

Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NOVA Parks)

Program Description

The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NOVA Parks) was founded in 1959 under the Virginia Park Authorities Act. Currently there are six jurisdictional members: the counties of Arlington, Fairfax and Loudoun and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church. NOVA Parks enhances the communities of Northern Virginia and enriches the lives of their citizens through the conservation of regional natural and cultural resources. It provides diverse regional recreational and educational opportunities and fosters an understanding of the relationships between people and their environment. Regional parks supplement local facilities and are distinguished from county and local parks in that they are designed to appeal to and serve the broad based population of the entire Northern Virginia region, or may be of a size or scope that a single jurisdiction could not undertake alone. The Washington and Old Dominion (W&OD) Railroad Regional Park, which extends from Alexandria through Arlington, Falls Church, Fairfax and Loudoun, is just one example of many NOVA Parks facilities that have region wide characteristics.

NOVA Parks now owns, leases, and holds easements on 12,918 acres of land, of which 8,591 acres are in Fairfax County. The Regional Park system serves a population of 2 million people. Parklands within the system include: Aldie Mill, Battle of Upperville/Goose Creek Bridge, Carlyle House, Mount Defiance, Mount Zion, and Tinner Hill Historic Parks, Meadowlark Botanical Gardens, the W&OD Trail (Washington and Old Dominion Railroad Regional Park), Algonkian, Ball's Bluff Battlefield, Beaverdam Reservoir, Blue Ridge, Brambleton, Bull Run, Bull Run Marina, Cameron Run, Fountainhead, Gateway, Gilbert's Corner, Hemlock Overlook, Occoquan, Pohick Bay, Potomac Overlook, Red Rock, Sandy Run, Seneca, Springdale, Temple Hall Farm, Upton Hill, and White's Ford Regional Parks, the Upper Potomac properties, the Rust Sanctuary and Webb Sanctuary.

In its conservation role, NOVA Parks is involved in implementing portions of the Environmental Quality Corridors concept, which defines an open space land system designated for long term protection in the County. In this role, NOVA Parks places emphasis on acquisition of the shoreline properties along the Potomac, Bull Run and Occoquan Rivers, while the Fairfax County Park Authority (FCPA) concentrates on acquiring land along the County's interior stream valleys.

Program Initiatives

From FY 2016 through FY 2020, NOVA Parks received \$25,247,202 in support from its regional membership jurisdictions, plus an additional \$42,465,577 in grants, donations, bonds, and other capital revenue, representing an actual capital program level of \$67,712,779. Accomplishments during these years include, as examples: construction of a conservatory at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens; acquisition of the last privately owned land inside Pohick Bay Regional Park; groundbreaking for the dual pedestrian and cyclist trails on the W&OD in Falls Church; renovation of the Nature Center at Potomac Overlook Regional Park; planning for the new Beaverdam Reservoir Park and the Cameron Run Winter Village; construction of the Jean R. Packard Center and replacement of the seawall at Occoquan Regional Park; improvements to rowing facilities at Sandy Run; acquisition of a shoreline inholding at Pohick Bay Regional Park; acquisition of 150 acres for Springdale Regional Park, the Goose Creek Bridge, and additional land at Gilbert's Corner; improvements to the Bull Run Festival of Lights; linkage of Gateway Park and local trails with the W&OD Trail; park entrance renovations at Meadowlark Botanical Gardens; upgrades to the campgrounds at Bull Run Regional Park; various trail improvements on the Washington & Old Dominion Railroad Regional Park; and ongoing renovations and upgrades to existing roads, parking, and restroom facilities.

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A portion of the capital improvement program includes the repair and renovation of existing and aging facilities, such as roof replacements, road repairs, replacement of mechanical systems, and similar work to preserve and repair existing facilities. Additional elements of the CIP include land acquisition, Americans with Disabilities Act improvements, energy improvements, expansion of existing facilities, and new features to meet the needs of the region.

Funds from Fairfax County to support NOVA Parks' capital improvement program have historically been supported by General Obligation Bonds. NOVA Parks' Capital Fund revenues consist primarily of capital appropriations received from the six-member jurisdictions. Fairfax County's contribution for FY 2022 is proposed at \$3.0 million. Funds for FY 2023 and beyond have not been formally allocated to specific projects and the following schedule lists only projects planned for FY 2022.

Current Project Descriptions

1. **ADA Improvements (Region-wide):** \$400,000 for accessibility improvements throughout the park system.
2. **Aldie Mill Historic Park (Loudoun County):** \$20,000 for millrace repair.
3. **Algonkian Regional Park (Loudoun County):** \$165,000 for improvements and renovations to Volcano Island Waterpark, Woodlands building, and cottages.
4. **Bull Run Regional Park (Fairfax County):** \$305,000 for Atlantis Waterpark renovations, seasonal event facility improvements, and campground upgrade.
5. **Cameron Run Regional Park (City of Alexandria):** \$75,000 for seasonal event facility enhancement.
6. **Carlyle House Historic Park (City of Alexandria):** \$100,000 for building repair and renovation.
7. **Cattail Improvements (Loudoun County):** \$150,000 to begin new park entrance, parking improvements, trail development, and miscellaneous upon acquisition of new park site.
8. **Fountainhead Regional Park (Fairfax County):** \$200,000 for marina renovations and mountain bike improvements.
9. **Golf Course Improvements (Region-wide):** \$150,000 for capital improvements at all NOVA Parks golf courses.
10. **Headquarters (Fairfax County):** \$110,000 for automated systems and building renovations.
11. **Hemlock Overlook Regional Park (Fairfax County):** \$50,000 for facility renovations.
12. **Land Acquisition (Region-wide):** \$400,000 for land and easement purchases, to be supplemented by grant funds.
13. **Meadowlark Botanical Gardens (Fairfax County):** \$245,000 for Atrium renovations, garden development, hoop houses, and seasonal event facility improvements.

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14. **Miscellaneous Improvements (Region-wide):** \$430,000 for energy projects, tree plantings, facility improvements, interpretive and signage improvements, and other capital maintenance not specifically assigned to a particular public use facility or park location.
15. **Occoquan Regional Park (Fairfax County):** \$100,000 for play features and retaining walls.
16. **Park Development Support and Planning (Region-wide):** \$658,000 for project management, development, planning, and strategic initiatives.
17. **Pohick Bay Regional Park (Fairfax County):** \$150,000 for water main extension, campground comfort station improvements, and master plan study.
18. **Roads and Parking (Region-wide):** \$293,000 for improving and renovating roadways and parking areas throughout the park system.
19. **Temple Hall Farm Regional Park (Loudoun County):** \$35,000 for seasonal event facility improvements.
20. **Upton Hill Regional Park (Fairfax and Arlington Counties):** \$100,000 for miniature golf course renovation.
21. **Vehicles and Equipment (Region-wide):** \$900,000 for capital equipment at all parks, central maintenance and headquarters.
22. **Waterpark Capital Maintenance (Region-wide):** \$300,000 for renovations and repairs at all NOVA Parks waterparks.
23. **W&OD Railroad Regional Park (Fairfax, Arlington, Loudoun Counties, Cities of Fairfax and Falls Church):** \$300,000 for various trail enhancements and repairs, to be supplemented by grant funds.

Project Cost Summaries

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(\$000's)

| Project Number | Project Title | Source of Funds | Budgeted or Expended Through FY 2021 | | | | | | Total FY 2022 - FY 2026 | Total FY 2027 - FY 2031 | Total Project Estimate |
|----------------|--|-----------------|--------------------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|-------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|
| | | | | FY 2022 | FY 2023 | FY 2024 | FY 2025 | FY 2026 | | | |
| 1 | ADA Improvements | B | C | \$400 | | | | | \$400 | | \$400 |
| 2 | Aldie Mill Historic Park (Loudoun County) | B | C | \$20 | | | | | \$20 | | \$20 |
| 3 | Algonkian Regional Park (Loudoun County) | B | C | \$165 | | | | | \$165 | | \$165 |
| 4 | Bull Run Regional Park (Fairfax County) | B | C | \$305 | | | | | \$305 | | \$305 |
| 5 | Cameron Run Reg. Park (City of Alexandria) | B | C | \$75 | | | | | \$75 | | \$75 |
| 6 | Carlyle House Historic Park (City of Alexandria) | B | C | \$100 | | | | | \$100 | | \$100 |
| 7 | Cattail Improvements (Loudoun County) | B | C | \$150 | | | | | \$150 | | \$150 |
| 8 | Fountainhead Regional Park (Fairfax County) | B | C | \$200 | | | | | \$200 | | \$200 |
| 9 | Golf Course Improvements | B | C | \$150 | | | | | \$150 | | \$150 |
| 10 | Headquarters (Fairfax County) | B | C | \$110 | | | | | \$110 | | \$110 |
| 11 | Hemlock Overlook Reg. Park (Fairfax County) | B | C | \$50 | | | | | \$50 | | \$50 |
| 12 | Land Acquisition | B | C | \$400 | | | | | \$400 | | \$400 |
| 13 | Meadowlark Botanical Gardens (Fairfax County) | B | C | \$245 | | | | | \$245 | | \$245 |
| 14 | Miscellaneous Improvements | B | C | \$430 | | | | | \$430 | | \$430 |
| 15 | Occoquan Regional Park (Fairfax County) | B | C | \$100 | | | | | \$100 | | \$100 |

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Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority

(\$000's)

| Project Title Project Number | Source of Funds | Budgeted or Expended Through FY 2021 | | | | | | Total FY 2022 - FY 2026 | Total FY 2027 - FY 2031 | Total Project Estimate |
|---|-----------------------|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|
| | | | FY 2022 | FY 2023 | FY 2024 | FY 2025 | FY 2026 | | | |
| 16 Park Development Support and Planning | B | C | \$658 | | | | | | \$658 | \$658 |
| 17 Pohick Bay Regional Park (Fairfax County) | B | C | \$150 | | | | | | \$150 | \$150 |
| 18 Roads and Parking | B | C | \$293 | | | | | | \$293 | \$293 |
| 19 Temple Hall Farm Reg. Park (Loudoun County) | B | C | \$35 | | | | | | \$35 | \$35 |
| 20 Upton Hill Regional Park (Fairfax and Arlington) | B | C | \$100 | | | | | | \$100 | \$100 |
| 21 Vehicles and Equipment | B | C | \$900 | | | | | | \$900 | \$900 |
| 22 Waterpark Maintenance | B | C | \$300 | | | | | | \$300 | \$300 |
| 23 W&OD Railroad Regional Park | B | C | \$300 | | | | | | \$300 | \$300 |
| TOTAL PROJECT COST | | | \$5,636 | \$5,477 | \$5,669 | \$5,869 | \$5,869 | | \$28,520 | \$28,520 |
| TOTAL FAIRFAX COUNTY | | | \$3,000 | \$3,095 | \$3,151 | \$3,246 | \$3,343 | | \$15,835 | \$15,835 |

Notes: Numbers in bold italics represent funded amounts. A "C" in the 'Budgeted or Expended' column denotes a continuing project.

Key: Source of Funds

| | |
|---|--------------|
| B | Bonds |
| G | General Fund |
| S | State |
| F | Federal |
| X | Other |
| U | Undetermined |