



# FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



## M E M O R A N D U M

**TO:** Chairman and Members  
Park Authority Board

**VIA:** Jai Cole, Executive Director

**FROM:** Sara Baldwin, Deputy Director/COO

**DATE:** September 23, 2022

### *Agenda*

**Budget Committee  
(Committee of the Whole)  
Wednesday, September 28, 2022 – 6:30 pm  
Virtual – Via Zoom  
Chairman: Ken Quincy  
Vice Chair: Maggie Godbold**

1. FY 2024 General Fund Budget Process (with presentation) – Information\*  
(As updated on 9/26/2022)

\*Enclosures



If accommodations and/or alternative formats are needed, please call (703) 324-8563. TTY (703) 803-3354



**FAIRFAX COUNTY  
PARK AUTHORITY**



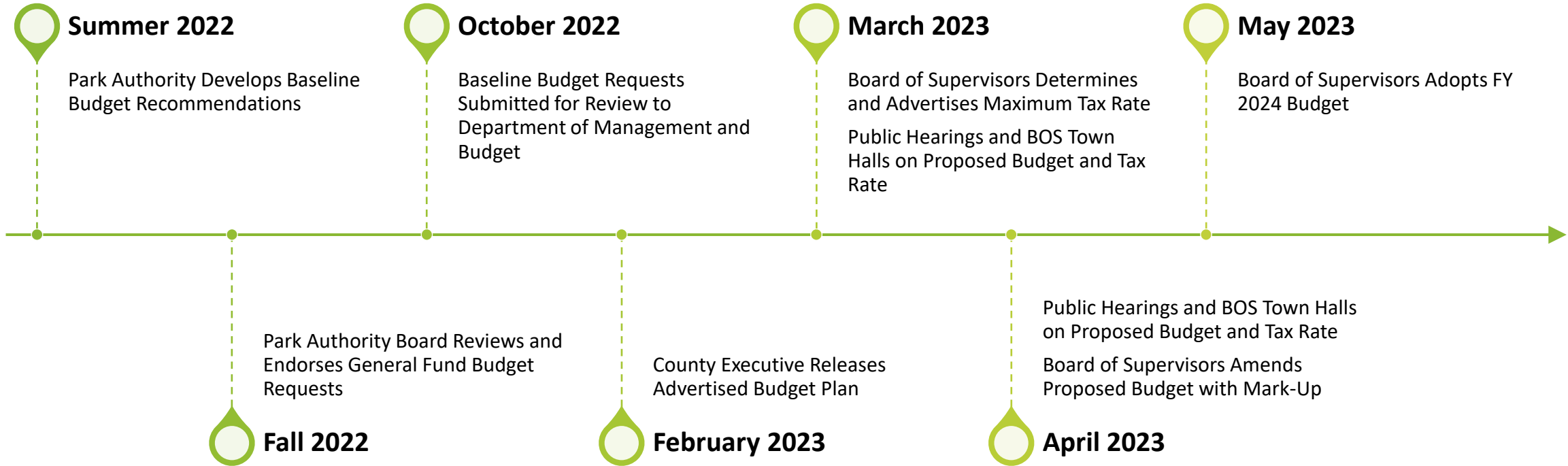
# FY 2024 General Fund Budget Discussion

September 2022





# FY 2024 Proposed Budget Development



# Regular Operating Budget Impacts

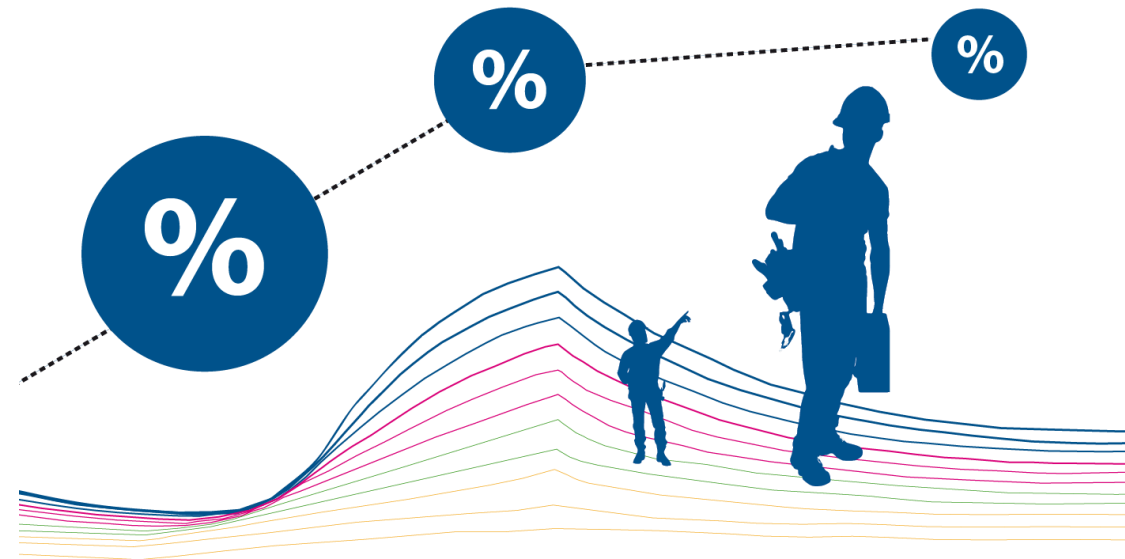
These items are required in order to continue to provide the same level of service of previous years considering the new acquisitions, parks, and inflation.

Items	\$ Request
CPI/Baseline Operating Increases	\$275,000
Summer Concert Series	\$150,000
Maintenance/ Stabilization for New Parks and Acquisitions	\$350,000
Bamboo Removal on Parkland	\$500,894



# Consumer Price Index (CPI)/ Baseline Increases: \$275,000

- Inflation and supply chain issues continue to have an impact on the cost of providing services.
- Raw materials and staffing continue to be the primary drivers in baseline increases.
- To continue providing our baseline services as they are, additional funds are required.



# Summer Concert Series: \$150,000

- More than 150 performances and outdoor events each Summer at 17 different locations.
- The cost of sound and technical support has been steadily rising.
- Several series are expanding the length of concerts from 1 hour to 1.5 hours, scheduling a longer season, or adding a second venue, adding to costs.
- The County funded a one-time increase at FY22 Third Quarter to cover these costs for the FY23 Summer Season, but the support is needed on an ongoing basis.



# Maintenance Funding: \$350,000

- FY22-FY23: 9.35 acres added to inventory
- All new and majorly renovated properties require additional maintenance, utility, and operating costs that are not in the current budget

## Newly Acquired /Renovated (FY22 – FY23)

Arrowbrook Park – Ratcliffe
Fairfax Arms Property
Arrowhead Park
Greendale GC- Storage Structure
Grist Mill Park- Union Farms
Oak Marr Rec Center- Cricket Netting Install
Chandon – Playground/ADA Improvements
Holladay- Synthetic Turf Conversion
Raglan Road Property Stabilization
Bren Mar Property Stabilization
Riverbend - Maintenance Facility
Laurel Hill - Central Green
Scotts Run - Station 44 Athletic Field
Pohick Stream



# Bamboo Removal on Parkland: \$500,894

- We estimate that there is currently ~200 acres of running bamboo countywide on FCPA property and receive multiple resident complaints per month.
- In response to Fairfax County Code §119-3-2, passed in March 2022 (with enforcement beginning January 2023), funding is needed to proactively mitigate bamboo infestation.





# FY 2024 Prioritized General Fund Budget Requests

Priority Order	Priority Area	Items	# of Positions	\$ Request
1	One Fairfax	Equity Consultation Request		TBD
2	Taking Care of What We Have	Zero Waste Trash Removal	3 Merit/ 6 Non-Merit	\$ 728,096
2	New Policy Budget Impacts	Recycling Efforts	3 Merit/ 6 Non-Merit	\$1,162,624
3	Safety - Unbudgeted Absorbing	Park Ranger Pilot Program	1 Merit/ 6 Non-Merit	\$729,834
4	One Fairfax	Activation Staff	1 Merit/ 4 Temporary	\$265,561
5	Taking Care of What We Have	Forestry Operations		\$358,000



# FY 2024 General Fund Budget Requests

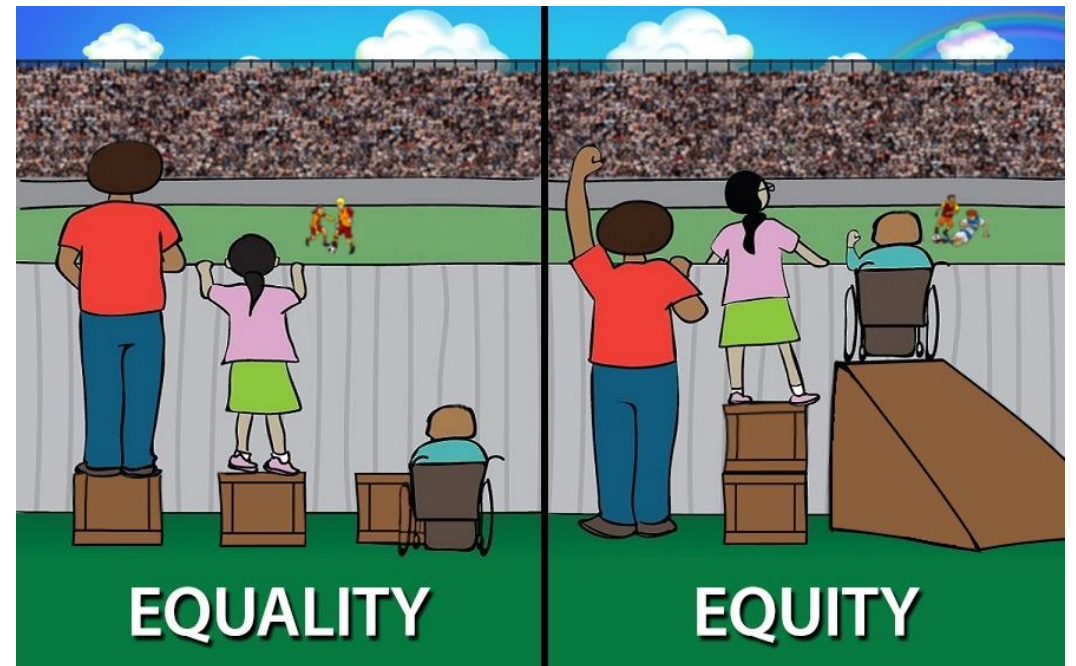
Priority Order	Priority Area	Items	# of Positions	\$ Request
6	Taking Care of What We Have	Capital Equipment		\$ 370,000
7	One Fairfax	Mobile Nature Centers	2 Merit	\$ 135,009
8	One Fairfax	Interpretation and Translation Services		\$ 50,000
9	Taking Care of What We Have	Asset Management Licenses and Technical Support		\$ 179,580
10	Taking Care of What We Have	IT Services Support Staff and Laptops	1 Merit	\$ 191,247



# Priority 1

## Equity: \$TBD

- Staff and consultants are working on an equity request.
- Equity funding *placeholder* request to maintain fees at the current level.



# Priority 2

## Zero Waste Trash Removal: \$728,096

- Add emptying and hauling services that cannot be handled by current resources.
- Provide additional trash and recycling services in our parks on the weekends.
- In the current model, maintenance staff spend 2-3 days per week on trash, impacting their ability to focus on other park maintenance projects.
- Ensure that trash and recycling separation is occurring at our parks and transport according to associated standards.





# Priority 2

## Parks Recycling Initiative: \$1,162,624

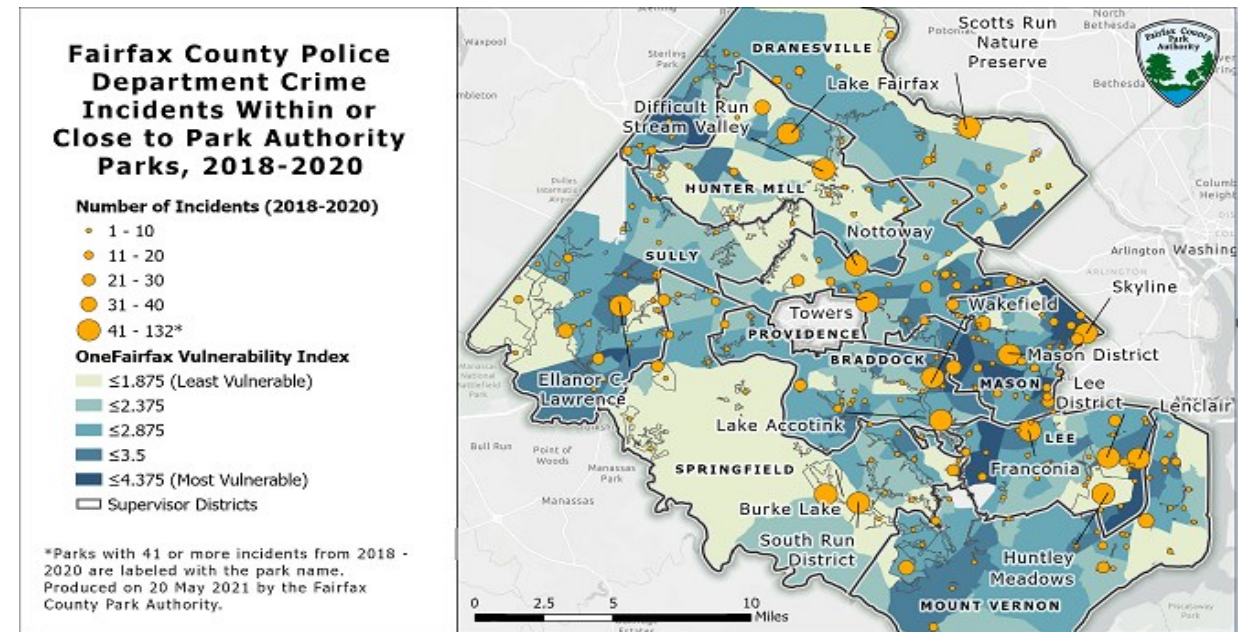
- Recycling is a necessary step in protecting the environment, but requires additional resources for the Park Authority to manage effectively at our more than 400 parks.
- Provide readily-available trash and recycling options for patrons at all park locations.
- Remove unsightly dumpsters that are often used as unmonitored dumping grounds and replace with central compactor systems.



# Priority 3

## Park Ranger Pilot Program: \$729,834

- Continued lack of resources to provide adequate park security will result in continued degradation of park facilities and decline in community satisfaction, safety and well-being.
- The program will lessen the burden on the Fairfax County Police Department,
- Surrounding jurisdictions all have successful park ranger programs
- This funding will allow the Park Authority to proactively patrol parks and facilities and to develop a program that is focused on and attuned to the needs of park users.



# Priority 4

## Activation Staff: \$265,561

- Work with communities to activate local parks with events.
- Working with the communities we will plan and facilitate events to create a sense of place and belonging.





# Priority 5

## Forestry Funding: \$358,000

- The current contract budget of \$276,000 only covers about 40% of the annual costs of removing high-risk trees.
- There is an increasing backlog of medium and low risk tree work that is not addressed until emergency issues arise
- Additional funding will allow FCPA to move from reactive service delivery to proactive and preventative care needs





# Priority 6

## Capital Equipment: \$370,000

- The Park Authority has 378 pieces of equipment including vehicles, trailers, and grounds equipment in its inventory, that is valued at \$7.1M – almost half is in poor condition and beyond life expectancy.
- Equipment is critical to maintain our parks, trails, fields, and all of the amenities that exist throughout our 420 parks.



# Priority 7

## Mobile Nature Centers: \$135,009

- 2 specialized vehicles required – sponsorship will be explored
- Assist with community engagement and allow staff to go **TO** communities
- Promote stewardship opportunities and build interest and rapport with the community



# Priority 8

## Interpretation/Translation Services: \$50,000

- Improve communication with all community members
- Enhance outreach efforts
- Ensure equitable access to community meetings



# Priority 9

## Asset Management: \$179,580

- System Procurement in Process with Department of Information Technology. Implementation and Operation will Require Dedicated Technical Support
- FCPA will Catalogue all Assets and Develop Lifecycle Costs in Concert with Work Order Systems
- Will Form Basis for Future Capital Budget Requests





# Priority 10

## IT Services Support: \$191,247

- With more than 2,500 employees at the peak of our summertime activities, our IT Services Branch has been stretched to even provide basic levels of support, let alone plan for the support needs of these systems.
- Our workforce has become mobile and many also opt to work from home. The current agency laptop/desktop allotment has been 575 since 2015 even with increased technology and demands for a virtual and mobile workforce.



# Other Long- Term Issues

## Item

Synthetic Turf Field Replacement Cycle

# Synthetic Turf Fields: \$2,215,000

- Current Inventory of Synthetic Fields: 97
- Average Replacement Cycle: 10 Years/8-10 Fields Per Year
- Average \$500k Replacement Cost per Field
- Current Annual Funding: \$2.3 Million
- Annual Ongoing Target for Uninterrupted Replacement: \$4.515 Million

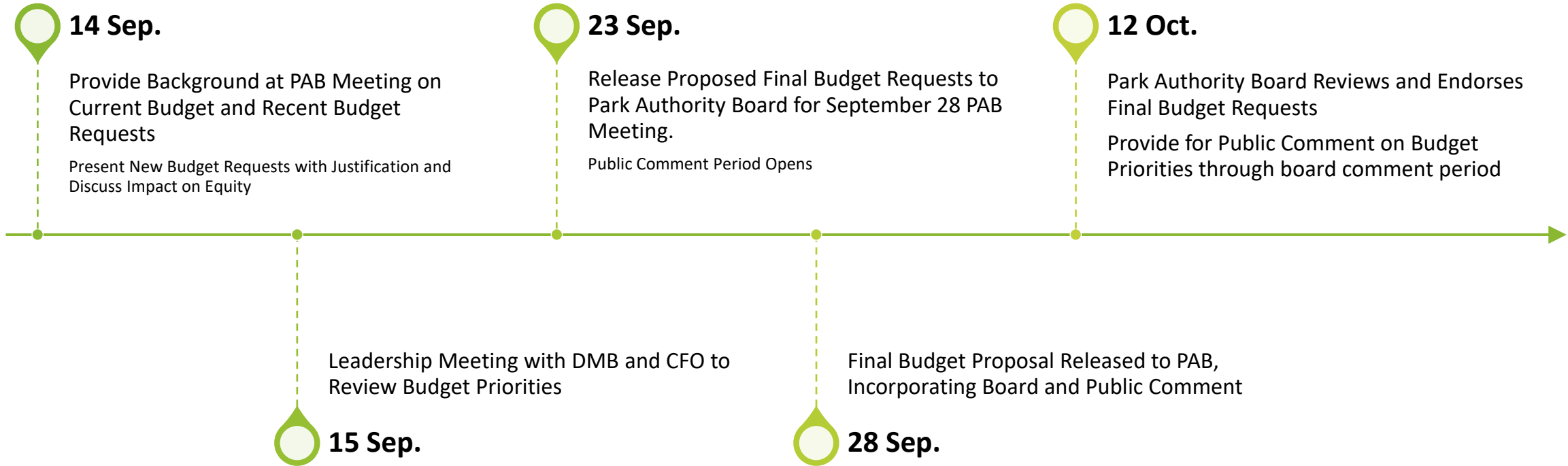


# FY 2024 Proposed Budget Development





# FY 2024 Proposed Budget Development



# Opportunities for Input

- **September 14, 2022 (6:30PM)**
  - Watch Presentation on Budget Priorities at Park Authority Board Budget Committee Meeting  
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/board/meetings>
- **September 15-23, 2022**
  - Public Comment Period on Initial Budget Proposals  
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/publications-plans-budget>
- ~~September 23, 2022~~ **September 26, 2022**
  - Final Staff Proposed Budget Package Released to Park Authority Board and Available to Public
- **September 28, 2022 (6:30PM)**
  - Presentation on Revised Budget Priorities at Park Authority Board Budget Committee Meeting  
<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/board/meetings>
- **October 12, 2022 (7:00PM)**
  - Park Authority Board Reviews Revised Budget Priorities, Discusses Public Comments, and Endorses Final Budget Proposal

**Public Comment can be sent to [Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov](mailto:Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov)**

# Opportunities for Input

<https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/board/meetings>

**Parkmail@fairfaxcounty.gov**

[https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/publications-plans-  
budget](https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/publications-plans-budget)



Questions



Budget Committee Agenda

Item

September 28, 2022

## **INFORMATION**

### FY 2024 General Fund Budget Process

Staff will present on the second phase of the Park Authority Board's General Fund Budget Request Development Process. Per the September 14, 2022 meeting, staff posted the initial summary of potential General Fund budget priority items and opened public comment through September 23, 2022.

Staff received comments and prioritized the budget requests for Park Authority Board consideration. A summary of those items is attached.

### ENCLOSED DOCUMENTS:

Public Budget Comments Received Through September 23, 2022

### STAFF:

Jai Cole, Executive Director

Sara Baldwin, Deputy Director/COO

Aimee L. Vosper, Deputy Director/CBD

Michael Peter, Administration Division

Dear Honorable Members of the Park Authority Board:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) Board's general budget priorities. On behalf of our respective organizations with members throughout Fairfax County, we were very pleased to see FCPA's priorities for the FY2024 budget cycle reflect the values of the One Fairfax equity policy. We strongly support this critical commitment toward more equitable access to parks and programs for all residents. In addition, we strongly support FCPA's efforts to increase stewardship of our natural resources. Our natural resources are on the front line of climate change; if managed well, they have the potential to significantly cushion the impact of more extreme weather for all residents. As such, we look forward to the day when FCPA is afforded the funding to become more proactive in addressing the stewardship challenges it currently cannot get to.

More specifically, we present the following feedback:

**Equity:**

- **We strongly support mobile nature centers that can meet the needs of all our communities.**
  - Fairfax County's vulnerability index has shown that many residents do not have access to reliable transportation.
  - We encourage the PAB board to approve the mobile park program so that all Fairfax County residents can have access to their parks.
  
- **We strongly support the activation staff to more fully engage our communities on their priorities and get them into the parks.**
  
- **We support more resources to make all FCPA programs accessible to every member of the community in their preferred language.**
  - We encourage FPCA to utilize IT resources to make FCPA online programs accessible in multiple languages. This is especially important for the online reservation systems and other information about how to access park amenities.
  - As FCPA hires new staff, especially outreach staff, we encourage a strong preference for multiple language capacity.
  - We encourage FCPA to ensure that all signs in its parks are multilingual and accessible for the diverse communities it serves.
  
- **We believe our parks must be safe, welcoming and inclusive for all Fairfax residents.** As such, we look forward to providing input on the proposed ranger pilot program to ensure it supports this vision.
  
- **We support providing safe routes for walking and biking to parks to ensure equitable access for all Fairfax residents and as an important part of reducing climate pollution.** We ask that needed funding be allocated to assess and improve the

safety and accessibility for walking and biking to our parks, maintaining park trails, and ensuring bicycling parking is available at all county parks with amenities.

### **Natural Resources:**

- **We encourage additional support for the Invasive Management Area (IMA) Program, to protect our shared natural resources and investment in parks**
  - IMA is the command center for the county's response to the growing problem of invasive plants; funding levels must be adequate to keep pace.
  - Under the current staffing levels of two employees plus summer interns, FCPA lacks the capacity to quickly respond to existing needs in this countywide program. The three additional ecologists approved for FY23 will help, but we strongly urge FCPA Board to take advantage of the program's popularity and momentum as more prospective volunteers hear about the program and wish to receive training to address the invasive weeds. We anticipate additional staff capacity will be needed as the challenge also grows.
  
- **We support funding for additional ecologists, at individual parks and countywide**
  - A lot of parks have extensive natural assets whose protection is complex. It is critical to have an ecologist's eye and level of expertise on the ground, working with volunteers and managing strategic actions.
  
- **We support funding for bamboo eradication on park property**
  - As the largest county property owner, FCPA must abide by the new bamboo ordinance taking effect January 1, 2023 to prevent invasive bamboo from spreading to neighboring properties.
  - Considering that 200+ acres of parkland have already been overtaken by bamboo, and understanding that eradication takes multiple years, we appreciate FCPA Board's planning for and prioritizing this investment.
  
- **We strongly support increasing funding for forestry**
  - Trees are integral for healthy communities, climate change mitigation, and equity.
  - We recognize the need to address the backlog for removal of hazardous trees in our parks and appreciate that this must be addressed before planning additional forward-thinking management of replenishing our forests.
  
- **We encourage continued support for the new Landscape Legacy and Sustainability Program**
  - Last year's investment in the Landscape Legacy and Sustainability Program demonstrated a forward-looking investment in managing the parks' natural resources. We appreciate this investment and encourage the FCPA Board to continue to seek the funding support to achieve the ongoing goals of the program.

- **We support FCPA addressing trash across our parks with increased funding for recycling, staff coverage and capital equipment.**
  - Litter not only is unhygienic, it harms wildlife and human health particularly as it ends up in our waterways.

Signed,

Zander Pellegrino  
Chesapeake Climate Action Network

Lydia Lawrence  
Fairfax County NAACP

Whitney Redding  
Friends of Holmes Run

Renee Grebe  
Audubon Naturalist Society

Carolyn Gamble  
Environmental Advocate

Glenda Booth  
Friends of Dyke Marsh

Helene Shore  
350Fairfax

Mary Paden  
South County Task Force

Michelle Krockner  
Northern Virginia Affordable Housing Alliance

Sonya Breehey  
Coalition for Smarter Growth

Pam Tinker  
Mother Nurture Company and Frog Pond Early Learning Center

Cindy Speas  
Environmental Advocate



Tom Blackburn  
Chair, Advocacy Committee  
Audubon Society of Northern Virginia

Yvette White  
Fairfax Alliance for Better Bicycling

September 22, 2022

Dear Members of the Fairfax County Park Authority Board:

Many thanks to all of you for your service on behalf of our Fairfax County Parks. Next to the natural and cultural resources actually comprising our parks, the people who oversee and directly care for their needs are undoubtedly the parks' most important asset. We, the below-referenced park Friends groups allied together to ensure that our parks receive their fair share of the County's taxpayer dollars, are grateful for all that you – and the hardworking Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) staff do – in acquiring, maintaining, and administering our parks.

### **Taking Care of What We Have**

#### *Staffing*

In reviewing the FCPA's budget priorities, we are pleased to see an express commitment to "taking care of what we have," i.e., those parks and FCPA assets already in hand. To do this the parks require adequate staffing. This is a basic necessity and should be foremost in budgeting priorities for the FCPA. The County's natural and cultural resources can't take care of themselves. They require people to maintain them, to interpret them, and to make them accessible to all.

As we Friends working side-by-side with FCPA "front-line" staff can attest, staff at "our" parks do a wonderful job, especially given that staffing levels and the financial resources staff are forced to work with are frequently insufficient to meet the operations and maintenance tasks at hand. Notably, their financial resourcing is also, in many cases, insufficient to meet their own personal needs when it comes to their pay and (frequent lack of) benefits. As we can further attest, this adversely affects their morale and retention. These employees who, in a manner of speaking, *are the parks* should have a certainty in knowing they have the resources to perform the tasks they are charged with fulfilling and should be able to look forward to long-term, financially sustainable careers with the FCPA. Accordingly, we assert that "taking care of what we have" includes employee compensation at competitive market rates and adding more full-time positions.

It also includes improving the FCPA's financial footing such that it can fill all of the positions it already has. Of the 87 positions in the Resource Management Division, 32 remain vacant. Nineteen of these vacancies are general fund positions, and ten of those are being advertised for fill. This leaves nine general fund positions vacant, possibly purposely so. Every year, unmet financial needs cause some positions to remain unfilled so that the funds appropriated for them by the County can be put to other use. This must stop. While it might be a common agency practice, it should not be. **Monies obligated by the County to pay for authorized positions should be used to fill those positions.** As already indicated, the FCPA needs every authorized person – and then some. We recognize that a national labor shortage may hinder the filling of every available position, but the FCPA should be positioned so that it can at least *try* to fill all those for which funding is being provided by the County.

## *Trash Containment and Removal*

We support the high prioritization for increased financial support for trash removal and forestry operations (tree maintenance) in our parks, to include stream valley parks. As we noted in our advocacy this past spring before the Board of Supervisors, visitors to some of our parks are met not with the beauty of nature, but with overflowing trash containers insufficient in their number to handle the amount of waste being generated in our well-used parks and/or deficient in the frequency with which they are emptied.

## *Forestry*

On the forestry front, we also noted last spring how appallingly below standard our County is in its financial support for managing the lands committed to its care. Whereas even a *low level* of support is typified by expenditures of \$3,000 to \$6000 per acre, our County has been far below that with historical expenditures at only \$159 dollars per managed acre. We supported last spring's increased funding for combating invasive species, and we absolutely support increased funding now for proper tree maintenance.

Properly resourcing tree maintenance has assumed an even greater importance in light of the Board of Supervisors' adoption of the Community-wide Energy and Climate Action Plan (CECAP). CECAP's Natural Resource Strategy calls for conserving and expanding the County's existing tree canopy. As the County's largest landowner, the FCPA will need a robust tree maintenance budget to do its part in supporting significant conservation and expansion of the County's existing tree canopy.

## **Equity**

We also applaud the proposed launch of mobile nature centers as well as mobile recreational and educational opportunities. It's important to make our parks accessible to all, to those without means of transportation to our parks as well as to those who simply may not know about particular parks at locations far removed from them given the County's vast size. We hope the proposed educational opportunities include not only environmental lessons relevant to the role of our parks in dealing with the current climate emergency, but also lessons in history, architecture, and science that FCPA historic sites and cultural resource collections can afford.

With many thanks, we are the Friends of –

Colvin Run Mill

Ellanor C. Lawrence Park

Fairfax County Archaeology and Cultural Resources

Frying Pan Farm Park

Green Spring Gardens (FROGS)

Historic Huntley

Holmes Run

Huntley Meadows Park

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TODI S. CARNES

Facilitator, Fair Parks Initiative

cc: Jeff McKay, Chairman BOS  
Laura Grape, Director FCPA RMD



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TODI S. CARNES

Facilitator, Fair Parks Initiative

cc: Jeff McKay, Chairman BOS  
Laura Grape, Director FCPA RMD

September 23, 2022

CORRECTIVE ADDENDUM

Friends' Letter to the Fairfax County Park Authority Board dated 22 Sep 2022

The list of groups represented by the above-referenced letter is amended to additionally include the Friends of –

Accotink Creek

Pimmit Barn

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TODI S. CARNES  
Facilitator, Fair Parks Initiative