

Arlington, Virginia: A Great Success Story

March 5, 2009

by Will Smith

Yesterday we posted about this month's cover story in The Atlantic, *How the Crash Will Reshape America*. In the article, author and urban theorist Richard Florida discusses how the current recession will reconfigure the urban geography of the US. In our [post](#) yesterday, we pointed out two instances during a recent interview with NPR where Florida pointedly mentions the DC area.

It turns out there was a third noteworthy mention in the same interview that we missed. In discussing the future of American cities, Florida argues that the suburbs present as much of a challenge for revitalization as the cities they surround. "I think one of the big tasks, when we're thinking about rebuilding and revitalizing the US economy, is how will we renew and revitalize the suburbs." He goes on to give a huge shout-out to Arlington, Virginia:

"The great success story...of Arlington, Virginia, which people saw as a down-and-out town. But when that rail link, the Metro link, came out there and they started to increase densities and build up buildings and bring multi-family rental and condominium housing, Arlington, which people thought was going to lose work and lose people, actually started to not only regain people but regain functioning, employing jobs that have built its economy."

Florida used to live in the area, and so likely witnessed Arlington's resurgence firsthand.

Listen to the entire NPR interview with Florida [here](#).

