

5. PARKS AND ECOLOGICAL RESOURCES

Board of Supervisors Environmental Vision:

“Ecological resources that include the soil, water, air, plants, animals, ecosystems and the services they provide are considered natural capital and green infrastructure. The public, or ecosystem, services provided by this green infrastructure are often more cost-effective than the engineered alternatives, and thus are managed as any other infrastructure or capital asset through deliberate inventory, planning, maintenance, enhancement, and restoration to ensure healthy, high functioning, and resilient ecosystems and environment. Maintaining healthy, natural ecosystems is a priority of Fairfax County.”¹

[The Water chapter will include an overall introduction, followed by three superheadings, to accommodate the three distinct aspects of water. Each superheading will follow the format below, kind of like having three chapters in one.]

INTRODUCTION

For this year, this introduction section will simply be a general description of the topic specific to Fairfax County and how it is related to the Board’s associated Environmental Vision (should your chapter be paired with a subject there). If there are important high level “why’s” or broad context for the recommendations you’ll be giving at the end, include them here.

The INTRODUCTION is where to place A FEW of the most critical facts the Board should know. For example, how many acres of parks, how many miles of streams, etc. Put yourself in the Supervisors’ position: What facts must be known to begin any serious discussion. The 2019 full report, which is online, might be a helpful reference if a more extensive introduction to the topic is needed.

Due to the length of each chapter (5 pages or less would be ideal, but by no means more than 10 pages), this section won’t be able to be long enough to get very deep).

CURRENT STATUS CONCERNS

It’s safe to say Fairfax County faces challenges in just about every environmental topic. Here, you should mention the most important concerns the Board should keep in mind. For example, our parks are being damaged by invasive species, and an overpopulation of deer is damaging the understory. Many of these concerns will lead to one or more recommendations. However, don’t just be negative: also say where things are going well, giving credit where credit is due!

[SUBHEADINGS ARE ALLOWED HERE]

¹ 2017 Fairfax County Environmental Vision, Section 2 E “Parks and Ecological Resources”
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/environment/sites/environment/files/assets/documents/pdf/environmental-vision-2017.pdf#page=30>

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Fund parks [SUGGESTED CRITICAL] The CRITICAL tag will be decided by the full Council.

Recommendation: 9PER-2021.1 | Status: New this year

To add emphasis for key points, I would like to see a template for a flyout note. For example, “Unless Fairfax corrects this problem, we will be in violation ...”

Justification and Background:

Each recommendation must clearly state an action that should be taken; provide the argument for taking that action; and describe what will satisfy that recommendation. Keep in mind, EQAC makes recommendations to the Board, not directly to county staff. Thus, the correct phrasing for some recommendation might be, “*The Board should ask County staff to take this action,*” or “*The Board should enact this regulation.*”

2. Additional recommendations follow in the same format

Recommendation: 9PER-2018.4 | Age: 3 years | Status: Making progress

Justification and Background:

Each recommendation will be assigned a unique “Recommendation ID”. The ID format is chapter number + capital first letter(s) of chapter name + year it was first recommended + its number from that year).

But, for this “Justification” section, write out your support argument. If there are no recommendations, the section should remain, but with “No recommendations.” as the content below the header.

[As a template, we also need to give examples of photos/illustrations and tables for authors to copy and insert. Each should be in a format that converts to accessible output. For example, every photo should have alternate text.]