



# 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:** Ben Boxer, Public Information Officer  
Marketing and Communications Office

**DATE:** February 23, 2024

### *Agenda*

**Communications and Community Engagement Committee  
(Committee of the Whole)**

**Wednesday, February 28, 2024 – 5:55 pm**

**Virtual, via Zoom**

**Chairman: William G. Bouie**

**Vice Chair: Mike Thompson**

1. Equity Study Outreach Update (with presentation) - Information



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

Board Agenda Item  
February 28, 2024

## **INFORMATION (with Presentation)**

### Equity Study Outreach Update

Staff will provide the Park Authority Board with an update on the Equity Study outreach.

### BACKGROUND:

The Fairfax County Park Authority is firmly committed towards enhancing equity in all aspects of our county park system – including equity of access to park programs. Since July 2022, FCPA has worked with consultant firm HR&A to conduct a comprehensive review of the Park Authority’s fee-based revenue funding structure to determine strategies for how we can enhance the equity with which park services are provided.

After 18 months, the findings of that study and proposed recommendations for consideration, along with a history of the development of the park and recreation system, were presented to both the Fairfax County Park Authority Board and the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors. Posted on January 25, 2024, these presentations are online and open for public comment until April 1<sup>st</sup>. In addition to online opportunities, staff will be reaching out to communities with a multi-pronged outreach approach as described in the presentation.

### STAFF:

Jai Cole, Executive Director  
Sara Baldwin, Deputy Director/COO  
Aimee Vosper, Deputy Director/CBD  
Ben Boxer, Public Information Officer

# Introduction



## Recreation | Funding for Equity

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

January 2024

- We presented the findings and recommendations from our review of the Equity of the FCPA's Revenue and Operating Fund
  - Park Authority Board – Jan. 24
  - Board of Supervisors – Jan.30
- Next Steps: Initiate Intensive, Inclusive Public Outreach Effort

# FCPA OUTREACH STRATEGY FOR EQUITY STUDY

Park Authority Board Meeting

February 28, 2024



# Background

- The known benefits of parks and recreation are abundant; the challenge is making sure that these benefits are felt equitably across communities.
- Equity Survey Launched in February and Seeks to
  1. Better understand Fairfax County residents' experience with our park system
  2. Identify barriers that may prevent them from taking full advantage of the programs, services and facilities



# Public Input

- <https://Engage.FairfaxCounty.gov/Park-Equity-Study>



## Fairfax County Park Authority Equity Study

The Fairfax County Park Authority is firmly committed towards enhancing equity in all aspects of our county park system – including equity of access to park programs. Since July 2022, the Fairfax County Park Authority has worked with consultant firm HR&A to conduct a comprehensive review of the Park Authority’s fee-based revenue funding structure to determine strategies for how we can enhance the equity with which park services are provided.

After 18 months, the findings of that study and proposed recommendations for consideration, along with a history of the development of the park and recreation system, have been presented to both the Fairfax County Park Authority Board and the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors:

**FCPA and NCS History**  
Working Together to Ensure Equity

**FCPA**

- 1950: Virginia General Assembly passed the Park Authority Act and the Fairfax County Board established the Park Authority.
- 1951: Luffey Eakin Sr. donated 14 acres to the Park Authority in one of the earliest land acquisitions.
- 1959: President Eisenhower transferred the FAPA property at Sully to the Park Authority for use as historic site.
- 1959: First bond referendum gave FCPA \$4.8M for the acquisition of 75.
- 1960: Springfield Revenue (Lake Access) is transferred from the federal government. Other parks acquired: Green Park, Frying Pan Park, Riverbend.
- 1960: Plans to build an airport (Dulles) in the area were abandoned. FCPA acquired Belle Lisle from the federal gov.
- 1967: In *Loving v. Virginia*, the Supreme Court ruled portions of Virginia's Racial Integrity Act of 1924 unconstitutional.

**NCS**

- 1946: David and Sarah Pies donated land to build a church.
- 1947: James Lee Elementary School was built.
- 1952: Dewe Smith Elementary School was built on land donated by Arnie Smith to serve black students.
- 1954: Brown v. Board of Education declared racial segregation in schools unconstitutional.
- 1956: Lillian Cary Elementary School was built on land donated by Florence Green, Miriam Peyton and Bessie Moore to serve black students.
- 1961: Fairfax County Department of Recreation was established to serve black and brown communities.
- 1967: As Fairfax County finally began desegregation, black schools became predominantly community led community centers.

Watch on YouTube

- [Fairfax County Park Authority Equity Study \(2024\)](#)
- [A History of the Fairfax County Park Authority \(1950 – 2024\)](#)

### We Want To Hear From You!

The Park Authority will be reaching out to neighborhoods and communities throughout Fairfax County to collect valuable information that will inform our next steps towards enhancing equity in parks. We welcome your participation in the following ways:

#### Comment on the Equity Study Presentation:

Your reaction and feedback on the published Equity Study and presentation will help inform our next steps towards greater equity in the Fairfax County Park System. We are accepting comments beginning January 25 through April 1. Comments



# Timeline

- Initial Study Comment period & Survey closes April 1, 2024
- April: Gather results and identify gaps in response groups
- May – July: targeted outreach to underrepresented populations from the first round
- August: Gather and analyze results
- Fall 2024: Return and report our findings and recommendations to PAB and BOS



# The Survey

- 20 questions
  - Yes/No
  - Multiple Choice
  - Rating
  - Open-Ended
  - Demographic Indicators
- Approximately 5-7 minutes to complete
- All responses are anonymous
- Translated into 8 languages  
(Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, Farsi, Korean, Spanish, Urdu, Vietnamese)
- Open through April 1, 2024





# Available Collateral

- HR&A Study/ Report
- PAB/BOS Presentation Recordings and Materials
- Survey (Digital and Hard Copy)
- Posters
- Cards
- Newsletter Content
- Direct Messaging
- Social Media Text and Imagery



# Strategies



- Strategies coordinated in partnership with the Inclusive Engagement and Targeted Interventions Division of NCS.*
- Established presence on Public Input
  - Engaging County Agencies, Community Nonprofits, Houses of Worship to Connect with Communities at dozens of locations countywide
  - Direct messaging through a variety of platforms and networks
    - Our Network
      - Park Patrons and Newsletter Communications
      - Park Sites
      - Park Volunteer Committees
      - Park Foundation and Friends Organizations
    - Other Communities of Interest
      - Board of Supervisors
      - Health Department Newsletters
      - SACC Program Participants
      - County Outreach Professionals
  - Attending 16 Community Engagement Meetings, Coordinating with BOS to attend Budget Town Halls where possible.
  - Tabling at FCPA and County events (Black History Month, Supervisor Listening Sessions, Town Hall Meetings)



Thank you!

- Questions?

