



FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Chairman and Members
Park Authority Board

Updated 9/14/2023 with presentation slides

VIA: Jai Cole, Executive Director

FROM: Kim Eckert, Division Director
Park Operations Division

DATE: September 8, 2023

Agenda

**Park Operations Committee
(Committee of the Whole)
Wednesday, September 13, 2023 – 5:50 pm
Board Room, Herrity Building
Chairman: Linwood Gorham
Vice Chair: Mike Thompson**

1. Park Authority Maintenance (with presentation) – Presentation



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

Board Agenda Item
September 13, 2023

PRESENTATION – 1

Park Authority Maintenance

The Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) strives to provide high-quality park experiences for the residents of Fairfax County. The 2016 Needs Assessment resident survey showed that the most important priority for residents was for FCPA to take care of what we have. Over the last decade however, FCPA has been challenged to maintain parks at a level consistent with best practices and the desire of the community, the Park Authority Board and the Board of Supervisors.

The presentation will outline some of the challenges FCPA faces maintaining the park system, including: vacancy rates, increased operating costs inconsistent with funding, growing deferred maintenance needs that come from an aging park system, capital equipment that is well beyond its useful life, and a growing park system without adequate funding.

The presentation will be posted online and available after the Park Authority Board Meeting on September 13, 2023.

STAFF:

Jai Cole, Executive Director

Sara Baldwin, Deputy Director/COO

Aimee Vosper, Deputy Director/CBD

Kim Eckert, Division Director, Park Operations

Michael Peter, Division Director, Business Administration



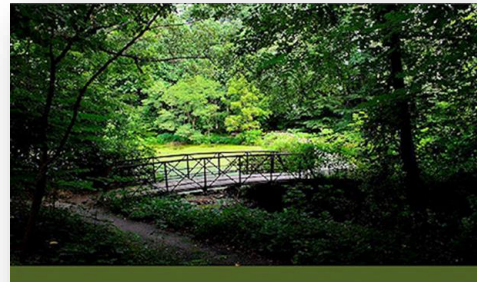
FCPA MAINTENANCE OVERVIEW AND CHALLENGES

PARK OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

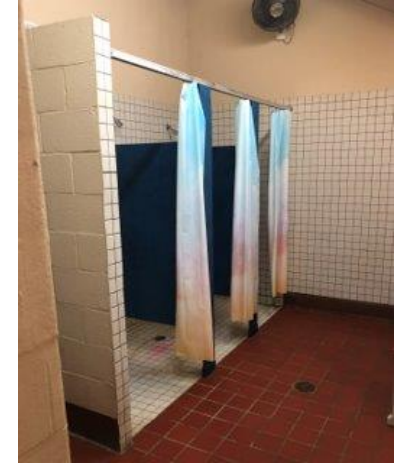
SEPTEMBER 13, 2023

COMMUNITY NEEDS

- The 2016 Needs Assessment resident survey showed that the most important priority for residents was for FCPA to take care of what we have.
- Over the last decade however, FCPA has been challenged to maintain parks at a level consistent with best practices and the desire of the community, the Park Authority Board and the Board of Supervisors.



Fairfax County Park Authority
Needs Assessment
April 2016



OVERVIEW OF THE PARK SYSTEM

- 23,854 acres of land
- 420 parks
- 9 Rec Centers
- 8 golf courses,
- 2 skate parks
- 11 dog parks
- 229 playgrounds
- 720 public garden plots
- 5 nature centers
- 3 equestrian facilities
- 263 Park Authority-owned athletic fields & maintenance of 452 Fairfax County Public Schools
- 62 picnic shelters
- 409 athletic courts
- 10 historic sites
- 3 outdoor aquatic facilities
- A horticultural center
- 338 miles of hiking and fitness trails
- A working farm
- And much more!



PARK OPERATIONS FY 2023 FUNDING SOURCES



**Salary/
Personnel
\$10.5 mill**



**General
Fund
Operating
\$2.52 mill**



**County
Construction
Fund*
Operating
\$5.69 mill**



*Does not include FCPS school maintenance or girl's softball tournament support funding

PARK OPERATIONS FY 2023 FUNDING SOURCES

- **Salary/Personnel:** General Fund-supported personnel costs for Park Operations positions established in the General Fund
- **General Fund Operating:** Appropriated by the Board of Supervisors, this supports regular non-revenue operations.
- **County Construction Fund*:** Appropriated by the Board of Supervisors, this supports specific park and field maintenance categories (including FCPS fields). Specifically, this fund supports field maintenance (staff salaries, contracts and operations), forestry, grounds maintenance, small capital projects for amenities and facilities.



PARK OPERATIONS MISSION

To operate, manage, protect and maintain parks, facilities, structures, equipment, support systems and infrastructure in an efficient, effective, safe and attractive manner. To work with community residents and groups, the private sector and other agencies in meeting the public need and support other Park Authority Divisions in the fulfillment of their mission.



Hooes Road Park Field #1



Hideaway Park Basketball Court

PARK OPERATIONS ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

Park Management (92)

- Park Maintenance
- Area Management
- Encroachments
- Adopt-A-Field Program
- Special Projects
- Off Leash Dog Areas
- Trail Maintenance
- Special Event & Program Assistance
- Snow Removal

Facilities & Equipment (29)

- Fleet Management
- Fleet Maintenance
- Facilities Maintenance
- Project Management
- Maintenance Assessment
- Equipment Support
- Capitalized Equipment Replacement Program
- Inventory Management

County-Wide Grounds (30)

- Forestry
- Turf Management
- Mobile Construction
- School Athletic Field Contract Management
- Trail, Court and other Project Management
- MS4 Liaison
- Service Contract Development

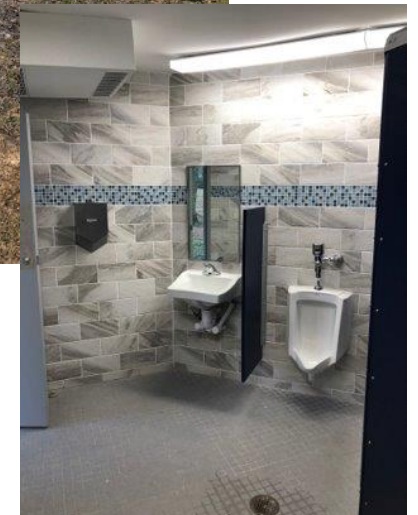
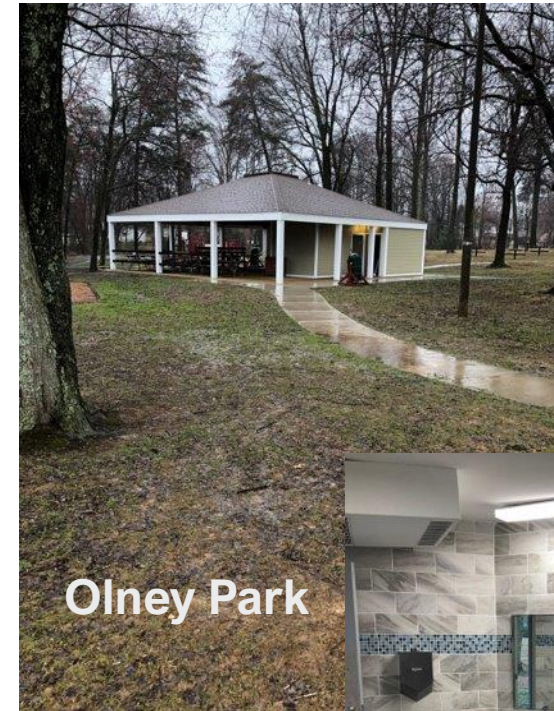
Support Services (7)

- Budget Administration
- Division Training
- Safety Program
- Public Inquiries/ Maintenance Reports
- Maintenance Work Order Management System and Processes
- Volunteer Program
- Service Contract Management
- FCPA Utilities
- Mastenbrook Grant Program



FACILITIES & EQUIPMENT

- Manages facilities and infrastructure maintenance and minor renovations
 - Total of 1,100,000 SF (Rec Centers, Golf Course Clubhouses, Historic Structures and other park facilities infrastructure such as picnic shelters, restrooms, etc.)
- Manages Vehicles and Equipment
 - Fleet management of 186 Park Authority vehicles
 - Provides maintenance and management of 510 pieces of equipment (includes grounds equipment and amusements)
- Over 4,000 work tickets processed per year
- Carpenters, Electricians, HVAC Technicians, Plumbers, Painter, Preventative Maintenance Specialists, Mechanic Equipment Technicians, Electronic Equipment Technician, Signs/Locksmith Technician, Project Managers, Operations Managers
- **Total Staff: 29**





1979 Bulldozer



1990 Dump Bed



Original Boiler at GW Rec Center

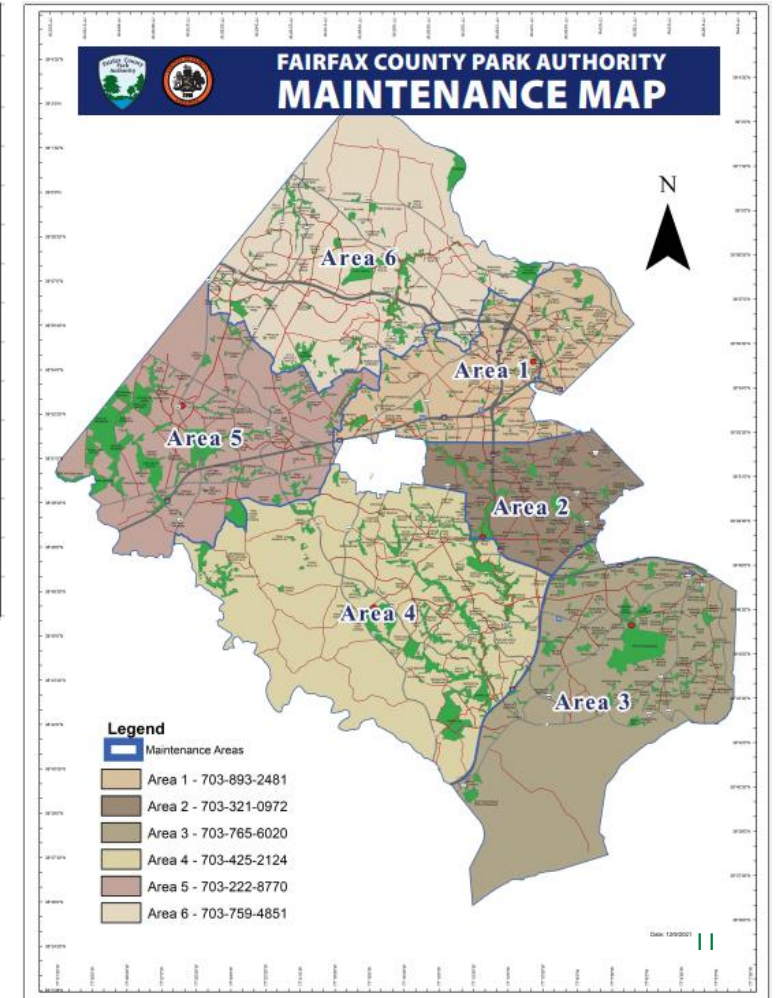
COUNTY-WIDE GROUNDS SERVICES

- **Forestry Operations** - 11 FTE (includes 3 on FY25 budget cut list): Remove high risk tree conditions, over 1,960 annually on average.
- **Project Management** – 1 FTE: Manages contractors in the repair and renovation of park infrastructure, including trails, athletic courts and parking lots/roadways.
- **Mobile Construction Crew** - 10 FTE: Heavy equipment operation: hauls materials/equipment, constructs and renovates park infrastructure (playgrounds, trails, athletic courts, parking lots and roads).
- **Turf Management** - 7 FTE: Maintain natural grass and synthetic turf on 260+ park athletic fields.
- **School Athletic Field Maintenance** - 1 FTE: Maintains 452 natural grass and synthetic turf fields on school property via direct service contracts.
- **Total Staff: 30**



PARK MANAGEMENT STAFF AND OPERATIONS

	Area 1	Area 2	Area 3	Area 4	Area 5	Area 6	TOTALS
TOTAL PARK MAINTENANCE STAFF	15	14	18	14	16	15	92
Parkland Acreage	1415	1688	3742	6498	6712	3793	23,854
Number of Parks	92	69	88	75	57	53	420
Trail Miles	37.5	41.3	29.6	92.1	62.6	75.2	338.3
Playgrounds	85	68	68	66	28	38	353
Courts	95	86	103	72	20	33	409
Diamond/Rectangle Fields	42	35	54	35	44	51	261
Buildings, Picnic Shelters, Historic Buildings	93	122	158	105	147	228	853
Dog Parks	1	1	3	2	1	3	11
Skate Parks	0	1	0	0	0	1	2
Amphitheaters	0	2	1	2	2	1	8
Parking Lots	42	50	49	57	48	75	321
Mowing - Annual (acreage x number of times mowed)	3849	3794	7216	4965	4752	8547	33,123
Total Population	193,122	144,430	213,434	222,490	201,267	197,285	1,172,028



PARK MANAGEMENT OPERATIONS

- Prioritize and address daily work tickets and safety concerns generated by the public.
- Athletic Field Crews - trash removal, prep infields, paint fields, inspect/maintain synthetic fields. Monitor contractors for mowing.
- Park Maintenance Crews - trash removal, inspect and repair park amenities, complete trail, picnic and playground maintenance. Monitor contractors for mowing, restroom cleaning and port-a-john services.
- **Total Staff: 92**



PARK OPERATIONS SUPPORT SERVICES

- **Budget, Administration, and Contract Management**
- **Volunteer Management Program**
 - Park Cleanups (67 total in FY23)
 - Park Volunteer Teams and Dog Park Monitors
 - Park Ops engaged **1,227 volunteers** who contributed **4,026 service hours** which equates to **\$128,027**
- **Mastenbrook Grant Program**
 - Manages and operates the agency's Mastenbrook Grant Program
 - Guides and collaborates with staff and community groups to ensure alignment of grant applications with grant program criteria
 - Writes narratives, board items, and presentations
 - Ten different park improvement projects with a **total value of \$1,350,298.**
- **Public Inquiries/ Maintenance Reports from the community and Work Order Management**
 - Over 4,000 contacts with the community per year
- **Total Staff: 7**



PARK OPERATIONS BUDGET

Category	FY23 Original Budget	FY23 Final Budget (Adjusted)*	FY23 Actuals
Salaries	\$10.5 Million	\$8.5 Million	\$8.1 Million
General Fund Operating	\$2.6 Million	\$4.2 Million	\$4.7 Million
County Construction Fund	\$5.7 Million	\$8.2 Million	\$5.3 Million
Capital	\$200k	\$669k	\$668k

*Includes Carryover and One-Time Adjustments



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FY23 Actuals for General Fund Operating Budget is \$2.1M over allocated amount



PARK OPERATIONS BUDGET

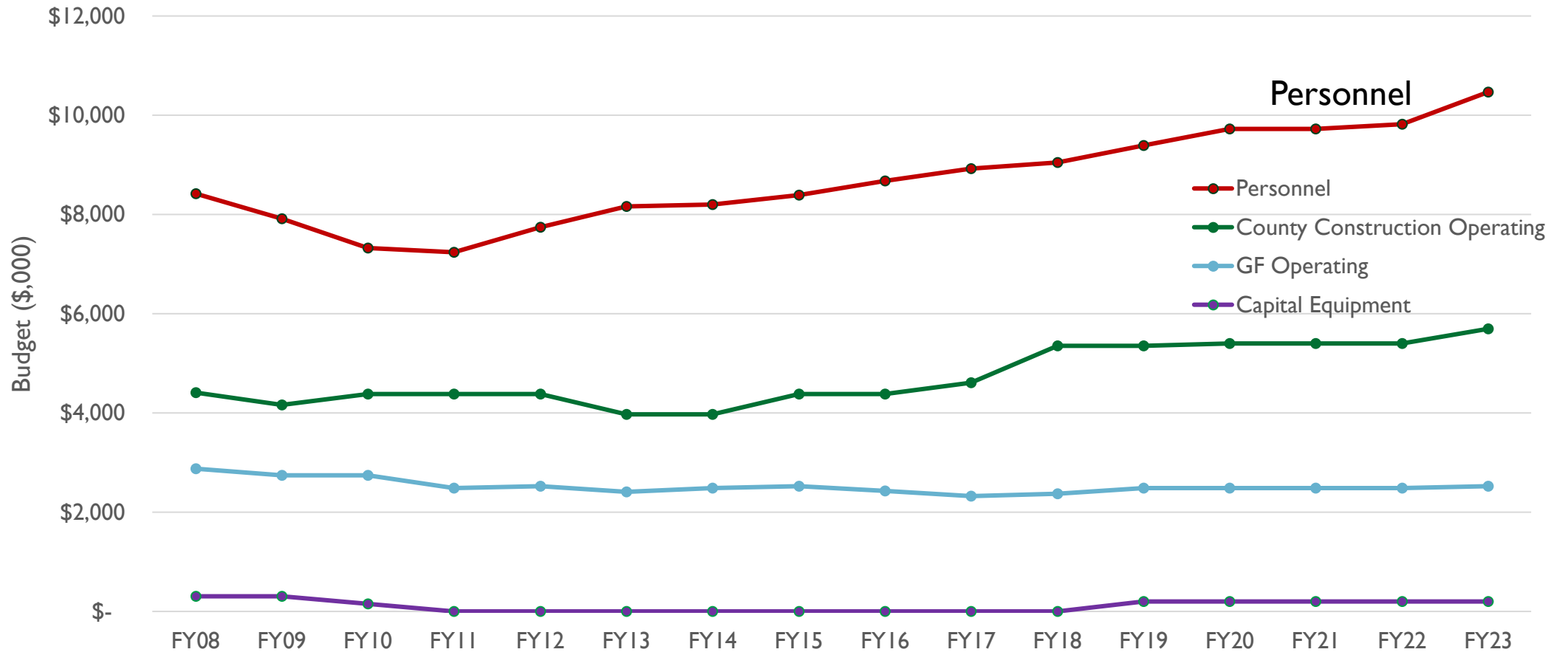
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**FY23 Actuals for General Fund Operating Budget is \$2.1M over allocated amount
\$2.1M went to cover operating shortfalls**



PARK OPERATIONS HISTORICAL BUDGET



GROWING PARK SYSTEM & DECREASING STAFF

	Total Acres	Trail Miles	Athletic Courts	Picnic Shelters	Playgrounds	# of Park Ops Positions
FY 2009	22,600	312	374	31	201	184
FY 2024	23,636	337	409	65	227	158
#/% Increase	1,036/4.6%	25/8%	35/9.4%	34/110%	26/13%	(26/14%)

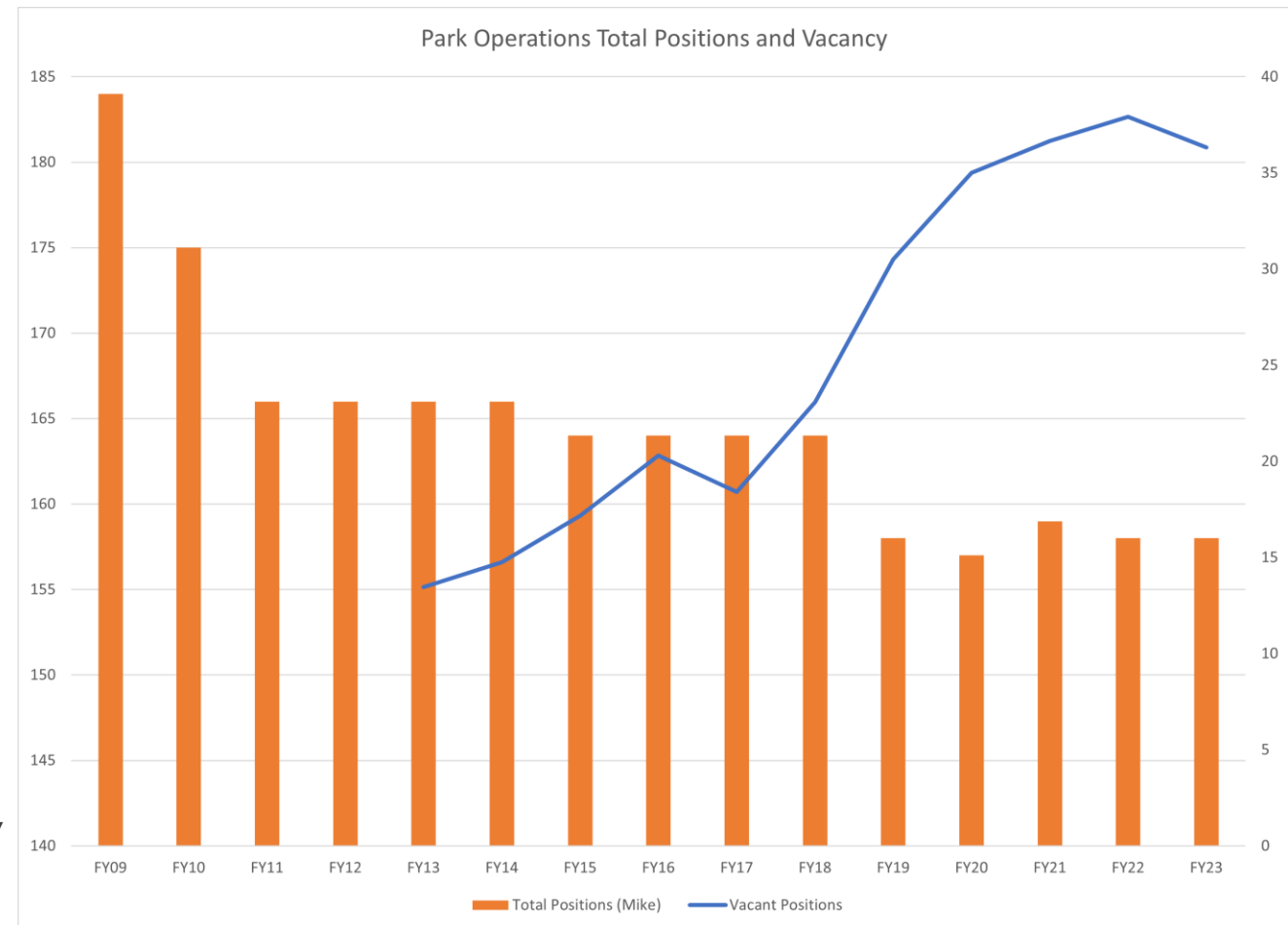
Fiscal Year	Position Reductions	Position Additions	Maintenance Area
FY 2010	6		Area Management
FY 2010	3		Facilities and Equipment
FY 2011	9		Facilities and Equipment
FY 2015	2		Area Management
FY 2019	6		Area Management
FY 2020	1		Facilities and Equipment
FY 2021		2	Area Management
FY 2022	2	1	Area Management
FY 2024	2	2	Area Management
TOTALS	31	5	



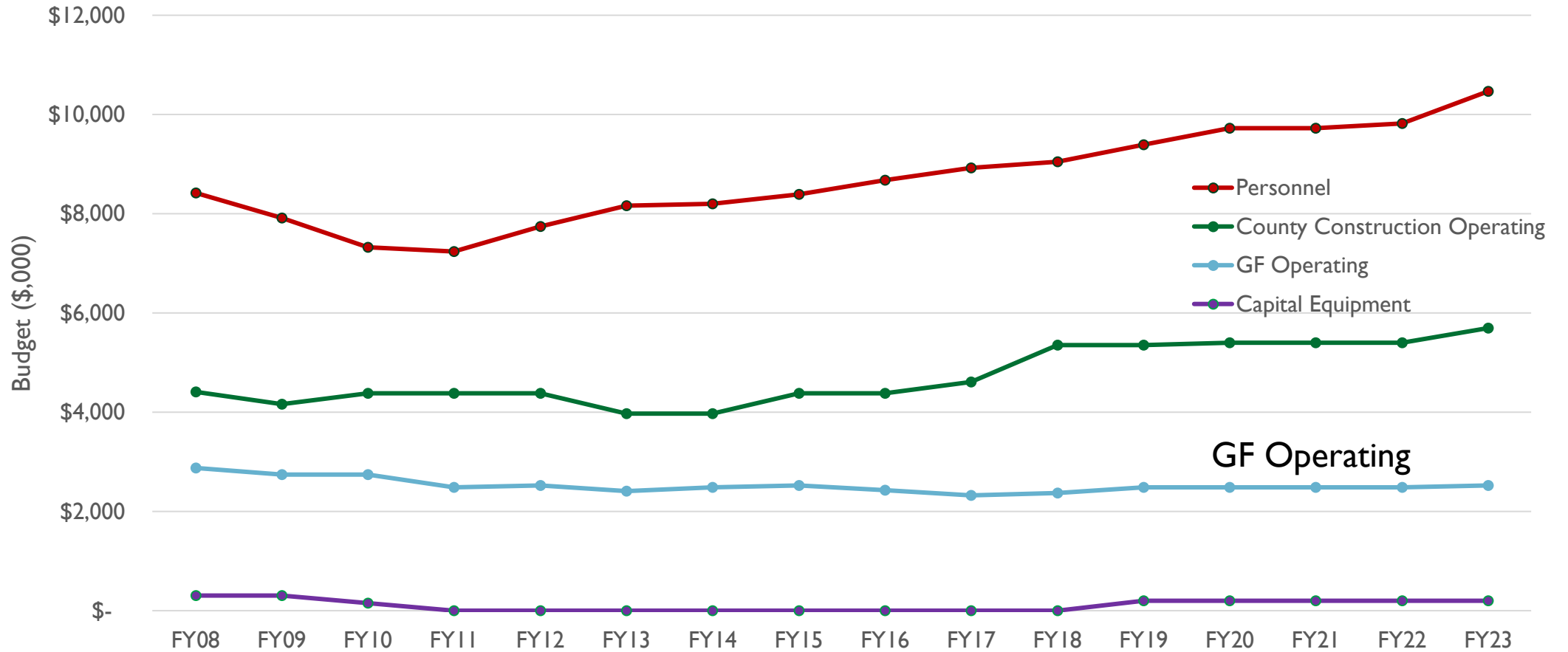
COVID IMPACTS



- Requirements to hold expenses in FY20 due to overall funding requirements (revenue fund) impacted position vacancies
- Spending Controls Implemented
- Staff turnover
- Hiring freeze
- Hiring efforts eventually resumed but vacancies were slow to fill due to lack of interested applicants
- As the county implemented CDC guidelines, volunteer programs, including those that support maintenance in parks were temporarily discontinued



PARK OPERATIONS HISTORICAL BUDGET



PARK OPERATIONS BUDGET

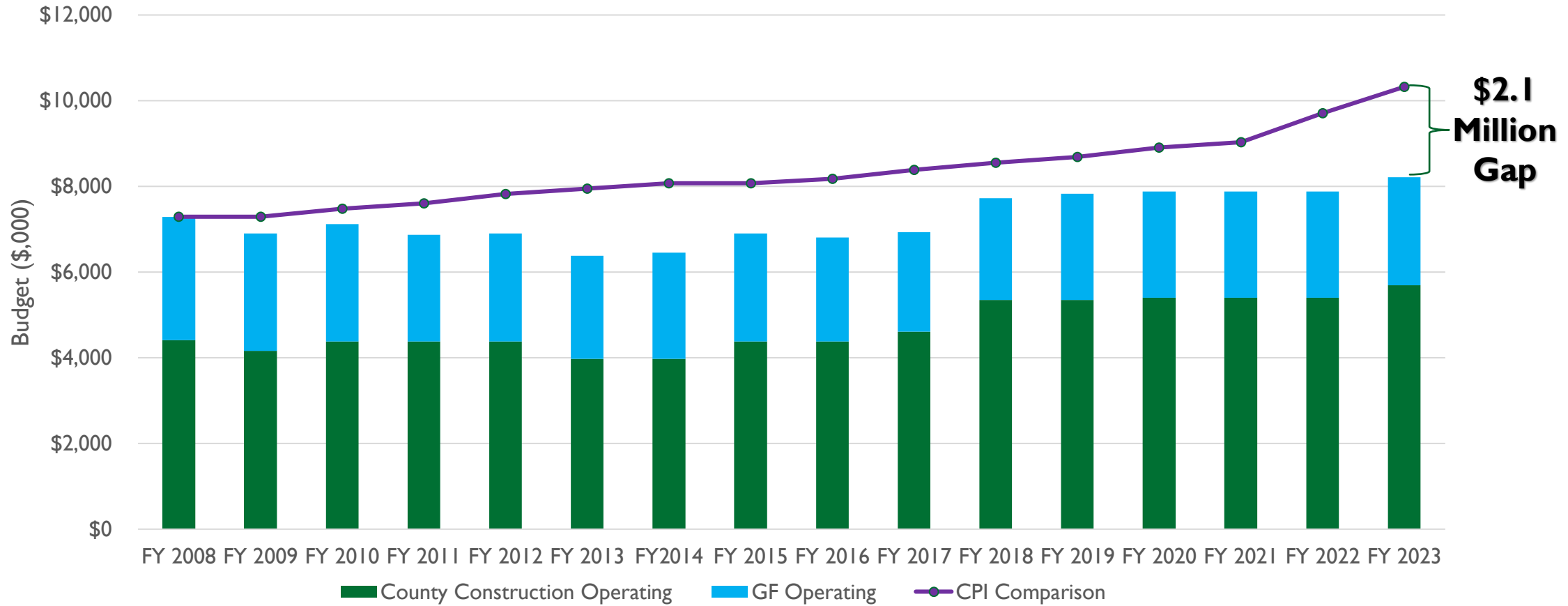
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FY23 Actuals for General Fund Operating Budget is \$2.1M over allocated amount \$2.1M went to cover operating shortfalls



OPERATING BUDGETS VS CPI



HISTORICAL BUDGET REQUESTS

	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020*	FY 2021*	FY 2022	FY 2023	Total	Difference
Total Operations/ Maintenance Funding Requests	\$2,330,614	\$2,692,000	\$2,179,911	\$50,000	\$3,564,208	\$5,997,079	\$5,289,100	\$22,102,912	(\$19,487,064)
Total Received	\$226,924	\$741,000	\$-	\$50,000	\$-	\$290,000	\$1,307,924	\$2,615,848	

*Pandemic Time Period



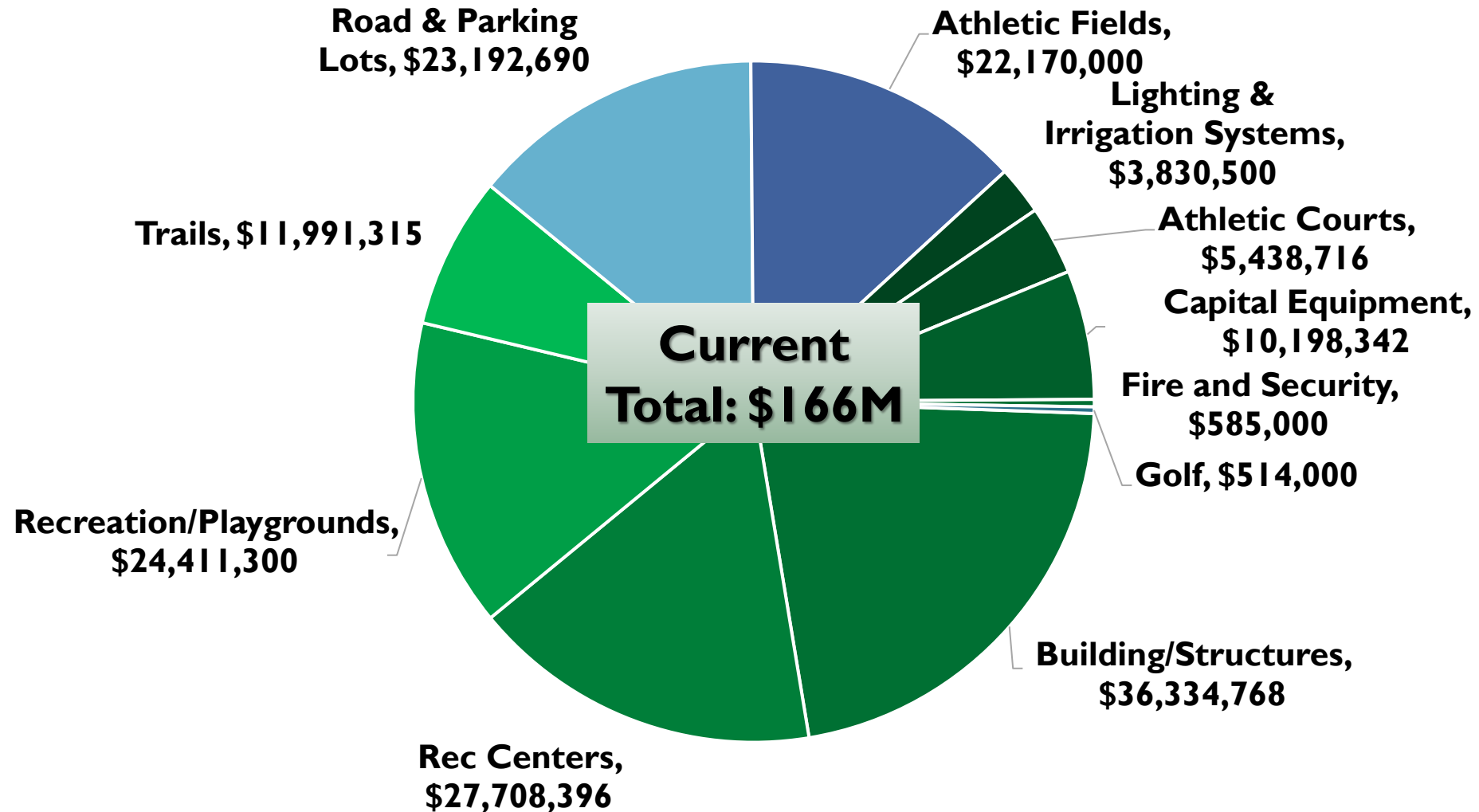
FORESTRY OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES

Fiscal Year	Budget	Actuals	Deficit	Sources of Deficit Coverage			
				Carryover/ 3d Quarter	Park Maintenance	General Fund	Athletic Fields
2013	\$212,924	\$237,000	\$24,076		\$24,076		
2019	\$276,000	\$784,000	\$508,000	\$300,000	\$100,000	\$58,000	\$50,000
2020	\$276,000	\$530,000	\$254,000			\$254,000	
2021	\$276,000	\$635,000	\$359,000		\$81,000	\$218,000	\$60,000
2022	\$276,000	\$961,000	\$685,000		\$295,000	\$390,000	
2023	\$326,000	\$1,240,000	\$914,000	\$500,000	\$64,000	\$300,000	\$50,000
2024*	\$383,000	\$1,273,000	\$890,000	\$500,000		+ \$TBD	

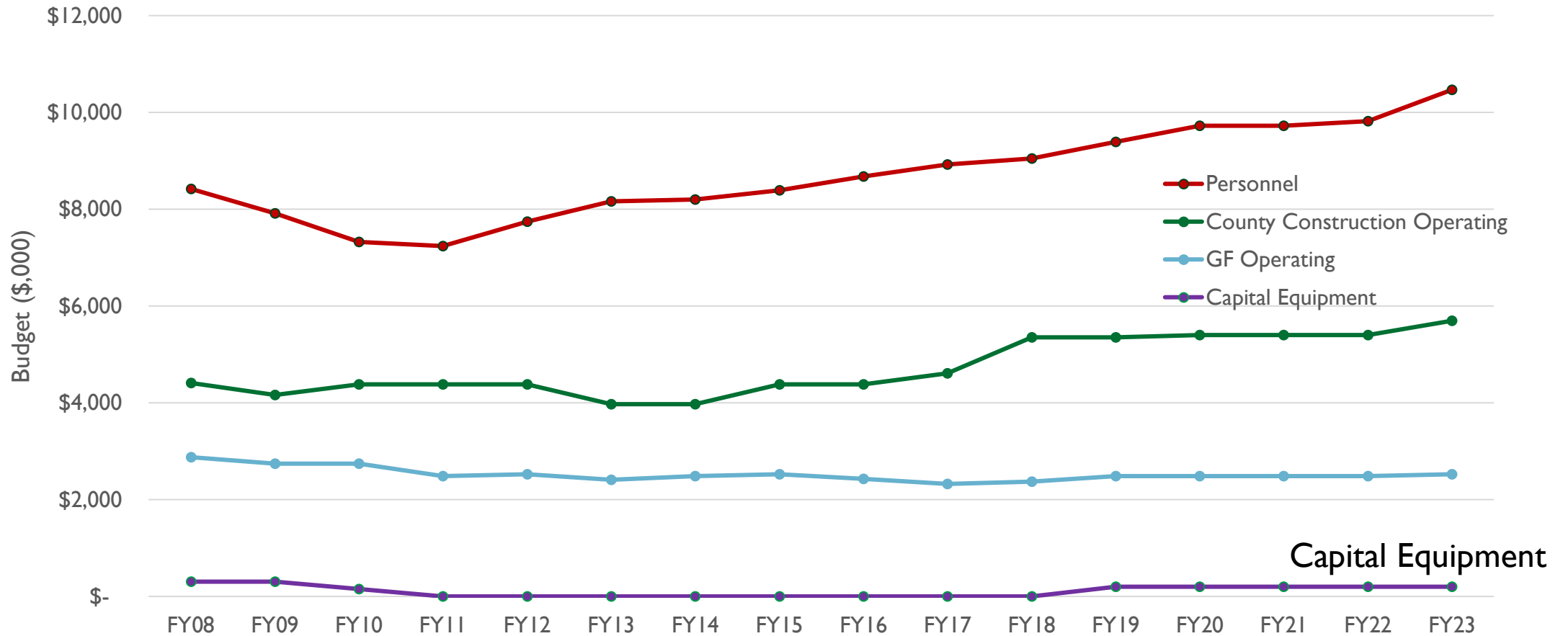


*Forecast

ASSETS PAST END OF LIFE OR IN NEED OF REPAIR



PARK OPERATIONS HISTORICAL BUDGET





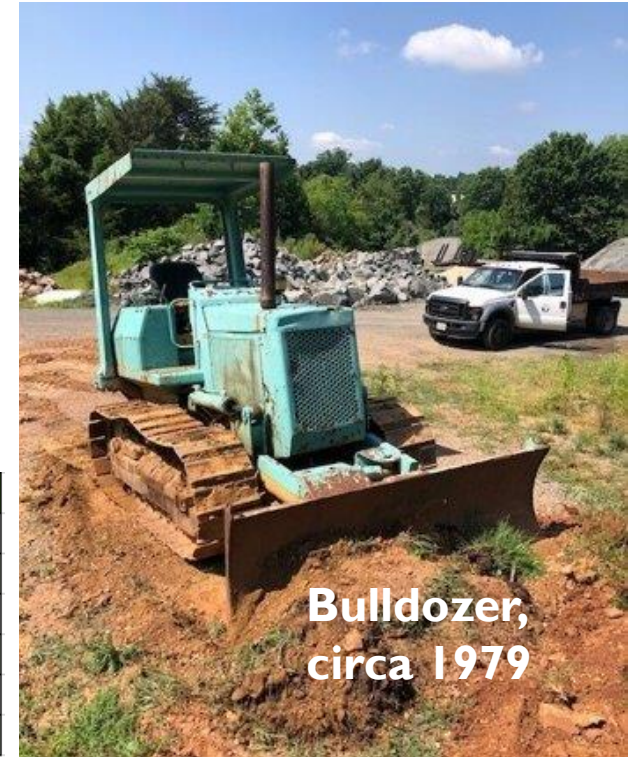
CAPITAL EQUIPMENT

Comparison between FCPA and Stormwater Management Equipment

Capital Equipment Summary			
	# of Equipment*	Avg Age of Fleet	Value
Stormwater Management (DPW)	140	6.5 years	\$4.9M
Park Authority (FCPA)	267	11.83 years	\$5.4M
*Equipment purchased value \$5K+			

Capital Equipment Replacement Funding

Capital Equipment Budget Comparison						
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Grand Total
Stormwater Management (DPW)	\$ 1,085,000.00	\$ 1,354,000.00	\$ 782,000.00	\$ 430,000.00	\$ 895,000.00	\$ 4,546,000.00
Park Operations (FCPA) - Recurring	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 1,000,000.00
Park Operations (FCPA) - One-Time	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 284,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 379,200.00	\$ 713,200.00
Park Operations (FCPA) - TOTAL	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 484,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 579,200.00	\$ 1,713,200.00



**Bulldozer,
circa 1979**



BENCHMARKING MOST COMPARABLE COUNTY TO FAIRFAX NATIONALLY

	Fairfax County	Mecklenburg County
Number of parks	420	233
Number of acres	23,632	18,570
Population	1,170,033	1,295,000
Maintenance/Operation staff count	158	202
Park operating and personnel expense budget	\$18,878,386	\$24,898,534
Acreage maintained per operating staff	150	92
Park operating expense per acre	\$799	\$1,341
Park operating FTEs per 1,000 population	0.14	0.16

Mecklenburg County has:

- Almost 33% more than our operating expense per acre

Mecklenburg County operating expense and FTEs include Park Operations and Park Repair and Maintenance

Source:

[Mecklenburg County FY2023 Budget Docs](#) (page 267)



BENCHMARKING MOST RELEVANT LOCAL COMPETITOR

	Fairfax County	Montgomery County
Number of parks	420	420
Number of acres	23,632	37,220
Population	1,170,033	1,054,827
Maintenance/Operation staff count	158	502
Park operating and personnel expense budget	\$18,878,386	\$54,350,531
Acreage maintained per operating staff	150	74
Park operating expense per acre	\$799	\$1,460
Park operating FTEs per 1,000 population	0.14	0.48

- Montgomery County has:
- Almost 83% more than our operating expense per acre
 - Over 3x park operating FTEs (with no recreation) per 1,000 population



Montgomery County operating expense and FTEs include Horticulture, Forestry & Environmental Education, Facilities Management, Northern Parks, and Southern Parks
Source:

[Montgomery County FY2023 Budget Docs](#) (page 42 & 64)

BENCHMARKING NEIGHBORING JURISDICTIONS OF FAIRFAX

	Fairfax County	Arlington County	Prince William County	Loudoun County
Number of parks	420	148	81	60
Number of acres	23,632	924	4,937	3,710
Population	1,170,033	235,500	486,943	442,695
Maintenance/Operation staff count	158	84	146	66
Park operating and personnel expense budget	\$18,878,386	\$16,481,880	\$17,124,511	\$8,845,455
Acreage maintained per operating staff	150	35	34	56
Park operating expense per acre	\$799	\$3,515	\$3,469	\$2,384
Park operating FTEs per 1,000 population	0.14	0.36	0.30	0.15



Source:

[Arlington County FY2023 Budget Docs](#) (page 318), [Prince William County FY2023 Budget Docs](#) (page 99), [Loudoun County FY2023 Budget Docs](#) (page 4-20)

SUMMARY

- Park Authority resources are woefully insufficient to address the growing needs of the park system.
- Years of stagnant or decreased budgets while the park system continued to grow have had a significant impact on the Park Authority's ability to provide adequate maintenance.
- Since FY 2008, FCPA has increased acreage, trail miles, courts, shelters, and playgrounds while experiencing declining staffing levels and budgets.
- In addition, the Park Authority has absorbed and continues to absorb significant unfunded requirements and initiatives without additional staff or operational funding.
- Increased tournament support, forestry operations, recycling pickup, new acquisitions, as well as substantial contract rate increases for mowing, restroom maintenance, and pest management.





QUESTIONS?

FCPA MAINTENANCE OVERVIEW AND CHALLENGES

PARK OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

SEPTEMBER 13, 2023