

Parks, Recreation and Libraries Program Area Summary

Overview

The quality of life in Fairfax County is significantly enhanced by the high caliber of its parks and libraries as well as recreational opportunities. From libraries to beautiful parks, RECenters and community centers, Fairfax County provides many opportunities to learn, have fun and relax. The formal beginning of the Fairfax County Public Library (FCPL) can be traced to the appropriation of \$250 by the Board of Supervisors in 1939 to establish a free countywide system, while for more than 50 years, the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) has been protecting and preserving precious natural resources, ensuring that everyone will be able to appreciate and enjoy them. In addition to the major parks, there are also nature centers, historic sites and golf courses to explore and experience. Likewise, for over 40 years, the Department of Community and Recreation Services (CRS) has offered a variety of recreational opportunities for all ages through its community centers, teen centers, senior centers, and recreation programs for individuals with disabilities.

The three agencies in this program area are regularly recognized for high achievement in their respective fields. FCPL is the largest public library in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, as well as the largest in Virginia and was recently cited by a report in the American Libraries Journal as one of the top 10 libraries of its size in the U.S. Its director currently serves as the President of the Virginia Library Association. In 2004, the National Association of Counties (NACo) recognized the Department of Community and Recreation Services' Therapeutic Recreation Services Program with two awards – one for the Joey Pizzano Swim Program and the other for the Seniors+ Program. FCPA won two Apex awards for publication excellence. One award was for the Park Operation's Athletic Field Maintenance Manual, designed to instruct volunteer groups participating in the Adopt-a-Field program how to maintain FCPA fields properly and in accordance with County standards. The other was for the 2003 Annual Report, which was recognized for overall communications excellence.

Strategic Direction

As part of the countywide focus on developing strategic plans during 2002-2003, FCPA, CRS and FCPL each developed mission, vision and values statements; performed environmental scans; and defined strategies for achieving their missions. These strategic plans are linked to the overall County Core Purpose and Vision Elements. Common themes in all three of the agencies in the Parks, Recreation and Cultural program area include:

- Accessibility
- Diversity
- Inclusiveness of all segments of the community
- Professional growth and staff development
- Lifelong learning
- Leisure opportunities
- Technology
- Partnerships and community involvement
- Stewardship of resources

COUNTY CORE PURPOSE

To protect and enrich the quality of life for the people, neighborhoods, and diverse communities of Fairfax County by:

- Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities
- Building Livable Spaces
- Practicing Environmental Stewardship
- Connecting People and Places
- Creating a Culture of Engagement
- Maintaining Healthy Economies
- Exercising Corporate Stewardship

In recognition that government cannot meet all the needs in this program area, there is a strong emphasis on community-building and leveraging community, business and County resources to provide the services and programs that residents want. Each of the three agencies relies extensively on volunteers to achieve its mission. Changing demographics are affecting all three and their strategic plans are designed to address these conditions. More on each one's strategic focus can be found in the individual agency narratives that follow.

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Linkage to County Vision Elements

While this program area supports all seven of the County Vision Elements, the following are especially emphasized:

- Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities
- Connecting People and Places
- Building Livable Communities
- Creating a Culture of Engagement

Common themes to address the **Maintaining Safe and Caring Communities** vision element include programs targeted toward youth, particularly those at risk, as well as the senior population. CRS is continuing to implement its Teen Center redesign, adding a fifth region to provide additional service for 250 teens in FY 2006. In addition, CRS is refocusing programs through increased community partnerships to support human services, including gang prevention and related after-school programs. In FY 2006, this includes the expansion of Club 78, an after school enrichment program designed to provide middle school youth with diverse educational, social, and recreational opportunities in a supervised environment, into three additional Fairfax County middle schools, providing an additional 180 participant slots. FCPA is continuing to partner with several other County agencies including FCPL, CRS and the Fairfax-Falls Church Community Services Board's Alcohol and Drug Services to incorporate elements of the Countywide "Character Counts" program into weekly themes of the summer RecPAC program. FCPA has increased Rec-PAC scholarships by 12 percent or 452 participants by streamlining scholarship applications to allow more community-based professionals to identify and refer children. CRS also continued to expand the Senior+ program to provide therapeutic recreation, mental health and nursing support for seniors with physical and mental health needs at senior centers. FCPL will continue to provide specially designed materials, programs and school visits to encourage young readers to keep up their reading skills during summer vacation.

A number of creative initiatives are taking place in this program area to foster the **Connecting People and Places** vision element. Some involve computer and Internet access. CRS initiatives include partnering with the Fairfax County Library Foundation to receive a U.S. Department of Education grant to improve student achievement through the start-up and operation of three additional computer clubhouses – one each at the Reston Teen Center, the James Lee Community Center and the Mott Community Center that are projected to serve an additional 500 youths. CRS is continuing to implement service zones for FASTRAN clients as part of an overall effort to reduce customer travel time and increase system savings. These zones are being phased in over several years. FCPL joined forces with FCPA to bring books to children along the Route 1 Corridor to encourage literacy among at-risk youth. Both of these agencies also partnered to develop programs and exhibits about Jamestown to support the County's proposal to become a Virginia 2007 Community, celebrating 400 years since the founding of Jamestown. FCPA continues to make strides in connecting people by expanding its online historic and cultural resources, as well as its e-mail subscriber service for greater communication with residents who have natural and cultural resource interests. FCPA will also continue to improve citizens' access to all parts of the County by expanding the Cross County Trail, a trail connecting all nine magisterial districts along the County's two largest stream valleys.

The County's vision element for **Building Livable Spaces** will be addressed within this program area by efforts to enhance and expand use of resources for recreational and learning activities including renovating and re-establishing the Southgate Community Center in Reston to enhance service delivery to residents of all ages and abilities in the North County area. FCPL continues to respond to the needs of a growing community by helping to develop plans for the construction of two new libraries, renovation of four libraries and the relocation of one library. In each of these efforts, the community benefits from expanded facilities to accommodate increased demands for programs and services.

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The three agencies in this program area will also play a critical role in **Creating a Culture of Engagement**. Each seeks to engage citizens as volunteers and stakeholders, as well as expand partnerships with the community in order to address the growing service demands resulting from an increased population. CRS will develop a community leadership conference and offer other leadership programs for youth and advisory councils in order to strengthen effectiveness of community advisory groups and planning committees. In addition, CRS is developing a community outreach toolbox and outreach to multicultural citizens and organizations to increase services and participation in community centers. As another means of engaging citizens, the FCPA will continue to participate in the Partnership for Youth's After-school Network, a county-wide initiative bringing together County agencies, businesses and parents to focus on programs for middle-school aged children. The FCPL will continue to recruit and retain volunteers. In FY 2004, more than 3,200 volunteers contributed more than 169,000 hours to libraries. The public benefits extensively from these efforts to provide a high level of service very cost-effectively.

Program Area Summary by Character

| Category | FY 2004 Actual | FY 2005 Adopted Budget Plan | FY 2005 Revised Budget Plan | FY 2006 Advertised Budget Plan | FY 2006 Adopted Budget Plan |
|----------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Authorized Positions/Staff Years | | | | | |
| Regular | 940/ 893.5 | 945/ 898.5 | 952/ 907.5 | 958/ 913 | 961/ 915.5 |
| Exempt | 1/ 1 | 1/ 1 | 0/ 0 | 0/ 0 | 0/ 0 |
| ----- | | | | | |
| Expenditures: | | | | | |
| Personnel Services | \$45,213,277 | \$49,574,104 | \$49,453,828 | \$51,680,694 | \$52,234,259 |
| Operating Expenses | 25,728,594 | 26,743,998 | 28,484,740 | 28,806,756 | 28,775,941 |
| Capital Equipment | 611,813 | 240,000 | 636,602 | 300,000 | 300,000 |
| Subtotal | \$71,553,684 | \$76,558,102 | \$78,575,170 | \$80,787,450 | \$81,310,200 |
| Less: | | | | | |
| Recovered Costs | (\$11,778,565) | (\$13,128,326) | (\$12,925,808) | (\$12,981,663) | (\$12,981,663) |
| Total Expenditures | \$59,775,119 | \$63,429,776 | \$65,649,362 | \$67,805,787 | \$68,328,537 |
| Income | \$6,886,024 | \$8,447,712 | \$8,329,827 | \$8,453,862 | \$7,185,622 |
| Net Cost to the County | \$52,889,095 | \$54,982,064 | \$57,319,535 | \$59,351,925 | \$61,142,915 |

Program Area Summary by Agency

| Category | FY 2004 Actual | FY 2005 Adopted Budget Plan | FY 2005 Revised Budget Plan | FY 2006 Advertised Budget Plan | FY 2006 Adopted Budget Plan |
|---|---------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Department of Community and Recreation Services | \$11,120,852 | \$12,366,215 | \$12,934,681 | \$14,234,339 | \$14,491,205 |
| Fairfax County Park Authority | 22,160,632 | 23,141,114 | 23,154,114 | 24,151,733 | 24,387,617 |
| Fairfax County Public Library | 26,493,635 | 27,922,447 | 29,560,567 | 29,419,715 | 29,449,715 |
| Total Expenditures | \$59,775,119 | \$63,429,776 | \$65,649,362 | \$67,805,787 | \$68,328,537 |

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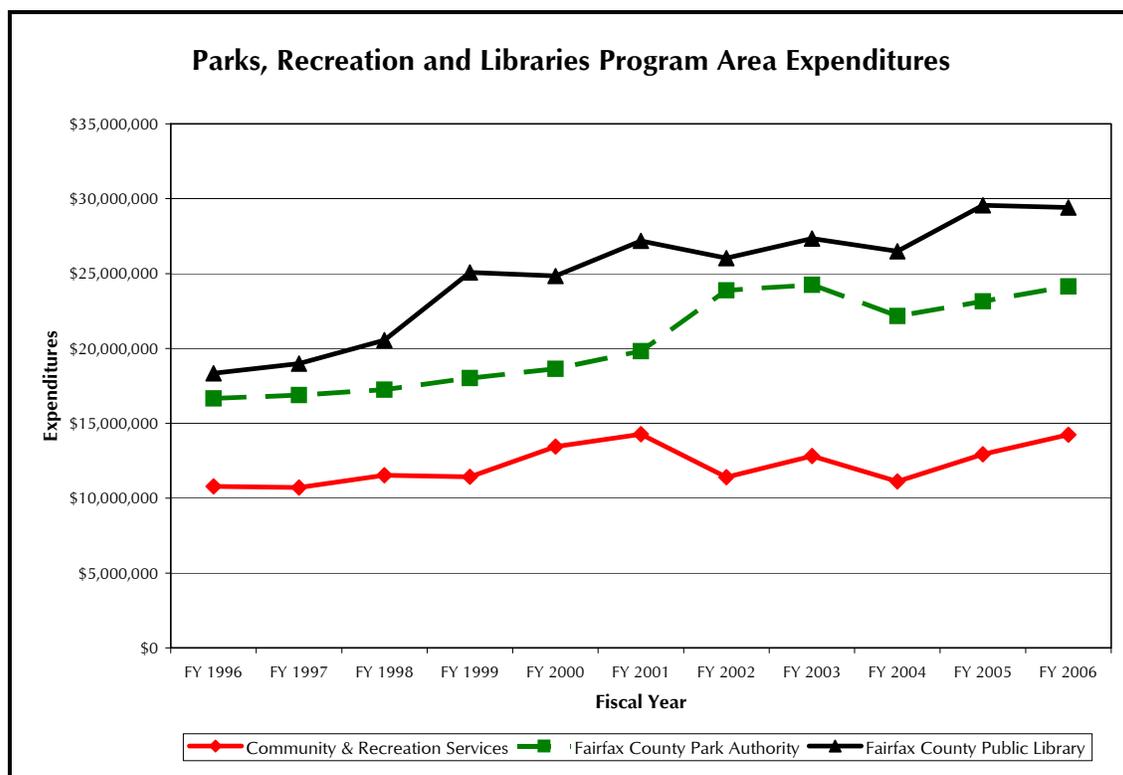
Budget Trends

For FY 2006, the recommended funding level of \$68,328,537 for the Parks, Recreation and Libraries program area comprises 6.3 percent of the total recommended General Fund direct expenditures of \$1,083,966,875. It also includes 961 or 8.2 percent of total authorized positions for FY 2006.

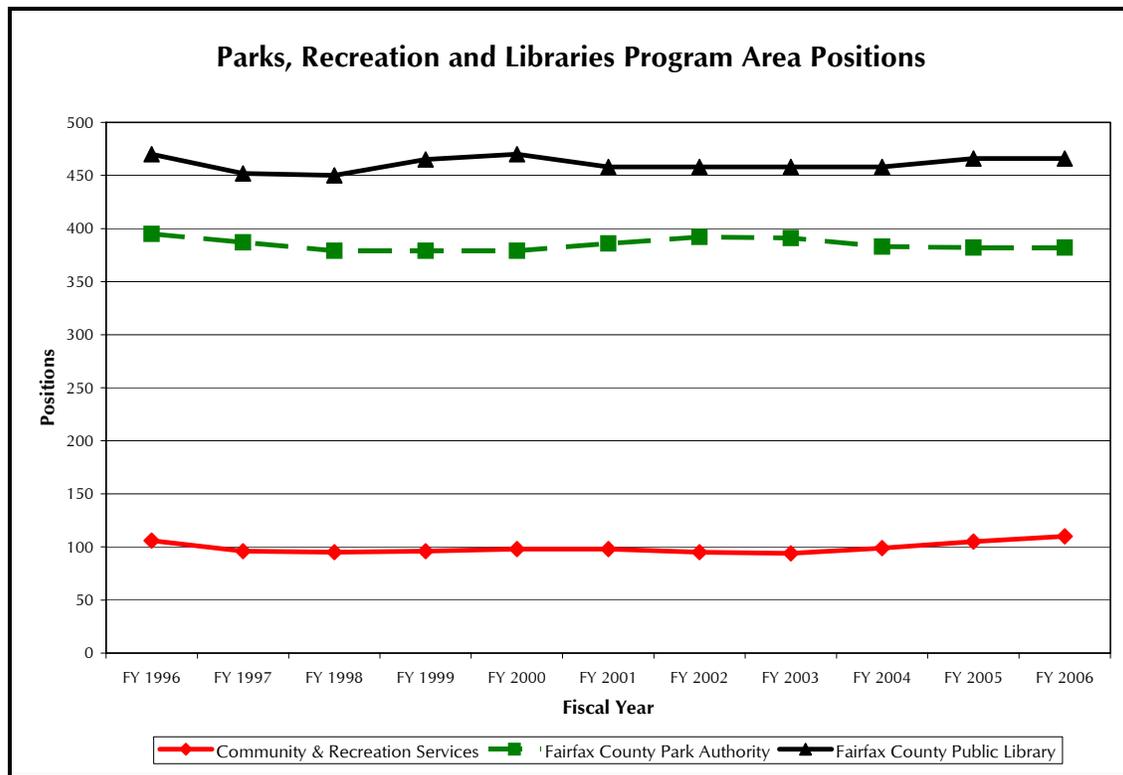
Parks, Recreation and Libraries program area expenditures will increase \$2,679,175 or 4.1 percent over the *FY 2005 Revised Budget* expenditure level. This increase is primarily associated with Personnel Services salary adjustments necessary to support the County's compensation program and 9/9.0 SYE new positions included for FY 2006. It should be noted that income for this program, primarily comprised of user fees including fines on overdue books, is projected to be \$7,185,622 for FY 2006. This is 10.5 percent of total expenditures for this program area.

To meet increased service demands and to provide direct support in underserved communities, CRS is preparing to open the Southgate Community Center in early FY 2007. The Southgate Community Center will be the center for regional services in the North County region, including areas of the Hunter Mill, Dranesville and Sully districts and is projected to serve 19,000 attendees per year. In FY 2006, 5/5.0 SYE positions in CRS are included to prepare for the opening of this facility. In addition, 4/3.0 SYE positions are included in CRS to support the expansion of the Club 78 program into three additional FCPS middle schools. Club 78 is an after school enrichment program designed to provide middle school youth with diverse educational, social, and recreational opportunities in a supervised environment, and includes activities such as a homework lab, drama, recreation, sports, and life skills training aimed at avoiding gang involvement and substance abuse. The expansion of the program into three new schools will provide an additional 180 participant slots.

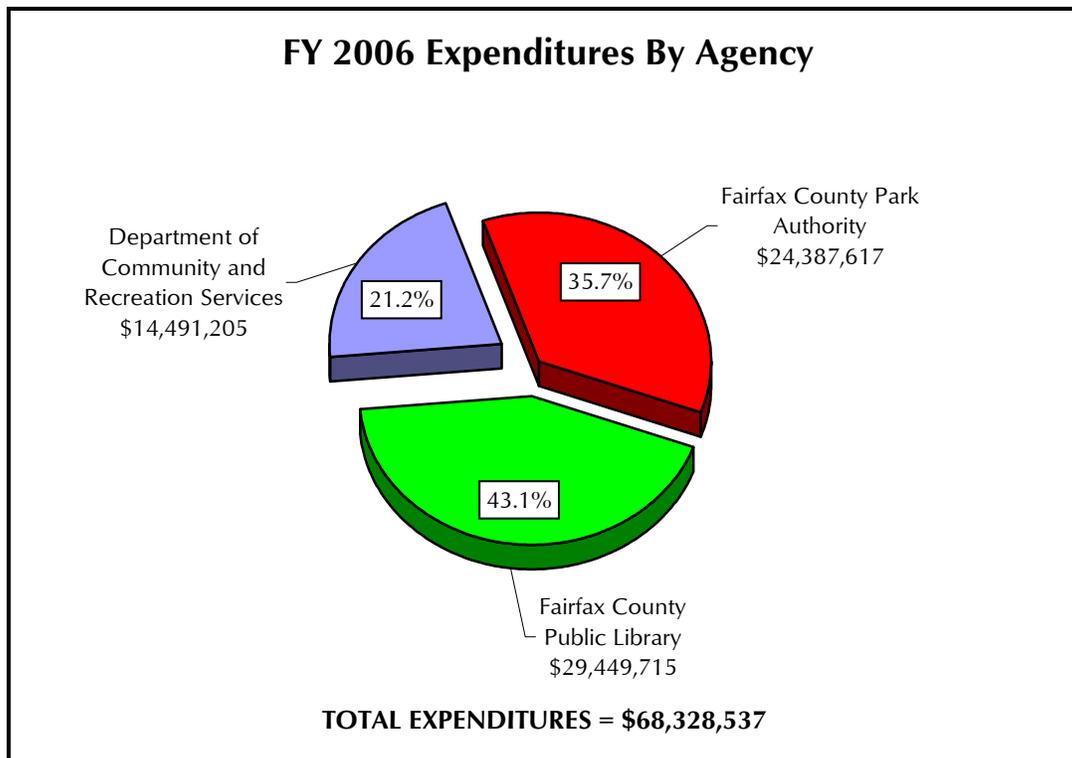
Trends in Expenditures and Positions



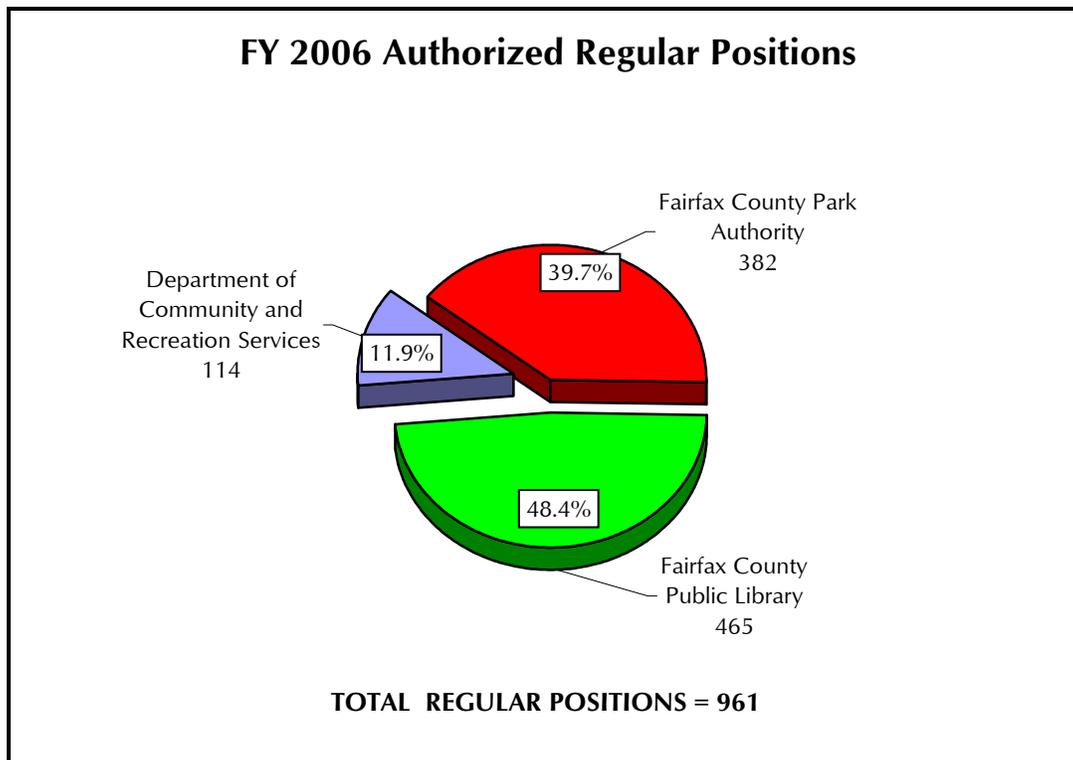
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FY 2006 Expenditures and Positions by Agency



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Benchmarking

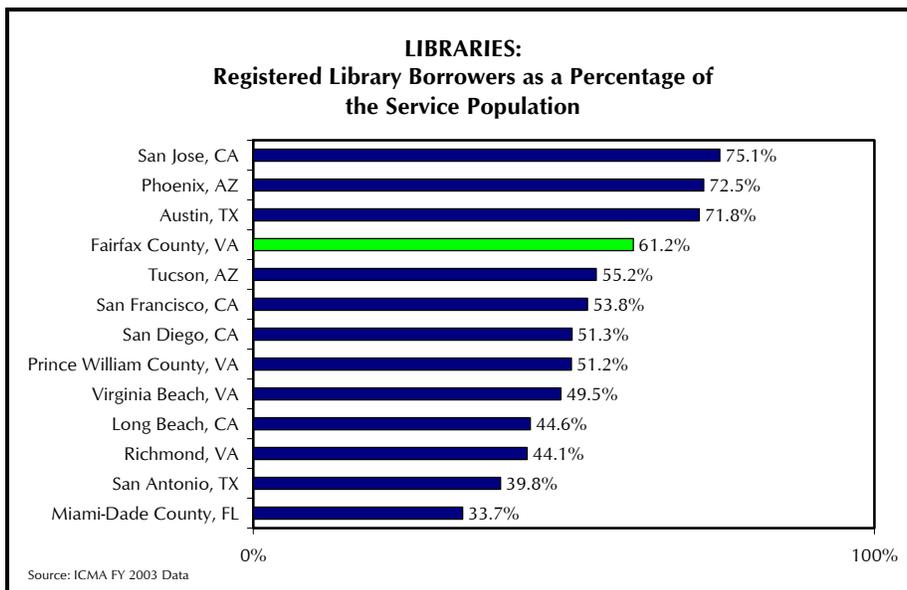
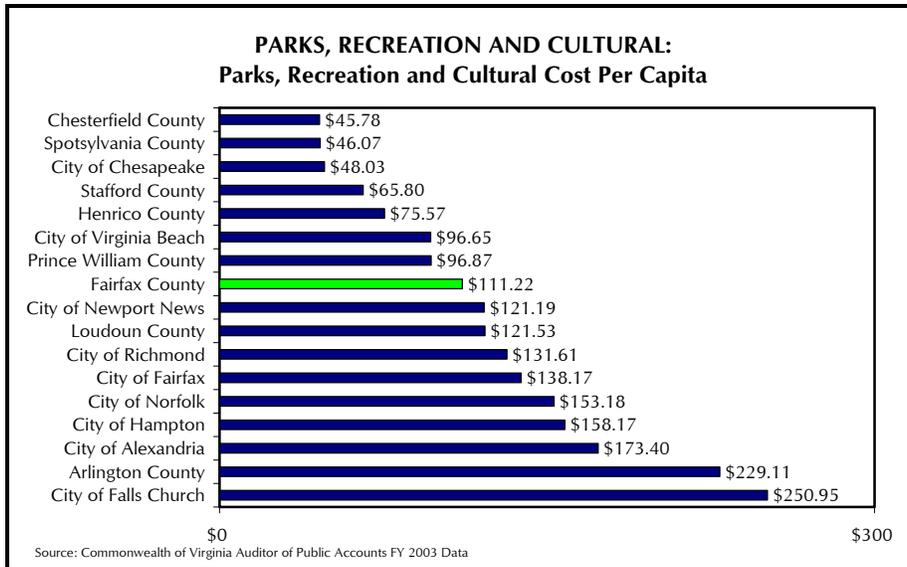
The first benchmarking statistic presented is a cost per capita comparison collected by the Auditor of Public Accounts (APA) for the Commonwealth of Virginia, included here for the first time. Due to the time necessary for data collection and cleaning, FY 2003 represents the most recent year for which data are available. An advantage to including these benchmarks is the comparability. In Virginia, local governments follow stringent guidelines regarding the classification of program area expenses. Cost data are provided annually to the APA for review and compilation in an annual report. Since these data are not prepared by any one jurisdiction, their objectivity is less questionable than they would be if collected by one of the participants. In addition, a standard methodology is consistently followed, allowing comparison over time. For each of the program areas, these comparisons of cost per capita are the first benchmarks shown in these sections.

A number of other benchmarks are shown that are associated with the International City/County Management Association's (ICMA) comparative performance program. Fairfax County has participated in ICMA's benchmarking effort since 2000. Over 100 cities, counties and towns provide comparable data annually in a number of service areas. However, not all jurisdictions provide data for every service area. Parks, Recreation and Libraries represent several of the benchmarked service areas for which Fairfax County provides data. Additional program-level performance measurement data are presented within each of these agencies' budget narratives.

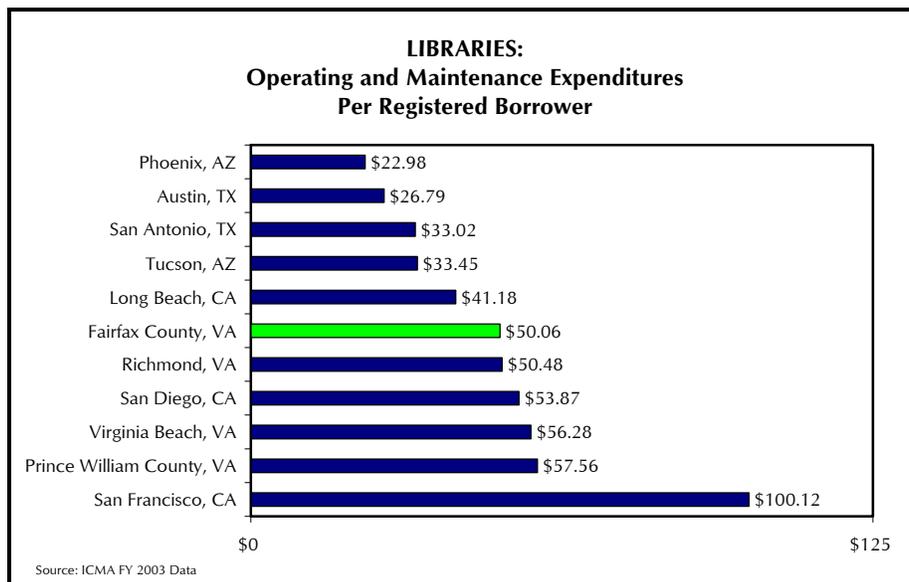
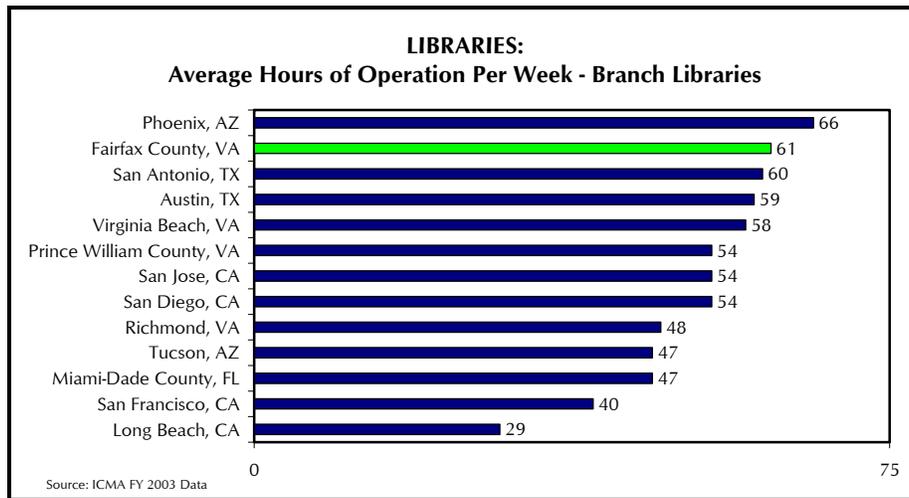
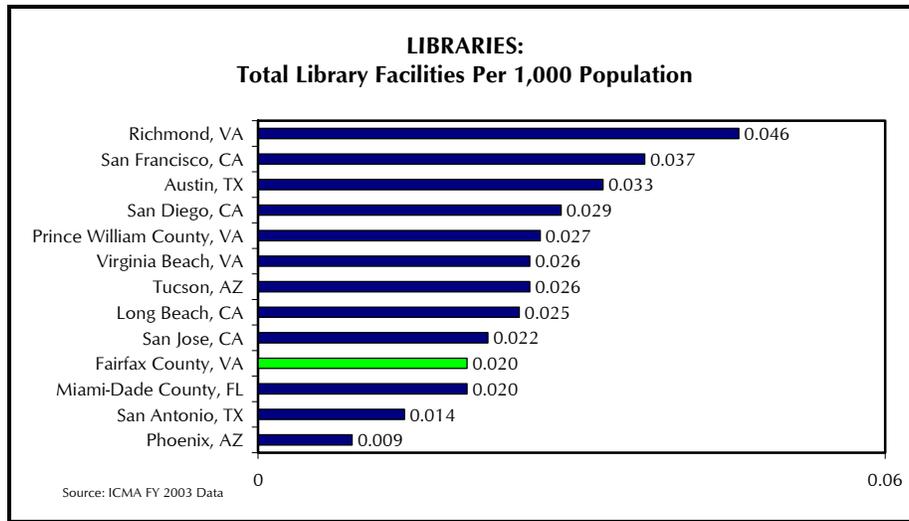
Participating local governments (cities, counties and towns) provide data on standard templates provided by ICMA in order to ensure consistency. ICMA then performs extensive data cleaning to ensure the greatest accuracy and comparability of data. As a result of the time to collect the data and undergo ICMA's rigorous data cleaning processes, information is always available with a one-year delay. FY 2003 data represent the latest available information. The jurisdictions presented in the graphs below generally show how Fairfax County compares to other large jurisdictions (population over 500,000). In cases where other Virginia localities provided data, they are shown as well.

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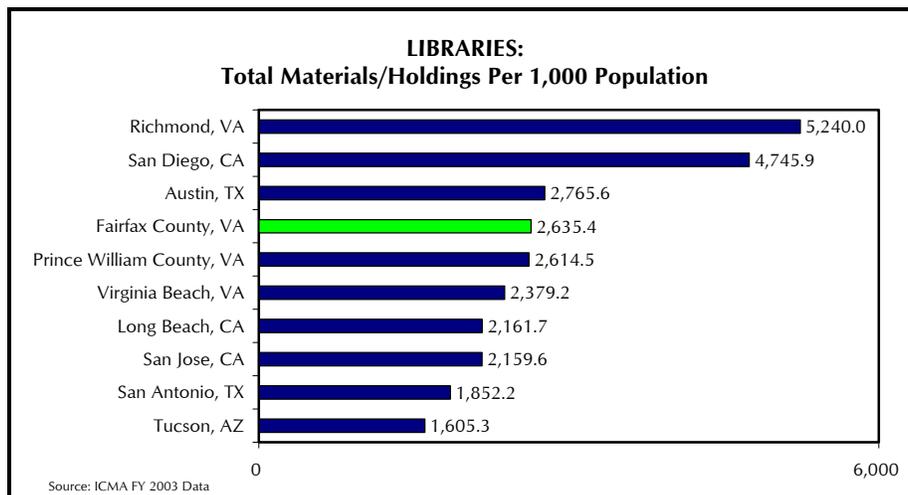
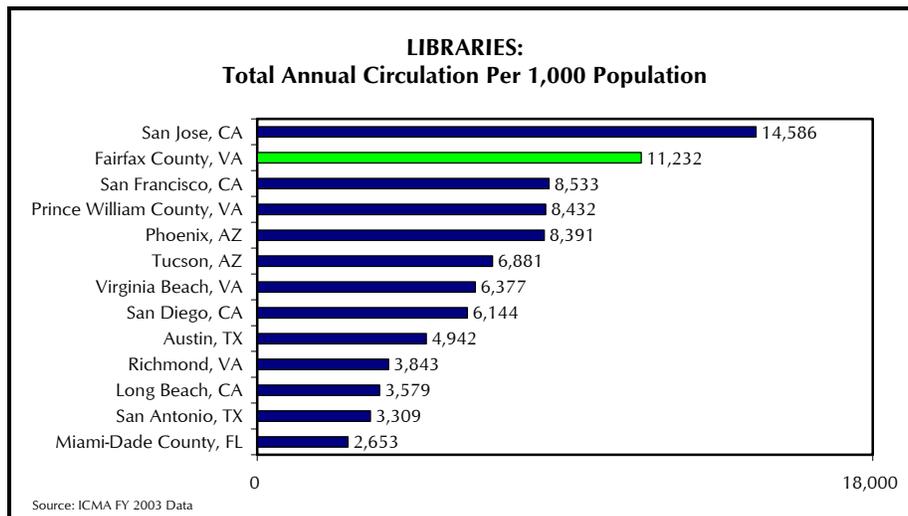
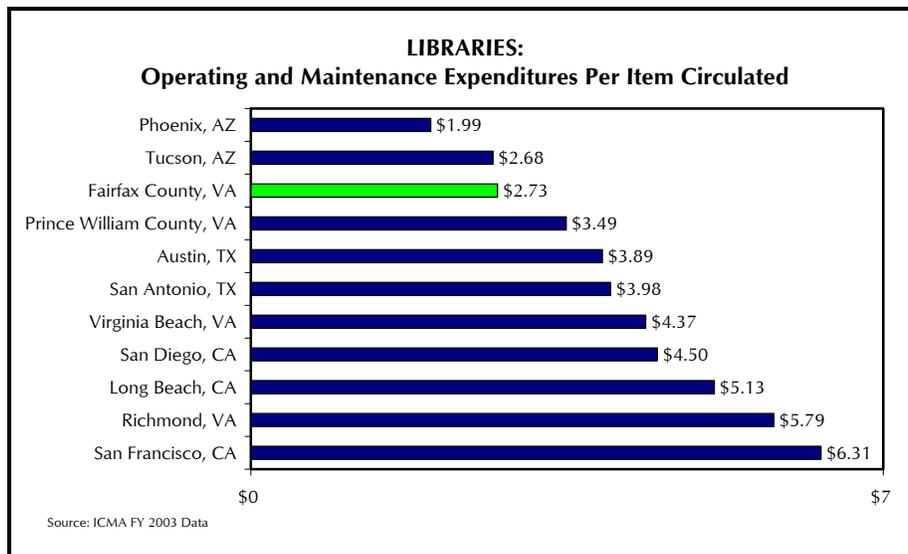
An important point to note in an effort such as this is that since participation is voluntary, the jurisdictions that provide data have shown they are committed to becoming/remaining high performance organizations. Therefore, comparisons made through this program should be considered in the context that the participants have self-selected and are inclined to be among the higher performers than a random sample among local governments nationwide. It is also important to note that not all jurisdictions respond to all questions. In some cases, the question or process is not applicable to a particular locality or data are not available. For those reasons, the universe of jurisdictions with which Fairfax County is compared is not always the same for each benchmark. As can be seen below, the County compares favorably in the Libraries and Parks/Recreation service areas in terms of both efficiency and effectiveness.



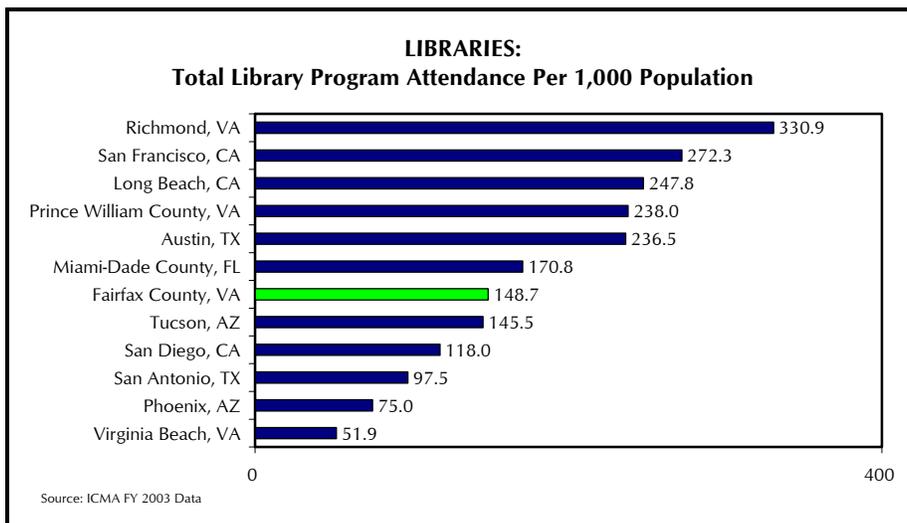
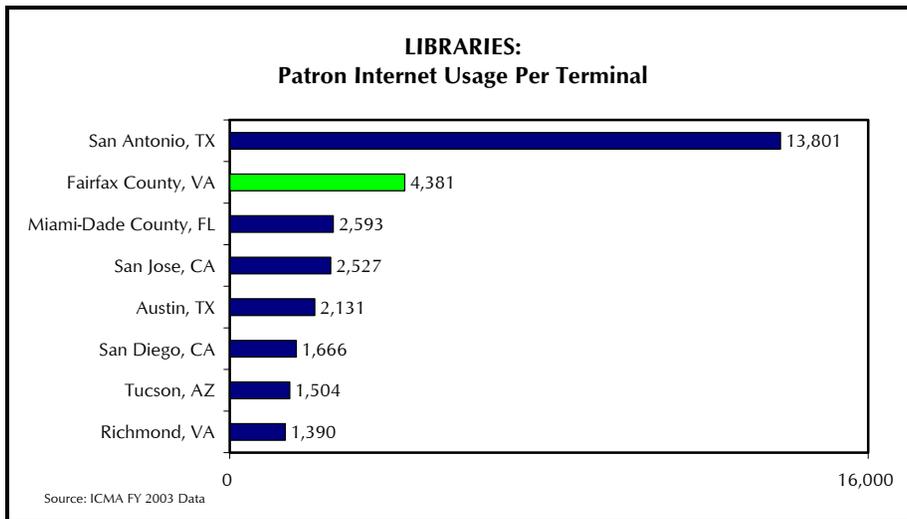
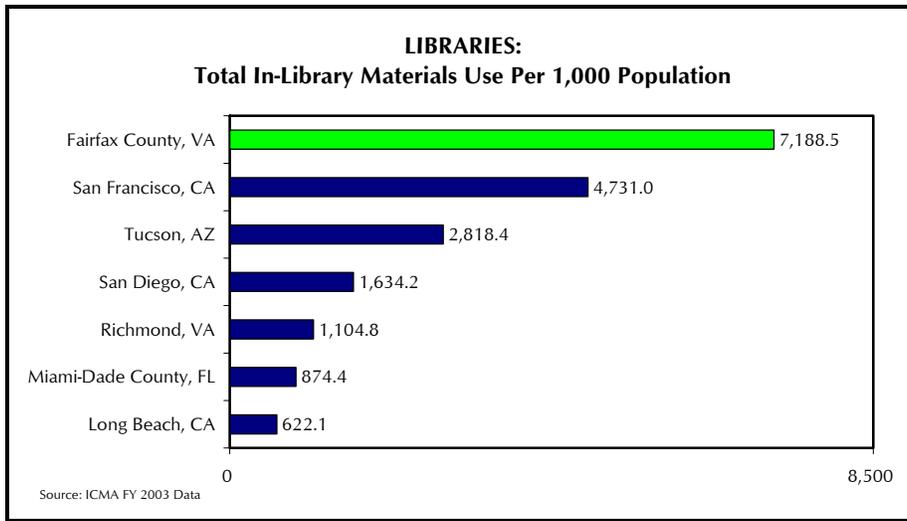
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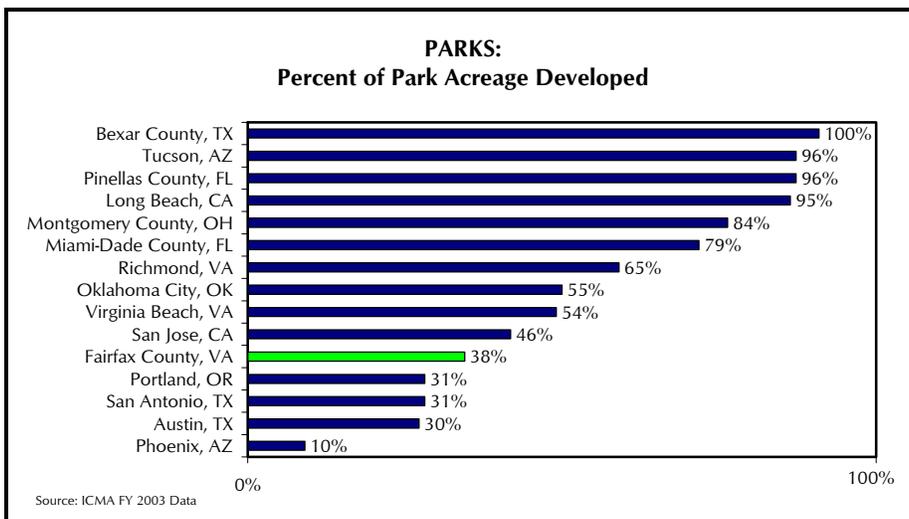
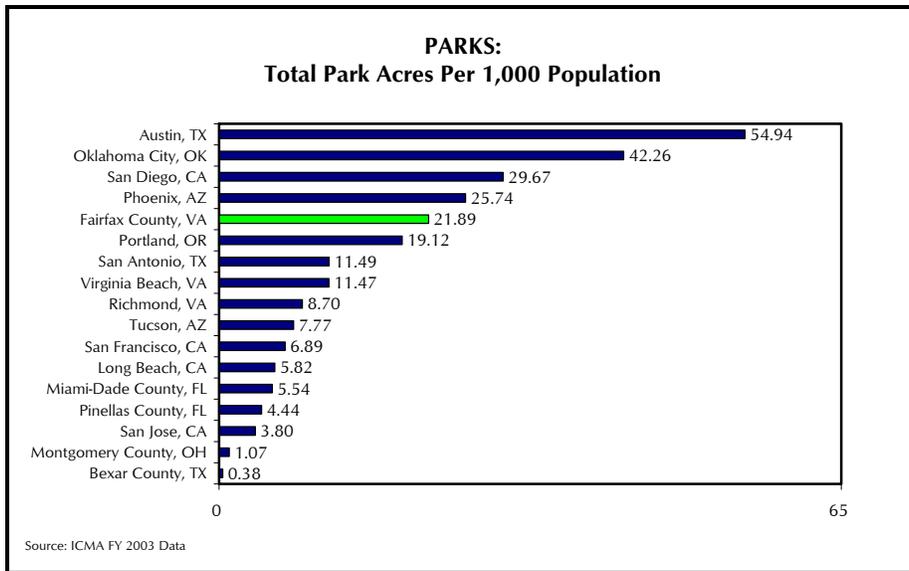
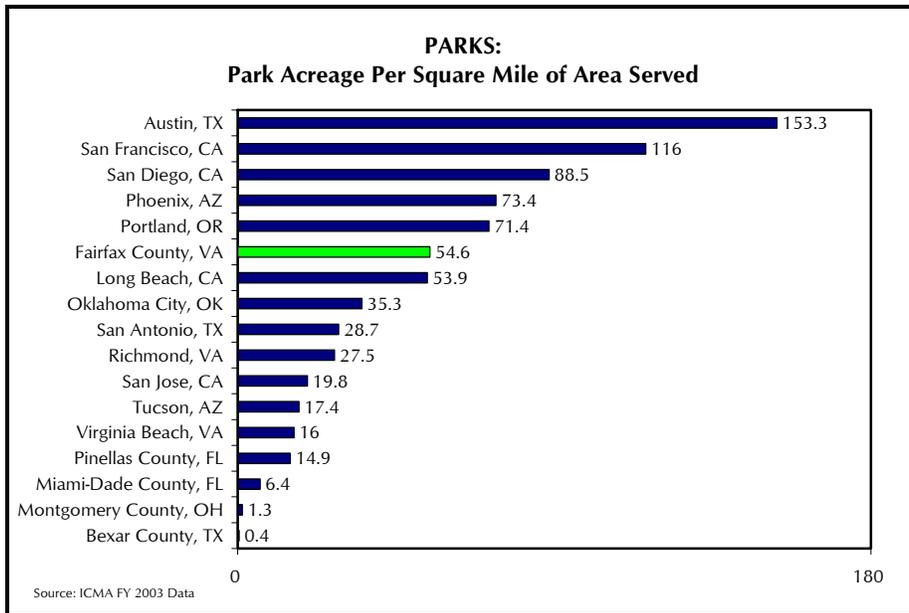
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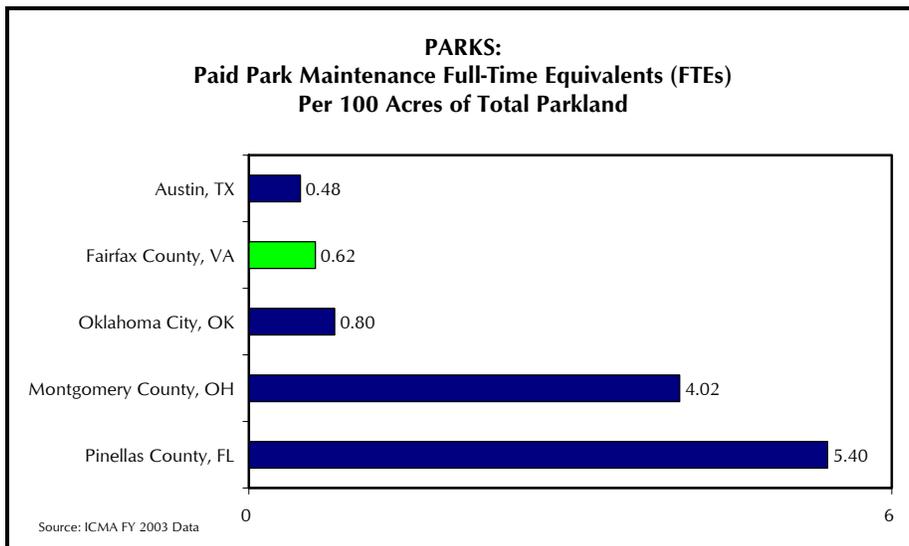
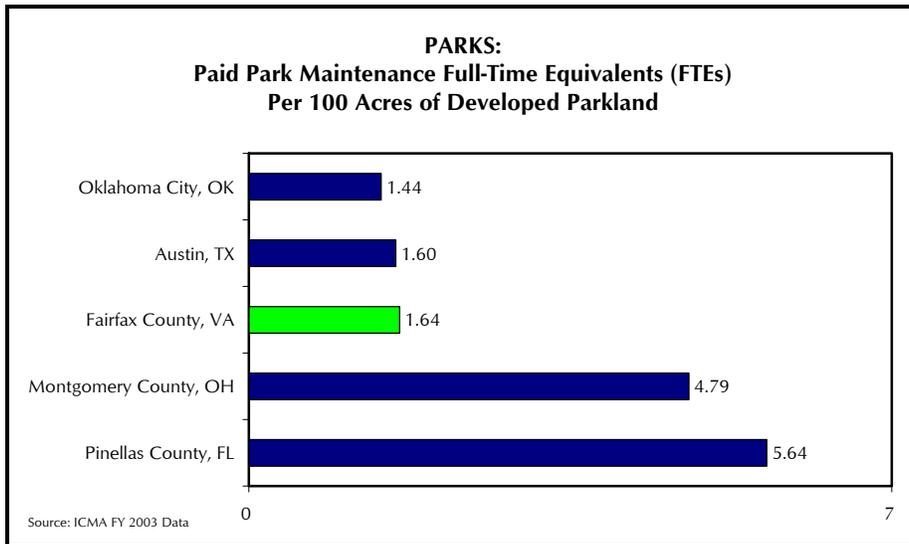
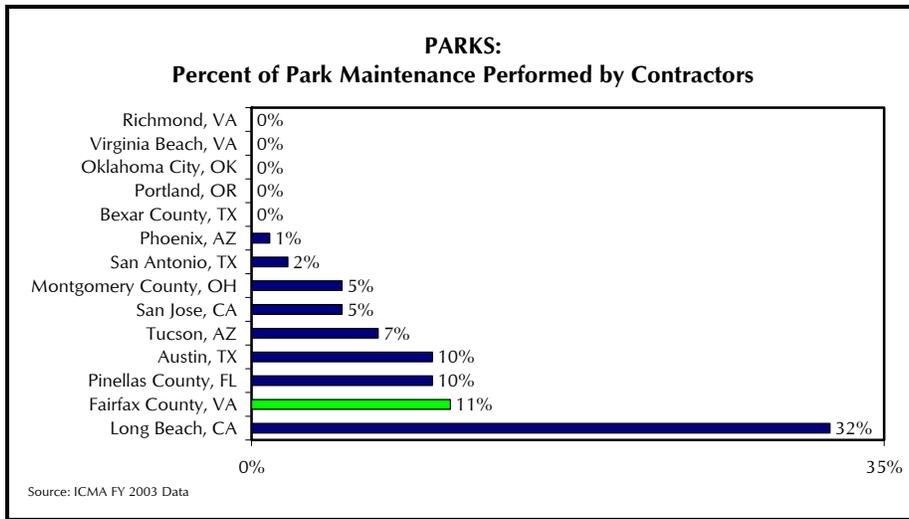
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