

APPENDIX D FAIRFAX COUNTY ENVIRONMENTAL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM PROJECT SELECTION

The following text has been largely copied from Fairfax County Sustainability Initiatives, September 2014, available on the Fairfax County website at: <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/environment/sustainability/>. Information about projects approved through the FY 2014 Carryover Budget process has been incorporated.

Fairfax County supports environmental initiatives in the board-adopted Environmental Excellence 20-year Vision Plan (Environmental Agenda) through several county agencies and funds. There are also many environmental initiatives and projects carried out by individuals and groups each year.

In its 2012 Annual Report on the Environment, the Environmental Quality Advisory Council recommended that the Environmental Improvement Program project selection process be formalized. In response to this recommendation, an interagency staff committee developed a rigorous project selection process to support the board-adopted Environmental Agenda. This process, which was reviewed and supported by EQAC, resulted in funding for several high-quality environmental projects in FY 2014.

Under this process, each fiscal year, county agencies have the opportunity to submit proposed projects for review, scoring and consideration. An agency must include technical analysis, including cost/benefit information, as part of its submission. After the submission period closes, a staff committee conducts agency interviews for each project, then evaluates and prioritizes all proposals. A final matrix of prioritized projects is submitted to an executive team comprised of members of the Department of Management and Budget and a Deputy County Executive for consideration in the County Executive's advertised budget.

Staff-developed submission criteria provide guidance to the agencies as they identify and develop their project proposals. Selection criteria guide committee members as they evaluate and prioritize the projects. Both the submission and selection criteria are derived from the board's Environmental Agenda and the six topic areas it addresses: Growth and Land Use; Air Quality and Transportation; Water Quality; Solid Waste; Parks, Trails and Open Space; and Environmental Stewardship.

FY 2014 Funding and Projects

As a result of this process, the FY 2014 adopted budget included funding of \$500,000 for environmental initiatives. The specific projects are detailed below:

- **Lighting Retrofits** – An amount of \$110,000 is included for lighting retrofits and upgrades at Fairfax County Park Authority facilities for energy efficiency and conservation. Lighting will be upgraded to LED fixtures and controls will be installed to more efficiently manage lighting during operating hours. These energy-saving retrofits will reduce energy use by approximately 80 percent, improve lighting, reduce light pollution and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- **Invasive Management Area Program** – An amount of \$100,000 was included to continue the Invasive Management Area program. The Fairfax County Park Authority manages this volunteer program as well as other invasive plant removal initiatives. These programs restore hundreds of acres of important natural areas, protect tree canopy and reach thousands of volunteers. Currently, 6,000 trained volunteer leaders have contributed 20,000 hours of service since the program's inception in 2005, improving over 1,000 acres of parkland.
- **Energy Education and Outreach** – An amount of \$250,000 was included for energy education and outreach initiatives. This program is intended to increase the awareness of Fairfax County residents and businesses regarding energy consumption and to encourage them to reduce consumption. Program objectives include educating citizens and businesses about energy consumption, explaining the energy assessment (audit) process and encouraging residents and businesses to undertake energy-saving measures.
- **Green Purchasing Program** – An amount of \$10,000 was included for the green purchasing program. This program is designed to support two interns to assist in clearly specifying environmental attributes during the county's procurement process. Fairfax County has a current inventory of over 2,400 contracts; emphasizing environmental attributes such as recycling, energy efficiency, durability and reduced toxicity during the procurement process can contribute to the purchase of green products, creating fiscal and environmental savings.
- **Weather Station** – An amount of \$6,500 was included to install a weather station for efficient water usage at Twin Lakes Golf Course. This system will help to measure air temperature, relative humidity, barometric pressure, rainfall and other weather indicators in order to modify watering requirements. It is estimated that installing this weather station could save 20 million gallons of water per year.
- **Strategic Initiatives** – An amount of \$23,500 was provided for other strategic environmental initiatives. This funding may also be used to offset any unanticipated project shortfalls in existing or proposed projects.

FY 2014 Carryover Funding and Projects

The FY 2014 carryover budget, adopted by the Board of Supervisors in September 2014, included funding of \$535,000 for the following environmental projects:

- **Invasive Management Area Program** – An amount of \$150,000 was included to continue the Invasive Plant Removal Program.
- **Energy Education and Outreach** – An amount of \$75,000 was included for Energy Education and Outreach initiatives.
- **Green Purchasing Program** – An amount of \$10,000 was included for the Green Purchasing Program.
- **Energy and Lighting Retrofits** – An amount of \$170,000 was included for lighting retrofits and upgrades at Fairfax County Park Authority facilities for energy efficiency and conservation.
- **Weather Station** – An amount of \$8,000 was included to install a weather station for efficient water usage at Greendale Golf Course. This system will help measure air temperature, relative humidity, barometric pressure, rainfall and other weather indicators in order to modify watering requirements. It is estimated that installing this weather station could save 10 million gallons of water per year. Estimated cost savings of more than \$50,000 per year.
- **Water Smart Web-Based Irrigation Controllers** – An amount of \$92,000 was included to install Water Smart web-based irrigation controllers utilizing Evapotranspiration weather technology at 20 park facilities that have existing irrigation systems with the opportunity to reduce energy use, water consumption and reduce environmental impacts.
- **Watershed Protection and Energy Conservation Matching Grant Program** – An amount of \$30,000 was included for a program that is intended to promote community engagement around sustainability and conservation issues. Specifically, the Watershed Protection and Energy Conservation matching grant pilot program will provide financial incentives to empower homeowners through their associations to implement on-the-ground sustainability projects. The initiative will build on current programs that provide technical assistance, hands-on support, outreach and education to Fairfax County homeowners and residents. Projects will improve water quality and/or reduce greenhouse gas emissions and conserve energy and water. The program funding level will support printing and materials, matching grants of \$300 - \$2,500 up to \$10,000 total for all grants and two seasonal paid interns to help run the program and conduct a community survey.

EIP Delivered Projects History

EIP projects were first funded as part of the FY 2004 Carryover Review (September 2004). To date, the total EIP project funding including the FY 2014 Adopted Budget Plan and FY 2014 Carryover Budget is roughly \$6.8 million. These initiatives generally support the Board of Supervisors Environmental Agenda.

The projects listed below have been supported by the county's General Fund; however other environmental projects have been supported by the Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009) and by the county's Contributory Fund (the latter of which funded tree planting partnerships with three non-profit organizations). In addition, several important environmental program areas and initiatives are supported through funding sources outside of the EIP and General Fund.

Projects funded through the EIP to date include:

- Purchase of wind energy.
- Air quality education and Clean Air Partners (media sponsorship to continue public outreach to improve air quality).
- Conversion of 163 Fairfax Connector buses to ultra-low sulfur fuel and addition of particulate traps to reduce emissions.
- Community cleanup/revitalization/blight abatement projects.
- Toxicity reduction public outreach program.
- Expansion of the business recycling program.
- Pedestrian improvements in the Richmond Highway corridor.
- Riparian buffer restoration.
- Cleanup of unauthorized dumpsites.
- Park Authority stewardship education.
- GIS-data green infrastructure for park natural resource management.
- Low impact development demonstration projects.
- Park trails mapping (comprehensive mapping program to allow the Park Authority to better manage and plan the trail system).
- Invasive Management Area program.
- Landfill gas utilization project at the I-95 Landfill.
- Remote household hazardous waste collection events.
- Tree canopy campaign at county facilities.
- Energy efficiency/renewable energy at county facilities.
- Litter campaign.
- Lighting retrofits and upgrades at Fairfax County Park Authority facilities.