

**FORESTRY AND LANDSCAPING PROGRAM**

**PROGRAM MISSION**

To promote a safe, attractive and environmentally sustainable community by providing optimal tree canopy cover, landscaping, and control of invasive plants.

The Forestry and Landscape Section manages, maintains, enhances and protects the County's urban forests and landscaped areas. This section includes technical staff that provides expertise and support for the review of site plans and County initiated projects as they relate to tree preservation, tree planting and natural resource issues. The Forestry and Landscape Section also manages a program to control invasive plants in County parks and the County's gypsy moth suppression program.

- The **Forestry Unit** performs tree maintenance, hazardous tree removal and technical assessments of trees in County parks, street rights-of-way and open spaces. They also review development and right-of-way improvement plans to ensure compliance with tree preservation and planting requirements, including compliance with the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance.
- The **Landscape Unit** plants trees on County property and installs and maintains landscaping in parks, street islands and on the grounds of community centers. The majority of annual and perennial flowers are grown in a staff operated greenhouse.
- The **Invasive Plant Control Program** combines volunteer and staff resources to help control invasive plants on County property.

**PROGRAM FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

|                           | FY 2005<br>Actual  | FY 2006<br>Adopted | FY 2007<br>Proposed | % Change<br>'06 to '07 |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Personnel                 | \$1,675,510        | \$1,870,943        | \$1,898,863         | 1%                     |
| Non-Personnel             | 1,218,725          | 1,016,074          | 1,043,329           | 3%                     |
| <b>Total Expenditures</b> | <b>2,894,235</b>   | <b>2,887,017</b>   | <b>2,942,192</b>    | <b>2%</b>              |
| Fees                      | -                  | 26,000             | 26,000              | -                      |
| Grants                    | -                  | 1,000              | -                   | -100%                  |
| <b>Total Revenues</b>     | <b>-</b>           | <b>27,000</b>      | <b>26,000</b>       | <b>-4%</b>             |
| <b>Net Tax Support</b>    | <b>\$2,894,235</b> | <b>\$2,860,017</b> | <b>\$2,916,192</b>  | <b>2%</b>              |
| Authorized FTEs           | 33.5               | 33.5               | 33.5                |                        |
| Funded FTEs               | 33.5               | 33.5               | 33.5                |                        |

**SIGNIFICANT BUDGET HIGHLIGHTS**

- ↑ The FY 2007 proposed budget reflects a two percent market pay line adjustment, a 10% increase in employer health insurance costs, and an increase in employer retirement contributions to maintain full funding of the retirement fund. These increases were partially offset by the decreased funding of vacancies after the retirement of four long time employees.
- ↑ Increase in non-personnel (\$27,255) is for fuel for County vehicles (\$28,284) offset by a decrease in the reallocation of County vehicle rental (\$1,029).

**FORESTRY AND LANDSCAPING PROGRAM**

- ↓ The Gypsy Moth grant is no longer available. It provided funding for the aerial spraying which is no longer part of the program. That funding was reallocated to ground work toward gypsy moth suppression.

**PERFORMANCE MEASURES**

**Forestry**

|   | FY 2002<br>Actual | FY 2003<br>Actual | FY 2004<br>Actual | FY 2005<br>Actual | FY 2006<br>Estimate | FY 2007<br>Estimate | FY 2007<br>Goal |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Percent of County street trees, and potential street tree planting locations covered by five-year planting and pruning plan | N/A               | N/A               | 98%               | 98%               | 98%                 | 98%                 | 100%            |
| Percent of available planting spaces along streets and medians that contain trees   | N/A               | N/A               | 93%               | 95%               | 97%                 | 98%                 | 98%             |
| Percent of tree emergencies completed in 24 hrs.  | 95%               | 95%               | 80%               | 95%               | 95%                 | 95%                 | 98%             |
| Percent of residents reporting good to excellent satisfaction with emergency and non-emergency tree removal and maintenance | N/A               | N/A               | N/A               | 90%               | 90%                 | 88%                 | 90%             |
| Reactive maintenance (percent of work)  | 75%               | 70%               | 82%               | 70%               | 70%                 | 70%                 | 65%             |
| Preventive maintenance (percent of work)  | 25%               | 30%               | 18%               | 30%               | 30%                 | 30%                 | 35%             |
| Trees removed   | 544               | 573               | 730               | 591               | 550                 | 550                 | 550             |
| Trees planted   | 854               | 1,287             | 1,289             | 1,283             | 1,280               | 1,280               | 1,280           |
| Net gain trees planted  | 310               | 714               | 559               | 692               | 730                 | 730                 | 730             |
| Trees pruned  | 2,340             | 2,356             | 2,220             | 2,230             | 2,300               | 2,300               | 3,000           |
| Plans reviewed  | 195               | 266               | 720               | 919               | 990                 | 1,000               | 1,000           |

- The number of trees removed in FY 2005 is slightly higher than usual due to two invasive plant control projects in which 55 invasive Allanthus trees were removed. High number in FY 2004 is due to Hurricane Isabel.
- Early in FY 2005 the Arlington County Board adopted the Urban Forest Master Plan as an element of the Open Space Master Plan. The approved plan establishes long-range goals and objectives and provides recommendations to improve the tree canopy of Arlington County.
- The number of plans reviewed for tree impacts and tree preservation requirements increased dramatically from 266 to 720 in FY 2004, to 919 in FY 2005, to an estimated 990 in FY 2006. This increase is due to plan submittal and review requirements associated with the County's revised Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance, and with the more active involvement of PRCR staff in review of all Right-of-Way permits (processed through Department of Environmental Services) for potential tree impacts.

**FORESTRY AND LANDSCAPING PROGRAM**

**Landscaping**

|  | FY 2002<br>Actual | FY 2003<br>Actual | FY 2004<br>Actual | FY 2005<br>Actual | FY 2006<br>Estimate | FY 2007<br>Estimate | FY 2007<br>Goal |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Percent of newly planted trees surviving after one year                      | 85%               | 90%               | 90%               | 90%               | 85%                 | 90%                 | 90%             |
| Percent of landscaping maintained according to standard                      | 90%               | 90%               | 90%               | 90%               | 90%                 | 90%                 | 95%             |
| Percent of residents that rate County landscape areas as "good to excellent" | N/A               | N/A               | N/A               | 80%               | 80%                 | 80%                 | 85%             |
| Landscape locations maintained   | 176               | 178               | 183               | 187               | 192                 | 195                 | 195             |
| Annual flower beds maintained  | 39                | 39                | 39                | 36                | 33                  | 30                  | 30              |
| Perennial flower beds maintained   | 31                | 31                | 36                | 43                | 51                  | 55                  | 55              |
| Greenhouse production of bedding plants                                      | 62,000            | 63,000            | 64,000            | 65,000            | 66,000              | 66,000              | 66,000          |

- Park renovations and beautification projects along street right-of-way have resulted in additional landscape areas that must be maintained. This is expected to continue in future years as park master planning efforts and neighborhood improvement projects are implemented.
- Growing the majority of annual and perennial flowers in the County's greenhouse results in average annual savings of \$14,000 compared to the cost of purchasing plants.

**Invasive Plant Control**

|   | FY 2002<br>Actual | FY 2003<br>Actual | FY 2004<br>Actual | FY 2005<br>Actual | FY 2006<br>Estimate | FY 2007<br>Estimate | FY 2007<br>Goal |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------|
| Number of acres where invasive plants were permanently removed (through chemical or mechanical methods)           | N/A               | 17.3              | 20.3              | 28                | 20                  | 20                  | 20              |
| Percent of program participants reporting increase in knowledge of invasive plant impacts and control techniques. | N/A               | N/A               | N/A               | 95%               | 95%                 | 95%                 | 95%             |
| Percent of participants reporting that program met or exceeded their expectations                                 | N/A               | N/A               | N/A               | 85%               | 85%                 | 85%                 | 90%             |
| Number of volunteer projects  | 13                | 21                | 26                | 39                | 30                  | 30                  | 30              |
| Yearly number of volunteer hours  | 654               | 1,346             | 2,150             | 1,613             | 1,800               | 1,800               | 1,800           |

- When this program was expanded in FY 2003 the goal listed in the Strategic Initiative Proposal was to implement "permanent" control measures (for invasive plants) on 12 acres per year. The goal has been consistently exceeded. The number of acres listed for permanent control each year represents "new" acreage (where control measures have not been implemented in the past).
- The high number of volunteer hours in FY 2004 (2,150) included 3 weeks of work by an Americorp group who contributed nearly 1,000 hours. In FY 2005 Americorp could only work 4 days, resulting in fewer total volunteer hours. Current/revised estimates for FY 2006 and FY 2007 (1,800) are based upon the assumption that we will be successful in obtaining the services of Americorp at a rate somewhere between what was obtained in FY 2004 and FY 2005. The actual number will not be known for FY 2006 until spring.

**FORESTRY AND LANDSCAPING PROGRAM**

**FUTURE BUDGET CONSIDERATIONS**

- The large increase in plan review requirements (as noted under “Forestry”) requires significant staff time. Additional resources are needed in order to perform timely reviews and conduct inspections for compliance with the Chesapeake Bay Preservation Ordinance necessary to preserve trees during construction and development projects. Enhanced plan review and inspection for tree preservation is supported by the Urban Forest Master Plan.