

To: Upper Arlington City Council
From: UA Community Relations Committee
Re: **Endorsement of Support for the Community Center Feasibility Study Recommendations**
Date: February 23, 2021

The Upper Arlington Community Relations Committee is pleased to endorse an Upper Arlington Community Center. Our vision is that Upper Arlington is an inclusive community of opportunity for all people. We must welcome and include everyone in ways they value and trust.

City Council established the UA Community Relations Committee in the fall of 2020 after an extensive assessment process which included two workshops and a survey involving more than 85 citizens. This process identified strengths of UA as well as areas requiring more attention. It also outlined steps to address gaps. The desire for a multi-purpose community center to bring community members together emerged as the top priority for the majority of participants.

Although quite new, our Committee is steadfast in its commitment to deepening the sense of community and neighborliness which so many in UA treasure. We are developing initiatives which enhance understanding, appreciation, communication, and mutual respect. We believe the Community Center issue before voters represents a transformational opportunity for UA to come together in ways heretofore not possible.

The proposed Community Center is uniquely positioned to accomplish this goal:

- ✓ It has a broad range of facilities and experiences for all ages, interests, and needs.
- ✓ The Kingsdale location is central, accessible, and safe.
- ✓ The detailed, carefully developed funding models for constructing and operating the facility are fiscally sound. **This project is possible without an increase in taxes.**
- ✓ Acting now is paramount. Otherwise, the site will be redeveloped for other purposes. Future options would be more costly and likely to take away from parks and other recreational land.

Should Upper Arlington voters support a Community Center on May 4, 2021, we encourage City Council to take the following steps as plans proceed to detailed design, construction and, ultimately the operation of this new community asset:

- Continue to engage residents in the next steps of the design process so that the Community Center best reflects the needs of all in the UA community.
- Adopt operations policies and fiscal practices that ensure the Community Center is accessible and affordable to anyone in UA who wants to belong.
- Include design elements, programming and events that promote and celebrate cultural diversity and inclusion.

Zig Ziglar said, “What you get by achieving your goals is not as important as what you become by achieving your goals.” We are on the precipice of a great step forward in this community.

We thank you for providing UA citizens with the opportunity to vote on this important initiative and look forward to celebrating this achievement.

Sincerely,

Upper Arlington Community Relations Committee

| Floyd Akins – Chair | Farida El-Hennawy – Co-Chair | Hana Abdelbaki | Jean-Philippe Dorval | Karen Heiser |
| Ukeme Awakessien Jeter | Judy Kase | Jason Sayat | Howard Warner |