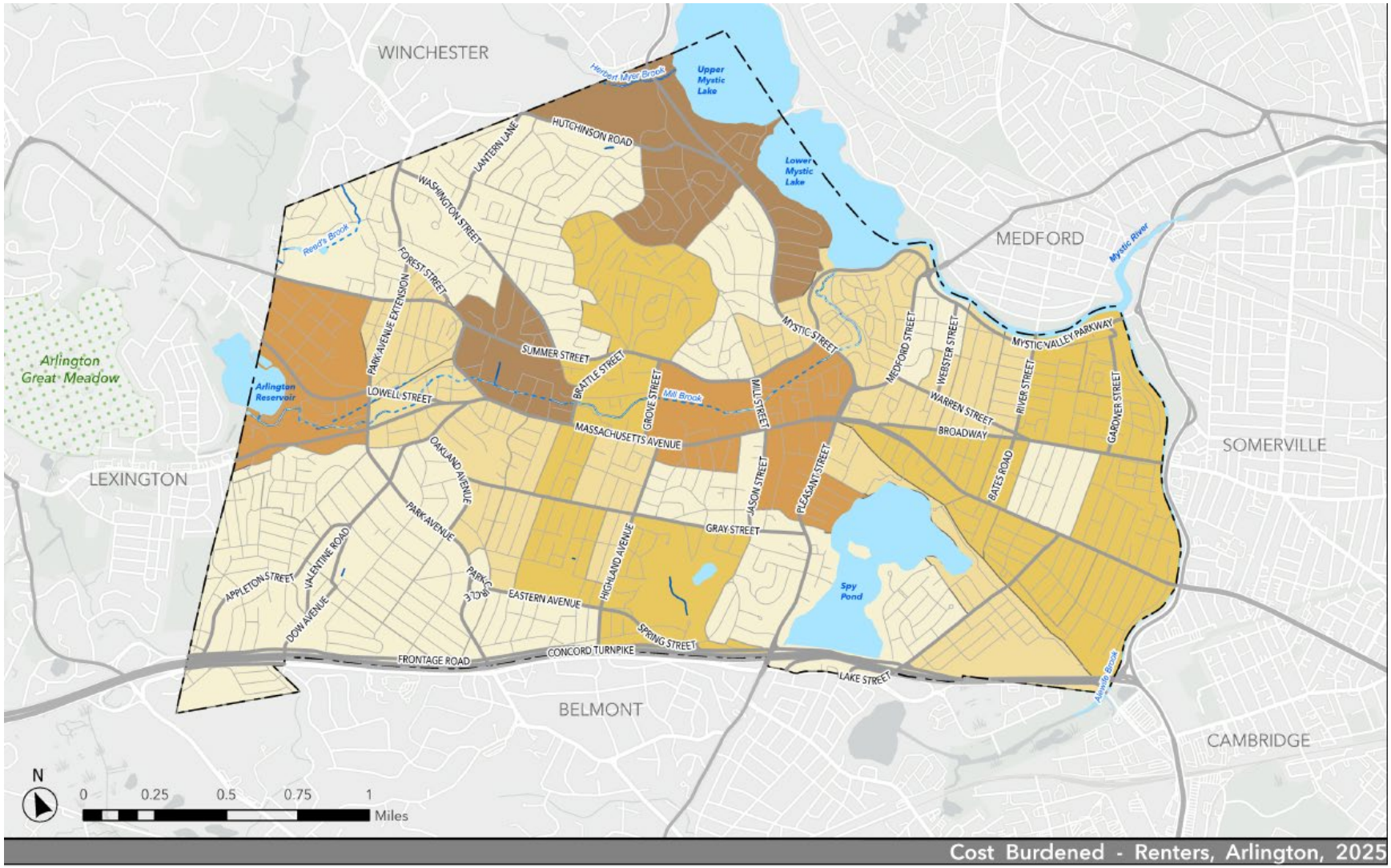
Affordability Gap

Arlington's HPP highlights a significant gap between the median sales price and the median income of Arlington households. Households earning Arlington's median household income of $145,141 (2019) can afford a single-family home of approximately $592,500 or a $521,000 condo (with additional condo fees). Both of these are significantly below the median sale prices demonstrating an increasing gap in housing attainability for Arlington households. This gap becomes even more pronounced for those earning HUD Area Median Family Income (HAMFI) as illustrated below.

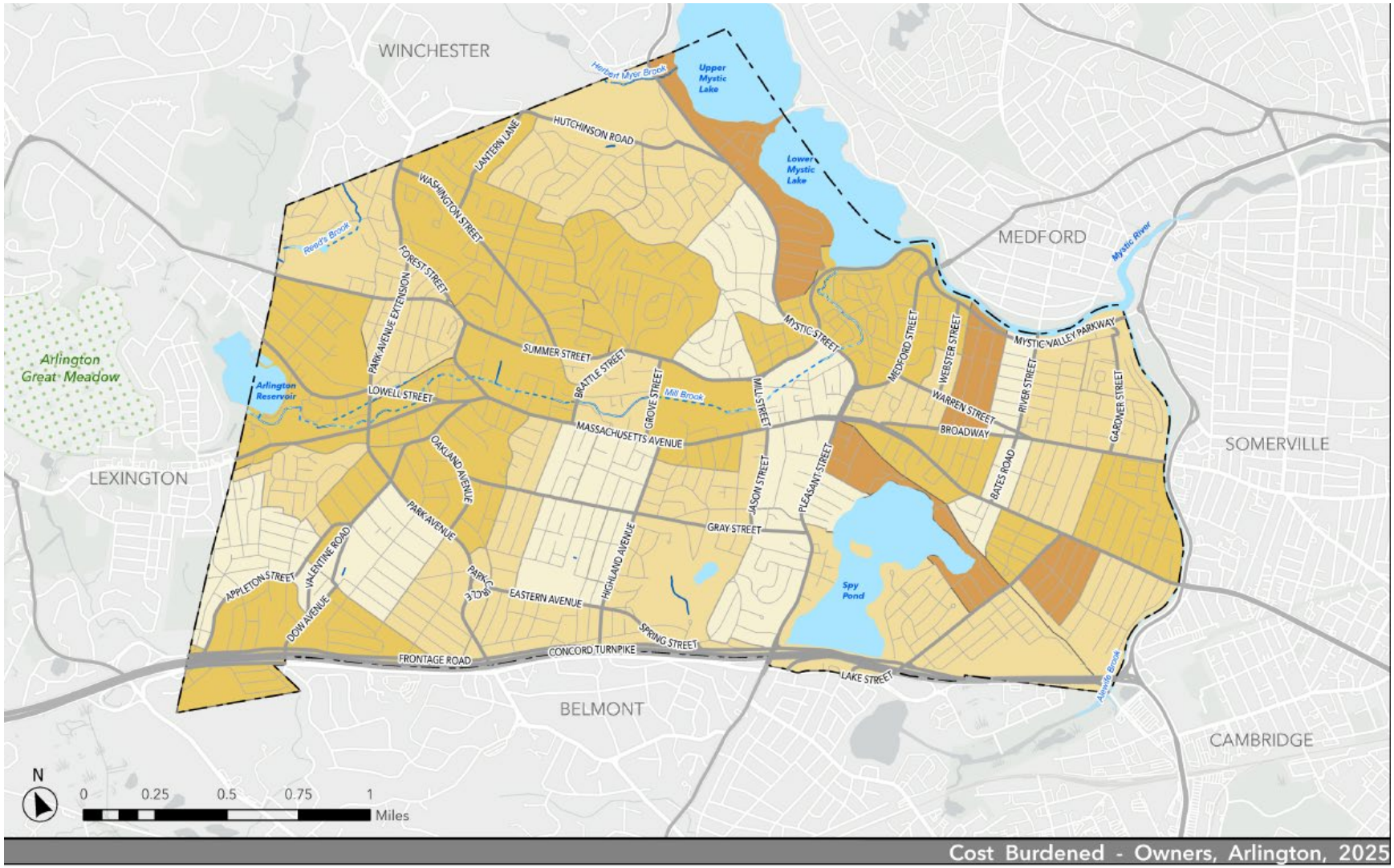
Figure 2.25. Maximum Affordable Purchase Price Compared to Median Sale Prices, 2019

Sources: Banker & Tradesman; HUD 2019 Median Family Income; American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2019





Map displays U.S. census data by census block group.



Map displays U.S. census data by census block group.

Existing Affordable Housing

Arlington's affordable housing stock is comprised of 1,302 units across public housing, Section 8, Housing Corporation of Arlington developments, and units developed through the Town's Inclusionary Zoning, 40B, and other policies. These units only meet about 20% of the community's need for deed-restricted affordable units, however. As reported in Arlington's 2022 Affordable Housing Trust Action Plan, nearly 1 in 3 households are low- or moderate-income households with household incomes less than 80% area median income (AMI) and more than 10% of households are extremely low-income households with incomes less than 30% AMI. The level of need far exceeds the availability of affordable units resulting in long waiting lists for public housing and housing vouchers.

The Arlington Housing Authority (AHA) plays the leading role in maintaining Arlington's affordable housing stock and Subsidized Housing Inventory (SHI). It owns and operates 179 units of affordable family housing, over 500 units of elderly housing, and administers the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP) and HUD Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program. In addition, it also provides special needs housing and single-room occupancy housing.

The Housing Corporation of Arlington (HCA) also plays an important role in maintaining and expanding the local affordable housing stock by acquiring and rehabilitating properties into affordable rental units. HCA owns and operates 151 rental units across various locations, serving a wide range of incomes and family types. Additionally, HCA manages a Homelessness Prevention Program which provides rent and security deposit subsidies to income-eligible households.

Family Housing

AHA offers 179 two- and three-bedroom units at Menotomy Manor in East Arlington. Veterans, current Arlington residents, and families with no other form of assistance receive preference for available units.

Senior housing

AHA owns and manages four public housing developments for the elderly and people with disabilities, prioritizing Arlington residents, disaster victims, and the homeless. These include Winslow Towers (132 units), Chestnut Manor (100 units), Cusack Terrace (67 units, including five wheelchair assessable units), and Drake Village Complex (216 units, including 7 wheelchair accessible units). Millbrook Square, a privately owned property managed by Corcoran Jennison, also provides housing for low-income, elderly, and disabled residents.

Tenant assistance

AHA manages the HUD Section 8 Housing Choice Voucher Program and the Massachusetts Rental Voucher Program (MRVP). Both offer subsidies to help income-eligible households afford market-rate rents. Tenants pay 30% or less of their monthly gross income, with AHA covering the remaining cost.

Special Needs Housing

Approximately 113 housing units provide housing for Arlington residents with special needs. AHA administers these units in addition to sponsoring a residential home that provides living accommodations for 13 developmentally disabled adults.

Two additional properties owned and operated by Caritas Communities provide 37 units to low-income single person households with shared kitchens and baths.

Group Homes

Arlington's Department of Developmental Services (DDS) and Department of Mental Health (DMH) oversee 81 housing units in group homes for adults with severe disabilities. Additional private group homes and mental health treatment facilities are also available in Town and administered by AHA. It is important to note, however, that only units managed by DDS or DMH are counted towards the 10% SHI calculation as per Chapter 40B.

Chapter 40B Subsidized Housing Inventory

Massachusetts's Chapter 40B aims to provide affordable housing for people with low-and-moderate incomes across the state by establishing a statewide goal for every city and town to have at least 10% of their total year-round housing units to be deed-restricted affordable and eligible for listing on the State's Subsidized housing Inventory (SHI). The 10% minimum represents each community's "regional fair share" of low- or moderate-income housing. Communities that do not meet this standard are subject to comprehensive permit applications for developments containing at least 20-25% affordable units. These proposals can override local zoning controls like density, parking, bedrooms, and floor area.

Safe Harbor status can be granted through the General Land Area Minimum exception if it can be demonstrated that more than 1.5% of the total land area zoned for residential, commercial, or industrial use is occupied by SHI eligible housing. Arlington recalculates its General Land Area Minimum prior to each 40B proposal to determine whether it can claim Safe Harbor status.

The most recently available data from June 2023 indicates that 1,299 housing units are on the Subsidized Housing Inventory, or 6.37% of the Town's year-round housing units in 2020. This is below the state's 10% affordable housing threshold and below the demonstrated need of income-eligible households currently living in Arlington. While Arlington has made substantial progress towards meeting the state's affordable housing goal, an additional 735 affordable units will be needed to reach the 10% threshold. To keep pace with the requirement, the town will need to ensure that new residential developments include affordable units that can be added to the SHI.

Inclusionary Zoning

Adopted in 2001, Arlington's Inclusionary Zoning bylaw requires projects with six or more housing units to set aside at least 15% of the total units as affordable. Since its adoption, the bylaw has resulted in over 60 inclusionary, affordable housing units being constructed with additional units in the pipeline.

Community Preservation Act

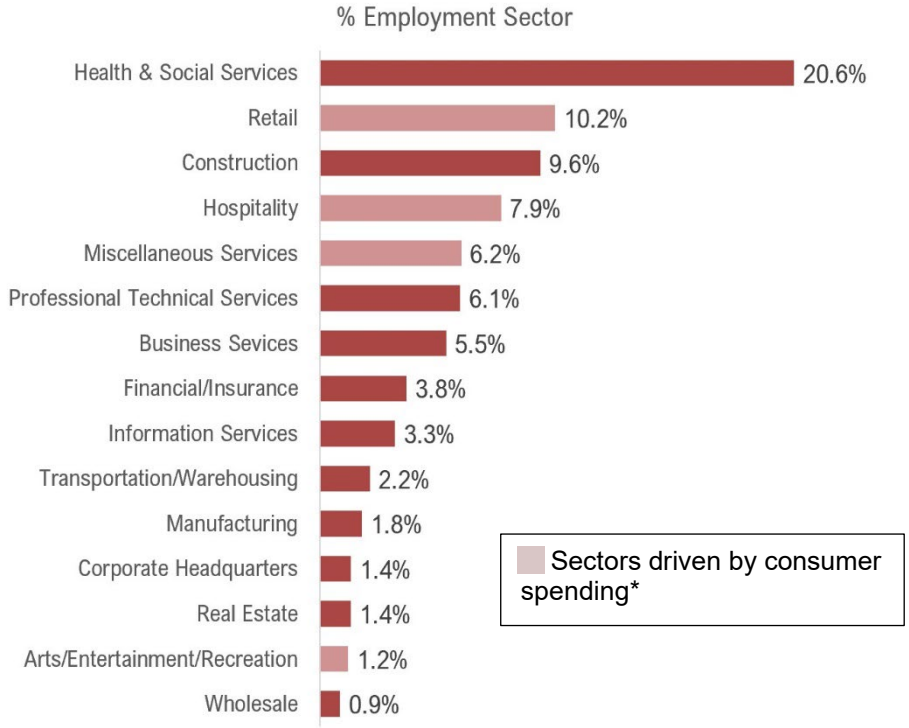
Arlington CPA grants have supported 24 housing projects since the first grants were approved in 2016. These efforts include the affordable housing improvements, HCA's Homelessness Prevention Program, the Somerville Homeless Coalition's Leasing Differential Program for Arlington tenants, and the Arlington Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

Sustainable Economic Development

Arlington's Employment Base

Arlington's local employment base includes 1,280 business establishments that generate about 10,000 jobs and $693 million in wages on average each year. Additionally, about 12% of residents are self-employed with earnings likely not reflected in this data

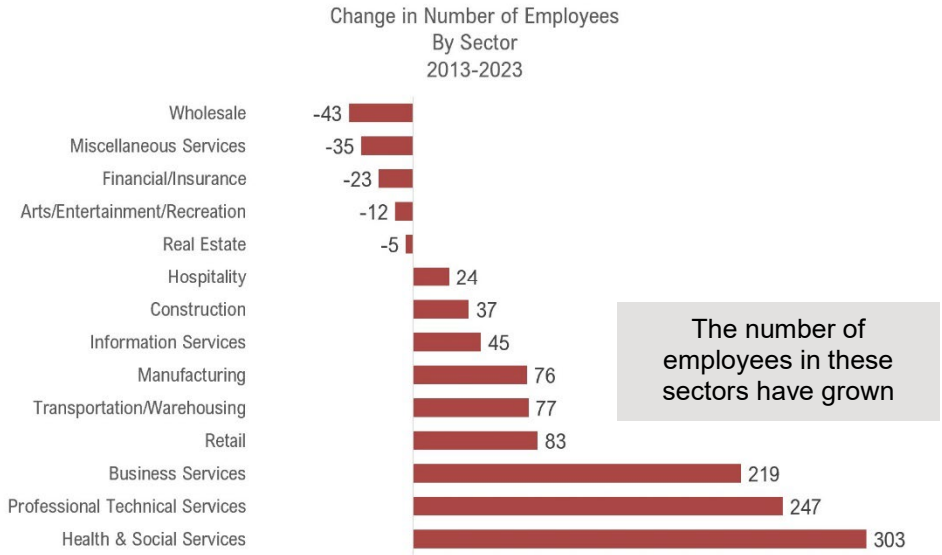
The healthcare and social services sector is the largest single sector and accounts for 20% of this employment base. However, several sectors that are driven by discretionary consumer spending account for 25% of local jobs making it the largest broad economic sector. These include retail, hospitality, and arts and entertainment. Arlington's local restaurant market is also strong with an estimated $145 million in spending and a spending potential index (SPI) 75% higher than the national average. A SPI measures how much a particular geographic area is likely to spend on a specific category of goods or services compared to the national average. An SPI of 100 matches the nation's average, while an SPI value below or above 100 indicates that residents are likely to spend less or more than average.

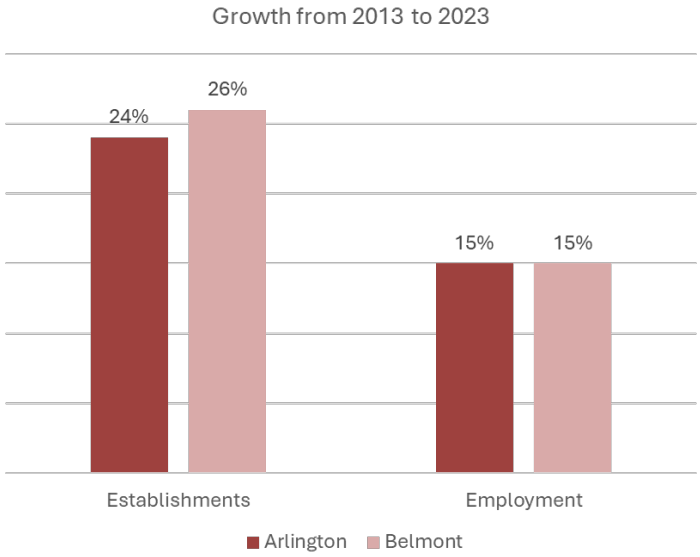


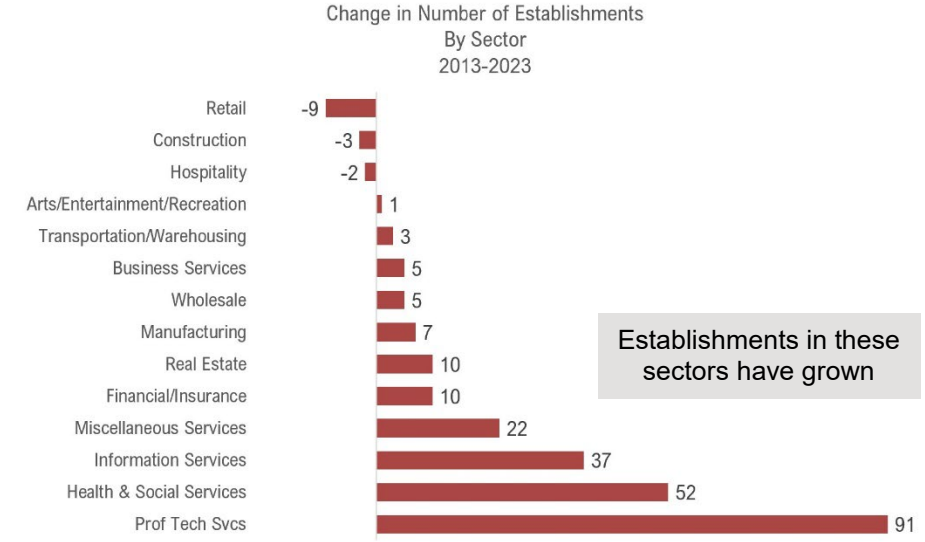
**Consumer-driven sectors consist of businesses whose performance depends on household spending. They grow when disposable income and consumer confidence in the economy are strong, but are among the first to slow when spending tightens.*

Arlington has added almost 250 new businesses and more than 1,300 employees since 2013. Much of this economic growth can be attributed to the healthcare and social services sector which experienced a 17% increase in total jobs (+300 jobs) and the professional and technical services sector which experienced a 67% increase (+247 jobs). New businesses in the professional and technical services, health and social services, and the informational services sectors also increased significantly during this period (72% of all new establishments). If these trends continue, there may be opportunity for small-scale office space in mixed-use development to support continued growth in these sectors.

Overall, office-based industries have experienced the greatest growth in both jobs and establishments over the last decade. Sectors such as arts, entertainment, and recreation and hospitality have seen considerably less.



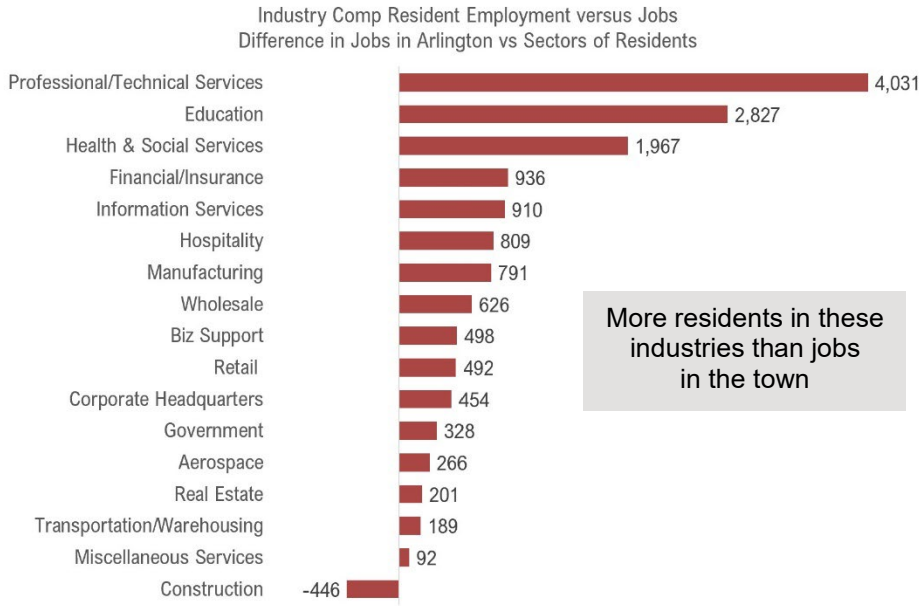


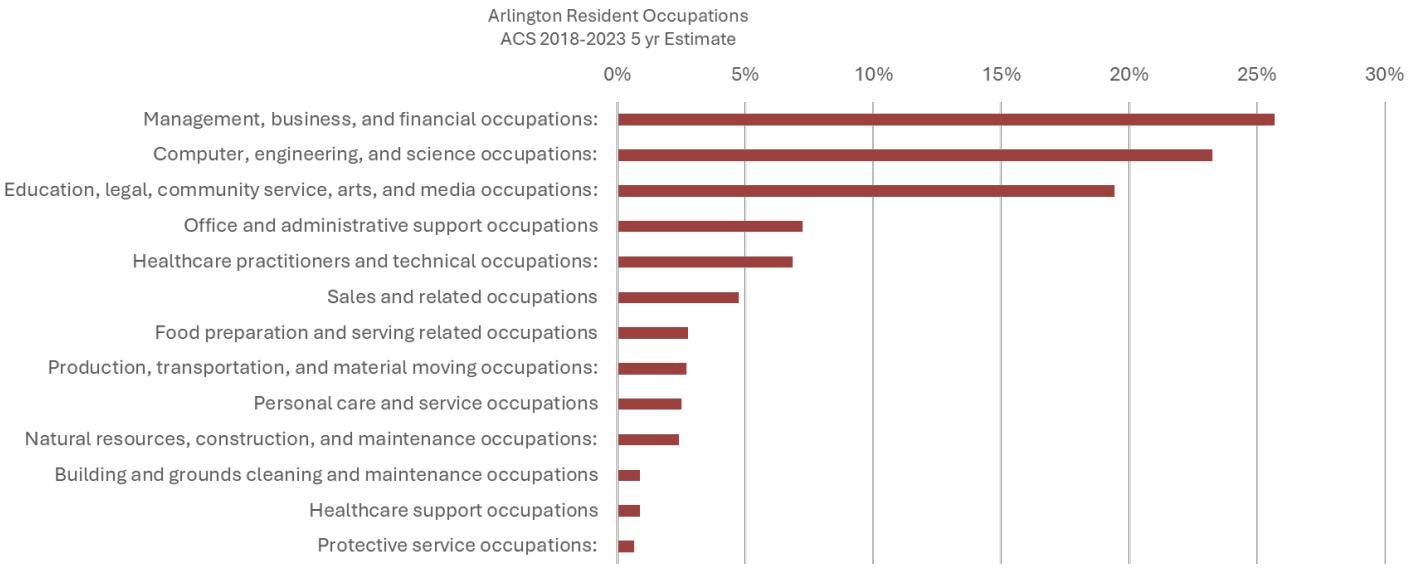


Note: Belmont was used as a comparison geography because of its proximity and limited commercial / industrial space, which is more similar to Arlington than Medford and Somerville which have very different development opportunities

Workforce

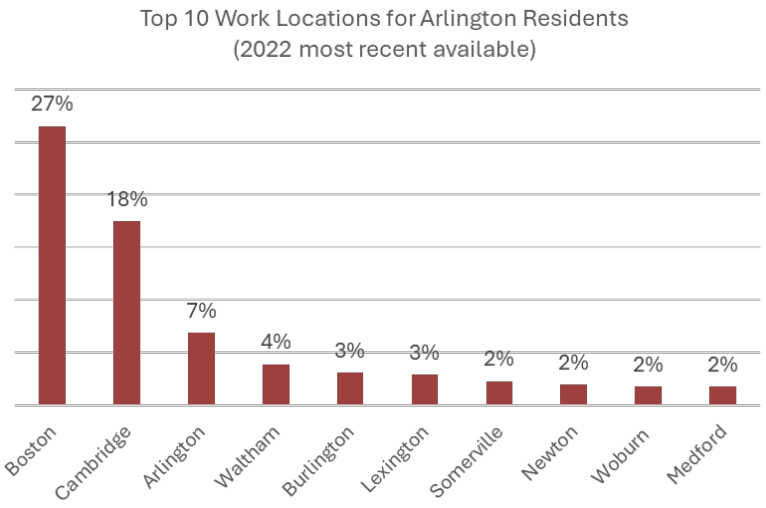
As a suburban community, Arlington has 2.6 times more residents in the workforce than it has jobs. Most residents (93%) commute outside Arlington for work in sectors that are not available locally. Almost half of Arlington residents hold jobs in management, finance, or STEM fields. Despite local job growth in the professional and technical services sector, significantly more residents (6x) still work in that sector than there are related jobs available in Arlington. This mismatch applies across several sectors with the exception of construction, which is the only industry where there are more jobs in Arlington than resident workers. As a result, most jobs (83%) in Arlington are filled by non-resident workers. This trend has remained steady over the last decade.

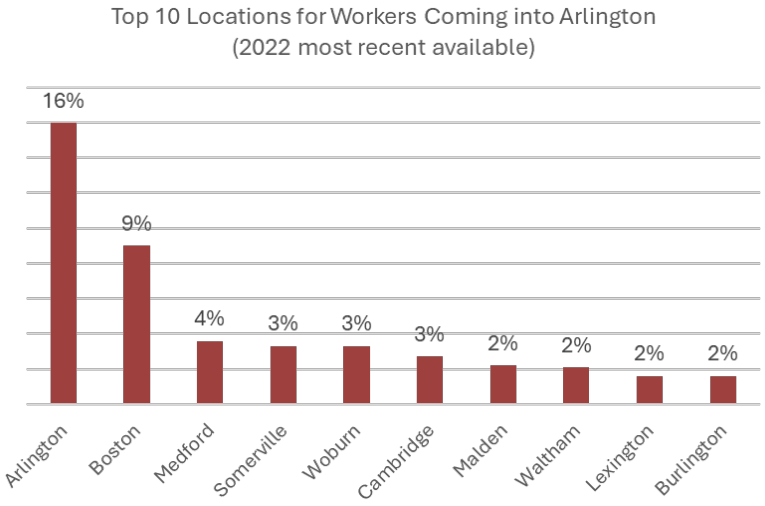




Several neighboring communities benefit from Arlington's worker residents. Roughly 45% of residents work in Boston or Cambridge alone, with other top locations including Waltham, Burlington, and Lexington. A relatively smaller proportion of workers come to Arlington for work from nearby communities, with just 12% coming from Boston or Cambridge. This unbalanced exchange of resident workers raises important questions around transit for commuting given the dispersed nature of the incoming workforce.

The proportion of residents working from home at least part-time has also increased over the years. According to the most recent ACS data, 48% of Arlington residents reported working from home at least part of the time. This represents a 6% increase from 2018 and is a significant change over a short period of time, primarily driven by pandemic-era shifts toward remote work especially for white collar workers.





Space Availability

Less than 7% of Arlington's land is zoned for business, industrial, or multi-use development. Recent data indicates only 40,000 square feet (SF) of commercial space is currently available and actively marketed in Arlington. This space is located in six buildings and offers small individual spaces, each under 10,000 SF. This limited supply of available, suitable land and building space presents a challenge for economic growth, particularly higher value office and light or flex industrial in growing sectors.

Existing Commercial Land Use in Arlington

Land Use/Zoning District	Total Acres	Pct. of Land Area
Business (B1-5)	133	3.7%
Industrial (I)	75	2.1%
Multi-use or Planned Unit Development (MU/PUD)	34	1%

Retail and Experience

Like many communities, Arlington's commercial areas continue to experience retail vacancies in response to the shifting retail landscape. These empty storefronts create negative perceptions of its commercial districts and impact potential tenants' willingness to lease available spaces. Some vacancies require investment by landlords to support tenant improvements, while others are not being actively marketed as available spaces by building owners. Building improvements and active marketing of vacant spaces would help reduce vacancies and also expand Arlington's viable commercial spaces.

The strength of Arlington's restaurant sector combined with its mix of other consumer-oriented businesses make "experience" a critical factor in attracting continued economic growth. Investments that enhance the consumer experience such as improvements to signage and wayfinding, programming, parking, and upgraded storefronts and streetscape play an important role in improving experience. Efforts to improve public perceptions of Arlington's commercial areas and expand the variety of local businesses are also essential for increasing the Town's potential to capture consumer spending and new businesses.

Interviews with local business owners highlight the need for greater consistency, predictability, and efficiency in Arlington's business-related regulatory processes. In addition, a coordinated Town effort to support and market economic development and tourism was identified as a key opportunity to advance economic growth. When paired with investments in district experience improvements, these efforts would help position Arlington as a more competitive and attractive destination for both businesses and visitors.

Historic & Cultural Resources

Brief History

The following history section is adapted from the Town's Open Space and Recreation Plan (2022) and Historic Preservation Survey Master Plan Final Report (2019).

The Town of Arlington sits on the ancestral lands of the Massachusett Tribe, the Indigenous peoples after which the Commonwealth is named. Originally settled in 1635 by European settlers as a part of Cambridge, Arlington was known as "Menotomy" after the Menotomy River (now called Alewife Brook). Agriculture and animal grazing made up the settlement's early economy, and it then expanded to include milling with the development of the area's first mill by Captain George Cooke on Mill Brook in 1637.

The formalization of Massachusetts Avenue as the major east/west transportation route between Boston and surrounding rural towns supported expansion of the Menotomy settlement, leading to greater commercial activity and the development of a distinct town center. This corridor served a key role in the early battles of the American Revolution, facilitating the movement of colonial militias and supplies to and from Lexington and Concord. Menotomy's location also made it a key site for additional militia ambushes against retreating British troops, culminating in the intensive Battle of Menotomy that followed the Battle of Lexington and Concord.

In 1807, Menotomy and a section of present-day Belmont broke off from Cambridge and reincorporated as West Cambridge. In 1867 the Town was renamed Arlington in honor of the Civil War veterans buried at the Arlington National Cemetery in Arlington, VA.

The first half of the 1800's saw Arlington grow and attract more industry. Middlesex Turnpike (1810, now Lowell Street), the railroad (1846), and the street railway along Massachusetts Avenue connected the growing town to the region. Agriculture continued as a major economic sector, with commercial market gardens in East Arlington. Immigrants were attracted by the agriculture and industry, leading to the development of the town's first residential subdivision in Arlington in 1856.

After incorporating as Arlington, the community saw changing industrial patterns and continued population growth. Menotomy Rocks Park was established as the town's first large public park in 1896. Literary and visual artists settled in Arlington Heights. Most large market gardens were subdivided into more housing in the early 1900's. Two- and three-family housing became more common in this period in support of continued population growth. The first "Town Plan" was adopted in 1916 followed by the Zoning Bylaw in 1924.

Arlington further suburbanized throughout the 20th century as its larger industries declined. The Concord Turnpike (Route 2) was developed in the 1930's, and more housing was developed ranging from single-family houses on former agricultural land or flood plains to low- and medium-rise apartments along Massachusetts Avenue. This housing increasingly accommodated the changing working-class population that supported the greater Boston area's changing industries.

Historic Places & Landscapes

Arlington has one historic district and 63 sites listed on the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The Arlington Center Historic District includes most of the central downtown area. Historic places include the Robbins Library, Robbins Memorial Town Hall, Whittemore-Robbins House, Regent Theatre, Capitol Theatre, Central Fire Station, the Pleasant Street Congregational Church, Old Burying Ground, and the Mount Pleasant Cemetery.

There are seven local historic districts, most of which are in or adjacent to the Arlington Center Historic District. The Mt. Gilboa/ Crescent Hill District is located in western Arlington near the reservoir. The others include the Avon Place District, Broadway District, Central Street District, Jason/Gray Street District, Pleasant Street District, and Russell District. The Pleasant Street District is the largest with 150 parcels while the Broadway District is the smallest with just 8 parcels.

The 2023 Archeological Reconnaissance Survey documented 37 archaeological sites that represent at least 10,000 years of human history. Accompanying sensitivity mapping illustrates how Arlington's natural environment has drawn and supported Native and Euro-American habitation and activity for thousands of years.

Arlington also contains several historic landscapes listed on the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation Historic Landscape Inventory. A 2006 report on Freedom's Way Heritage Area identified 63 heritage landscapes in Arlington. These landscapes represent distinctive places shaped by human interaction with the natural environment and reflect local history while also contributing to the community's character. Identified priority heritage landscapes include the Battle Road Corridor, Great Meadows/Mill Brook Drainage System, Jonathan Whittemore House, Mugar Property, Spy Pond and adjacent parkland, and the W.C. Taylor House.

Arlington Properties on the National Register of Historic Places

S.N.	NAME	LOCATION	CATEGORY	LISTED DATE
1	Allyn House	94 Oakland Ave.	Building	9/27/1985
2	Arlington Center Historic District	Bounded by Massachusetts Ave. and Academy, Pleasant St. and Maple St.	District	7/18/1974
3	Arlington Center Historic District (Boundary Increase)	Roughly bounded by Jason St., Massachusetts Ave., Pleasant St. and Gray St.	District	9/27/1985
4	Arlington Coal & Lumber	41 Park Ave.	Building	4/18/1985
5	Arlington Gaslight Company	Grove St. Town Yard	Building	4/18/1985
6	Arlington Pumping Station	Brattle Court off Brattle St.	Building	4/18/1985
7	Arlington Reservoir	Park Circle	Structure	9/27/1985
8	Baptist Society Meeting House	3--5 Brattle St.	Building	4/18/1985
9	Bassett, Maria, House	8 College Ave.	Building	9/27/1985
10	Butterfield-Whittemore House	54 Massachusetts Ave.	Building	3/30/1978
11	Call-Bartlett House	216 Pleasant St.	Building	4/18/1985
12	Calvary Methodist Church	300 Massachusetts Ave.	Building	6/23/1983
13	Capitol Theater Building	202--208 Massachusetts Ave.	Building	4/18/1985
14	Chapel of St. Anne	Claremont Ave.	Building	4/18/1985
15	Cushman House	104 Bartlett Ave.	Building	4/18/1985
16	Cutter, Ephraim, House	4 Water St.	Building	3/29/1978
17	Cutter, Gershom, House	1146 Massachusetts Ave.	Building	11/12/1999
18	Cutter, Jefferson, House	1 Whittemore Park	Building	1/23/1992
19	Cutter, Second, A. P., House	89 Summer St.	Building	4/18/1985
20	Damon House	275 Broadway	Building	4/18/1985
21	Farmer, Kimball, House	1173 Massachusetts Ave.	Building	4/18/1985
22	First Parish Church Parsonage	232--234 Pleasant St.	Building	4/18/1985
23	Fowle-Reed-Wyman House	64 Old Mystic St.	Building	4/14/1975
24	Greek Orthodox Church	735 Massachusetts Ave.	Building	6/23/1983
25	Hall, Edward, House	187 Pleasant St.	Building	4/18/1985
26	Highland Hose House	1007 Massachusetts Ave.	Building	4/18/1985
27	Hill, Addison, House	83 Appleton St.	Building	9/27/1985

S.N.	NAME	LOCATION	CATEGORY	LISTED DATE
28	Hornblower, Edward, House and Barn	200 Pleasant St.	Building	4/18/1985
29	House at 45 Claremont Avenue	45 Claremont Ave.	Building	4/18/1985
30	House at 5 Willow Court	5 Willow Court	Building	4/18/1985
31	House at 5-7 Winter Street	5--7 Winter St.	Building	4/18/1985
32	Kensington Park Historic District	Roughly bounded by Kensington Park, Brantwood and Kensington Rds.	District	9/27/1985
33	Kimball, W.W., House	13 Winter St.	Building	4/18/1985
34	Locke School	88 Parke Ave.	Building	9/27/1985
35	Locke, Capt. Benjamin, House	21 Appleton St.	Building	7/21/1978
36	Locke, Lt. Benjamin, Store	11--13 Lowell St.	Building	4/18/1985
37	Milestone	Appleton St. and Paul Revere Rd.	Object	9/27/1985
38	Mystic Valley Parkway, Metropolitan Park System of Greater Boston MPS	Mystic Valley Parkway	District	1/18/2006
39	Old Schwamb Mill	17 Mill Lane and 29 Lowell St.	Building	10/7/1971
40	Orvis Road Historic District	Roughly bounded by Massachusetts Ave., Freeman, Randolph St. and Newcomb St. on Orvis Rd.	District	9/27/1985
41	Pierce Farm Historic District	Roughly bounded by Claremont and Oakland Aves.	District	9/27/1985
42	Pleasant Street Congregational Church	75 Pleasant St.	Building	6/23/1983
43	Prentiss, William, House	252 Gray St.	Building	9/27/1985
44	Prentiss-Payson House	224--226 Pleasant St.	Building	4/18/1985
45	Prince Hall Mystic Cemetery	Address Restricted	Site	11/25/1998
46	Proctor, William, House	390 Massachusetts Ave.	Building	4/18/1985
47	Rawson, Warren, Building	68--74 Franklin St.	Building	9/27/1985
48	Rawson, Warren, House	37--49 Park St.	Building	4/18/1985
49	Robindreau, Alfred E., House	28 Lafayette St.	Building	4/18/1985
50	Robinson House	19 Winter St.	Building	4/18/1985
51	Robinson-Lewis-G. F. Fessenden House	40 Westminster Ave.	Building	4/18/1985
52	Russell Common	2--10 Park Terrace	Building	4/18/1985
53	Russell, Jason House	7 Jason St.	Building	10/9/1974
54	Shattuck, Ralph W., House	274--276 Broadway	Building	9/27/1985

S.N.	NAME	LOCATION	CATEGORY	LISTED DATE
55	Sterling, Ella Mahalla Cutter, House	93 Summer St.	Building	4/18/1985
56	Swadkins, Thomas, House	160 Westminster Ave.	Building	4/18/1985
57	Swan, Henry, House	418 Massachusetts Ave.	Building	9/27/1985
58	Symmes, Stephen, Jr., House	215 Crosby St.	Building	4/18/1985
59	Taylor-Dallin House	69 Oakland Ave.	Building	9/27/1985
60	US Post Office-Arlington Main	10 Court St.	Building	6/18/1986
61	Wayside Inn	393 Massachusetts Ave.	Building	9/27/1985
62	Whittemore House	267 Broadway	Building	4/18/1985
63	Winn Farm	57 Summer St.	Building	4/18/1985
54	Shattuck, Ralph W., House	274--276 Broadway	Building	9/27/1985
55	Sterling, Ella Mahalla Cutter, House	93 Summer St.	Building	4/18/1985
56	Swadkins, Thomas, House	160 Westminster Ave.	Building	4/18/1985
57	Swan, Henry, House	418 Massachusetts Ave.	Building	9/27/1985
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Source: National Register of Historic Places [NRHP] list updated on 2024-07-10 [https://www.nps.gov/subjects/nationalregister/database-research.htm]

Historic Preservation

The Arlington Historical Commission and Arlington Historic Districts Commission oversee the preservation of the community's historic buildings, resources, and character. The Town's Community Preservation Act (CPA) Committee oversees the allocation of dedicated CPA funds to support a range of public investment projects, including the preservation of historic landmarks and other historic resources.

The Historical Commission maintains an inventory of historically and architecturally significant properties and administers the Town's demolition-delay bylaw. It works with the Planning & Community Development Department to ensure new development maintains Arlington's historic character. The Commission also works with other Town departments to maintain and restore Town-owned historical buildings and gardens. The Whittemore Robbins House, Town Hall and grounds, 23 Maple Street, and the Jarvis House at 50 Pleasant Street are all managed by the Commission.

The Arlington Historic Districts Commission protects and preserves the historic resources within the Town's seven local historic districts. It reviews the architectural appropriateness of proposed development and exterior design changes of properties within these districts to ensure that any improvements are compatible with the character of the district.

In addition, the Arlington Historic Society, a private nonprofit organization, also supports preservation of the Town's history and heritage. The Historic Society and several other private groups focus on the preservation of specific sites and historic artifact and document collections in Town.

Community Preservation Act

Arlington CPA grants have supported 31 historic preservation projects since the first grants were approved in 2016. These projects include historic building restoration projects, records preservation, and an updated historic resources inventory.

Cultural Resources

Arlington's vibrant and dynamic culture is supported through its extensive network of civic institutions and community organizations, local shops and restaurants, and highly utilized outdoor spaces. The Arlington Commission for Arts and Culture oversees all Town-related arts and culture programming and activities including the Arlington Mural Project, the local Artist-In-Residence Program, and the Arlington Cultural District.

The Arlington Cultural District runs from Arlington Center to East Arlington between Massachusetts Avenue and the Minuteman Bikeway and serves as a hub for arts, culture, dining, and entertainment. It is home to several arts and cultural institutions including the Arlington Center for Arts, which offers studio space, classes, exhibits, and performances that engage local artists and the wider community. The Cyrus E. Dallin Art Museum, based in the historic Jefferson Cutter House, stewards over ninety works of art from throughout the Arlington-based sculptor, educator, and Indigenous rights advocate's career. The Regent Theatre supports a variety of live music, theatre, dance, comedy, and other entertainment events for all ages. The historic Capitol Theatre in East Arlington provides a unique setting for movie-goers, decorated in the style of the original theatre. Arlington Children's Theatre offers an artistic outlet for youth and has been in Trinity Baptist Church since 2016.

Additionally, the Town hosts several annual events, festivals, and parades including Arlington Town Day, Summer and Winter Carnivals for children, Feast of the East, Uncle Sam's Birthday, Patriot's Day and Veteran's Day parade, and the Arlington Farmers Market.

Open Space, Recreation, & Natural Resources

Overview

Arlington's limited open space and recreation areas and facilities are a highly valued community resource that include a wide range of opportunities for outdoor activities, sports, and leisure. More than 550 acres of publicly held open space make up Arlington's open space network, including Arlington's Great Meadows and land surrounding the Arlington Reservoir which are located in the Town of Lexington. About 118 acres of privately owned open space complement these public open space resources, providing additional recreational offerings at Winchester Country Club, Belmont Country Club, Arlington Catholic High School Field, and Kelwyn Manor Playground.

While Arlington's open space and recreational resources are distributed throughout town, its larger resources tend to be located towards its perimeter. Many are also located adjacent to existing water bodies.

The Town of Arlington and State's Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) owns the majority of these open and recreational spaces. The Town of Lexington owns about 7% and private entities, including not-for-profits, for-profits, and land trusts own the remaining 32%. About 72% of Arlington's open and recreational spaces are protected.

OWNERSHIP CATEGORY	PERCENTAGE [%]
Public	
Town of Arlington	**46%**
Town of Lexington	**7%**
State (DCR)	**15%**
Private	**32%**

Arlington's Department of Public Works' Parks Division oversees the maintenance of Town-owned parks, playgrounds, athletic fields, open space, and public trees. The Department of Recreation and Community Services manages recreational programming and facilities and works in partnership with DPW to balance user needs and the ongoing maintenance of open space and recreational assets. The Parks and Recreation Commission and Conservation Commission also play key roles in the management of the Town's open space and recreational resources.

A full inventory of Arlington's open space and recreational resources is available in the Town's Open Space & Recreation Plan (2022), with additional information in its Public Land Management Plan 2023-2026.

Major Open Space and Recreational Resources

Arlington's parks and open spaces provide opportunities for a variety of passive activities, such as walking, hiking, enjoying scenery, and observing wildlife.

Name	Location
Arlington's Great Meadows	Minuteman Commuter Bikeway (Lexington, MA)
Arlington Reservoir	210 Lowell Street
Hurd and Reservoir Fields	25 Drake Road
Buzzell Fields	29 Summer Street
Cooke's Hollow	94 Mystic Street
McClennen Park	664 Summer Street
Meadowbrook Park	Mystic Valley Parkway
Pleasant Cemetery	70 Medford Street
Menotomy Rocks Park	129 Jason Street
Mount Gilboa	1 Gilboa Road
North Union Park/Lussiano Field	60 N Union Street
Poets Corner	9 Keats Road

Name	Location
Robbins Farm Park	61 Eastern Avenue
Spy Pond and parks and fields	56 Pond Road
Kelwyn Manor Park	Spypond Parkway
Summer Street Sports Complex	422 Summer Street
Symmes Woods and Parks	Symmes Road
Thorndike and Magnolia Park and Fields	99 & 111 Magnolia Street
Turkey Hill Reservation	9 Brand Street
Wellington Park	34 Grove Street
Whittemore Park and Uncle Sam Plaza	611 Massachusetts Avenue
Windows on Mystic/Mystic Lakes	Mystic Valley Parkway

Small Neighborhood Parks and Open Spaces

Arlington also has several smaller neighborhood parks and open spaces that include historic landscapes, school facilities, community gardens, small conservation areas, playgrounds, and streetscapes. Some of these resources include Foot of the Rocks, Monument Square, Park Circle Water Tower, and Prince Hall Mystic Cemetery.

Most of Arlington's public schools offer additional recreation opportunities for the community ranging from playing fields, courts, and playgrounds to indoor gym facilities and pollinator and educational gardens.

Several larger community gardens also provide recreational and educational opportunities for the community while contributing to the Town's open space fabric. The Arlington Community Orchard features over 50 fruit trees, herbs, and edible berries, as well as sculptures, picnic tables, and gathering space for workshops and public use on MWRA land off Brattle Court. The Magnolia Community Garden offers 54 garden plots and supporting facilities for resident use in addition to providing important drainage in its flood-prone location. The Robbins Farm Learning Garden, colonial kitchen garden at the Jason Russell House, and demonstration gardens at Arlington's neighborhood schools provide educational gardening resources to the community and visitors. Other garden and planting initiatives focused on native plants and preserving and expanding pollinator habitats include the Wildlife Habitat Garden at Arlington Reservoir and the Mystic Charles Pollinator Pathways volunteer coalition.

Arlington's streetscapes also include a variety of small landscapes and memorial sites that offer community gathering space and create more attractive environments along commercial corridors. These small but interesting spaces include sidewalk plazas and street parklets, traffic island gardens and planters, and veterans memorials and markers.

Trails, Corridors, and Greenways

The Minuteman Bikeway provides opportunities for walking, running, biking, and rolling and connects Arlington to Cambridge, Lexington, and Bedford. It also serves as an important habitat corridor due to its proximity and connections to several open spaces, brooks, and water bodies. Additional trails and pathways run through existing open spaces offering additional amenities for walking, hiking, and interacting with nature.

A 1.4-mile section of the Alewife Brook Reservation and Greenway runs through Arlington parallel to Alewife Brook and the Alewife Brook Parkway. The area is managed by DCR and includes pathways for pedestrian and cyclist use. It also provides connections to the Fresh Pond Pathway, Watertown Greenway, and the Mystic River Reservation in Medford.

The 2.7-mile Mill Brook corridor flows from Arlington Reservoir to Lower Mystic Lake. With more than 40% of the brook culverted and 30% channelized, only a few short sections are open and in natural condition. Much of the surrounding land is publicly owned by the Town of Arlington and serves as open space and recreational areas. The need for substantial restoration and remediation to enhance biodiversity, improve water quality, and address drainage and flood control along the brook was identified in both the *2010 Mill Brook Linear Park Report* and 2019 *Mill Brook Corridor Report*.

A narrow section of the Mystic River Reservation is located in Arlington parallel to the Mystic River and Parkway. In 2019 a

restoration project was completed to create riparian habitat, add flood storage, and improve stormwater quality.

Conservation Land

The Arlington Conservation Commission (ACC) plays a critical role in the protection and management of wetlands and local conservation land. The Commission oversees and manages 33.1 acres across twenty-four parcels of land including Meadowbrook Park, Mount Gilboa Conservation Area, Windows on the Mystic, Cooke's Hollow, and Turkey Hill Reservation. The Commission also owns a variety of smaller conservation parcels that provide space for habitat throughout town.

Recreational Facilities

Arlington's recreational programs and facilities are extensively used and highly valued by the community. The Recreation Department is a self-supporting enterprise and does not use general fund dollars to support staff or programs. It oversees several sports leagues for youth and adults, fitness programming, and special event permit requests. Other organized leagues contract with the Town for use of fields, courts, and other facilities.

The Summer Street Sports Complex and Ed Burns Arena are Arlington's two largest recreational facilities. The Summer Street Sports Complex includes baseball, softball, field hockey, and soccer fields, a bocce court, basketball court, fitness stations, tot play equipment, and a handicap accessible children's play structure. The Ed Burns Arena provides an ice rink in the fall and winter months and batting cages, indoor soccer programs, and summer camps in the spring and summer. It is also used for special events and is home to the Arlington Hockey and Figure Skating Association and Arlington High and Arlington Catholic School boys' and girls' hockey teams. The Town-owned Gibbs School gymnasium also offers space for indoor recreation.

The Town of Arlington has consistently invested in its open space and recreational resources to ensure high-quality experiences and meet growing user demand. The Parks and Recreation Commission's long-term capital plan outlines ongoing investments in ADA compliance, playground audits and repairs, and feasibility studies to assess and plan for further improvements over the next five years. Robbins Farm Playground was recently renovated to become the Town's first playground utilizing universal design principles. Additionally, the Department plans to develop a Field Master Plan to prioritize the use of existing field spaces and explore the potential of passive open spaces for accommodating active recreation.

The Arlington Boys and Girls Club is a key partner for Arlington's recreational offerings. The private, non-profit facility is located next to Spy Pond and hosts a variety of classes, events, and after-school programing. It has the only indoor pool in town and offers swimming lessons and open swim time. The Fidelity House in Arlington Center also serves as a community center and runs programming for children.

Community Preservation Act

Arlington CPA grants have supported 21 open space projects and 14 recreation projects since the first grants were approved in 2016. These projects include contributing to the Open Space and Recreation Plan and Public Land Management Plan, feasibility studies for specific locations, and improvements to parks and playgrounds.

Natural & Ecological Resources

Local Terrain

Located on the western edge of the Boston Basin, Arlington's landscape generally slopes downward from west to east with more hilly and rocky terrain in the west of town and flatter, more low-lying terrain towards the east. At 380 feet, Turkey Hill represents the highest elevation point along with neighboring Gilboa and Symmes Hill. The lower elevations in the eastern part of town range between 10 and 40 feet above mean sea level.

Water Resources

Arlington straddles the Charles River and Mystic River watersheds. The majority of land (90%) is located in the Mystic River watershed with water flowing towards low-lying areas in the eastern and southern parts of town where it drains into Alewife Brook and the Mystic River, and eventually Boston Harbor and Massachusetts Bay. The Poets Corner and Arlington Village neighborhoods drain to the Charles River watershed.

About 8% of Arlington's total area is comprised of surface water and includes two lakes, two ponds, one reservoir, one river, and several brooks. The Upper Mystic and Lower Mystic lakes are located on the town's northeastern border with Medford. Spy Pond lies just north of the Concord Turnpike and Arlington Reservoir sits on Arlington's western border with Lexington. The smaller Hill's Pond is located just west of Spy Pond in Menotomy Rocks Park. The Mystic River runs from the Mystic Lakes along Arlington's eastern border before entering Medford.

Mill Brook and Alewife Brook are the town's largest streams and experience occasional flooding during intensive and extended rainfall events. Low-lying areas adjacent to waterways are especially vulnerable. Access to Arlington's water bodies is limited due to adjacent private properties that line most shorelines.

	LAKES AND PONDS	AREA [ACRES]
1	Spy Pond	**102**
2	Lower Mystic Lake	**55**
3	Upper Mystic Lake	**49**
4	Arlington Reservoir	**12**
5	Hill's Pond	**2**
	Total	**220**

Wetlands

Arlington's wetlands are primarily located near Alewife Brook, Spy Pond, Hill's Pond, the Arlington Reservoir, in Meadowbrook Park, and on undeveloped properties near Thorndike field. Most are shallow marshes and shrub swamps bordering existing waterbodies. Meadowbrook Park contains the largest wetland which is located at the mouth of Mill Brook adjacent to Lower Mystic Lake.

Several of the Town's recreational fields and facilities are located in and near wetland areas creating tensions between user needs and environmental protection as well as seasonal limitations in recreational use. Thorndike and Magnolia fields, McClennen Park, and Poet's Corner all experience saturation and drainage issues due to their proximity to wetland areas.

Arlington's 183-acre Great Meadows, located in Lexington, also includes a large certified vegetated wetland. The flat, marshy plain contains a series of hummocks and is surrounded by wooded uplands with walking trails.

Forests

Woodland areas are limited in Arlington due to its built-out condition but some can still be found in Menotomy Rocks Park, Turkey Hill, Mount Gilboa, Arlington Reservoir, Hill's Hill, Crusher lot at the Ottoson School, and portions of the Symmes Property. As a densely developed community, Arlington's tree canopy plays an important role in the provision of vital ecosystem services that improve air quality, filter pollutants, support flood control and erosion prevention, and provide shade and heat management during the summer. Over the years Arlington has lost a considerable proportion of its tree population from development, pests and disease, and the loss of funding for tree maintenance and replacement. To preserve its canopy, Arlington passed a Tree Preservation Bylaw in 2016 to limit tree removal and support canopy revitalization and is also in the process of implementing a Tree Inventory Management Plan. The plan aims to restore Arlington's tree canopy to its peak level of 10,700 trees by planting 300 street trees per year (assuming a removal rate of 200 street trees per year) and increasing its tree planting budget.

Key Habitats and Wildlife

Arlington's limited but diverse natural ecosystems provide crucial habitats for a variety of flora and fauna.

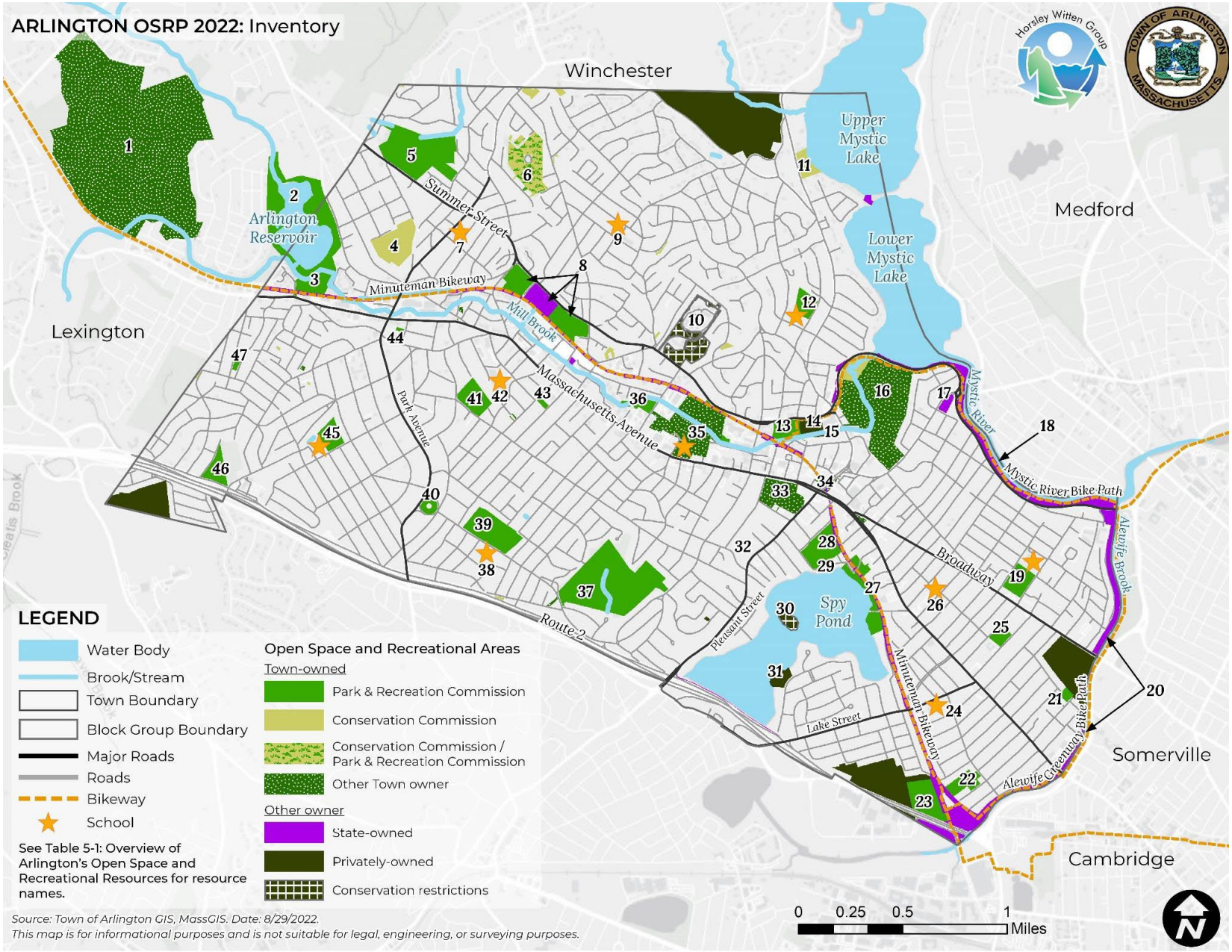
Habitat Name	Documented Flora and Fauna
Alewife Brook	Small herring run, variety of birds, small mammals, reptiles, and amphibians
Arlington Reservoir	Fish, turtles, bees, dragonflies, 60 species of water birds and shorebirds
Hill Pond	Birds, sunfish, frogs, and insects
Mill Brook	Ducks, birds, mammals- racoons, skunks and coyotes, fishes
Mystic Lakes	Support migrating birds (support Alewife and Blueback Herring), Bald Eagles
Spy Pond	Resting and feeding area for migrating birds, Canada geese, mallard ducks, mute swans
Mystic River	Supports one of the strongest river herring runs, birds, waterfowl

Arlington is home to several threatened and endangered species listed on the Massachusetts Endangered Species List, including six plant species and eight fish and wildlife species, such as the Golden-winged Warbler, Mystic Valley Amphipod, Black-billed Cuckoo, and Orchard Oriole.

Spy Pond has been designated as a Priority Habitat under MassWildlife's Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program (NHESP), recognizing it as a critical area where rare and endangered species have been observed, making it a key habitat to protect. Additionally, Spy Pond, the Mystic Lakes, portions of the Mystic River and Alewife Brook, and their surrounding areas have been identified by MassWildlife and The Nature Conservancy's BioMap as core habitats and critical natural landscapes. These ecosystems play a vital role in biodiversity conservation both locally and across the Commonwealth.

According to BioMap data, core habitats cover just under 9% of Arlington's total area and critical natural landscapes cover roughly 7%.

Open Space and Recreational Resources in Arlington



Public Services & Facilities

Overview

Arlington is governed by a five-member Select Board elected at-large, an appointed Town Manager, and a Town Meeting legislative branch made up of 252 representatives elected from Arlington's 21 precincts. The Town's 18 departments provide a range of municipal services, public facilities, and public utilities to ensure a high quality of life for all residents. The Town also has over 80 boards, committees, and commissions that work with departments on a variety of issues.

Arlington's Town Departments include:

- Clerk's Office
- Facilities
- Finance
- Fire
- Human Resources
- Health and Human Services
- Information Technology
- Inspectional Services
- Legal
- Libraries
- Planning and Community Development
- Police
- Public Works
- Purchasing
- Recreation and Community Services
- Schools
- Town Manager

Town Facilities

Arlington's Facilities Department oversees the operations and maintenance of 35 buildings with approximately 1.5 million square feet of space. These include 25 Town buildings and 10 schools.

Town Hall: The Robbins Memorial Town Hall functions as the central hub for Arlington's municipal operations, housing the Town Clerk's Office, Assessor's Office, Selectboard Office, Town Manager's Office, Department of Planning and Community Development, and Human Resources. While well-maintained, the building is in need of enhancements.

Public Library: The Arlington Public Library system provides access to a variety of traditional and technological resources for all residents across two libraries: the Robbins Library main branch located in Arlington Center, and the Edith M. Fox Library, known as the Fox Branch, located in East Arlington. In addition to circulating physical and digital materials, both locations offer meeting spaces for community groups and host a range of in-person and online programming and events for all ages. In 2024, the library system had over 319,000 total visitors and circulated more than 976,000 physical and electronic materials. The libraries have seen an increase in all metrics over the past five years especially in the community's use of digital materials and program attendance.

Arlington Senior Center: Operated by the Council on Aging, Arlington's Senior Center provides a variety of programming and activities that support older adult education. It also facilitates access to social services, health and wellness resources, and assisted transportation.

Public Health & Safety

Department of Health and Human Services: includes the Board of Health, the Council on Aging (COA), COA Transportation, Veterans Services, and the Youth Counseling Center. It also provides professional support to several town boards, notably the Fair Housing Commission, the Disabilities Commission, Board of Health, Council on Aging, Human Rights Commission, and Board of Youth Services.

Arlington Police Department: Arlington's Police Department is organized across three divisions that focus on community services, investigative services and professional standards, and support services and logistics. Sixty-five full-time sworn officers support the Department including one school resource officer and three parking control officers. The Department is located in the Arlington Community Safety Building at the corner of Mystic and Summer Street. The building was renovated in 2015 but the department has already outgrown the space.

In 2024, the Department received about 30,000 emergency calls, which represents a 37% increase from 2020call volumes. The Department is most impacted by traffic levels in town which have resulted in vehicular and pedestrian crashes, parking issues, and congestion which slows response time. Between January 2022 and November 2024, the Department responded to 31 pedestrian crashes, some which included fatalities, and 162 motor vehicle crashes. The majority of these incidents occurred along Medford Street, Park Avenue, Mystic Street, Massachusetts Avenue, Broadway, and Summer Street.

Arlington Fire Department: The Fire Department provides fire prevention and suppression, hazard mitigation, planning for local emergencies, and emergency medical service across the Arlington

community. In addition, the department also provides building inspections on a regular basis for code enforcement, public education projects, training, and performs several related tasks including annual hose testing and hydrant inspections. The Department operates out of three fire stations (Central Fire Station, Highland Station, and Tower Station). In 2024 the Department responded to 5,926 calls for assistance, 70% of which were for medical emergencies entailing emergency medical response and emergency medical assist. That was an increase from 59% in 2021.

The Department includes a Class 1 Rescue/Ambulance staffed by two EMT-Basics, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. The Department currently has seventy-six EMT's. When staffing allows, Rescue 2 is placed in service as a second transport vehicle. In 2024, the Department's ambulance service responded to a total of 3,338 medical emergencies, up 9.6% from 2021.

The Fire Department works in partnership with the Arlington Emergency Management Office which is charged with developing and implementing the Town's Comprehensive Emergency Management (CEM) plan. The CEM plan focuses on preparedness, response, mitigation, and recovery from all risks, including man-caused emergencies and natural disasters.

Infrastructure & Municipal Services

Water & Sewer

Arlington's public water and sewer system is managed by its Department of Public Works (DPW) in partnership with the Massachusetts Water Resource Authority (MWRA). While the town maintains its own water and sewer infrastructure, it purchases water and sewer service from MWRA. About 130 miles of water lines and 115 miles of sewer lines make up the system.

Like many other communities, this infrastructure is aging and in need of repair and replacement. The town continually works to maintain and upgrade its aging water and sewer system's infrastructure to maintain reliable services. Funding is in place to replace about one mile of water piping per year. Expediting this replacement process would require a water rate adjustment. Different sections of Arlington's sewer system are inspected and improved each year. As of 2025, DPW confirmed the Town has already completed one full cycle of upgrades and is beginning the process again to keep up with the ongoing maintenance needs.

Stormwater

Arlington manages its stormwater program through a Small Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems (MS4) permit under the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). The Town has also enacted a Stormwater Management Program (SWMP) to help it target drainage infrastructure improvements to safeguard the water quality of its surface water resources. Because Arlington has a separated sewer system it does not directly experience combined sewer overflows (CSOs) within town boundaries. It is impacted, however, by neighboring CSO

communities that discharge into shared waterbodies along Arlington's town line, most notably Alewife Brook.

High volume and duration rainfall events result in significant flooding throughout town due to Arlington's high density and level of impervious surfaces as well as its local topography which directs waterflow to Mill Brook. One to two significant flood events typically occur each year at key points along Mill Brook impacting some residents whose properties intersect the floodplain. Recognizing Mill Brook's capacity cannot increase, DPW focuses on flood mitigation and preparedness.

Waste Management

The Town facilitates waste collection through a contract with Waste Management. The service provides weekly curbside and dumpster collection for solid waste, recycling, and yard waste from residential and commercial locations. Arlington's mandatory recycling program has decreased solid waste tonnage over the years. Trash is taken to an incinerator in North Andover, and recycling goes to GreenWorks in Peabody where it is sorted and sold to make new consumer goods. The Town operates a Reuse & Recycling Center that accepts items not suitable for curbside pickup, such as electronic waste, scrap metal, propane tanks, batteries (excluding alkaline), and bulky rigid plastics. Yard waste is made into mulch and other organic material to enhance soil quality.

Public Schools

Arlington Public Schools serve approximately 6,000 students across eleven schools which include one pre-school, eight elementary schools, two middle schools, and one high school. Total enrollment has increased by about 6% since 2021. Enrollment has grown steadily for the past twenty years and is expected to continue to increase over the next five years.

Menotomy Preschool: A nonprofit preschool located in Arlington High School and run by the childhood special education department at AHS, offering work-related training experience for high school students studying early childhood education.

Kindergarten to Grade 5:

Bishop Elementary: Built in 1950, renovated in 2002. Softball/youth baseball diamond, basketball court, multipurpose field, playground, parking lot.

Brackett Elementary: Rebuilt in 2000. Basketball court, multipurpose field, playground, across street from Robbins Farm Park (baseball diamond, multipurpose field, playground)

Dallin Elementary: Rebuilt in 2005. Softball/youth baseball diamond, basketball courts, multipurpose field, playground, tot lot

Hardy Elementary: Built in 1926, renovated in 2001. Basketball courts, playground, parking lot available after 3pm

Peirce Elementary: Rebuilt in 2004. Basketball courts, playground, tot lot, parking lot available after 3pm

Stratton Elementary: Built in 1962, renovated in 2011. Basketball courts, multipurpose field, playground, parking lot available after 3pm

Thompson Elementary: Rebuilt in 2013. Basketball court, softball/youth baseball diamond, playgrounds, baseball diamond, multipurpose field, picnic tables, seasonal spray pool, parking lot

Gibbs School: Grades 3-8. Built 1928, renovated in 2018. Playground, gardens, outdoor classroom.

Ottoson Middle School: Grades 6-8. Built in 1920, renovated in 1998. Softball/youth baseball diamond, practice area, parking

Arlington High School: Grades 9-12. Rebuilt 2020-2025. Three gymnasiums, baseball/soccer field, softball/football field, amphitheater, football stadium and track.

The Arlington High School Building Project began in 2020 to improve and expand the facility to keep up with increasing enrollment and transform outdated infrastructure to better meet today's education needs. The four-phase project includes the addition of performing arts and STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, Mathematics) wings, new educational spaces for humanities, the library, and Menotomy Preschool, administrative offices, a black box theater, and new athletic facilities and turf fields. The project has entered phase four and is expected to be completed in September 2025.

Town Financials

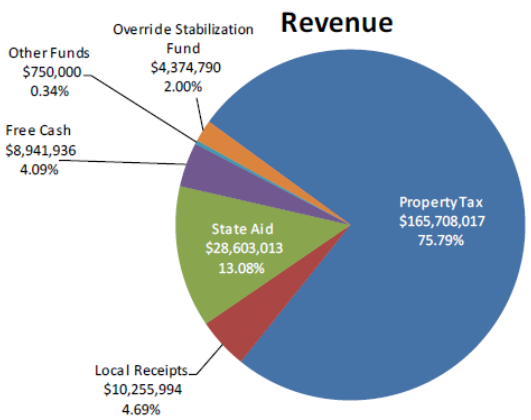
Three-quarters of the Town's revenue comes from local property taxes. In Fiscal Year 2025, the total tax levy was approximately $166,205,000, of which 94.7% was residential. 3.6% was commercial and less than 0.2% industrial. The remaining 1.5% was from personal property taxes. Compared to Fiscal Year 2021, the residential share has stayed about the same while the share of commercial and industrial both shrank and personal property increased.

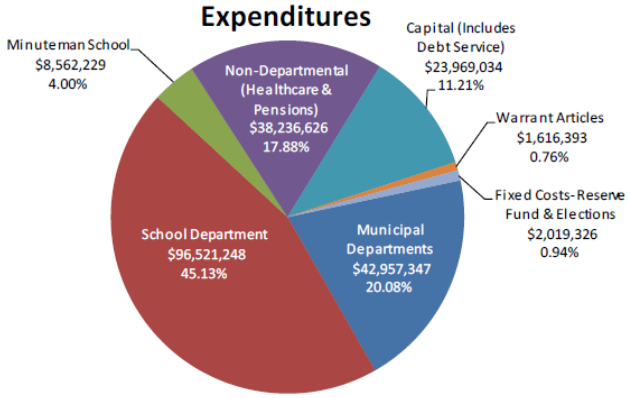
While a fairly stable source of revenue, property tax increases are limited by Proposition 2½ and have been insufficient to keep pace with rising costs. New growth, primarily from new construction and redevelopment, can also increase the Town's revenue but has averaged only about 1% in recent years, among the bottom third of Massachusetts' towns and cities. This creates a structural deficit where limited property tax revenue increases lag behind steadily increasing costs for essential services. Fiscal Year 2026 is the final year of a three-year plan that incorporated the Proposition 2½ override approved in November 2023.

Almost half of the Town's expenditures are allocated to the School Department (45%). Non-departmental (healthcare and pensions) is another sizable expenditure at almost 18%. Municipal departments account for about 20% of expenditures.

Fiscal Year 2025

Total $218,633,750





Enterprise Funds

The Town has five enterprise funds separate from the Town's General Fund: water/sewer, recreation, Ed Burns Arena/Sports Center, Council on Aging Transportation, and Youth Counseling Center. The water/sewer fund is the largest with a Fiscal Year 2025 budget of approximately $24.5 million. The others range from $130,000 to $2.6 million.

Capital Improvement Program

The goal of the Capital Planning Program is to provide a means of planning for the maintenance and improvement of the capital assets and infrastructure of the Town. The maintenance of infrastructure and the capital assets are of vital importance to the delivery of quality services. Over the five-year span of the capital improvement program, the total budget is estimated around $67.8 million. The Fiscal Year 2025 capital improvement budget is $16 million. About half is allocated to six Public Works divisions. Schools is the next largest component at around 28%.

Community Preservation Act

The Community Preservation Act (CPA) allows participating cities and towns to reserve dedicated funds to preserve open space and historic sites, create affordable housing, and develop open space and recreational facilities. The acquisition, creation and preservation of these community assets is financed through the Community Preservation Fund, comprised of local revenues collected from a property tax surcharge (1.5% of the net tax levy in Arlington), plus annual distributions from the Massachusetts Community Preservation Trust Fund.

The Town of Arlington passed the CPA in November 2014. The Town began collecting local tax surcharge revenue in 2015 and received the first annual state CPA distribution in 2016. The first round of CPA grants was approved by Annual Town Meeting in 2016.

To date, Arlington CPA grants have directly leveraged at least $800,000 in new outside funding for open space, recreation, and historic preservation in Arlington. In addition, CPA has contributed to the required local match for millions in federal and state housing awards to date.

Mobility & Access

Overview

Arlington provides its residents with a robust multimodal transportation network. The roadway network is well-connected, providing multiple connections between residential neighborhoods, commercial areas, and employment centers both locally and regionally. The local road network is complemented with through roads, which allows for streamlined travel for those passing through Arlington and connecting to Boston or Cambridge without substantially impacting residential traffic flows. Public transit is available to Arlington residents through the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) bus network. MBTA's web of bus routes through Arlington provides residents with frequent and accessible service, and several bus routes connect directly with rapid transit subway service at Alewife Station and Harvard Station.

Sidewalk and active transportation infrastructure continues to develop in Arlington, with increasing emphasis on the long-term sustainability of the Town's mobility network. Though the current sidewalk network is far-reaching and deemed to be in above-fair condition, instances of crashes particularly involving pedestrians and cyclists remain high along Massachusetts Avenue. This can partially be explained by the confluence of bus, cyclist, auto, and pedestrian traffic on this thoroughfare. While the Town is expanding multimodal infrastructure, additional steps are needed to ensure complementary traffic calming measures take place.

Roadway Network

People driving, taking transit, making deliveries, biking, and walking in Arlington, whether for work, travel, or social activities, have several key roadways to choose from. Most of these thoroughfares connect the town in the east-west direction: Route 2, Route 2A, Route 16, and Route 60. These roads, predominantly characterized as principal arterials or urban major arterials, are essential in bringing commuters into and out of Arlington during peak travel periods. Route 2 runs along the Town's southern border and is the only controlled-access route, connecting to Cambridge, I-95, and beyond.

The functional classification of Arlington's roadways are depicted in Table 1. The classification of a roadway indicates its function and its scale of connectivity spanning from local access to through movement. As seen in Table 1, 97 miles (73%) of Arlington's roadway network fall into the local classification. Arterials and collectors comprise 17% of the roadway network, while state and national highway-designated roads make up the remainder.

Table 1: Classification of Roads in Arlington[1]

Classification	Roadway Miles
Local	97
Arterial	12
Collector	10
Ramp	2
State Route	8
US Highway	3

[1] Road Inventory from 2024: Road Inventory 2024 | MassDOT Open Data Portal

Arterial Roads

Arterials provide the highest level of mobility for vehicles. These are often state highways and provide limited multimodal options for roadway users.

Collector Roads

This functional class of road allows for access to abutting land with higher frequency than an arterial road. Collector roads link local roadways to larger arterials.

Local Roads

Local roads connect drivers to abutting land and prioritize frequent access needs over connectivity or transit needs.

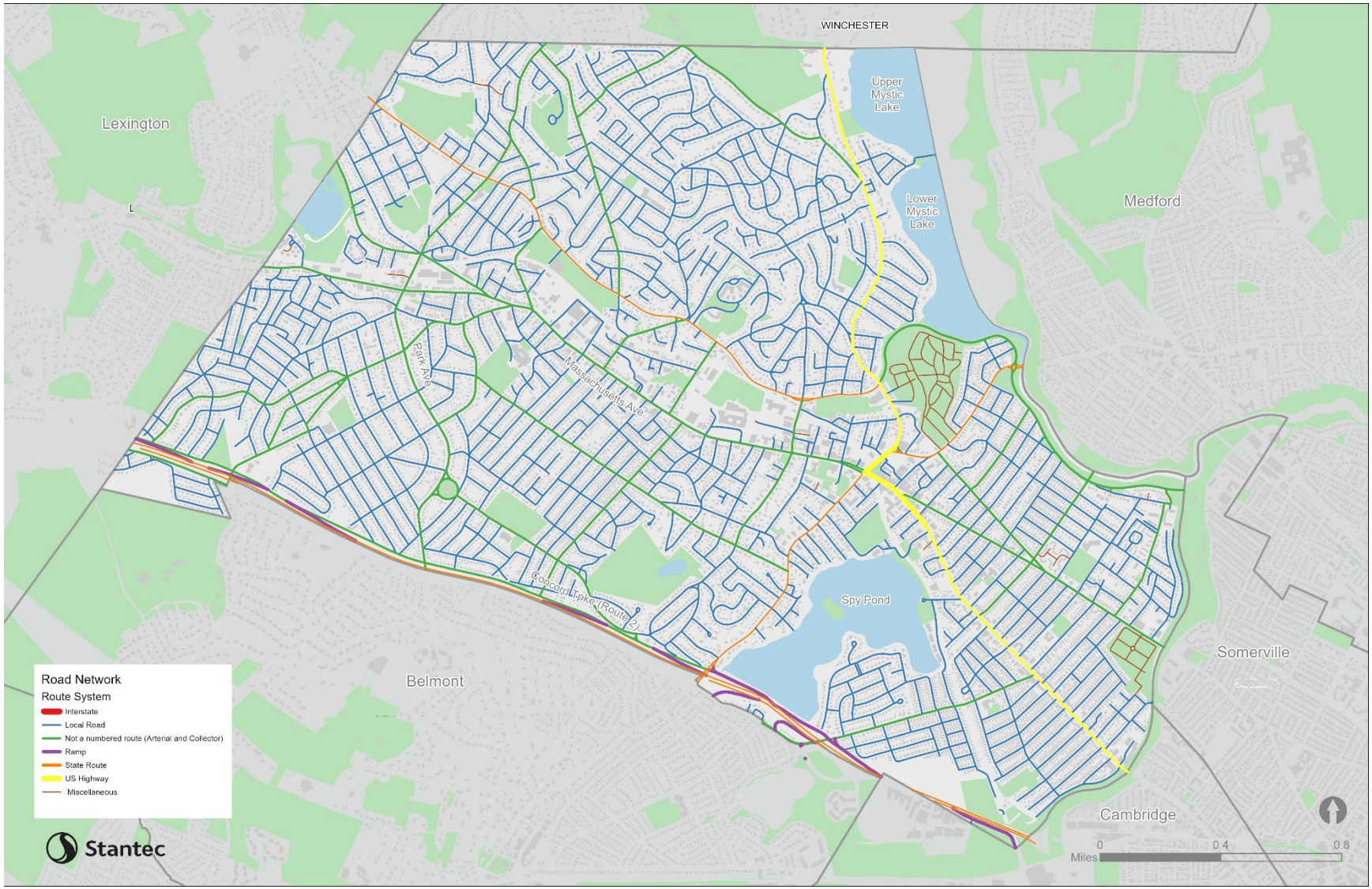
This classification of road is divided into accepted town roads (those owned by the Town) and unaccepted town roads (private ways). The Town of Arlington plows all roads in the winter months, but all other maintenance of private ways are the responsibility of the abutting owners per state laws governing private ways.

Roadway Jurisdiction

Figure 2 depicts the current jurisdiction of roads in Arlington. The jurisdiction of a roadway indicates the ownership and responsibility for maintenance, enhancements, and repairs.

The majority of roads in Arlington fall under the jurisdiction of the Town. The state-owned roadways include sections of Route 2 and segments of Route 3, which are maintained by the Commonwealth.

Figure 1: Classification of Roads in Arlington (*MassDOT, 2024)*[2]



[2] Road Inventory from 2024: [Road Inventory 2024 | MassDOT Open Data Portal]

Figure 2: Arlington Roadways and Ownership (MassDOT, 2024)[3]



Key Arterials

Table 2: Classification of Key Arterials in Arlington

Street	Other Designations	Function	Roadway Characteristics	Context	Ownership
Route 2	**N/A**	Principal arterial connecting connection between Boston and NY State line. Commuting route for workers in northwest suburbs to Boston	Three to four lanes in each direction. Five exits into Arlington. No bicycle facilities	Walled-in highway	MassDOT
Route 2A	Massachusetts Avenue, Mystic Street, Summer Street	Principal arterial and minor arterial running in the east-west direction. A connection between the Cambridge city line and the start of Summer Street. Offers a similar function as Route 2, but at slower speeds	One to two lanes in each direction. Sidewalks on both sides, intermittent bike lanes.	Varies: commercial, residential	
US Route 3	Mystic Street and Massachusetts Avenue	Principal arterial provides connection between surrounding suburbs and Boston area	One to two lanes in each direction along Massachusetts Avenue; two-lane roadway along Mystic Street. Sidewalks on both sides, proposed bike lane.	Residential, industrial, park and open space	MassDOT
Route 16	Alewife Brook Parkway	Principal arterial and east-west connection between Revere and Webster, however in Arlington is oriented in north-south direction, running along the border at the Cambridge city line	One lane in each direction		DCR

[3] Road Inventory from 2024: Road Inventory 2024 | MassDOT Open Data Portal

Route 60	Medford Street, Chestnut Street, Mystic Street, Pleasant Street	Urban major Arterial and east-west connection between Revere and Waltham Provides a link for residents traveling between Medford and Belmont, and between Route 2 and Interstate 93 Used by commercial vehicles	One lane in each direction Near shared use bike path	Residential, industrial, commercial, and open space	MassDOT
Lake Street	N/A	Urban minor arterial and connection between Massachusetts Avenue and Route 2 Used by commuters and for local school pick-up times	One lane in each direction Sidewalks on both sides, partial existing bike lane, proposed completed bike lane	Residential	Town
Mill Street	N/A	Urban minor arterial and connection between Massachusetts Avenue and Route 2A Crosses the Minuteman Bikeway. Primary point of access for those going to Arlington High School	One lane in each direction Sidewalks on both sides, proposed bike lane	Commercial	Town
Park Avenue	N/A	Urban minor arterial and connection between Route 2A and Belmont. Crosses Massachusetts Avenue, and bisects Arlington in the north-south direction	One lane in each direction Sidewalk both sides, protected bike lane for a section, shared street bike lane in other sections	Residential and commercial when passing Massachusetts Avenue	Town

Signalized Intersections

Arlington has 34 signalized intersections including both state-owned and Town-owned, as shown below.

Signalized Intersection Under MassDOT Jurisdiction

- Lake Street/Route 2 WB Ramps
- Park Avenue/Frontage Road D (North Side)
- Pleasant Street/Frontage Road D (North Side)
- Lake/Street Route 2 E Exit 60
- Massachusetts Avenue/Route 16*

Signalized Intersection Under Town Jurisdiction

- Pleasant Street /Irving Street
- Summer Street/Mill Street/Cutter Hill Road
- Broadway/Bates Road/Warren Street/River Street
- Broadway/Franklin Street
- Park Avenue/Florence Avenue
- Mystic Street/Columbia Road/Kimball Road
- Broadway/Oxford Street/N. Union Street
- Massachusetts Avenue/Shoulder Circle/Lockeland Avenue
- Massachusetts Avenue/High School Drive
- Mystic Street/Chestnut Street
- Medford Street/Warren Street
- Appleton Street/Appleton Place/Mass. Avenue
- Lake Street/Brooks Avenue
- Massachusetts Avenue/Jason Court/Mill Street
- Massachusetts Avenue/Franklin Street
- Mystic Valley Parkway/River Street/Harvard Avenue
- Route 2A (Summer Street)/Overlook Road/Ryder Street
- Route 2A (Summer Street)/Park Avenue Extension
- Route 2A (Summer Street)/Forest Street
- Mass. Avenue/Brattle Street
- Mystic Street/Summer Street/Mystic Valley Parkway
- Massachusetts Avenue/Lake Street/Winter Street
- Massachusetts Avenue/Pleasant Street/Mystic Street
- Massachusetts Avenue/Broadway
- Massachusetts Avenue/Swan Place
- Route 2A (Summer Street)/Brattle Street/Hemlock Street
- Massachusetts Avenue/Park Avenue
- Massachusetts Avenue/Linwood Street/Foster Street
- Gray Street/Highland Avenue
- Broadway/Cleveland Street
- Massachusetts Avenue/Thorndike Street/Teel Street

Parking Facilities

Arlington has on-street parking in many of its residential neighborhoods. Parking is time-restricted in the three commercial districts: Arlington Heights, East Arlington, and Arlington Center. In Arlington Center, parkers pay-to-park, contributing to a parking benefits district. No overnight parking is allowed on any public street in Arlington. The Town has a pilot program to allow 150 permits for overnight on-street parking at a cost of $1 per day.

Additionally, the Town has invested in electric vehicle charging stations for Town vehicles, with ten locations in Arlington as of June 2025.

Traffic Safety

Vehicular, Pedestrian, and Bicycle Crashes

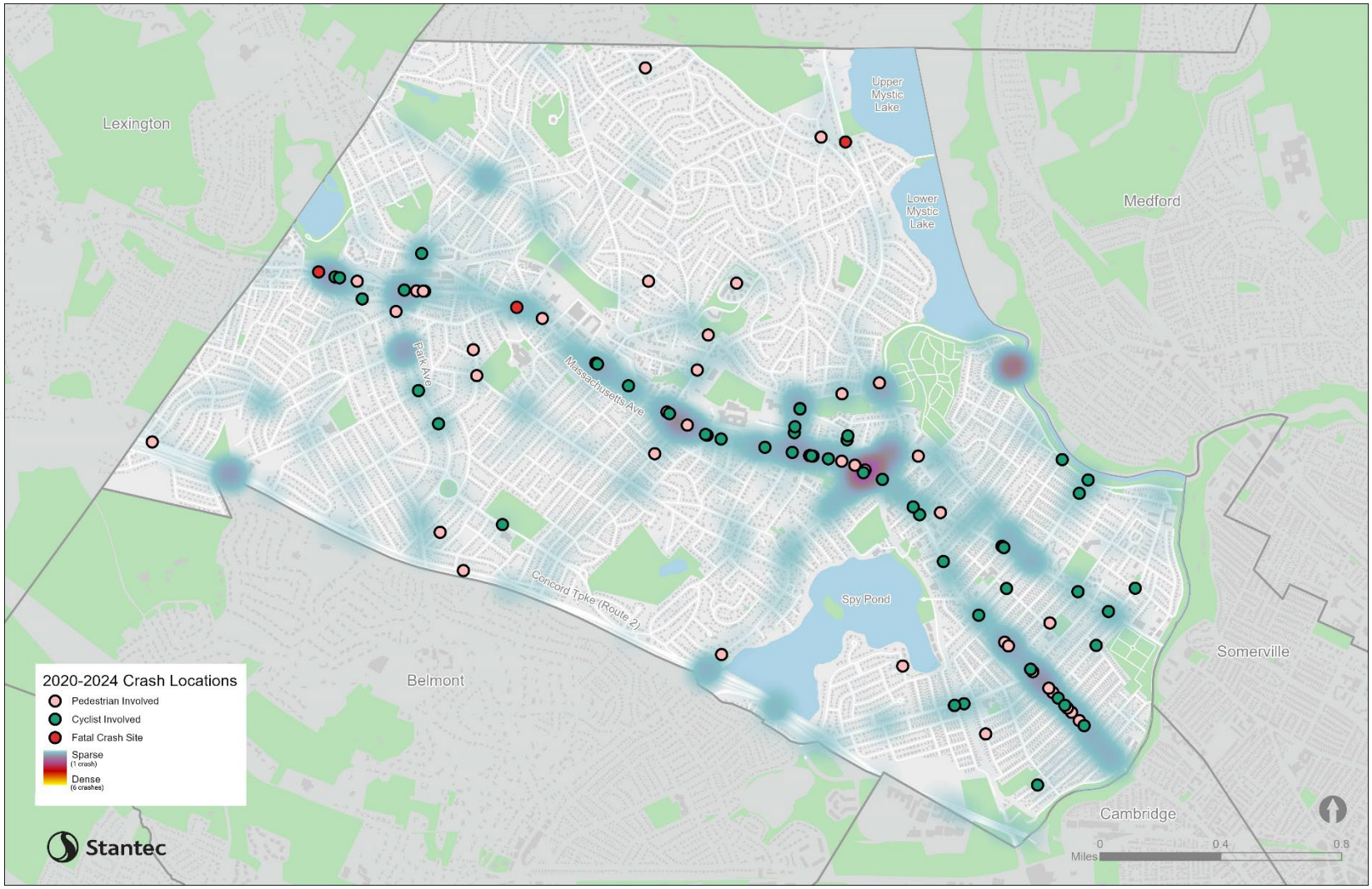
Potential transportation safety conflicts in Arlington were visualized using MassDOT crash data from 2020 to 2024. This data indicates that collisions are occurring along Massachusetts Avenue, with fatalities occurring at intersections with Dundee Road and Appleton Street. Collisions along this stretch often involve pedestrians and cyclists. Crashes involving solely vehicles are more concentrated along Mystic Street and Massachusetts Avenue within Arlington's central historic and business district. According to MassDOT information, 25 pedestrian crashes, 40 bicycle crashes, and 17 intersection crashes were contained within the top 5% of Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) clusters (2021).

Table 3 Types of Crashes[4] [5] [6] [7] [8]

Crash Description	Number of Crashes (2020-2024)
Fatal injury	3
Pedestrian Involved	51
Cyclist Involved	53
Total Crashes	*1,568*

[4] Crash Data from 2020: 2020 Crashes | MassGIS Data Hub
[5] Crash Data from 2021: 2021 Crashes | MassDOT Open Data Portal
[6] Crash Data from 2022: 2022 Crashes | MassDOT Open Data Portal
[7] Crash Data from 2023: https://geo-massdot.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/MassDOT::2023-crashes/about
[8] Crash Data from 2024: 2024 Crashes | MassDOT Open Data Portal

Figure 3 Arlington Crash Locations 2020-2024



Note: Crash locations based on merged MassDOT Impact Data from 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, and 2024[9] [10] [11] [12] The sparse and dense designations identify areas of town that have experienced a lower or higher concentration of crashes.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Infrastructure

Pedestrian Facilities

Infrastructure for pedestrians is generally available throughout Arlington, with sidewalks present on all major corridors and throughout most neighborhoods. All residential neighborhoods, except for Turkey Hill in the northwest and an area in the southwest portion of Arlington Heights, have consistent sidewalks on both sides of the street infrastructure. Additionally, sidewalk conditions at and around bus stops in Arlington are generally sufficient and maintained. Sidewalks in Arlington are doubly useful for both mobility and recreation. Along Broadway, various outdoor dining and seating areas allow the sidewalk to be a place of socialization and commerce. Curb extension and pedestrian plazas further enhance the sense of community taking place on Town sidewalks.

Pedestrians also enjoy a diverse tree canopy over most sidewalks, though areas along Massachusetts Avenue, particularly west of Academy street, stand to benefit from greater shading.

The Town provides snow plowing along all roadways and private ways. At bus stops, the MBTA has responsibility for clearing snow from sidewalks. Sidewalks outside of MBTA jurisdiction are cleared by adjacent residents or business owners.

Pathways

Three miles of the Minuteman Bikeway pass through Arlington, linking residents in Bedford, Lexington, and Cambridge on a shared use path. Traveling on the bikeway, pedestrians and cyclists pass several parks and historic sites. The pathway also is an economic asset, as it links areas of major business and downtown activities, such as Arlington Heights, Arlington Center, and East Arlington.

The bikeway connects Arlington to the regional bicycle paths, such as the Somerville Community Path, the Fitchburg Cut-off Path, the Alewife Greenway (with access to Alewife Station), the Reformatory Branch Trail in Bedford, and the Narrow-Gauge Rail-Trail in Bedford.

[9]Crash Data from 2020: 2020 Crashes | MassGIS Data Hub
[10] Crash Data from 2021: 2021 Crashes | MassDOT Open Data Portal
[11] Crash Data from 2022: 2022 Crashes | MassDOT Open Data Portal
[12] Crash Data from 2023: https://geo-massdot.opendata.arcgis.com/datasets/MassDOT::2023-crashes/about

Bicycle Facilities

Arlington's dedicated bicycle facilities connect different recreational assets, as well as areas of commercial and residential life. The Connect Arlington Sustainable Transportation Plan created a map of future bike infrastructure, further developing this network of mobility. Per recommendations outlined in this 2021 plan, the Town has established projects to further develop Massachusetts Avenue bike lane infrastructure and Mystic Valley Parkway bicycle infrastructure. The bike lane design intended for Mystic Valley Parkway is currently in progress and will link the heavily trafficked Minuteman Bikeway to Medford. The increasing presence of shared bike stations enhances the need for a safe and comprehensive bicycle network. As of June 2025, Arlington has ten shared bike stations in the Bluebikes Bike Share System, six of which are located along the Minuteman Bikeway. Often these bike share programs have users that cycle for transportation, rather than recreation, as the network of Bluebikes connects the town to a broader system encompassing Boston, Cambridge, Somerville, Newton, and the Metro Boston area.

Figure 4: Existing Sidewalk Network[13]

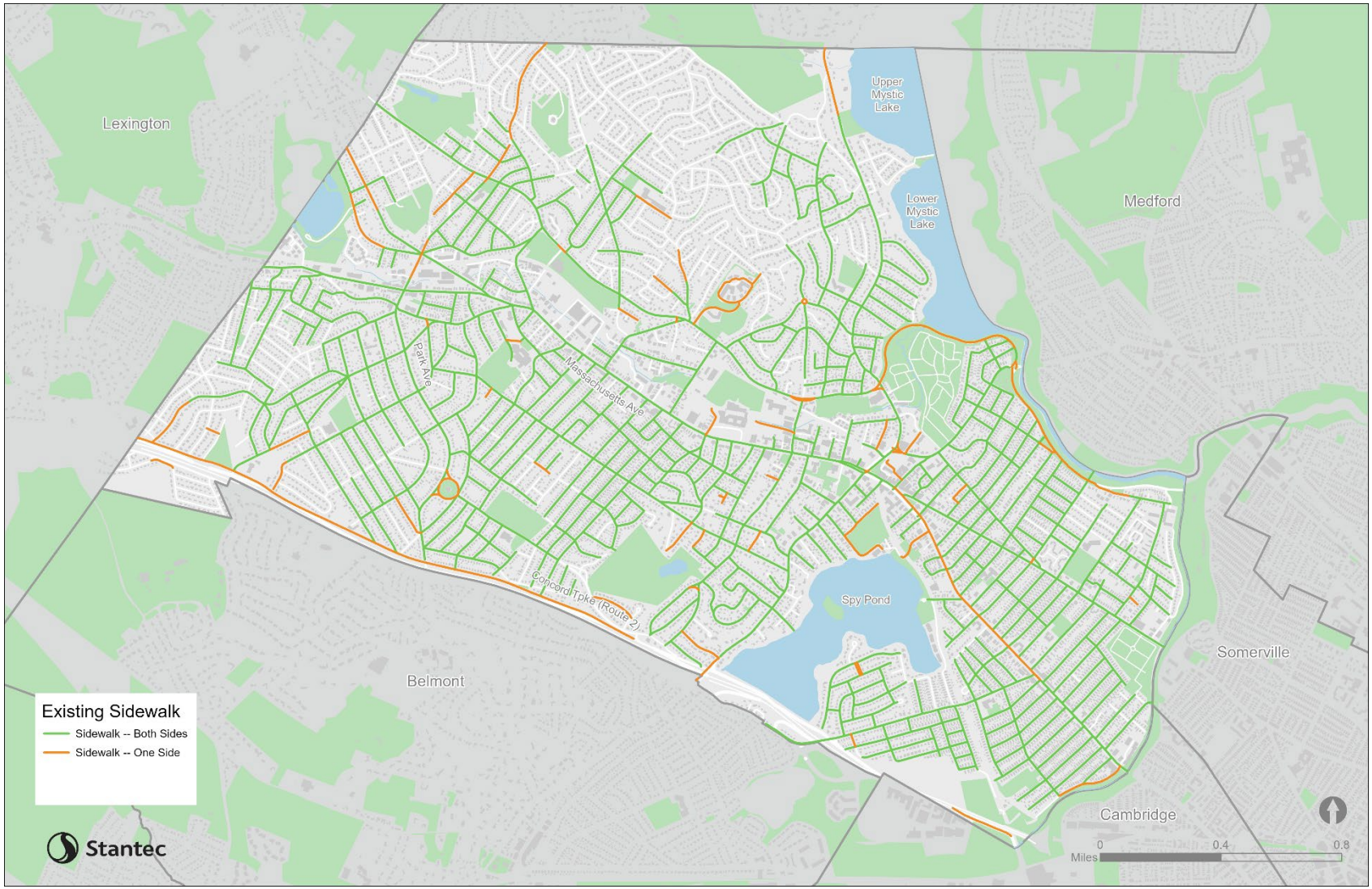
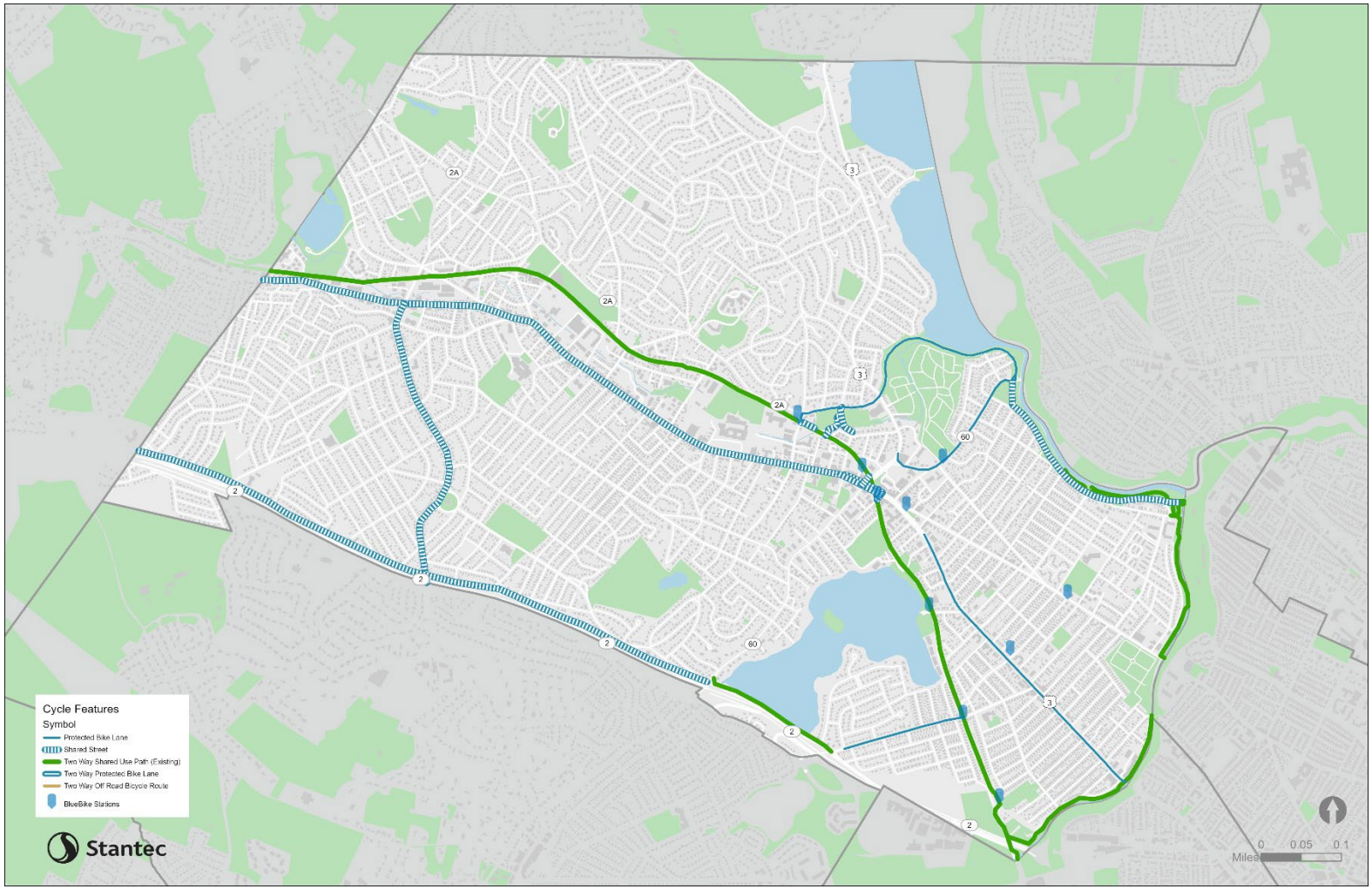


Figure 5 Arlington Bike Bicycle Network and Facilities[14]



[13] Sidewalk Infrastructure Data from 2023: Sidewalk Inventory | MassGIS Data Hub

[14] Bicycle Infrastructure from 2021: Connect Arlington Complete Plan FINAL : Town of Arlington Massachusetts : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive

Transit

Bus Transit

Nine fixed MBTA bus routes pass through Arlington, with one bus route meeting a 15-minute/high frequency headway. Most routes connect east and west, facilitating connection to and from Cambridge and Somerville. In addition, three routes connect directly to Alewife Station, an MBTA station providing rapid transit to Boston. Two others connect to Harvard Station, including the Route 77 bus which provides frequent service at less than 15 minute intervals during morning peak times.

Rapid Transit

There are no stations within the Town boundary that are serviced by rapid transit. However, the Alewife Station is located just beyond the southern town border and accessible through three bus routes. At this MBTA station residents have frequent and fast access to Somerville, Cambridge and Boston via the Red Line.

Arlington is also within two miles of four MBTA commuter rail stations, in Belmont, Winchester, Cambridge, and West Medford.

Transportation for Senior Citizens

Senior citizens in Arlington benefit from transportation services provided through the Town's Council on Aging (COA). The COA's van service costs riders $6 per roundtrip and must be scheduled at least 2 business days in advance.

Medical Escort Services are also provided for trips outside of Arlington limits at the rate of $10 each way.

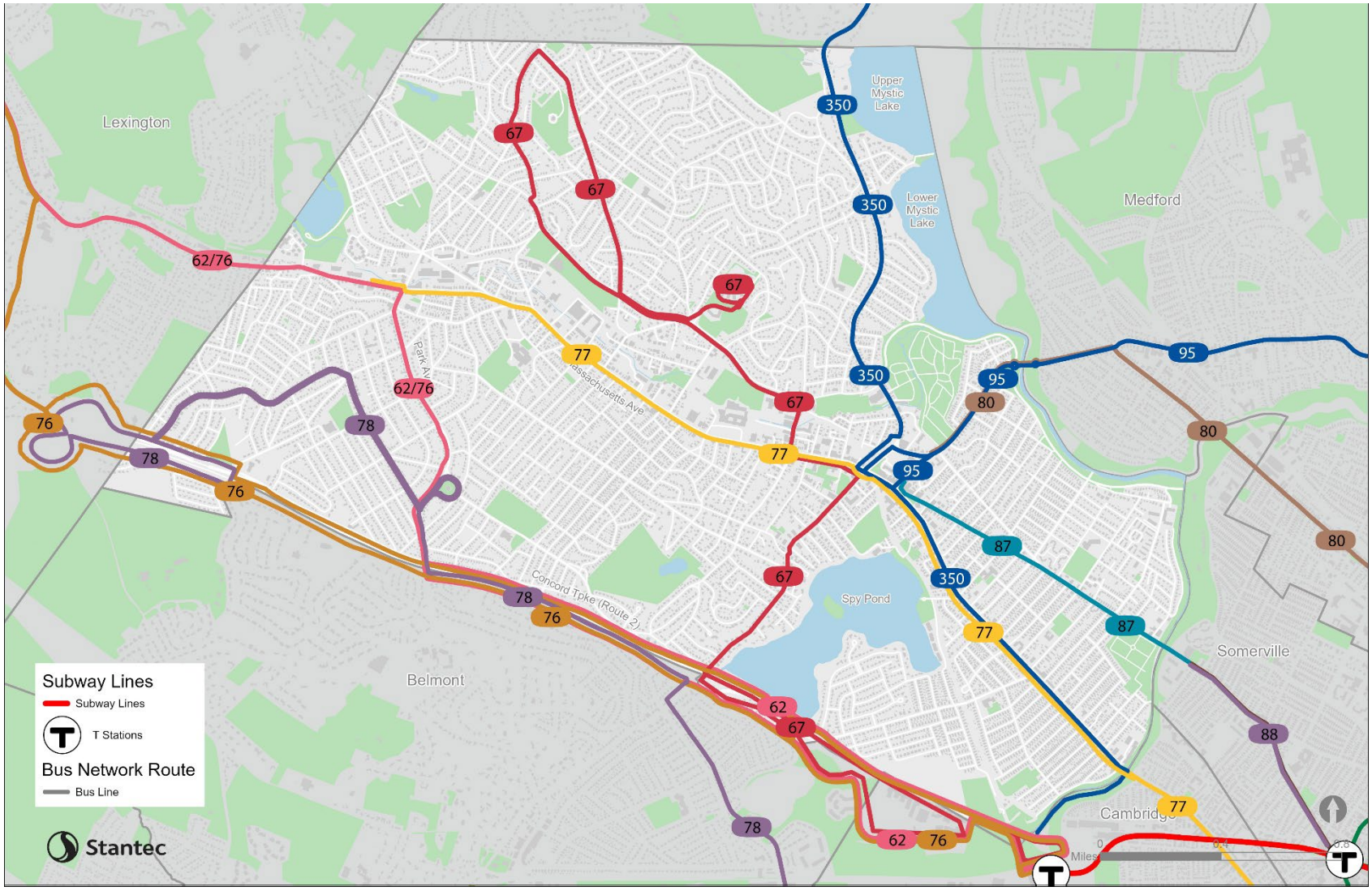
All residents of Arlington have access to free transportation via taxi or rideshare service for any cancer-related appointment. This service is funded through the Sanborn Foundation in partnership with the Arlington Council on Aging.

Table 4 Typical Boarding on Bus Routes through Arlington, Fall 2023

MBTA Bus Route	Route Description	Frequency (avg AM peak, 2025)[15]	Average Weekday Boardings (Fall 2023)[16]
62	Bedford VA Hospital – Alewife Station	40-55 min	675
67	Turkey Hill – Alewife Station	25-30 min	327
76	Alewife via Hanscom Airport	40-55 min	226
77	Arlington Heights – Harvard Station	15 min	4,902
78	Arlmont Village – Harvard Station	20-30 min	1,084
80	Arlington Center – Lechmere Station	40 min	649
87	Clarendon Hill or Arlington Center – Lechmere Station	15-30 min	2,279

[15] Frequency Data from Summer 2025: MBTA Bus Schedule
[16] Average Boarding Data from Fall 2023: MBTA Ridership by Trip, Stop, Season, Route

Figure 6 MBTA Bus Routes through Arlington (March 2025)[17]



[17] System Map Data from 2025: MBTA System Map

General Travel and Commute Patterns

All Trips Estimates

New ways of using available traffic data have allowed planners to predict and model travel demand patterns. *Replica* is a data product that processes Census data, traffic and transit counts, and anonymized mobile GPS data to predict where daily trips are occurring, and the mode and purpose of these trips. Table illustrates the general pattern of the top municipalities from which trips originate that end in Arlington on a typical weekday. Figure 4 further breaks down the origin location of weekday trips, showing specific census tracts where trips are predicted to start. The figure indicates that the majority of trips originate within the Town limits, though there is also east-west demand, with 23% of all trips originating from the east in Boston, Cambridge, Medford, and Somerville.

The data indicates that most trips occur within Arlington, meaning interventions to existing transportation networks stand to benefit most trip takers by improving local roadways.

Table 6: Estimated Mode Share for All Trips, 2024

Mode	Percentage of Trips
Personal Vehicle	73%
Pedestrian	15%
Bike	6%
Transit	3%
Commercial Vehicle	1%
TNC/ Ride Share	1%
Other	1%

Figure 4: Origins of Trips to Arlington Daily, (Fall, 2024)

 illustrates that most trips taken on a weekday are done via private automobiles. The second highest share of trips are made by pedestrians, a mode share that increases from 15% to 17% when looking at just Arlington residents. Table indicates the mode share breakdown of trips made by just Arlington residents.

Table 5: Top Trip Origins for Trips that end in Arlington, Weekday, Fall 2024[18]

Trip Origin	Percent of All Trips
Arlington	47%
Boston	8%
Cambridge	7%
Medford	4%
Somerville	4%
Other	30%

[18] Origin Trip Data from Fall, 2024: Replica: Data to Drive Decisions about the Built Environment

Table 6: Estimated Mode Share for All Trips, 2024[19]

Mode	Percentage of Trips
Personal Vehicle	73%
Pedestrian	15%
Bike	6%
Transit	3%
Commercial Vehicle	1%
TNC/ Ride Share	1%
Other	1%

[19] Origin Trip Data from Fall, 2024: Replica: Data to Drive Decisions about the Built Environment

Figure 4: Origins of Trips to Arlington Daily, (Fall, 2024)[20]



Auto Ownership

As of 2023, it was estimated that 4% of households in Arlington do not own vehicles, representing a population that is entirely dependent on multimodal infrastructure to walk, bike, take transit, use transportation network companies or taxis, or other alternatives for moving around Arlington and beyond. Table shows the percentage of households with zero vehicles, compared to those with at least one.

Table 7: Arlington Residents Mode Share for All Trips, 2024[21]

Mode	Number of Trips of Residents
Personal Vehicle	72%
Pedestrian	17%
Bike	7%
Transit	3%
Other	1%
TNC/Ride Share	0%

Table 8: Auto Ownership of Arlington Households[22]

Number of Vehicles	Percentage of Households
2	43%
1	40%
3+	14%
0	4%

[20] Origin Trip Data from Fall, 2024: Replica: Data to Drive Decisions about the Built Environment

[21] Origin Trip Data from Fall, 2024: Replica: Data to Drive Decisions about the Built Environment

[22] Car Ownership Data from 2019-2023: 5-Year Estimates: Commute in Arlington Massachusetts - Census Bureau Tables

Commute Mode Choice

Using census data to verify commuter mode choice, Table indicates that Arlington residents most often choose to travel via personal vehicle. Around 2% of residents walk, while 18% use public transportation. Roughly 48% of Arlington residents work from home for at least part of the work week, likely due to the changes caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.[23] When comparing the mode share of multimodal transportation in Arlington versus the State, it far outpaces the Massachusetts average for walking, biking and public transit use.

Commuting Time

The average commuting time of Arlington residents is 32 minutes according to 2019-2023 census data, and predicted to be around 16 miles.[24] The relationship between miles traveled and average commuting time could be explained by the higher than average rates of congestion experienced on arterials going into Boston or Cambridge.

Table 11: Arlington Commuter Mode Share[25]

Mode	Number of Trips of Residents
Personal Vehicle	71%
Transit	18%
Bike	7%
Pedestrian	2%
TNC/Ride Share	1%

[23] American Community Survey data from 2023: https://data.census.gov/.
[24] Commuter Data from 2019-2023 5-Year Estimates: Commute in Arlington Massachusetts - Census Bureau Tables

[25] Commuter Data from 2019-2023 5-Year Estimates: Commute in Arlington Massachusetts - Census Bureau Tables