

# ARLINGTON'S PARK LAND AND OPEN/GREEN SPACE CRISIS: ARLINGTON'S DRAMATIC NEED FOR MORE PARK LAND TO MEET INCREASED POPULATION AND DEMAND

February 2, 2016

## Executive Summary

Below, the Arlington County Civic Federation Parks and Recreation Committee provides documentation and support for a policy to ensure increased park land acquisition. We ask the County Board and County Manager to establish an annual target of adding a minimum of 3 acres of additional park land to the County's public park land portfolio each year for the next 10 years (2017–2027) to balance increasing population density.

In order to provide staff with a sound basis for meeting this target, this goal must be adopted as County policy and be incorporated into all related plans. Staff should then provide an annual progress report to the County Board.

This modest, achievable target is predicated on a commitment by the County Board and County Manager to ensure the preservation of all existing publicly owned park land such that there is a net annual increase of at least 3 additional, publicly owned and available acres and that there is no concurrent net loss of existing park land acreage.

Since 2008, Arlington County has underinvested in public park land acquisition. As a result, there is less park land acreage per 1,000 residents today than at any other time in the last 50 years. Neighboring jurisdictions have more park land acreage per 1,000 residents and have plans to acquire more to meet the needs of their growing populations. Arlington County residents, too, have expressed a desire for more park land.

According to County government, Arlington will add 35,300 households by 2040, an increase of 36%, which will add an estimated 75,400 people<sup>1</sup> (roughly equivalent to 4.5 times the existing population of the City of Falls Church) to Arlington County's population. These new residents will increase demand for County services, including schools, police/fire/rescue, public transportation, parks, playing fields, recreation and community centers, etc.

Nearly all of these new households will be located in multifamily buildings — mostly mid- and high-rise apartments and condos without much open/green space of their own — so the demand for open, green, and recreational spaces becomes even more acute. Either Arlington invests in additional park land and recreation facilities to accommodate its growing population, or it will face a crisis because most existing facilities and park lands are overrun, making Arlington a much less desirable and livable community.

***By adopting the recommended target-based strategy, the County can begin to address its public park land deficit and meet residents' growing demand for park and recreational space on a reasonable, incremental, and affordable basis.***

## 1. Why does Arlington County need to acquire more public park land?

The short answer is public park land represents an investment in Arlington's future and is the permanent, tangible legacy we will leave to Arlington's children. Current demand far exceeds current resources since County land acquisition has not kept pace with population growth, resulting in increased shortages of all forms of recreational and outdoor space. The recent Community Facilities Study report documents the increasing demand for public park facilities, not to mention natural space: facility reservations from FY 2013 to FY 2014 increased 11%, class registrations were up 34%, and youth sports sign-ups rose 33% between FY 2011 and FY 2014.<sup>2</sup>

Waiting lists are common<sup>3</sup>, and not all County residents who want to utilize park facilities or participate in classes or sports can do so. Visiting one of our parks during the nine months of the year when the weather is mild reveals intensively used bike and walking paths, crowded picnic areas, and oversubscribed playing fields.

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<sup>1</sup> Arlington County Forecast Round 8.4 (Preliminary), <http://projects.arlingtonva.us/data-research/future-data-forecasts/>, accessed 1/19/16

<sup>2</sup> *Arlington Community Facilities Study Final Report*, Arlington County, November 6, 2015, p. 55, [http://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2015/11/CFS\\_Final\\_Report\\_web.pdf](http://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2015/11/CFS_Final_Report_web.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Arlington County Department of Parks & Recreation "Waitlist" web page, <http://parks.arlingtonva.us/online-registration-reservations-help-tips-success/waitlists/>

The 2015 Arlington Community Facilities Study report also notes the following:

Although there are success stories from sharing facility resources, the open space system has been pressured by recent and forecasted population growth. As a result, the needs, future planning and land acquisition for parks, open space, and cultural and recreational facilities are among the primary discussion topics raised by community members in all civic engagement arenas.<sup>4</sup>

Citizens in areas such as Pentagon City already experiencing this pressure are putting forth solutions to address current park land deficits at Virginia Highlands Park through more efficient use.<sup>5</sup> This is only a partial solution to address current pressures and cannot satisfy a larger population's needs over the long term.

Recognition of Arlington's growing need for public park land and recreational space isn't new, nor is the idea that Arlington must develop a robust land acquisition strategy to meet community needs.

The 2005 *Public Spaces Master Plan* (PSMP) highlights the fact that demand for park land continues to grow:

There is a strong documented need for aquatics, fitness, teen center, arts and multi-purpose spaces, along with need for additional outdoor trails, fields and natural areas.<sup>6</sup>

The 2005 PSMP also identifies the need to develop a strategic land acquisition program as opposed to opportunistic acquisitions:

Priority 2 – Develop a Land Acquisition Policy  
(Recommendation 1.2)

During the development of this plan, a detailed review of current land acquisition processes and policies was undertaken. The findings demonstrate the challenges the County faces in continuing to acquire open space in a climate where there is limited availability of land, the strong economy has driven up land prices and competition, and acquisition is more opportunistic than strategic.<sup>7</sup>

Furthermore, the 2005 PSMP emphasizes the need to acquire land for parks large enough to accommodate active recreation:

Address the need to expand green spaces in the urban corridors in order to provide parks large enough to accommodate active recreation. Look for opportunities to make better use of existing public sites, such as the Wilson School/Rosslyn Highlands Park/Fire Station #10 Site.<sup>8</sup>

Bottom line — Arlington already has insufficient park land and open space to meet existing demand. In 2016, the Community Facilities Study report reiterates that notwithstanding co-location efforts and existing joint uses of property, it is inevitable that a **robust land acquisition program needs to be established given the increased demand for services associated with a growing population.**

## 2. Is there value to Arlington park land beyond its recreational value?

Parks and recreation facilities provide human health and other benefits. The *International Journal of Environmental Sciences* reports the following:

Many public green areas provide the local community and visitors with opportunities for physical recreation and relaxation, as well as for social interaction (Wodarczyk, 2007). According to *Forest Research*, there is a strong body of evidence which demonstrates the restorative value of green space showing that more passive forms of usage, or even just access to views of green space, can have a beneficial impact on mental well-being and cognitive function (Forest Research, 2010 and RICS, 2011)... Similarly, access to green space is an important predictor of increased physical activity ("active living") and reduced risk of obesity (John, 2011).<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> *Arlington Community Facilities Study Final Report*, 2015, p. 56, <http://commissions.arlingtonva.us/community-facilities-study/>

<sup>5</sup> Virginia Highlands Park West Side Rebalancing Proposal, Friends of Aurora Highlands Parks, <http://friendsofahparks.org/virginia-highlands-park/proposal-virginia-highlands-park-west-side/>

<sup>6</sup> *Public Spaces Master Plan*, Arlington's Public Spaces, Where the Community Comes Together, Adopted December 10, 2005, Arlington, Virginia, Objective One – Balance Acquisition and Development of Public Spaces, p. 45, <http://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2014/04/Chapter-5-Recommendations.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> *Public Spaces Master Plan* (2005), Op. Ct., p. 43

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid*, p. 42

<sup>9</sup> "The Value of Urban Green Infrastructure and Its Environmental Response in Urban Ecosystem: A Literature Review," *International Journal of Environmental Sciences*, Vol. 4, No. 2, 2015, pp. 89-101, <http://www.water.ca.gov/wateruseefficiency/landscapeordnance/pubcomments/Melanie%20Stanton/Turfgrass%20Benefits%20Literature%20Review%20for%20Developing%20Nations.pdf>

There are additional environmental and economic benefits derived from our parks' natural infrastructure. A July 2015 Arlington Parks and Recreation Commission research paper, "Valuing Arlington's Community Parks and Open Space" state the following:

Green infrastructure—trees, shrubs, grasses and forbs—improve air quality by reducing air pollution (as plants absorb carbon dioxide, ozone, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, carbon monoxide and other materials (USDA 2006); ameliorate the urban heat island effect with shade and cooling; act as a noise barrier; and reduce urban runoff as roots capture and filter rainwater (Longcore et al. 2004; Morris 2003; Pincetl et al. 2003; Woolley 2003; Miller 1995.) Trees especially provide shade and cooling and block winds to other structures. Mature tree canopies can reduce air temperature by 5–10 degrees F. Increasing the urban tree canopy by 10% can reduce the summer surface temperature by 2.5 degrees F (both, Tyrvaenen et al. 2005.) These 'nature's services' ultimately reduce infrastructure costs as they conserve soils in flood-prone areas, reduce heat island effects, reduce air and water pollution and reduce energy costs for cooling.<sup>10</sup>

Increasing the County's park land and green space acreage could also facilitate budgetary savings:

New York City's 2010 Green Infrastructure Plan aims to reduce the city's sewer management costs by \$2.4 billion over 20 years. The plan estimates that every fully vegetated acre of green infrastructure would provide total annual benefits of \$8,522 in reduced energy demand, \$166 in reduced CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, \$1,044 in improved air quality, and \$4,725 in increased property value. It estimates that the city can reduce CSO [combined storm and sewer overflow] volumes by 2 billion gallons by 2030, using green practices at a total cost of \$1.5 billion less than traditional methods.<sup>11</sup>

### 3. What is the history of park land acquisition in Arlington?

For the past 50-plus years, planning documents have continually highlighted the County's open-space acreage deficit and the need to purchase additional park land and open/green space as the population increases. For example, a 1965 report prepared by the Northern Virginia Regional Planning and Economic Development Commission calculated the Acreage Deficit of Open Space in Northern Virginia at 2,500 acres, with Arlington County having the largest deficit at 1,080 acres (43%).<sup>12</sup>

In the mid-1960s under the visionary leadership of County Board member Thomas Richards, who promoted conservation and Smart Growth, Arlington County took specific measures to obtain additional land to offset anticipated development of the Ballston-Rosslyn corridor. These measures included purchasing property to establish the Gulf Branch Nature Center and the Davidson Farm to create Potomac Overlook Park (to be managed by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority). Due to the success of Gulf Branch, a similar purchase was made at Long Branch to create the Long Branch Nature Center and augment natural areas in Arlington County.

The County's efforts over the last 20 years to acquire park land to offset population increases and increased density can be measured in part by the amount of funding earmarked for land acquisition during the biannual bond cycle for parks.

The attached Arlington County C-2 Land Acquisition Funding Memo of June 3, 2014, summarizes park land acquisition by Arlington County from 1995 to 2015. As illustrated in the Table 1.0 below recent County decisions in regards to Rosslyn Highlands and Thomas Jefferson actually reduced park land acquisition by 4.03 acres to 73.23 from 76.43 acres.

A review of the County's history shows that between 1995 and 2008, funding for park land acquisition per two-year bond cycle was between \$4.0 and \$8.5 million, with most cycles at \$8.5 million. Since then, as explained in the C-2 Memo, there has been a decline primarily attributed to economic conditions. Over the six years between 2008 and 2014, land acquisition bond funding totaled only \$3.0 million, but it has been supplemented by a total of \$5.47 million in pay-as-you-go (PAYG) annual budget allocations. Yet, the total funds of \$8.47 million available for land acquisition during this six-year period is still far less than the \$8.5 million that was typical for **each two-year cycle** between 1996 and 2004 (an eight-year period).

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<sup>10</sup> "Valuing Arlington's Community Parks and Open Space," July 2015, p. 3, <https://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/5/2015/07/Valuing-Arlington-Parks-and-Open-Space-FINAL.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> "The Value of Green Infrastructure for Urban Climate Adaptation," 2011, p. iv, [http://www.amwa.net/galleries/climate-change/Green\\_Infrastructure\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.amwa.net/galleries/climate-change/Green_Infrastructure_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>12</sup> *Action for Open Space*, National Capitol Space Program Planning Report No. 1, Northern Virginia Regional Planning and Economic Development Commission, 1965, Appendix Table F, p. 107.

The 2014 C-2 Memo demonstrates that the County has not implemented a land acquisition policy based on strategic objectives, given the significant downturn in park land acquisition since 2008.

Since 2014, it can be argued that Arlington County park land acreage has actually *decreased* notwithstanding some acquisitions in 2015. As the chart below shows, Arlington lost park land acreage in 2015, notwithstanding spending \$2.2 million on land acquisition.

**Park Land Acreage History Since the 2014 CIP and Estimated Bond Fund Balance**

<b>Table 1.0</b>	<b>Acres Added/Deleted</b>	<b>Total Acres Since 1995</b>	<b>Revenue/ Cost</b>	<b>Park Bond Fund Balance</b>
Park Land Acquisition 1995 – 2014 & Bond fund balance <sup>13</sup>		76.43		\$2.96 Million
Additions:				
2014 Bond Referendum – Land Acquisition funds			+\$2 Million	\$4.96 Million
2/15 Benjamin Banneker Park <sup>14</sup>	+8,375 Sq. Ft. (0.19 Acres)		-\$688,710	
9/15 Chestnut Hills Park <sup>15</sup>	+9,632 Sq. Ft. (0.22 acres)		-\$728,000	
12/15 Benjamin Banneker Park <sup>16</sup>	+8,250 Sq. Ft. (0.22 acres)		-\$637,500	
Subtotal	+0.63 acres	77.26	-\$2,054,210	
Closing costs @\$5,000 per property plus site restoration costs @\$50,000 per property <sup>17</sup>			-\$165,000	
Subtotal			-\$2,219,210 (\$2.2 Million)	\$2.76 Million
Deletions:				
30% Reduction in size of Rosslyn Highlands Park <sup>18</sup>	From 30,500 Sq. Ft. to 21,800 Sq. Ft. Reduction of -8,700 Sq. Ft (-0.20 acres)			
Use western edge of TJ park for school. <sup>19</sup>	-3.83 Acres			
Subtotal	-4.03 Acres	73.23		
Total		73.23		\$2.76 Million

Note: Does not include land that the County may have acquired through a transfer of development rights (TDRs) or developer contributions.

#### **4. Parks and recreation bond initiatives have been pretty large in recent years. Why have we added so little park land recently?**

Land acquisition is only one of several components in park bond initiatives. In recent years, the land acquisition component in the County’s park bond initiatives has been reduced to allow other components (facility design and

<sup>13</sup> Information in C-2 memo, <http://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/18/2014/07/C-2-Land-Acquisition-Funding.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> See <http://newsroom.arlingtonva.us/release/arlington-to-buy-land-to-expand-benjamin-banneker-park/>

<sup>15</sup> See <http://newsroom.arlingtonva.us/release/arlington-to-buy-land-to-enlarge-chestnut-hills-park/>

<sup>16</sup> See <http://newsroom.arlingtonva.us/release/arlington-buys-land-to-expand-benjamin-banneker-park/>

<sup>17</sup> News releases listed in notes above refer to reports submitted to the Board where closing costs are identified at \$5,000 per property and site preparation expense at \$50,000 per property.

<sup>18</sup> Rosslyn Highlands Park Summary, [http://www.arlingtonparkscoalition.org/rosslyn\\_highlands\\_park](http://www.arlingtonparkscoalition.org/rosslyn_highlands_park)

<sup>19</sup> TJ Working Group Report, Jan. 16, 2015, <http://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/31/2015/01/TJWG-Final-Report-011615.pdf>

construction, maintenance, etc.) to predominate. *For example, in 2012 the \$50.5 million park bond included \$42.5 million for the aquatics center but only \$1.0 million for land acquisition.*<sup>20</sup>

There also have been past instances when land acquisition bond funds were used for purposes other than actual land acquisition. In one such example, land acquisition bond funds were used to renovate the rented space that housed the Artisphere.

In 2009, the ACCF passed a resolution calling into question the use of \$4.445 million in land acquisition funds to pay for the Artisphere's front-end construction costs. The resolve statements of this resolution are as follows:

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

- (1) The Arlington County Civic Federation calls upon the County Board to use funds approved by the voters for park land acquisition and other capital projects, for only the purposes described in the adopted CIP; and further
- (2) The Civic Federation urges the County Board to make park land acquisition a priority for bond funding in the FY11-FY16 CIP, to be adopted in the summer of 2010, so that the ability to make strategic land acquisitions is not impaired.<sup>21</sup>

## **5. How does Arlington County park land acreage compare to other jurisdictions?**

As of 2015, Arlington County had 1,784 acres of park land. Of the 1,784 acres, 949 acres are owned by Arlington County 700 acres are owned by the National Parks Service (most of which is Arlington Cemetery), and 135 acres are owned by the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority.<sup>22</sup>

In 1995, Arlington County had 10.8 acres of park land per 1,000 residents. By 2014 the County's population grew by over 43,000 residents, and the park land to population ratio declined to 7.9 acres of park land per 1,000 residents.

Washington, DC, has 13.2 acres of park land per 1,000 residents, and Fairfax County contains has 28.3 acres of park land per 1,000 residents. Fairfax County considers its park land acreage to be too small and plans to purchase an additional 2,015 acres for parks, according to its 2015-2019 CIP<sup>23</sup> (Yes, that's a comma, not a decimal point!)

Fairfax County has a strategic plan requiring 10% of its land mass (25,280 acres) to be held as county parks.<sup>24</sup> Using the same 10% formula, Arlington's target for park land acquisition would be 1,664 acres of public park land (excluding land held by the National Parks Service or the Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority).

## **6. Why do park advocates keep making a distinction between park lands and other county properties, such as school lands? After all, it is County owned land, so what is the difference?**

Technically, the Arlington County Board "owns" or holds title to all County land. Likewise, the Arlington School Board "owns" or holds title to all school land. The County Board has little or no control over how the School Board chooses to utilize its properties (beyond granting use permits and applying other standard regulations). Likewise, the School Board has no authority over County land.

Though the County has included APS open space in its total acreage figure for park and open space, it has no way to ensure APS open and natural spaces remains that way. In fact, large tracts of APS natural and open space have been sacrificed to host permanent and temporary structures for classrooms.

In Arlington County (as in most of the United States), the Capital Improvement Plan (CIP) is developed by function, with funding allocated for each function such as schools, parks, public safety, fire, etc. Each function generates its own bond question for the ballot, whereby the voters vote **SEPERATELY** for each function's bond. In most local governments, land acquisition costs for these functions are included to develop the CIP for each specific function.

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<sup>20</sup> 2013-2022 Adopted Biennial Capital Improvement Plan, Fiscal Years 2013–2022, p. A-8, <http://arlingtonva.s3.amazonaws.com/wp-content/uploads/sites/18/2013/10/2013-2022-CIP-ALL-IN-ONE.pdf>. [Note: The \$1.0 million land acquisition figure is also reflected in the C-2 Memo for FY 2013-2014.]

<sup>21</sup> Full text of the 2009 resolution can be viewed here: <http://www.civfed.org/resparklandacq.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> Data taken from 2015 City Park Facts, Center for City Park Excellence, The Trust for Public Land, Washington DC, 2015, <https://www.tpl.org/2015-city-park-facts>

<sup>23</sup> Fairfax County advertised CIP FY 2015-2019 – Fairfax County Park Authority section, p. 53, <http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dmb/fy2015/advertised/cip/fcpa.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> Fairfax County CIP, Op. Cit., p. 2

When Arlington County sells bonds, it is required by law to use the funds only for the projects advertised in the bond initiative until those funds are repaid. However, the wording of a bond initiative/question can permit the funds to be reallocated to other projects within that same functional category rather than for the originally advertised purpose. In most cities, land purchased with bond funds continues to be used for the same intended purpose even after the bond has been paid back, though legally the land can be repurposed.

Two Arlington County government functions with very large land requirements are parks and schools. Hence, when a CIP is developed, land acquisition costs for schools and parks are normally included in each one's respective bond question.

Arlington's schools and parks should continue to work together in a collaborative manner, as noted in the 2005 *Public Spaces Master Plan*:

Arlington County and Arlington Public Schools have a long history of collaboration and joint use of facilities to maximize the community's investment in our public buildings. A variety of memorandum of understandings (MOU) and other types of formal and informal agreements have been developed and are currently in operation for facilities which have joint or shared use.<sup>25</sup>

However, it is false economy to view park land as a "land bank." If a function, such as schools, needs land to build additional schools, then the land acquisition costs associated with the new school should be incorporated into the school bond proposal. APS Superintendent Dr. Patrick Murphy indicated as much during his presentation on January 6, 2016, to the Arlington County Civic Federation when he indicated that the APS CIP will include land costs as appropriate.<sup>26</sup>

## **7. How did the ACCF Parks & Recreation Committee determine the figure of 3 acres per year?**

The 3-acre acquisition target was selected based on a review of several factors. Over a 20-year period, Arlington County acquired an average of 3.8 acres of new public park land a year. The most recent trend has been lower—only 0.63 acres were purchased in 2015. Moreover, there have often been multiyear delays in making land acquired with park bond funds available to the public as well as non-park use of such land, so that the actual increase in park land has been less than the amount of land acquired.

While higher acreage figures are justified given the population increase the County has experienced, the Committee felt that it was more important to encourage the County to establish a reasonable land acquisition goal as recommended in both the 2005 PSMP and the 2015 Community Facilities Study (CFS). A goal of three acres was chosen because it is under the average of the last 20 years, yet above recent acquisition trends. Likewise, it begins the process of establishing a land acquisition program complementing the CFS with a realistic, achievable goal. Once County staff releases its observations on the CFS and the County Board weighs in, the goal can be revisited and increased, if needed, to better meet park land requirements for the anticipated population increase. Even before the completion of the CFS review, it is hoped that a land acquisition policy will be established with specific goals that will exceed 3 acres per year.

## **8. What about funding?**

Funding for park land acquisition can be assembled from a variety of sources as the County sees fit, including unallocated close-out budget funds, Virginia land and water conservation grant funds, transfer/sale of development rights from existing parkland, land swaps (low-value parcels for larger or high-value parcels), excess or unused bond funds already allocated for parks and recreation, Department of Parks and Recreation budget savings (rather than returning those funds to the general fund), and new CIP bond money.

In 2012, County staff released a draft of the *Parkland/Open Space Acquisition and Preservation Plan* (POSAPP) that established criteria for the prioritization and acquisition of parcels, identified future need areas, and recommended both acquisition mechanisms and funding sources.<sup>27</sup> Unfortunately, this plan was set aside and was never finalized or implemented.

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<sup>25</sup> *Public Spaces Master Plan*, op. cit., p. 44

<sup>26</sup> See minute 35.05 of January 2016 Arlington County Civic Federation meeting video, <https://vimeo.com/152493353>

<sup>27</sup> *Parkland / Open Space Acquisition and Preservation Plan*, Preliminary Draft October 2012, Arlington, Virginia, <https://web.archive.org/web/20130124150616/http://arlingtonva.us/departments/parksrecreation/scripts/planning/page76192.aspx> [Note: Web archive doesn't permit downloading the document.]

Among the acquisition tools identified by the 2012 POSAPP are deed of gift (basically the donation of land to the county), acquisition of federal/state surplus property, life estate with reversion of the property to the County, and permanent easements. The POSAPP also recommends establishing a land acquisition fund, collaborating with conservation organizations and land trusts, and setting up sponsorships that would generate funds for public land acquisition.

Given the degree of park land acreage deficit, it is unrealistic to assume that focusing on a single source alone—such as land acquisition via the CIP—will realistically address the land deficit. Various funding mechanisms must be used to meet the goal of 3 or more acres. While traditionally the CIP has been the vehicle for land acquisition, the Committee recognizes the fiscal constraints within the CIP process, including the County’s finite credit authority and the ratio of debit service to general fund expenditure. Given these limitations, the Committee recognizes that it is necessary to consider multiple funding sources to meet the target.

### **Conclusion**

Arlington County has a significant park land acreage *deficit* because park land acquisition has not kept pace with the County’s rising population and increased density. Given this situation, the solution most certainly includes the creative use of space for all government functions, but creativity, co-location and other space-utilization efficiencies will go only so far.

From the 2005 *Public Spaces Master Plan* to the 2015 Community Facilities Study report, we hear the same refrain: There are documented unmet and growing needs for park land and recreational facilities. These needs are going unmet today. We face an even larger urgent challenge in the years ahead as we add more than 75,000 new residents. A strategic land acquisition plan is the only way to reverse current trends.

As part of their strategic planning, cities and counties have an obligation to budget adequate resources for anticipated population increases in the same way that that individuals must contribute a reasonable amount to their 401(k) plans to enjoy a reasonable retirement. Acquiring public park land and natural space is our collective investment in our community’s future—our legacy to future generations, serving as a counterbalance to the impacts of density.

***Adopting the recommended target-based strategy will allow Arlington to begin addressing its public park land deficit and meet citizens’ growing demand for park and recreational space.***

Respectfully submitted:

Richard Epstein (Chair), Michael Thomas (Vice-chair), Mark Antell, Duke Banks, Suzanne Bolton, Connie Ericson, Dean Foster, Mark Haynes, Char Mahoney, Suzanne Smith Sundburg, Jay Wind, and Edith Wilson. Bernie H. Berne declined to support the committee’s recommendations in this paper.

**ATTACHMENT**

**Subject: DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION – HISTORY OF LAND ACQUISITION FUNDING**

**FY 2015 – FY 2024 Proposed CIP  
General Government Work Session Follow-up**

**June 3, 2014**

The following information is provided in response to a question raised by Mr. Vihstadt at the General Government Proposed CIP work session on June 3, 2014, regarding the funding history of land acquisition.

The table below shows a twenty-year history of land acquisition funding. In prior years, land acquisition funding for DPR came primarily from bonds. Annual funding dipped in FY 2005-2006 and declined after FY 2008 due to the significant economic recession; in 2008, the only items included on the referenda were WMATA, Schools (Yorktown High School), Utilities (Water Pollution Control Plant), and the Neighborhood Conservation program. In recent years, other funds have been allocated to park land acquisition, such as one-time PAYG allocations and closeout funds. Land acquisition funds are allowed to build so that balances are available on an as-needed basis. The funds budgeted each two-year period do not directly correspond to the funds that will be spent during that same period.

**LAND ACQUISITION FUNDING (FY 1995 - 2005)**

Fiscal Years	Two-Year Bond Funding (\$M)	Other Funding (\$M)	Notes on Other Funding
1995-1996	\$8.00		
1997-1998	\$8.50		
1999-2000	\$8.50		
2001-2002	\$8.50		
2003-2004	\$8.50		
2005-2006	\$4.00		
2007-2008	\$8.00		
2009-2010	-	\$1.47	one-time PAYG allocation of debt service savings
2011-2012	\$2.00		
2013-2014	\$1.00	\$0.50	one-time PAYG allocation of FY 2012 close-out funds in FY 2014 Budget
		\$2.00	one-time PAYG allocation from one-time funds generated by tax rate increase in FY 2014 Budget
2015		\$1.50	one-time PAYG allocation of one-time funds generated by higher than expected assessments (FY 2015 Budget)
<b>20-year Funding Total</b>	<b>\$55.00</b>	<b>\$5.47</b>	

The current net available balance of land acquisition funding, including the \$1.5 million in one-time PAYG funding approved in the FY 2015 Adopted Budget, and excluding all planned uses of funds, is \$2.96 million.



**Subject: DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION – HISTORY OF LAND ACQUISITION FUNDING**

**ATTACHMENT 1: ALL PARK LAND ACQUISITIONS SINCE 1995**

The following is an account of all park land acquisitions since 1995. In addition to acquisitions through purchase, the County has occasionally received land in fee or through transfer of development rights.

**Property Acquired per Bond Cycle**

**FY 1995-1996**

<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Park (Address)</b>
0.9	Douglas (1602 S. Quincy Street)
0.5	Fort C.F. Smith (N. 24th Street)
4.3	Fort C.F. Smith (N. 24th Street)
0.1	Clarendon Triangle (3282 Fairfax Drive)
0.06	Butler Holmes (2415 S. 1st Road)
0.4	Chestnut Hills (2821 N. Harrison Street)
10.6	Fort Bennett (N. 22nd Street)

**FY 1997-1998**

<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Park/Address</b>
0.2	Lang St. Community Gardens (2811 S. Lang Street)
0.2	Lang St. Community Gardens (2815 S. Lang Street)
0.4	Mosaic (544 & 548 N. Pollard Street)
0.05	Bluemont (Par. D, N. Manchester Street)
0.4	Benjamin Banneker (6700 N. 18th Street)
	Powhatan Springs (6008, 6016 & 6022 Wilson Boulevard)
5.3	
0.12	Butler Holmes (2409 S. 1st Road)
0.7	Mosaic Park (N. 5th Road)
1.9	Arlington Mill CC (4975 Columbia Pike)

**FY 1999-2000**

<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Park/Address</b>
1	Jennie Dean (3700 S. Four Mile Run)
0.2	Jennie Dean (3660 S. 27th Street)
0.9	Chestnut Hills (2711 & 2717 N. Harrison Street)
0.2	Zachary Taylor (2631 N. Upshur Street)
0.2	Cherry Valley (3802 & 3804 N. 17th Street)

**FY 2001-2002**

<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Park/Address</b>
0.1	Cherry Valley (3808 N. 17th Street)
0.7	Wakefield HS (4966 S. 14th Street)
0.2	Drew (3436 S. 24th Street)
2.45	Bluemont Park/Reevesland (400 N. Manchester Street)
1.85	Jennie Dean (3600 Four Mile Run)
0.95	Oakgrove (1612 N. Quincy Street)

**Subject: DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION – HISTORY OF LAND ACQUISITION FUNDING**

**FY 2003-2004**

<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Park/Address</b>
21.45	Long Bridge *
0.22	Bluemont Junction (Block 3, part of lot 20 & 21)
0.17	Benjamin Banneker (6708 N. 18th Street)

**FY 2005-2006**

<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Park/Address</b>
0.13	James Hunter (1230 N. Hartford Street)
0.67	Long Bridge (901 S. Clark Street)
0.5	Jennie Dean (3806 S. Four Mile Run)
0.45	Jennie Dean (2654 S. Oakland Street)
0.21	Maury (816 N. Lincoln Street)

**FY 2007-2008**

<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Park/Address</b>
-	No Properties Acquired This Period

**FY2009-2010**

<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Park/Address</b>
0.08	Drew (2400 S. Kenmore Street)
6.69	Long Bridge (Parcel 17) *
0.14	Bon Air (882 N. Lexington Street)
1.00	Henry Wright Park (Buckingham)
4.46	Long Bridge (Davis Industries) *
0.6	Mosaic (former WMATA parking lot) *
0.25	Maury (3538 Wilson Boulevard)
0.12	Mosaic (3529 5th Place North)

**FY2011-2012**

<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Park/Address</b>
0.36	Fillmore (Rockwell property, lots 72-75) *
0.4	Penrose Square (2501 9th Road South) *
0.22	Drew (YMCA - N. 23rd Street Lots 9-11) *
2.39	Long Bridge (property swap w/Monument net) *

**FY2013-2014**

<b>Acreage</b>	<b>Park/Address</b>
0.12	Butler Homes (2405 S. 1st Road)
0.21	Douglas Park (1700 S. Quincy Street)
0.61	Rossllyn (1101 Lee Highway)

\*(Acquired through means other than purchase, such as transfer of density rights, developer contributions, etc.)