

FAIRFAX PLANNING DISTRICT

Overview & Character

The [Fairfax Planning District](#) is located in the center of the County and surrounds the [City of Fairfax](#). The major roads in the District are Interstate 66, Route 50, Route 123, Route 29, Route 236, Braddock Road, Hunter Mill Road and Gallows Road. The predominantly suburban District was first developed in the 1950's and 1960's and has been substantially built out since the 1980s. The northwestern portion of the District is low-density residential development. The central portion, including the City of Fairfax, is a primary growth center focused on the City of Fairfax. A small portion of southwestern Fairfax is in the Occoquan watershed that has a low density residential and open space land use pattern, established to protect the water quality in the Occoquan watershed where the Occoquan Reservoir is located. The land area of Fairfax is 16,996 acres and it has seven community planning sectors. It is located in Park Maintenance Areas 2, 4, 5, 6, and 7. Fairfax is located in the Braddock, Providence, Springfield, and Sully Supervisory Districts.



The [Fairfax Planning District](#) is mostly composed of the headwater regions of Accotink Creek and Difficult Run watersheds, covering approximately 40 percent and 38 percent of the district respectively. The rest of Fairfax is in the headwaters of Cub Run, Popes Head, and Pohick Creek. Difficult Run and Accotink Creek represent two very different watersheds. Although Difficult Run has increasing pressure from human land use, it still retains better than average water quality. Accotink has an almost urban watershed with few to no stormwater controls and severe degradation from excessive runoff.

The population of the Fairfax Planning District in 2005 was 63,334, which was 6 percent of the County population. Even with its small population, it is the fourth most densely populated planning area in the county, as depicted in Table 1. [George Mason University](#) is located in the Fairfax Planning District and it is the largest and fastest growing university in Virginia as well as the

largest employer in the District. It has nearly 30,000 students, most of whom attend the main campus in Fairfax but only 4,000 live on campus. Thirty-one percent of the households in Fairfax have children under the age of 18. This age group is among the most active users of park facilities countywide.

Table 1: Demographic Indicators for Fairfax

| Fairfax Demographic Data | | | |
|--|------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Fairfax | Fairfax County | District Rank |
| Total Population | | | |
| 1980 Population | 32,332 | 596,901 | 8 of 14 |
| 2005 Population | 63,344 | 1,041,242 | 8 of 14 |
| 2005 Population Density | 5.7 | 4.5 per acre | 4 of 14 |
| Median Market Housing Value | \$375,000 | \$349,000 | 4 of 14 |
| Housing Units 2005 | 24,197 | 384,683 | 7 of 14 |
| Nonresidential Structure Gross Floor Area 2005 | 16,403,338 | 229,527,736 | 6 of 14 |
| 2000 Households (HH) | 20,400 | 348,714 | 8 of 14 |
| w/o Children | 69% | 63% | 9 of 14 |
| w Children under 18 | 31% | 37% | 9 of 14 |
| Total Population in 2000 | 56,024 | 969,749 | 8 of 14 |
| White | 71.9% | 69.9% | 7 of 14 |
| Black | 6.4% | 8.6% | 9 of 14 |
| Asian & Pacific Islander | 14.8% | 13.1% | 4 of 14 |
| Other or Two or More | 6.9% | 8.5% | 13 of 14 |
| Hispanic (can be of any race) | 9.5% | 11.0% | 9 of 14 |

Park System Overview

There are 45 public parks in the Fairfax Planning District with a total of 1,173 acres. The Fairfax County Park Authority protects and maintains 1,008 acres, which is 87 percent, in 27 parks. The [City of Fairfax](#) has its own park system with a total of 165 acres. Total public parkland in the District is seven percent of all land. Two golf courses, [Penderbrook](#), (which is open to the public, and [Army-Navy](#), which is private, are located in Fairfax. Parks are shown on Map 1. Table 2 lists individual public parks by classification and community planning sector with their acreages and date of master plan approval, if appropriate.



The majority of parkland in the Fairfax Planning District is in neighborhood and stream valley parks. Most of the parkland is forested, which is beneficial in a highly urbanized area. These facilities are listed in Table 3 for each park.

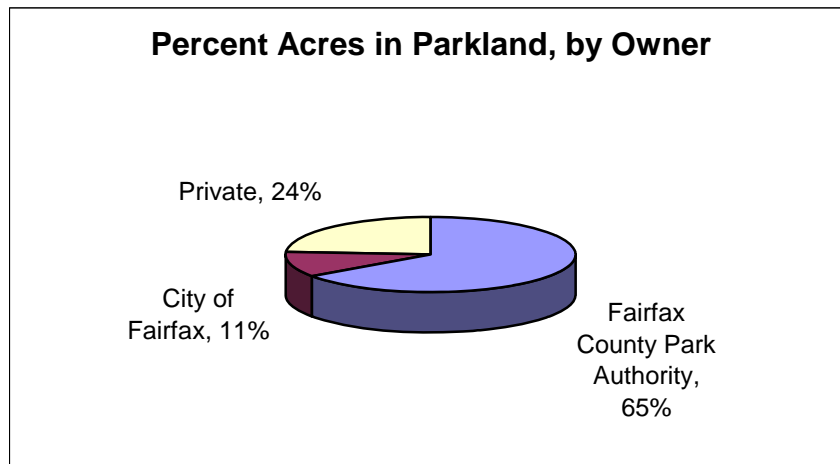


Table 2: Parkland by Planning Sector

| SECTOR | PARK NAME | CURRENT CLASSIFICATION | ACRES | MASTER PLAN DATE |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------|--------|------------------|
| BRADDOCK | FAIRFAX VILLA | RESOURCE BASED | 59.28 | 2007 |
| | GEORGE MASON | NEIGHBORHOOD | 7.98 | |
| | LONG BRANCH STREAM VALLEY | STREAM VALLEY | 55.34 | |
| | OLD FORGE | NEIGHBORHOOD | 6.36 | 1977 |
| | RUTHERFORD | COMMUNITY | 6.92 | 1971 |
| | SMOKEWOOD | NEIGHBORHOOD | 13.66 | |
| | SURREY SQUARE | NEIGHBORHOOD | 9.37 | |
| | UNIVERSITY | COMMUNITY | 9.42 | |
| CITY OF FAIRFAX | ARMY-NAVY COUNTRY CLUB | PRIVATE | 231.46 | |
| | COBDDALE PARK | CITY OF FAIRFAX | 0.53 | |
| | DALE LESTINA PARK | CITY OF FAIRFAX | 7.78 | |
| | DANIELS RUN PARK | CITY OF FAIRFAX | 46.72 | |
| | DRAPER DRIVE | CITY OF FAIRFAX | 16.57 | |
| | E CALVIN VAN DYCK | CITY OF FAIRFAX | 31.18 | |
| | FAIRCHESTER RECREATION AREA | CITY OF FAIRFAX | 1.00 | |
| | GATEWAY PARK | CITY OF FAIRFAX - NVRPA | 3.53 | |
| | KUTNER PARK | CITY OF FAIRFAX | 10.24 | |
| | PAT RODIO PARK | CITY OF FAIRFAX | 3.97 | |
| | PROVIDENCE PARK | CITY OF FAIRFAX | 16.16 | |
| | RANGER ROAD | CITY OF FAIRFAX | 7.10 | |
| | RATCLIFFE | CITY OF FAIRFAX | 3.21 | |
| | THAISS | CITY OF FAIRFAX | 10.77 | |
| WESTMORE RECREATION AREA | CITY OF FAIRFAX | 0.98 | | |
| FOX LAKE | DIFFICULT RUN STREAM VALLEY | STREAM VALLEY | 273.41 | |
| | FOXVALE | COMMUNITY | 24.60 | 1977 |
| | GABRIELSON GARDENS | NATURAL RESOURCES | 12.10 | 1996 |

| | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------------------------|---------------|-------------|------|
| | LITTLE DIFFICULT RUN STREAM VALLEY | STREAM VALLEY | 37.69 | |
| | OAK MARR | DISTRICT | 135.80 | 1991 |
| | OAKBOROUGH SQUARE | NEIGHBORHOOD | 7.56 | |
| | PENDERBROOK | PRIVATE | 135.22 | |
| | TATTERSALL | COMMUNITY | 35.49 | |
| | WAPLES MILL | DISTRICT | 37.52 | |
| | WAYLAND STREET | COMMUNITY | 16.47 | |
| GEORGE MASON | FAIRFAX VILLA | COMMUNITY | 59.28 | 2007 |
| LEGATO | CARNEY PARK | NEIGHBORHOOD | 29.46 | |
| | DIXIE HILL | NEIGHBORHOOD | 3.43 | 1980 |
| | RANDOM HILLS | NEIGHBORHOOD | 8.25 | |
| MANTUA | ACCOTINK STREAM VALLEY | STREAM VALLEY | 153.70 | |
| | EAKIN (MANTUA SECTION) | NEIGHBORHOOD | 76.01 | 1960 |
| | EAKIN COMMUNITY | COMMUNITY | 57.40 | 1967 |
| MOSBY WOODS | BLAKE LANE SCHOOL SITE | COMMUNITY | 10.27 | 1986 |
| | BORGE STREET | NEIGHBORHOOD | 3.56 | 1986 |
| | MOSBY WOODS | NEIGHBORHOOD | 6.91 | 1984 |
| | VILLA D'ESTE | NEIGHBORHOOD | 9.00 | 1985 |
| TOTAL | | | 1692.6 6 | |

Map 2: Parkland Classification in the Fairfax Planning District

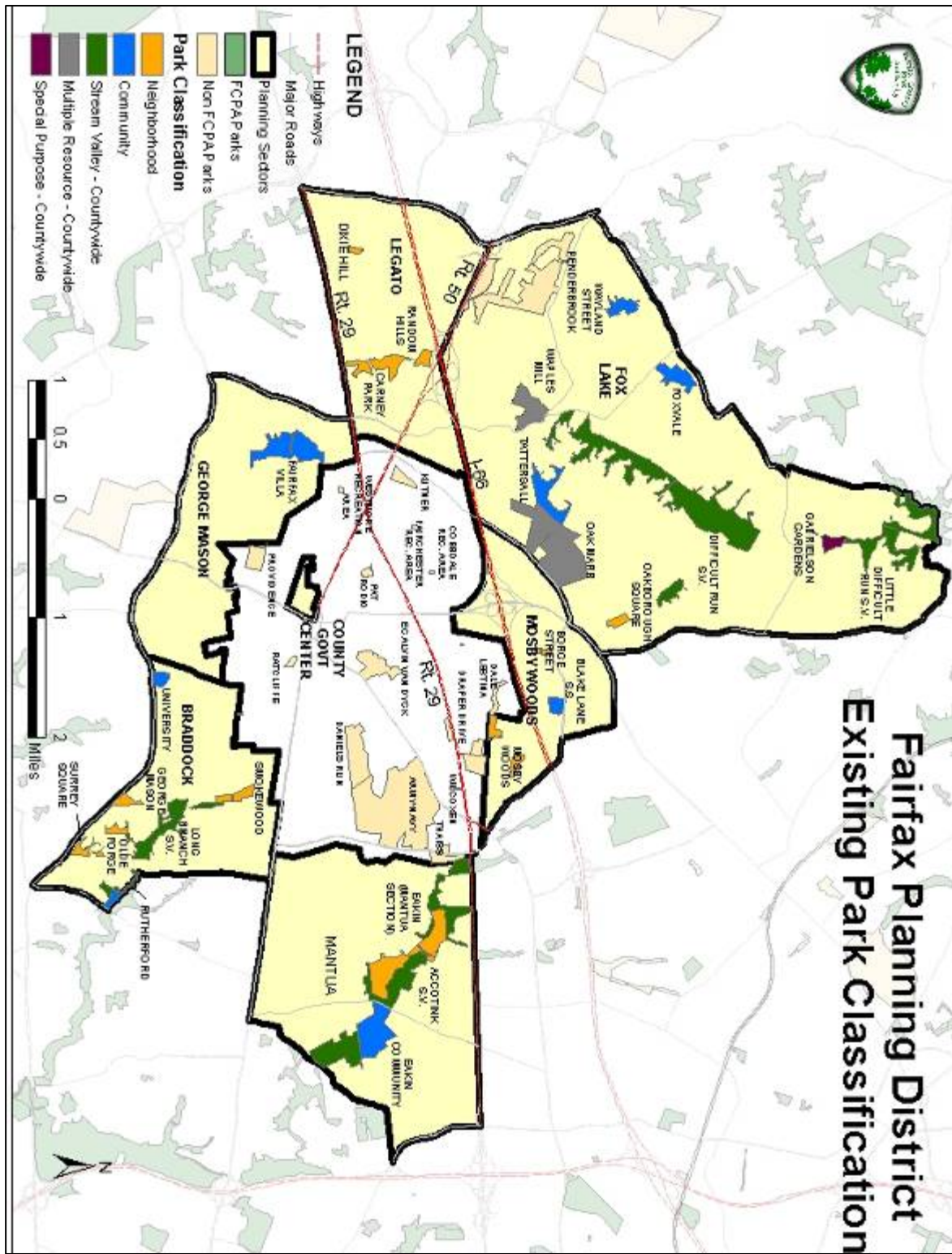


Table 3: Park Facilities provided by Park Authority

| PARK NAME | Restrooms | GOLF | Mini Golf | TRAILS | PICNIC SHELTERS Picnic Tables | PLAYGROUNDS | RECTANGLE FIELDS | DIAMOND FIELDS | Sand Volleyball Courts | TENNIS | MULTI-USE COURTS | RECenter | Garden Plots | HISTORIC FEATURE | WATER ACTIVITIES | Nature Center | Dog Park | SPECIALTY FEATURES |
|------------------------------------|-----------|------|-----------|--------|----------------------------------|-------------|------------------|----------------|------------------------|--------|------------------|----------|--------------|------------------|------------------|---------------|----------|--------------------|
| ACCOTINK STREAM VALLEY | | | | ● | | | | | | | | | | ● | | | | |
| BLAKE LANE SCHOOL SITE | | | | ● | | P | ● | | | P | P | | | ● | | | ● | |
| BORGE STREET | | | | ● | | ● | | | | | ● | | | | | | | |
| CARNEY PARK | | | | ● | | ● | | | | ● | ● | | | | | | | |
| DIFFICULT RUN STREAM VALLEY | | | | ● | | | | | | | | | | ● | | | | |
| DIXIE HILL | | | | | ● | ● | ● | | | | ● | | | | | | | |
| EAKIN (MANTUA SECTION) | | | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | | | | | | | | |
| EAKIN COMMUNITY | | | | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | P | | ● | ● | | P | | P |
| FAIRFAX VILLA | | | | ● | | | | | | | | | | ● | | | | |
| FOXVALE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| GABRIELSON GARDENS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| GEORGE MASON | | | | ● | | | | | | | | | ● | ● | | | | |
| LITTLE DIFFICULT RUN STREAM VALLEY | | | | ● | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| LONG BRANCH STREAM VALLEY | | | | ● | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| MOSBY WOODS | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OAK MARR | ● | ● | ● | ● | ● | | ● | | | | | ● | | ● | | | | |
| OAKBOROUGH SQUARE | | | | ● | | ● | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| OLDE FORGE | | | | P | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RANDOM HILLS | | | | ● | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| RUTHERFORD | | | | ● | ● | ● | | ● | | ● | ● | | | | | | | |
| SMOKEWOOD | | | | ● | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| SURREY SQUARE | | | | ● | | ● | | | | | ● | | | | | | | |
| TATTERSALL | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ● | | | | |
| UNIVERSITY | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| VILLA D'ESTE | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WAPLES MILL | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| WAYLAND STREET | | | | ● | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Facilities Exist ●
Facilities Planned P

The majority of the parks in the Fairfax District, both county and regional, protect numerous natural and cultural resources. Examples of this are the Park Authority's Accotink Stream Valley and Fairfax Villa Parks. The northern and eastern parts of the District have stream valleys that are traversed by [The Cross County Trail](#). There are a handful of neighborhood parks scattered throughout the District. With the exception of the parks along [The Cross County Trail](#), there is a lack of interconnecting trails and habitat corridors between the parks and some of the communities they serve. In addition to a lack of park connectivity access is limited by the difficulty of crossing major, multi-lane, busy roads.

Additional recreational facilities are provided at County public school sites, which are often maintained by the Park Authority. [Patriot Park](#), [Burke Lake Park](#), [E. C. Lawrence Park](#), and [Nottoway Park](#) which are outside the District,

all provide a range of facilities and resources for District residents. Fairfax District parks, such as [Oak Marr](#) with its [RECenter](#), also serve residents outside the District. The City of Fairfax also provides recreation facilities at parks and schools, including playgrounds, picnic areas, basketball courts, and athletic fields. Other publicly accessible facilities exist at [George Mason University](#) that provides playing fields and aquatic facilities for public use.

Summary of Major Parks and Facilities

Park Authority Parks and Facilities

The stream valley parks in the Fairfax District provide both significant resource protection and recreational amenities.

[The Cross County Trail](#) is over 40 miles long and connects the northern and southern boundaries of Fairfax County. It is the primary north-south trail corridor in the County. [The Cross County Trail](#) runs south through the Difficult Run Stream Valley Park, passing through Little Difficult Run, [Oak Marr](#), Eakin Mantua, [Eakin Community Park](#) and exits the planning district through the Accotink Stream Valley Park

[Eakin Community Park](#) was the first park acquired by the Park Authority. It provides trails, picnic area, open play area, playgrounds, tennis courts, and two diamond fields.

[Fairfax Villa](#) is a 58-acre wooded park providing a unique example of nearly-intact native, upland oak-hickory forest. Present within the park is a significant Native American mining site estimated to have been in operation 5,000 years ago. The park also contains a portion of the Civil War era Kamp Washington and Manassas Gap Railroad. The park has natural surface trails and interpretive features.

[Oak Marr District Park](#), [Golf Complex](#), and [RECenter](#) provide a wide variety of indoor and outdoor recreational facilities. It provides two unlighted rectangle fields, an open play area, picnic tables, an historic site, and multiuse trails. The [Oak Marr Golf Complex](#) adjoins the RECenter and provides a 9-hole golf course, an 18-hole mini golf course, a driving range, and golf lessons. The Oak Marr RECenter has a heated Olympic-sized indoor pool with spa, beach, and wading area, and a diving complex as well as two racquetball courts, one with walleyball capacity, [Fitness Center](#), sauna, showers, and locker rooms. It also provides extensive [programs and camps](#). The District Park also has extensive forest containing numerous foot trails and is imperiled by deer overpopulation.

Non-Park Authority Parks and Facilities

The [City of Fairfax](#) maintains 21 parks and school sites in the [Fairfax Planning District](#) that provide recreation and natural resource facilities. These parks are mostly neighborhood parks with playgrounds, playing fields, courts, gymnasiums, fitness centers, urban parks, and trails. The [Penderbrook](#) community operates its own private golf course, which has 150 acres of open space. Their facilities include a clubhouse, swimming, tennis, basketball, fitness center. The Army Navy County Club maintains their private [Inner Nine Golf Course \(with 27 holes\)](#) in the City of Fairfax. The [Jewish Community Center of Fairfax](#) also maintains a fitness center with aquatics, and Gym. Park facilities in the Fairfax Planning District are listed in Table 3.

[George Mason University](#) provides a variety of indoor fitness and recreation facilities that are open to the public. These include the [Recreation Sports Complex](#) (Field House) and [Aquatic & Fitness Center](#). The [Recreation Sports Complex](#) provides a weight room, a 200-meter track, six basketball courts, seven tennis courts, seven volleyball courts, eight handball/racquetball courts, a batting cage, golf and archery nets, fencing lanes, locker rooms, and saunas. It has a 400-meter outdoor track, soccer field, baseball diamond, and other athletic fields. [Summer sports camps](#) are provided. The George Mason University [Aquatic & Fitness Center](#) provides a 50-Meter Olympic pool, diving area, recreational pool, spa, fitness gallery, four classrooms, whirlpool, co-ed sauna with men's and women's shower/locker rooms, plus family changing area.

Summary of Natural Resources

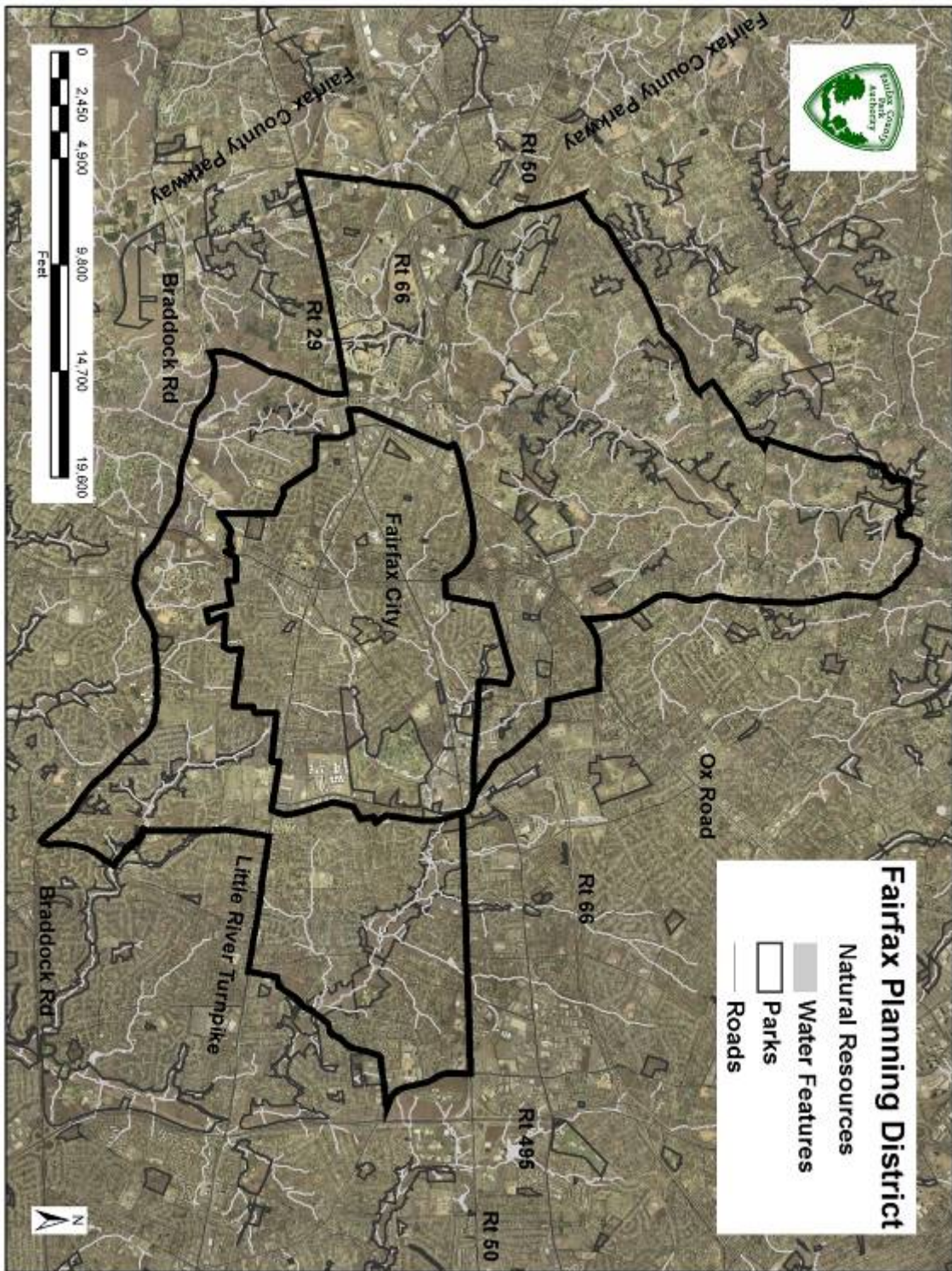
The natural areas in the District are a mixture of narrow swaths of low-lying lands in stream valley corridors and isolated, and often developed, uplands. The larger parks, including Oak Marr District Park, the Random Hills-Carney park complex and Fairfax Villa Park are isolated and contain some high-quality resources. These resources are under stress due to human activity, invasive species and deer herbivory. The other large parks are in stream valleys, which contain fairly healthy wetlands and habitat that supports uncommon plant and animal species. These parks and several adjacent private parcels constitute the best wildlife habitat and stream buffering in the District. The aerial photo in Map 3 illustrates parkland in a landscape context of land use and waterbodies.

There are many significant natural resources in the District. Highlights include the stream corridors buffered by Accotink Creek Stream Valley Park and Difficult Run Stream Valley Park. These corridors provide pathways for visitors and wildlife alike to travel throughout large portions of the County.

Fairfax Villa Park is a good example of a natural area that has mature oak-hickory forest, which is the dominant climax forest community type in this area. The relatively undisturbed soils and low levels of invasive plant cover are a sign of a healthy forest that is likely to remain so if managed properly.

There has not been coordinated assessment, research and documentation of natural resources on public and private properties in the planning district. None of the Fairfax parks have natural resource inventories, except the Fairfax Villa Park.

Map 3: Aerial Photo of Fairfax Planning District with Streams



Cultural Resources

The Fairfax Planning District does not contain any Historic Overlay Districts, but does contain many important cultural resources. The most important of these are Civil War features, including the Manassas Gap Railroad (unfinished railroad started in 1852, and never completed). In addition, this District includes a number of 18th and 19th century mills, important for understanding early industry, manufacturing of building materials and food products, as well as many Native American sites. These Native American sites exist in abundance in the undeveloped portions of our park lands. Sites types include Native American campsites, hunting stations and stone quarries. The Native Americans used outcrops of quartz and cobbles available in streams for the manufacture of many types of tools, including spears, knives, arrow points, scrapers, axes and awls. Also located in the Fairfax District are outcrops of high quality steatite (soapstone) used to create bowls, used prior to the advent of ceramics, as well as ceremonial items. The District contains Native American sites that date from the earliest known occupations in the county, some 12,000 years ago up to European contact.

Park Access & Connectivity

Some of the larger community and district parks in Fairfax are located along major roads, which make them accessible by automobile. Bike and pedestrian access is difficult because the roads and heavy traffic can present barriers and there is a lack of interconnecting trails in some cases.

Many of the neighborhood and stream valley parks are accessible by pedestrians from adjacent communities because at the time the communities were developed the parks were embedded within them. They are not readily accessible from major roads and streets. While serving immediate communities it has often become difficult for the larger community to use. Fairfax Villa, both the park and the community, are an example. Sometimes there are sidewalks or trails, but often informal paths from yards lead into the parks, which are not usually connected to the comprehensive countywide trail system.

The Cross County Trail is a major trail in the Fairfax Planning District that crosses the Fairfax Planning District along the Accotink Creek, Difficult Run, and Little Difficult Run Stream Valley Parks. A major weakness in the trail system in this area is the lack of interconnection between the parks or the greater communities they serve. This is mostly due to patchwork development, and major roadways that stand in the way of potential trail connections.

Anticipated Land Use and Demographic Changes

The population of the Fairfax Planning District in 2005 was 63,334. The population projection for 2015 is 73,602, making Fairfax one of the fastest growing planning districts in the County, as shown in Table 4. Housing units are projected to increase with an additional 4,152 units in the same timeframe. Major employers in the Fairfax Planning District include George Mason University, Fairfax County Government, and the City of Fairfax. It is anticipated that commercial and office development in this district will continue at a moderate rate. Most significant land use changes will likely occur through redevelopment in areas developed prior to 1985.

Without increases in stormwater management, control of human activities, white-tailed deer population, and non-native invasive species, the quality of preserved parkland is threatened.

Table 4: Growth Rates for Fairfax Planning District

| Fairfax Planning District | | | |
|---------------------------|---------|----------------|---------|
| | Fairfax | Fairfax County | Rank |
| Total Population | | | |
| 2005 | 63,344 | 1,041,242 | 8 of 14 |
| Forecast 2015 | 73,602 | 1,179,258 | 6 of 14 |
| Growth Rate 1980-2005 | 96% | 74% | 4 of 14 |
| Growth Rate 2005-2015 | 16% | 13% | 2 of 14 |
| Housing Units | | | |
| 2005 | 24,197 | 384,683 | 7 of 14 |
| Forecast 2015 | 28,349 | 436,436 | 6 of 14 |
| Growth Rate 1980-2005 | 104% | 78% | 6 of 14 |
| Growth Rate 2005-2015 | 17% | 13% | 2 of 14 |