

Module: Arlington County: A Best Practice Case in Urban Regeneration

Meets: Friday, October 17, 2008 (5:00 pm to 9:00 pm) & Saturday, October 18, 2008 (9:00 am to 5:00 pm)

Credit hours: 1

Instructors: Dr. Heike Mayer, Dr. Ralph Buehler

Arlington County represents a best practice case study in urban regeneration in the Washington D.C. region. The county was one of the first localities to apply innovative planning tools such as transit-oriented development and smart growth. Arlington has created vibrant “urban villages” around its Metro stations and the majority of the county’s economic base is concentrated in the Rosslyn-Ballston transit corridor. This module class will discuss the ways in which Arlington County implemented urban regeneration ideas to generate residential and economic development around the Rosslyn-Ballston corridor and encourage non-automobile transportation. We will pay attention to the following two planning areas: transportation and economic development. In particular, we will discuss the ways in which these areas intersect and relate to each other. Instructors will introduce the topics and embed the Arlington County case study in the broader context of urban development in the United States. Guest speakers and a field trip will allow students to gain a practice-oriented perspective of Arlington as a best practice case. The class will be joined by a group of students from Kaiserslautern, Germany, who will be visiting the DC region to study urban development and suburbanization.

Preliminary Outline:

Transportation (Ralph Buehler)

- History of transportation in the US
- Theories of transportation, land use, and urban design
- Transit-oriented development
- Case study: Arlington County, Virginia

Economic Development (Heike Mayer)

- History of economic development planning in the US
- Knowledge-based economic development
- Commercial revitalization
- Case study: Arlington County, Virginia

The intersection of transportation & economic development

Field trip to Arlington County (most likely on Saturday, October 18)

Student projects:

Each student will prepare a short research paper (no more than 10-12 pages) related to one of the following topics. The papers will be presented during the module course.

1. How does Arlington plan for transit-oriented development?
2. How does Arlington promote transit use, walking, and bicycling?

3. How does incentive zoning work?
4. How does Arlington use and implement the so-called GLUP and the sector plans?
5. How does Arlington plan for density around the Metro stops?
6. What is Arlington's response to the recent recommendations by the BRAC commission?
7. What's happening with the Columbia Pike corridor?
8. How does Arlington County plan in Chrystal City?
9. What is Arlington County's approach to affordable housing?
10. What is the practice of economic development planning in Arlington County?
11. What is Arlington's retail development strategy?
12. How does Arlington use art, culture and creativity in economic development?
13. How does Arlington support knowledge-based industries and institutions?
14. In what ways does the county work with community groups?
15. What is the public participation model in Arlington County?

Closing Discussion questions for German and American students:

VT students will be joined by a group of German students. A large part of the class will take on a comparative perspective and we will focus our concluding discussion on questions such as:

- What are the lessons from Arlington for other places in the U.S.? Which policies can be transferred; what barriers are there for adopting these policies in other counties?
- What distinguishes Arlington's approach of integrating transportation and land use planning from *traditional* transportation and land use planning elsewhere in the US?
- How does Arlington County's planning approach compare to planning in Germany?
- What instruments, tools, and perspectives could be transferred to the German context?
- Etc.