Compilation of Issues and Recommended Solutions derived by participants of:

Arlington Coming Together, Arlington, Texas

***Site P*ROBLEM *I*DENTIFICATION AND *R*ESOLUTION OF *I*SSUES *T*OGETHER**

(SPIRIT)

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This compilation is a summary of the ideas and concerns of residents of Arlington, TX and not of the U.S. Department of Justice. The compilation should not be perceived, construed, interpreted or understood to be a finding or conclusion of the U.S. Department of Justice or any component thereof.

Introduction

Since 1964, the Community Relations Service (CRS) of the United States Department of Justice has introduced a variety of methods and programs for reducing racial tension and violence in communities throughout the United States.

More than 5 years ago, a CRS conciliator recognized the value of community and city problem solving for racial issues and created the SPIRIT (**S**ite **P**roblem **I**dentification and **R**esolution of **I**ssues **T**ogether) program. Since then, CRS has applied the principles of mediation, problem solving, and full engagement of residents to help improve the racial climate of their communities. SPIRIT brings community leaders, city officials and concerned citizens together to identify issues, develop solutions, and take action on conflicts within their communities.

Mayor Robert Cluck of Arlington and Rita Sibert of the Arlington Chapter NAACP agreed that CRS should conduct a SPIRIT session in Arlington. Building and improving race relations were the goals. This report provides our methodology and exclusively, from the participants, problem identification and resolutions. This program calls for a CRS Senior Conciliator and local practitioners to facilitate the process of gaining community perspectives of problems ***and*** solutions in Arlington. Facilitators came from community representatives in the city of Arlington.

Methodology

In the morning session we began with a program introduction and presentation by the Mayor, U.S. Attorney, Arlington NAACP Chapter President and CRS. Grouping participants by career fields, we tasked them with identifying problems and issues of concern. Following this first break-out session, participants identified representatives to work on the Mayor's Arlington Coming Together Advisory Council (see the list at the end of this document). Participants reconvened after recording the problems and concerns of their respective groups and voting on the top five issues from each respective group. The information gathered at the morning session is contained within Appendix A at the end of this document.

Facilitators gathered all recordings and developed a compilation of common problems and themes. In the afternoon participants worked on problem resolutions using a 5-step problem solving process. Participants were placed in mixed career field groups to develop their solutions to problems of concern. (Participants recognized during this grouping that their individual group concerns were common among other groups). Note that minor edits of the participant data was made to assure a clear understanding of the communication.

At the end of the day, the Mayor's Arlington Coming Together Advisory Council was introduced to the Mayor. This Advisory Council will meet periodically with the Mayor to follow-up on the program and implement resolutions developed during the sessions. The Advisory Council will also work on other concerns as appropriate.

<u>List of Priorities Issues</u>

MAJOR PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED, CONSOLIDATED, AND PRIORITIZED BASED ON PARTICIPANT VOTES (Participants received 3 dots and placed a dot(s) by the issue(s) most important to them. Issues in bold were selected for further discussion to develop action plan goals and recommended resolutions.)

1. **Lack of public transportation – 24 votes (page 12)**
2. **Leadership of City and Schools does not represent the diversity of community (elected and appointed). – 26 votes (page 6)**
3. City caters to affluent business class to the detriment of the general population. – 1 vote
4. **Educational system is broken – 25 votes (page 9)**
    a. **Literacy**
    b. **Diversity**
    c. **Communication**
5. Local government does not have a servant attitude and tries to maintain status quo. – 3 votes
6. Poor City planning on the use of land and parks and recreation facilities. – 0 votes
7. Need more county healthcare. – 3 votes
8. Law enforcement at the patrol level does not reflect the diversity of the community. – 4 votes
9. **Divisions by race, ethnicity, misrepresentation, and stereotypes create barriers to communication. – 21 votes (page 11)**
10. **Political process/election process hinders minority participation (at large election process). – 17 votes (page 13)**
11. Making grant programs easier with more assistance for applying for grants. – 1 votes
12. Lack of communication between City Council and School Board. – 2 votes
13. Lack of quality mentoring for teens. – 6 votes
14. Lack of racial dialogue within schools (between schools and staff). – 9 votes
15. Lack of cultural arts activities. – 0 votes

Problem Resolution

Afternoon session:
The afternoon session moves participants to resolving problems. They were first introduced to the 5-step problem-solving method, and then briefed on the common themes that ran across all groups in the morning sessions.

General session 2: The 5-step problem-solving method:

1. Identify the problem
2. Brainstorm possible solutions
3. Pick the best solution(s)
4. Develop a plan of action and implement the solution
5. Follow-up on the success of the implementation

Breakout session 2: Participants were then broken up into mixed occupational groups identified by colors on their nametags to brainstorm potential solutions to concerns. Each group was tasked with addressing one concern. Participants were encouraged to come up with as many ideas as possible and not to judge or evaluate them until the end of the session. Using the 5 Step Problem Solving Model, each group below indicates the problem addressed and corresponding recommendations for resolution.

**Font that is blue and italicized was added during editing to further clarify certain recommended resolutions.*

Problem one: The leadership of our city and school district (elected officials) does not reflect the diversity of the community.

Action plan goal: To reflect the diversity of the community within the leadership of the city and school board.

Resolutions recommended:

1. Election process by single member districts for school board officials and city council.
    - Timeline: Before next election
    - Responsible parties: City Council, School Board, Civic community.
    - Resources: Funding from city local, private, state, non-profits.
    - *Note – For the City Council, a change to all single member districts require an election to change the City Charter. An election of this type can either be ordered by the Council or put on the ballot by a citizen petition.*
    - *Note - For the Arlington Independent School District, a change to single member districts is governed by Texas Education Code section 11.052. A change can be made in one of two ways:*
        - *By its own motion, the board may order that trustees are to be elected from single-member districts or that not fewer than 70 percent of the members of the board are to be elected from single-member districts with the remaining trustees to be elected from the district at large. Before adopting such an order, the board must post public notice of and hold a public hearing at which registered voters of the district are given an opportunity to comment on whether or not they favor the election of trustees in the manner proposed by the board.*
        - *If at least 15 percent or 15,000 of the registered voters of the school district, whichever is less, sign and present to the board a petition requesting submission to the voters of the proposition that trustees of the district be elected in a specific manner, which must be generally described on the petition and which must be a manner of election that the board could have ordered on its own motion, the board shall order that the appropriate proposition be placed on the ballot at the first regular election of trustees held after the 120th day after the date the petition is submitted to the board. The proposition must specify the number of trustees to be elected from single-member districts. Beginning with the first regular election of trustees held after an election at which a majority of the registered voters voting approve the proposition, trustees of the district shall be elected in the manner prescribed by the approved proposition.*

2. Voter education programs for school board and city elections.
    - Timeline: Ongoing programs and activities
    - Resources: Leaders from minority communities.

3. Candidate recruitment in underrepresented communities. Minority candidate recruitment forum.

- Timeline: Ongoing

4. Establishment of leadership academy.
    - Timeline: Ongoing
    - Resources: City, and university taxes
        - *Note – Leadership Arlington is one existing leadership academy that operates within the community. It is a non-profit, funded through sponsors such as the Arlington Junior League, the Arlington Chamber of Commerce, the University of Texas at Arlington and the Star Telegram. Allocation of tax dollars that go to the City and the University of Texas at Arlington are decided by the City Council and University President, Board of Regents and the UT System respectively.*

5. The creation of a Human Relations Commission to advise the Mayor, city council, school board on fair practices related to elected and appointed officials, on matters related to race, color, nationality, they should also serve to advise the Mayor/Council on issues requiring conflict resolution within the city.
    - Timelines: Right away
    - Responsible parties: Civic organizations, ACT, NAACP, LULAC, League of women voters; Asian organizations.
        - *Note – There are no existing entities that formally advise both the City Council and the Arlington School Board. The City Council and the Arlington School Board are advised separately by various boards and commissions that it they create and appoint.*

6. Encourage the Mayor, City Council, and School Board to consider diversity when appointing boards, commissions and committees.
    - Timeline: Now
        - *Note – The City Council has tracked the diversity of their boards and commissions appointments by gender and race for over three years. See Appendix B for additional information on the diversity of Arlington Board and Commission members.*
        - *Note - The AISD Board of Trustees appoints several committees including the Financial Futures Committee and the Boundary Committee. The applications to serve on these committees do not ask for ethnicity or gender.*

7. Educate young high school pre-voters/voters about how local government works and ways of becoming involved.
    - Timeline: ongoing

8. Federal funding to enhance our efforts (city, local, state, non profits)

9. Realistic mayoral and city council salaries.
    - Responsible parties: Tax payers, citizens.

- *Note – In the May 2005 election, the Council put a proposition on the ballot to increase the current pay of $250 per month for the Mayor and $200 per month for the Council members to $1,500 per month and $1,000 per month respectively. This proposition was defeated 5,089 (35%) to 9,311 (65%).*

10. School board members should have children in public school or have had first hand experience.

- Time frame: Now
  - *Note - Arlington ISD does not have the authority to place additional restrictions on district residents who wish to run for the school board.*

11. Identification of leadership in ethnic and national communities to encourage candidate recruitment.

- Timeline: Immediately
- Responsible parties**:** Administration, teachers, students.

Problem two - The educational system is broken

Action plan goal: Speak out against stereotyping

- **Resolutions recommended:**

1. Relationship based education
    - Timeline 3-5 years
    - Responsible parties: AISD
    - *Note - AISD promotes one-on-one relationships between teachers, administrators and parents. Every campus hosts open houses to encourage parents to visit classrooms and discuss any programs, issues or concerns they may have with teachers. In addition, the Title I campuses have family liaisons who work very closely with parents to plan and host family-oriented activities outside of the school day, such as Family Literacy Night, Watching the Stars Night, etc. The district is hosting, along with Councilman Mel LeBlanc, a meet-and-greet event at a local apartment complex near Roquemore Elementary so the campus and district staff can meet with parents in a comfortable setting.*

2. Concentrate on 9th grade students.
    - Time line: 2 years
    - Responsible parties: AISD
        - *Note – Several programs are currently underway:*
            - *Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID) – addresses failure rates*
            - *Success in Schools Summit (community dropout prevention summit)*
            - *21st Century Grant (after school program)*
            - *Freshman Connection Class (a transition class)*

3. Increase social services connections with the district.
    - Timeline 1 year
        - *Note – Several partnerships have been developed:*
            - *Partnership with JPS Health Network to have a total of three health clinics on three separate school campuses*
            - *After school programs: Girls Inc., YMCA, Boys and Girls Club*
            - *Partnerships with Arlington Alliance for Youth, Rotary Clubs, Kiwanis, Optimists, Mission Arlington, etc.*

4. Utilize UTA more
    - *Note – Several programs are currently underway:*
        - *Free SAT Preparation Courses offered to AISD students by UTA*
        - *Active Engineering Programs facilitated by Career and Technology*
        - *Tutoring and scheduled field trips to visit and experience a university campus*
        - *Superintendent meets quarterly and has open dialog with UTA President Spaniolo and with TCC Southeast Campus President Judith Carter*

5. Mentoring program (fact based council on PTA)
    - Timeline: 6 months to a year
    - Responsible parties: AISD vocational office
        - *Note - Big Brothers Big Sisters has a strong relationship with the AISD, wherein community members mentor AISD students throughout the school year.*

6. Expand vocational programs.
    - Timeline: 2-4 years
    - Responsible parties: AISD
        - *Note – AISD's program is comparable to programs in surrounding districts. Additional courses are restricted by state curriculum mandates and core subject requirements. AISD currently offers more than 100 career and technology courses; it is a very expansive program.*

7. AISD town hall meetings
    - Responsible parties: AISD
        - *Note - At every regularly scheduled AISD board meeting, there is an open forum for agenda items and non-agenda items. All meeting agendas are posted on the district Web site, visibly posted in the administration building and are also sent to the media.*

8. Diversity - professional - mentoring system
    - *Note – Several programs are in place:*
        - *New teachers are paired with veteran teachers regardless of their ethnicity or sex.*
        - *Celebration Pride is an annual employee retention event wherein minority professional employees are given an opportunity to connect with each other in a casual setting.*
        - *Workforce Diversity Committee is comprised of community members and AISD staff. The committee advises the district on ways to increase diversity in the AISD through recruitment and retention.*

9. Camp Anytime
    - Timeline: 1 year

Problem three: - Division by race, ethnicity, misrepresentation and stereotypes creates barriers to communication.

Action Plan Goal:
To promote and enhance cross cultural exchanges and communication

- **Resolutions recommended:**
  1. International day or week
  2. "Taste" of culture programs
  3. Increase in block parties
  4. All city baseball/theater events with children
  5. Cultural events at Levitt's plaza
  6. International film nights
  7. Coordinate national night out
  8. Outreach to citizens by radio and television and newspapers.

  Time line:
  To be determined

  Responsible parties:
  Mayor's Arlington Coming Together Council will appoint committees including neighborhood leaders, religious organizations, schools, UTA, AISD, business, civic groups and government.

  Resources:
  Grants, partnerships, voluntary contributions, volunteers, cooperate

Problem four: - Transportation for people who can't afford other transportation, seniors, students, and people who have only one car.

Resolutions recommended:

1. Public education and voter registration.
2. Organize minority groups
3. Use all of our communities resources to work together to pass the vote for public transportation
    - Time line**:** Fall on 2009
    - Responsible parties**:** Citizen driven
    - Resources: Stadium local bus; community organizations
        - *Note – Under current state law, public transportation is funded through voter approved increases in the local sales tax. Arlington does not currently have enough space left on its sales tax to adequately fund a public transit system. However, the City is a part of a regional coalition pursuing a change in state law to allow funding through other means.*

Problem five - The political and election processes hinders minority participation

Resolutions recommended:

1. Improve process by appointing boards
   - Eliminate barriers by applying simplified language.
   - Develop creative communication
   - Develop method to match applicant with opportunities
     - Timeline: June 2009
     - *Note – The City Council has tracked the diversity of their boards and commissions appointments by gender and race for over three years.*
     - *Note - The AISD Board of Trustees appoints several committees including the Financial Futures Committee and the Boundary Committee. The applications to serve on these committees do not ask for ethnicity or gender. Arlington ISD does not have the authority to place additional restrictions on district residents who wish to run for the school board.*

2. Educate community about the political process
   - More outreach education on how to get involved
   - Campaign training
     - Timeline: December 2008

3. Develop communication language skills
   - Ask residents what is needed to get them involved
   - Lengthen public comments at council meetings
   - Have special town hall forums
     - Timeline: Establish planning by November 2008
     - *Note – The general time limit for comment at the end of Council meetings is three minutes, although this can be extended at the discretion of the Mayor. Generally the speakers taking part in the citizen comment portion of the agenda make their statements in less than three minutes.*

4. Finance Reform
   - Public campaign finance caps
     - *Note – The State Ethics Commission governs the campaign finance and election rules for local elected official campaigns.*
   - Elected officials ethics
     - *Note – There is a Code of Ethics in the City of Arlington Ordinances for City elected officials.*
   - Salaries for council members
     - Timeline: December 2009
     - *Note – In the May 2005 election, the Council put a proposition on the ballot to increase the current pay of $250 per month for the Mayor and $200 per month for the Council members to $1,500 per month and $1,000 per month respectively. This proposition was defeated 5,089 (35%) to 9,311 (65%).*

5. Single member district terms for city council and school board members
    - Term limits
        - Timeline: May 2009 ballot
    - *Note – For the City Council, a change to all single member districts require an election to change the City Charter. An election of this type can either be ordered by the Council or put on the ballot by a citizen petition. The process for changing districts of Arlington School Board members can only be done by the School Board itself, there is no petition option.*
    - *Note - Trustees of independent school districts must serve either three- or four-year terms. Texas Education Code section 11.059. AISD trustees serve three-year terms. For information concerning a change to single-member districts, please see AISD's response under Problem one: Green Group, item 1. A change to single-member districts is governed by Texas Education Code section 11.052.*

Final General Session: Participants reconvened to report out on each group's solution. Each group gave a short presentation on resolution and implementation strategies.

ARLINGTON COMING TOGETHER MAYOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL

Representatives

Grace Alaman
Bonnie Bowman
Alan Bean
Luis Castillo
Beverly Fogleman
Silk Littlejohn
Judy Shannon
Paul Stampp
Joe Rodriguez
Kathy Rokusek

Appendix A: Morning Session Information

Morning Session: Problem Identification

SPIRIT invites participants to share concerns about what they see as problems in their city. Participants met within groups of related career fields for problem identification and issue recording.

Break-out Session 1: Participants were broken up into five groups (Education, Retirees, Social/Human Services, Neighborhoods, Other). The facilitators began the individual group sessions, starting out with ice-breakers, introducing ground rules of respect, and then beginning to elicit from the participants what they felt were the most important issues to them in Arlington. **The following is not verbatim but a compilation of the lists of issues that the participants raised by respective groups:**

Group One – Education

Facilitators – Richard Gonzales & Danel Bonner

Top Priorities

1. Public transportation systems.
2. No dialogue between City Council and School Board.
3. Fear/ignorance of difference
4. Still institutional/individual racism (denial)
5. City and school leadership does not represent community demographics.

Strengths

- Job availability
- Sense of safety
- City administration/more law enforcement
- Economic strength
- Diversity in population/schools
- Diversity
- Two educational institutions
- Two professional sports teams
- Sense of community – this is a strength
- Wonderful healthcare
- School system
- Admitting problem exists

Weaknesses

- Not thinking about equity
- Parents are bogged down
- Teacher is racist
- Addressing gangs in a reactionary mood
- Economic strength is not shared
- Some students don't have family support

- Still institutional/individual racism
- Fear/ignorance
- Schools don't embrace parental approach; good old boy system – unfair treatment for minority kids
- School admin. is a weakness
- Parental involvement is non-existent in Sam Houston
- ISD needs to reach out
- System problem with growth and change in demographics
- City has apathy about streets especially in east and central Arlington
- Little code enforcement
- Too many cars cause environmental problems
- No good working relationship between City and schools
- No dialogue between Council and School Board members
- No single member districts
- Gas prices/transportation
- Minorities suffer/denial in community e.g. don't need transportation, reason – bring undesirables
- Need bus system
- Don't have a central hub
- Divided city: have and have not's
- Streets neglected; don't know if bus system will work, Arlington is spread out
- Asians are discriminated against
- Too many rental properties
- Not enough minority teachers
- Not enough male teachers

Race Relations

- We stereotype students stop the racism
- Inequitable representation
- Denial by status quo about race relations
- Dialogue but no action
- Leadership does not represent demographics of the city/school
- Pretend Muslim community doesn't exist
- District is in denial re – drop out issue
- Black and Latino students are adversarial
- Student cliques
- Natural segregation
- Minority student groups don't work together
- City say what is politically correct
- City doesn't listen
- We are not color blind
- We haven't reached level of acceptance
- Don't' have enough opportunities for different races to dialogue
- Anglo kids don't have enough representatives for them especially as demographics change
- When we don't think equity, all suffer

- Need parents need to feel comfortable speaking with representative
- Problems with language need to be proactive

Group Two - Retirees

Facilitators – LaWanda Staten & Teresa Sims

Top Priorities

1. Lack of public transportation/disabled.
2. Lack of cross cultural integration.
3. Making grant programs easier/more assistance for applying for grants.
4. AISD education literacy.
5. More young people involvement.
6. More cultural & arts,
7. Diversity training across the board.
8. Outreach to train leadership for minorities/ethnic groups.

Strengths

- Learning from each other's cultural
- Sporting events brings people together
- Feel welcomed in Arlington
- People stay a long time in neighborhood
- Diversity in the neighborhoods
- Good City leadership
- Forums in neighborhood/groups
- Youth organizations
- Good library system
- Centrally located
- Good parks system
- Cost of living is great!/Housing is affordable!

Weaknesses

- Roads and utilities
- Lack of public and disabled transportation
- Turn over in residents
- Lack cross/cultural integration
- Lack of leadership in community
- Making grant programs easier/more assistance for applying for grants ie programs
- Crime
- AISD education literacy
- Getting people to vote (especially in City elections)
- Litter control/cleaner City of Arlington
- More young people involvement
- More involvement with University
- More arts & culture

- Diversity training across board
- More parks
- Diversity training for police officers
- Lack of no kill animal shelter
- Conservative outlook (too)
- Expertise with municipal bonds

- Giving neighborhood funding for putting additional driveways
- No integration in churches
- Outreach to train leadership for minorities/ethnic groups

Race Relations

- Don't see or hear any problems with race relations
- No mixing of race relations among adults
- Stereotype of one race having too many people living in one house
- Not a lot of acceptance of different cultures i.e. interracial marriage
- Under current of prejudice
- Segmented groups

Group Three - Social/Human Services

Facilitators – Willie Dean & Terry Meza

Top Priorities

1. Lack of public transportation
2. Lack of quality mentoring programs for teens
3. Ethnic groups internally diverse but with different needs.
4. Need more county healthcare
5. We're divided by race/ethnicity, misperceptions & stereotypes create barriers to communication & race relations; classism (education, income) Failure to speak openly/candidly

Strengths

- Cowboys stadium
- Strong police department (diverse, educated, well-trained)
    - Trained problem solvers
    - College educated
- UTA – professors, resources
- AISD
- TCC
- Youth sports, YMCA, Optimists, rec program, private
- Tourism destination – Six Flags etc.
- Diversity of City of Arlington
- Churches coming together to dialogue – desire to have diverse congregations
- Diversity of patients in JPS & desire to meet needs

- Strong healthcare system
- Increase confidence in City Council and Planning & Zoning to keep city alive – better planning to keep city viable

Weaknesses

- Language barriers; finding resources to share with diverse communities; need to inform
- Inadequate medical care – people choosing between medicine and basic needs
- Lack of public transportation
- Lack of priority for green spaces – don't destroy the trees
- Lack of quality mentoring programs for teens other than criminal justice system/courts
- Teen court needs to be expanded
- Getting information out to parents etc.
- Lot of employment is part-time or non-professional – bedroom community
- Need more county healthcare in Arlington
- Parent mentorship – teach parents to be parents; parenting skills/tools
- Voter apathy
- Minority voter apathy
- Fear of public transportation "If we build it…"they" will come"

Race Relations

- Tensions around immigration
- Katrina evacuees stigmatized – correlation to increased crime
    - Excuse to bring out feelings already there
    - Labeling
- We are divided by race/ethnicity
- Stereotyping
    - Hispanics – illegal
    - African Americans – criminals
- Ethnic groups are internally diverse and have different needs – groups don't meet "my" needs
- Institutional racism
- Individual prejudice
- Misperceptions & stereotypes create barriers to communications & race relations
- Classism is a big issue
    - Education
    - Income
- Cultural insensitivity/lack of awareness
    - Language
    - Stereotyping
    - Grudge with ethnic groups
- Need to respect our differences
- Sometimes differences used to divide us
- Lack of recognition that everyone has worth
- What we have in common often based on "white" norms
- Failure to speak openly/candidly with one another
- City of Arlington can do more

Group Four - Neighborhood
Facilitators – Joe Way & Jean Hood

Top Priorities
1. Outreach to community /lack of public awareness/communication
2. Political process relative to elections (all)
3. Micro inequalities
4. Celebrating diversity
5. Racial dialogue within schools/students/staff
6. Law enforcements representation/diversity patrol/community policing

Strengths
- Diverse population
- Higher education opportunities – TCC, UTA etc.
- Relatively cosmopolitan - restaurants, Symphony etc.
- Location, location, location – access
- Major sports venues and entertainment
- Economic position vis a vis sports venues
- Young (age demographics)
- Schools

Weaknesses
- Mass transportation
- Lack of participation of minorities – volunteers, elected
- Low cost entertainment opportunities
- General apathy for participation by some minorities
- Lack of understanding and/or outreach
- Lack of public awareness/communications to grass roots organizations
- Insufficient # of law enforcement
- Group ego creates barriers
- Political process relative to elections (all)
- Campaign financing (barrier to success in elections)
- Infrastructure (physical)

Race Relations
- Covered in the work place (laws)
- Individual level extremely apparent
- Racial dialogue within school environment
- General fright of minorities

Group Five Others - Day of Registration
Facilitators – Patricia Ortiz & David Penland

Top Priorities

1. Local government does not have a servant attitude and tries to maintain status quo.
2. Leadership of City does not reflect the diversity of the community.
3. Lack of public transportation- perception that public transportation only benefits the disadvantaged and elderly.
4. City caters to affluent business class to the detriment of the population.
5. Education system broken – poor resourcing for talented programs and poor testing opportunities.
6. Poor business land use planning – City does not address blighted or economically disadvantaged communities.
7. Eliminating parks and recreation facilities.

Strengths

- Location: Easy access to surrounding communities, events
- Entertainment – Rangers, Cowboys, Six Flags etc.
- Affordable housing
- Lower sales tax
- Business friendly
- Resources
- Diverse population
- Diverse services

Weaknesses

- Transportation (lack of public transportation)
- Perception: that public transportation will only benefit the disadvantaged and elderly
- Education – poor testing for gifted and talented program and poor resourcing, encourages mediocrity
- City caters to affluent business class to the detriment of the general population
- City decision-making based on class
- Eliminating parks and recreation facilities
- Local government poorly represents the diversity of the community
- Local government does not have a servant attitude. Tries to maintain the status quo
- City does not address blighted or economically disadvantaged communities.

Race Relations

- Leadership of city within all sectors is not diverse enough
- Lack of celebration of diversity
- Not enough cross-cultural opportunities to bring people together
- Diversity means more than Black, White & Hispanic

Appendix B: City of Arlington Board and Commission Diversity

	Caucasian	African-American	Hispanic	Asian
2004	88%	7%	2%	1%
2005	75.9%	8.4%	4.2%	3%
2006				
2007				
2008	66%	15%	9%	5%