



FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY

M E M O R A N D U M

TO: Chairman and Members
Park Authority Board

VIA: Jai Cole, Executive Director

FROM: Mike Peter, Division Director
Business Administration Division

DATE: September 11, 2024

Agenda

**Budget Committee
(Committee of the Whole)
Wednesday, September 11, 2024 – 5:45 pm
Boardroom, Herrity Building
Chairman: Ken Quincy
Vice Chair: Tim Hackman**

1. FY 2026 Non-Recommended General Fund Budget Reductions (with presentation) – Information
2. FY 2026 Budget Submission, Fund 1001, General Fund (with presentation) – Information
3. Public Comment on FY 2026 Budget



If accommodations and/or alternative formats are needed, please call (703) 324-8563. TTY (703) 803-3354

INFORMATION

FY 2026 Non-Recommended General Fund Budget Reductions

BACKGROUND

The Park Authority has fiduciary responsibility over the Park Revenue & Operating Fund and the Park Improvements Fund, while the County has fiduciary responsibility over the General Fund. Activities supported by the General Fund include general access to parks and park grounds, lakefront parks, natural, cultural and horticultural sites, stewardship education programs, maintenance of parks, management of the community concert series, County archeological functions, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliance activities, community-based leisure classes and special events, trips and tours, agency wide management, planning, and administrative support, general park planning and support of the County Comprehensive Plan, and project management support for capital projects.

In order to provide the County Executive and the Board with options to balance required expenditure increases against the impact on taxpayers, Department of Management and Budget are once again asking all General Fund and General Fund supported agencies to develop a list of reduction options. Given that the reductions taken during the FY 2025 budget process focused on efficiencies and flexibility available within agency budgets, DMB expects that the options developed this year will involve harder choices that may impact service delivery and filled positions. Agencies were asked to provide reductions totaling 10 percent of their budgets, which will allow DMB to weigh the feasibility of each option and its impact on County services as the FY 2026 budget picture develops. The total budget reduction goal for the Park Authority is \$3,561,100.

After public input, Board action on endorsing a final package of non-recommended budget reductions will be requested at the September 25, 2024 meeting.

NON-RECOMMENDED BUDGET REDUCTIONS

Items	Reduction
Summer Entertainment Series Reduction	\$109,703
Reduce Forestry Contract Services	\$200,000
Reduce Athletic Field Mowing	\$240,823
Reduce Open space Mowing	\$129,258
Reduce Cleaning of Port-A-Johns	\$48,960
Reduce Athletic Court Maintenance and Renovations	\$250,000
Reduce Trail Maintenance Funding	\$250,000
Reduce General Park and Facility Maintenance	\$350,000
Increase Foundation Funding	\$300,000

Board Agenda Item
September 11, 2024

WPFO/Eliminate Ecologist 1	\$65,000
Eliminate Historic Resource Specialist II	\$82,826
Close one nature center and one historic site (Encumbered)	\$644,000
Close Scott's Run Nature Preserve Parking Lots	\$152,548
Remove Part-time Photographic Specialist	\$26,988
Increase WPFO in Development division	\$714,000

Summer Entertainment Series Reduction: \$109,703

- Reduce Summer Entertainment Series to maximum of 8 shows per district
- Reduce from 120 to 73 shows (does not include the Children's series)
- With reduction, each series would receive no more than \$2,000 per show
- Additional reductions proposed result in decreased staffing hours and lower print budget
- Any future contract increases in Sound/AV (which are anticipated annually) would require additional decreases in the series or additional funding

Reduce Forestry Contract Services: \$200,000

- Current Budget: \$1,273,000
- BOS added \$890,000 for FY 2025
- In total, the Park Operations Forestry remediates as many as 1,900 trees annually, meeting only the high priority cases.
- This would impact the ability to address high risk/high priority trees threatening life and property.
- If weather conditions require emergency responses, this reduction will impact maintenance funding or require 3rd quarter or carry-over funding

Reduce Athletic Field Mowing from 2x/week to 1x/week: \$240,823

- FY24 Actual: \$481,646
- BOS added \$345,000 for FY 2025 for Athletic Field maintenance
- This will require a reduction in frequency of mowing for over 200 athletic fields.
- This will impact the playability and quality of fields for users and visitors and would deviate from maintenance standards.
- This would increase and magnify the already existing deferred maintenance throughout parks

Reduce Park Open Space Mowing: \$129,258

- FY24 Actual: \$617,474
- BOS added \$120,000 for FY 2025
- Reclassify multiple locations to reduce mowing
- In FY24, 216 calls and emails related to mowing were received.

Board Agenda Item
September 11, 2024

- This would increase and magnify the already existing deferred maintenance throughout parks.

Reduce Cleaning Port-A-Johns to Pre-Covid Standards: \$48,960

- FY24 Actual: \$175,000 (Cleaning and Rental)
- Reduction in cleaning services to pre-Covid standards – 2x/week.
- This would be a reduction in services available for port-a-johns throughout the parks and athletic fields

Reduce Athletic Court Maintenance and Renovations by 51%: \$250,000

- Current Budget: \$490,000
- BOS added \$200,000 for FY 2025
- Definition: Pickleball, Tennis, Futsal, Basketball
- Five (5) athletic courts are planned to be renovated in FY25. This reduction will take us back to renovating approx. two (2) courts per year.
- The life expectancy of an athletic court is 10 years with regular maintenance.
- The Park Authority maintains 412 athletic courts. The public can expect to see court closings start to occur.

Reduce Trail Maintenance Funding by 50%: \$250,000

- Current Budget: \$500,000
- BOS added \$150,000 for FY 2025
- Trail maintenance needs for more than 300 miles of trails
- Trails were identified by the community as a top priority (FCPA Needs Assessment.)
- This would impact trail safety and usability for trail users and may require some trail closures.
- Increase and magnify the existing deferred maintenance throughout parks.

Reduce General Park and Facility Maintenance Funding by 37%: \$350,000

- Current Budget: \$937,000
- BOS added \$395,000 for FY 2025
- This would increase deferred maintenance to infrastructure such as dugouts, picnic tables/areas, benches, shelters, grills, playgrounds, signage, dog parks, roads and parking lots, and stabilization of new properties.
- This reduction will magnify the already existing deferred maintenance throughout the park system.

Increase Foundation Funding: \$300,000

- Raise an additional \$300K to cover expenses associated with operating the Foundation

Board Agenda Item
September 11, 2024

- Will require the Foundation to raise additional funds and/or attach a 20% admin fee.
- Those funds (equaling \$300k) will be reinvested back to the Park Authority
- Impacts include reduction in donation amounts for programs
 - Example: SES current fundraising goal \$158,640 would now require fundraising goal of \$190,368

WPFO/Eliminate Ecologist I Position in Natural Resources: \$65,000

- Eliminate E-Status Ecologist I position within the IMA program unit
- Explore funding this through the Stormwater Funds
- The IMA is one of the County's most important programs for addressing invasives.
- The current program includes 62 parks, with 6000 volunteers contributing nearly 20,000 hours of service. Nearly 760 acres have been treated for invasive vegetation.
- Impact:
 - Lack of oversight, QC due diligence for herbicide application
 - Difficult to engage in early detection rapid response to stop infestation
 - Curtailed ability to engage additional volunteers to expand the IMA program
 - Reduced scale and effectiveness of countywide invasive management

Eliminate Historic Resource Specialist II in Heritage Resources: \$82,826

- Eliminate vacant Historic Resource Specialist II in Heritage Conservation
- Monitor 130 historic sites
- Impact:
 - Limit future growth of property assessment needed for Heritage Resources documentation for the Resident Curator Program

Close One Nature Center and One Historic Site: \$644,000

- Significant Reduction in Force:
 - General Fund: 6 Merit and 8 LTE
- Impact engagements with over 100,000 visitors annually, mostly children.
- Eliminate popular field trips for thousands of public, private, and home school students.
- Impacts FCPA's ability to deliver on our mission.
 - The Park Authority Mission is to enrich quality of life for all members of the community through an enduring park system that provides a healthy environment, preserves natural and cultural heritage, offers inspiring recreational experiences, and promotes healthy lifestyles.

Close Scotts Run Nature Preserve Parking Lots: \$152,548

- Reduction in Force:
 - General Fund: 3 LTE

Board Agenda Item
September 11, 2024

- The parking lot would be gated and locked. Access would be limited to residents that can walk to the park.
- Eliminate police and security presence at the park.
- Reduced frequency of FCPA personnel on site could impact globally-significant ecological resources throughout the park.

Remove Part-Time Photographic Specialist: \$26,988

- Reduction in Force
 - 1 Non-Merit, SYE
- Responsibility to be absorbed by merit Photographer and Marketing/Communications team via mobile devices, potentially compromising photo quality, and ultimately the FCPA brand standard, for editorial and media use

Charge Additional Development Division Salaries to Bond \$714,000

- Additional staff will be charged to the Bond
- This will increase Project Management Expenses for bond projects from approx. \$1M to \$1.7M per year and the agency will lose flexibility in mitigating WPFO affects on project budgets
- This will decrease the amount of Bond available for design and construction of projects.
- For the 2026 Bond \$10.6M of the \$180M will go to Project Management Expenses (up from \$6M).

FISCAL IMPACT:

The County has asked for options that would total 10% of the current Park Authority General Fund Budget. The options presented to the Park Authority Board total \$3,564,106, meeting the required goal.

STAFF:

Jai Cole, Executive Director
Sara Baldwin, Deputy Director/COO
Aimee L. Vosper, Deputy Director/CBD
Michael Peter, Director, Administration Division
Katie Miga, Business Office Manager
Kelly Sackett, Strategic Business and Financial Analyst
Tonya Mills, Senior Fiscal Administrator
Nicole Varnes, Senior Budget Analyst

INFORMATION ITEM

FY 2026 Budget Submission, Fund 1001, General Fund

BACKGROUND:

Similar to the FY 2025 budget, the outlook for FY 2026 includes modest revenue growth, while employee compensation requirements and operating expenses continue to increase. Given the current budget forecast, new funding requests for General Fund or General Fund supported agencies must fall into one of the following categories 1) new facilities; 2) contract rate increases; and/or 3) critical County operations.

These additional items are included as addenda to the current baseline budget request. The current FY 2026 General Fund Forecasted Budget is \$36,331,623. Personnel Services are \$32,425,616; Operating Expenditures are \$7,532,168; \$250,000 in Capital Equipment; and Recovered Costs are (\$3,876,161). This is before the inclusion of the package of non-recommended budget reductions totaling 10% of our baseline budget.

Other Possible Adjustments:

- The Department of Management and Budget has not given guidelines for Compensation increases for FY 2026 Budget. Based on historical figures, the increase in personnel expenses would be approximately \$319,000 for every one percent increase.

After public input, Board action on endorsing a final package of non-recommended budget reductions will be requested at the September 25, 2024 meeting.

BUDGET REQUESTS

Throughout the public PAB budget process, the Board has considered two specific requests, totaling \$4,455,604.

Zero Waste Trash Removal and Recycling: \$2,861,072

The Park Authority is committed to complying with the applicable ordinance and moving forward with the Zero Waste Plan. The additional funding will allow FCPA to expand our trash and recycling services beyond phase one. Funding will include the required capital investment and the staff needed to support full implementation. Based on available funding, the next phases may be implemented/funded over two fiscal years.

OBI Funding – Maintenance, Stabilization and Staffing: \$1,594,532

As part of our efforts to assess the operating impact of new parks, land acquisitions, and major renovations, Park Authority staff have continued these efforts and identified additional impacts for new areas acquired in FY24. All new and majorly renovated properties require additional maintenance, utility, and operating costs that are not in the current budget. Part of the budget request includes new positions – 8 Merit, 2 Non-Merit, and 3 Temporary.

Board Agenda Item
September 11, 2024

To safely maintain park property and prevent deferred maintenance of other parks and facilities and to maintain newly acquired property. The funding will allow staff time to address critical maintenance for facilities such as trails, playgrounds, athletic courts, and general park maintenance.

New Properties and Major Use Adjustments
Annandale Civic Space
Belle Haven Park
Elklick Preserve
Hilltop Park
Lake Fairfax Inline Skate Park
Laurel Hill Central Green
Mount Vernon Woods Skate Park
North Hill Park
Overlook Ridge
Quander Fairchild
Raglan Road Park
Ruckstahl Park
Scotts Run Athletic Field and Restroom
Woodlands Education and Stewardship Center

FISCAL IMPACT:

The baseline FY 2026 General Fund Budget is \$36,331,623, with no revenue attached. These budget requests would add \$4,455,604 to that baseline.

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Tonya Mills, Senior Fiscal Administrator, Financial Management Branch
Nicole Varnes, Budget, Capital and Financial Reporting Manager

Board Agenda Item
September 11, 2024

Public Comment on FY 2026 Budget

BACKGROUND

The Park Authority Board has received staff's FY 2026 Non-Recommended Budget Reductions Package and the FY 2026 Proposed Budget Requests. The Board will hear comments from the public regarding the FY 2026 Budget at the Budget Committee meeting on Wednesday, September 11, 2024. All comments received during the public input session and those submitted by email, phone and US mail will be compiled and shared with the Park Authority Board at its September 25, 2024 meeting.

ENCLOSED DOCUMENTS:

None.

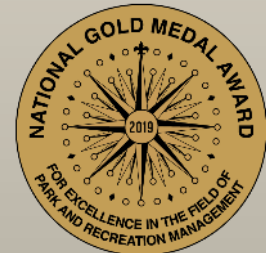
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FY 2026 Budget Development

Park Authority Board Meeting
September 11, 2024



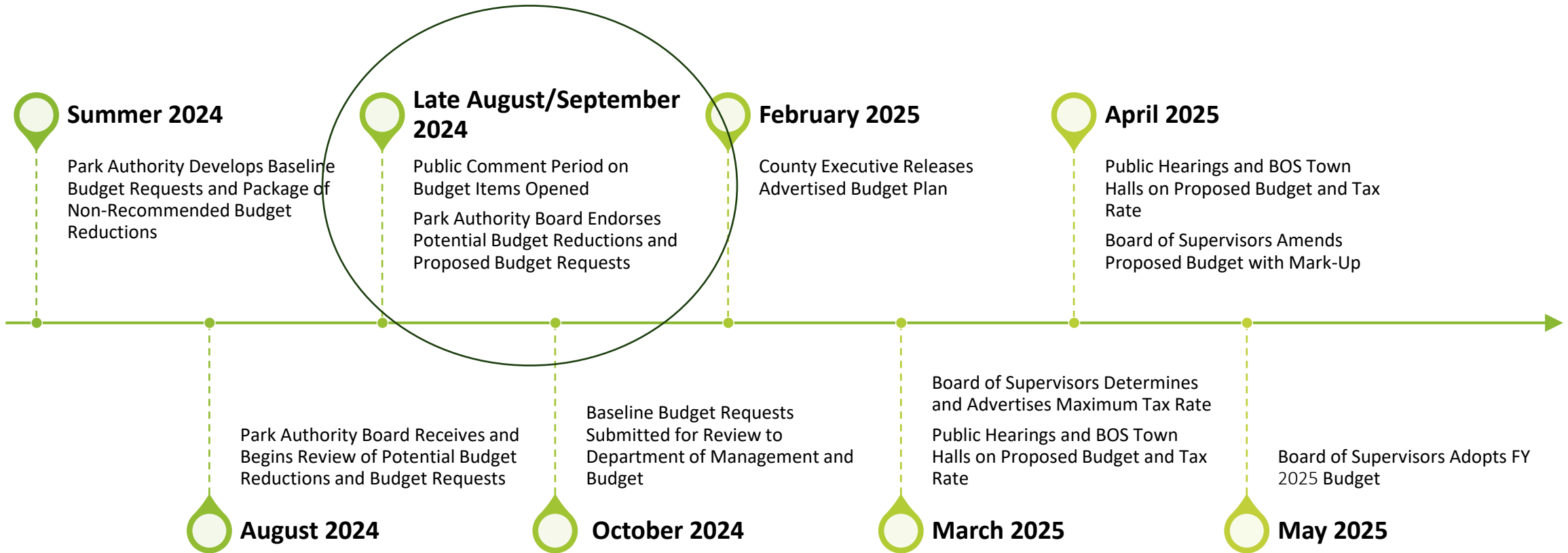
Information Item

FY 2026 Non-Recommended Budget Reduction Package

Fund 10001 – General Fund



FY 2026 Proposed Budget Development Summary



General Fund Budget Reduction Guidance

- Given that the reductions taken during the FY 2025 budget process focused on efficiencies and flexibility available within agency budgets, we expect that the options developed this year will involve harder choices that may impact service delivery and filled positions.
- Agencies are asked to provide reductions totaling 10 percent of their budgets, which will allow us to weigh the feasibility of each option and its impact on County services as the FY 2026 budget picture develops.

FCPA General Fund Target: \$3,561,100



Personnel Budget Considerations

- FY 2023
 - Added 3.0 FTE for Natural Resources Sustainability
 - Added 3.0 FTE for Patriot Park North
 - Reduced 5.0 FTE – Targeted Reductions (Based on Long-Term Vacancy)
 - 1.0 FTE – Maintenance Crew Chief Position
 - 3.0 FTE – Maintenance Worker Positions
 - 1.0 FTE – Admin Assistant IV Position
- FY 2024
 - Added 3.0 FTE for Forestry Operations
 - Added 1.0 FTE for Bamboo Mitigation Management
 - Added 2.0 FTE for Mobile Nature Center
 - Reduced 4.0 FTE – Targeted Reductions (Based on Long-Term Vacancy)
 - 1.0 FTE Maintenance Worker Position
 - 1.0 FTE Pest Controller Position
 - 1.0 FTE Naturalist I Position at Huntley Meadows – At Carryover
 - 1.0 FTE Park/Rec Specialist I at Riverbend Park – At Carryover
 - Reduced 22.0 Temporary 900-Hour Positions – Targeted Reductions (Based on Long-Term Vacancy) At Carryover



FY 2026 Non-Recommended General Fund Budget Reductions: \$3,564,106

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Alternative to Summer Concert Series



Sep-24

Charge Additional Development Division Salaries to Bond ~~\$714,000~~ \$768,851

- Additional staff will be charged to the Bond
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- This will decrease the amount of Bond available for design and construction of projects.
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Reduce General Park and Facility Maintenance Funding: ~~\$350,000~~ \$404,851

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Discussion

