

Fairfax County Park Authority

LOB #339:

REAL ESTATE SERVICES

Purpose

This LOB provides County-wide professional land services that includes land acquisition, encroachment protection and supports park development. Services include the protection of open space and the purchase of land for park capital development through research, negotiation, and obtaining property rights to meet the needs of the County through fee simple purchases, easements, donations, and dedications. Management of existing park holdings is accomplished through the origination and negotiation of technical documents to grant leases, easements, and land use agreements on park property and provides oversight for conditions in those agreements. Additional ongoing management tasks in the Park Authority's Revenue Fund include management of residential and commercial leases, the easement program, and the Agency's telecommunications program. The Real Estate Services LOB maintains the Agency's land records for over 23,346 acres of parkland.

Description

This LOB is comprised of the following discrete programs:

- Land Acquisition – serves as a forward-looking vehicle for protecting open space through research and negotiation with property owners to acquire property through fee simple purchases, easements, donations, and dedications. Additionally, this program responds to specific Agency needs that support the ongoing management of existing park facilities and the development of new park facilities. This program is accomplished via professional Park Authority staff located at FCPA headquarters. Program hours are standard workdays with exceptions for night and weekend meetings. This program has been operational since the formation of the Park Authority in 1950.
- Professional Survey – provides Agency-wide survey services for the establishment and protection of park property boundaries and technical survey capabilities in support of park development projects, land exchanges, and the creation of plats for grants or other easements. This program is accomplished via professional Park Authority staff located at FCPA headquarters. Program hours are standard workdays with exceptions for night and weekend meetings. This program has been operational since 1970.
- Telecommunications Program - responsible for the management of the licenses for 14 private telecommunication facilities (monopoles) located on parkland, and researching and negotiating new locations with telecommunication industry representatives. This program is accomplished via professional Park Authority staff located at FCPA headquarters. Program hours are standard workdays with exceptions for night and weekend meetings. This program has been in operation since 1994 when the Park Authority negotiated the first lease for the location of telecommunications facilities on park property. Revenue generated from this activity is managed in the Park Improvement Fund and staff costs associated with the activity are recovered from the Park Improvement Fund.
- Rental Property Management – manages select residential and commercial structures located on parkland including the creation and management of individual leases. This program is accomplished via professional Park Authority staff located at FCPA headquarters. Program hours are standard workdays with exceptions for night and weekend meetings. This program has been operational since 1982.
- Lease/Easement/Land Use Agreement Management - prepares and negotiates technical documents with private entities to grant leases, easements, and land use agreements within or across existing park land and park facilities. This program is also responsible for the oversight of the conditions contained within the documents. This program is accomplished via professional Park Authority staff located at FCPA headquarters. Program hours are standard workdays with exceptions for night and weekend meetings. This program has been in operation since the

Fairfax County Park Authority

formation of the Park Authority in 1950. Revenue generated from this activity is managed in the Park Improvement Fund and staff costs associated with the activity are recovered from the Park Improvement Fund.

Benefits

The park system is a resource available to all residents and visitors of Fairfax County. As a professional, County-wide program, Real Estate Services supports all residents of Fairfax County who use the land holdings and facilities within the park system by continuing to ensure the protection of new open spaces and management of land rights within existing parks. The value of Real Estate Services to the community is a staff trained and dedicated specifically to the vision and policies of Fairfax County and the Park Authority Board, and an expertise regarding the technical details and intricacies related to a park system in excess of 23,346 acres. Finally, by providing forward-looking protection of open space, natural and cultural resources, and management of existing Park Authority assets, the function, and value to the community, of the Real Estate Services program aligns with the County vision elements. Revenues generated from the Telecommunications, Rental Property Management and Lease/Easement/Land Use Agreement Management programs are used to improve park facilities Countywide as well as offset staff costs for managing the programs.

Mandates

This LOB is partially mandated and it has a specific mandate for semi-annual reporting to the National Park Service for properties purchased using grant dollars provided by the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The source of the mandate is a provision of the funding agreement between the Park Authority and the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation that administers the grant program for the National Park Service.

Trends and Challenges

The main trends include the following:

- Working more closely, and more frequently, with private entities regarding land and/or facility dedications proffered to the Park Authority as part of the rezoning process.
- The growing urbanization of the County.
- Sourcing appropriate acquisition opportunities in urban areas of the County.
- More frequent participation in public private partnerships to leverage benefits to the Agency.
- Increase in demand for use of parkland for other purposes such as major utility easements, transportation improvements and additional telecommunication facilities.
- Increased encroachment from park neighbors on parkland.

The major challenges that this LOB faces are the following:

- Fewer large land acquisition opportunities in urban areas of the County,
- Land values are increasing, decreasing FCPA's purchasing power,
- Reduced availability of trained staff and increased competition from private sector, and
- More complicated land agreements for use of parkland for other purposes.

Fairfax County Park Authority

Resources

Category	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Adopted
LOB #339: Real Estate Services			
FUNDING			
Expenditures:			
Compensation	\$783,651	\$724,060	\$851,919
Benefits	55,426	68,127	115,905
Operating Expenses	127,617	103,844	213,983
Work Performed for Others	(378,133)	(375,559)	(447,957)
Total Expenditures	\$588,561	\$520,472	\$733,850
General Fund Expenditures	\$529,041	\$463,255	\$529,819
Transfers Out:			
Transfer Out to General Fund	\$11,625	\$11,625	\$12,300
Total Transfers Out	\$11,625	\$11,625	\$12,300
Total Revenue	\$142,351	\$90,077	\$118,404
POSITIONS			
Authorized Positions/Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs)			
Positions:			
Regular	10 / 10	10 / 10	10 / 10
Total Positions	10 / 10	10 / 10	10 / 10

Fairfax County Park Authority

Metrics

Metric Indicator	FY 2013 Actual	FY 2014 Actual	FY 2015 Actual	FY 2016 Estimate	FY 2017 Estimate
Acres of Additional Parkland Acquired	70	56	36	20	30
Number of plans reviewed per year for impact to park property	No data available	No data available	No data available	300	325
Percent of County's land mass owned by the Park Authority	8.95%	8.97%	8.98%	8.99%	9.00%

This LOB has a goal of obtaining 10 percent of the County land mass for parks. In order to protect existing park holdings, Real Estate Services reviews all projects that will impact parkland in order to minimize disturbance and loss of park acreage. Real Estate Services participates in the review of zoning cases that impact parkland or where a park dedication is proposed.

Trends for the Real Estate Services Division include:

- Open space in the County has decreased, increasing the cost and difficulty in acquiring parkland.
- Ability to purchase park land via fee simple purchase is limited by available funding for land acquisition.
- Funding for land acquisition has decreased due to other Board priorities.
- Completion of acquisition projects may be deferred due to decisions beyond staff control.
- The cost of developable land continues to increase in value limiting purchase power.
- Development proffers that include land dedications are becoming increasingly complex requiring additional staff hours per acre of parkland dedicated.
- Greater participation is required in County planning studies and initiatives as development impacts to parkland increases as the County continues to build out.
- Park access requirements by FCDOT and VDOT are increasingly complex.
- Staff capacity, training limits and retirements constrain staffing levels and competency.