

Arlington County Civic Federation Parks and Recreation Committee Resolution
Approved 63-1-1 by Member Organizations Delegates or Alternates
February 2, 2016

WHEREAS Arlington's population is expected to grow by up to 36% in the next 25 years, adding 75,400 people to reach a population of 283,000 by 2040 and requiring substantial acres of additional parkland to maintain an adequate level of service;

WHEREAS the 2015 Arlington Community Facilities Study recommends a robust County public land acquisition program, including the acquisition of parkland, to ensure adequate public land to meet growing demand for services;

WHEREAS parks provide economic benefits, enhancing property values, increasing tax revenue, and attracting businesses, workers, homebuyers and retirees;

WHEREAS parks are an important element of smart growth, strengthening the urban core, enhancing mixed development and redevelopment strategies, and mitigating the environmental and other impacts of increased density;

WHEREAS the county has in the recent past failed to acquire high-value parcels;

WHEREAS CIP bond funds specifically earmarked for park land acquisition have been diverted in the past for other purposes unrelated to park land acquisition;

WHEREAS there are a variety of funding sources available that can be leveraged for park land acquisition, 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, intradepartmental DPR budget savings (rather than returning those funds to the general fund), and new CIP bond money;

WHEREAS the cost of land in Arlington continues to increase; and

WHEREAS the Community Facilities Study report recommends a robust County public land acquisition program, including the acquisition of parkland, to ensure adequate public land to meet growing demand for services;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

The Arlington County Civic Federation recommends:

That the County Board adopt a land acquisition policy with a target to obtain a minimum of 3 acres of park land per year on average over the next 10 years;

That this policy be implemented using various funding tools available and that the County Board encourage staff to look for acquisition opportunities that may not be listed in the Public Spaces Master Plan;

That the County Board assure the public that park land acquisition funds will be used only for obtaining a well-balanced mix of natural and recreational areas and not diverted for other non-park purposes; and

That the County Board assure the public that the County will preserve all existing publicly owned park land such that there is a net annual increase of at least 3 new publicly owned and available acres added to the County's public park land portfolio with no net offset or loss of existing acreage.