

**Anita Herrera, Chair, FCPF Board of Directors**

Good afternoon, Chairman McKay, Vice Chair Gross and District Supervisors. I am Anita Herrera and I serve as Chair of the Fairfax County Park Foundation Board. Thank you all for providing the opportunity for me and the Park Foundation's Vice Chair to speak with you today.

The Foundation supports the Park Authority by raising private funds, obtaining grants and creating partnerships that supplement tax dollars to meet our community's needs for park land, facilities and services. That need continues to grow with greater expectations and desires from the community to bridge the gap so all residents have access to recreational opportunities, places to play and exercise, along with open space areas and our incredible park amenities. Your constituents continue to demonstrate their love of the Fairfax County parks that are important to their quality of life!

An increasing number of our neighbors in every district make voluntary contributions to the extent of their ability while living through uncertain economic times. The Park Foundation's status as a 501(c)(3) independent nonprofit corporation enables individuals, organizations, businesses, and foundations to contribute monetary donations; grants; Donor Advised Funds; Vehicle Donations; and IRA Qualified Charitable Distribution Gifts.

I am very proud of our contributions over the years, which exceed \$14.5 million to date! Since our inception in 2001, I have seen remarkable growth in our capabilities and our focus. Each day we strive to maximize the benefits of our philanthropic efforts which relieves some pressure of the Park Authority.

Some pressure – but not all!

There are many accomplishments worthy of mention and I will touch on only a few. During the last fiscal year, the Park Foundation secured more than \$1,123,000 million from thousands of donors for 75 Park Authority programs events and projects.

More than 38,000 people enjoyed the ever-popular Summer Entertainment Series of 190 concerts, movies and shows held in every Supervisory District!

Generous donors have sponsored interactive STREAM (Science, Technology, RECREATION, Engineering, Arts and Math) Features for the future Stewardship Education Center at Ellanor C. Lawrence Park in Chantilly.

Looking ahead, we want to be a partner for the Park Authority's Mobile Nature Centers. A commitment has been secured to support environmental education and program supplies and we are seeking vehicles. If your Board of Supervisors would help provide resources for staff, this can become a reality as early as Fiscal Year 2024!

Many of the vast array of offerings through Fairfax County parks is already supplemented by the Foundation as well Friends Groups that support a specific

park or area of interest. We are here to do our part to help ensure that equity becomes reality.

The Park Foundation Board was an early adopter of the One Fairfax Racial and Social Equity Policy because it's the right thing to do. Our work to help ensure that ALL Fairfax County residents have access to high quality parks, and enriching environmental education is demonstrated with Rec-PAC summer camp support and PACT scholarships for children in homeless shelters and supportive housing. As previously shared, there is so much opportunity to do more with your support. These select accomplishments do narrow the gap between resources and demand for services, yet more is needed to meet the massive public demand from the Park Authority which will help Fairfax County to activate the One Fairfax Policy and the (Green/Environmental Initiative here.)

Please help us and the good work of the Park Authority to accomplish even more!  
Thank you.

**Laura Eakin Erlacher, Vice Chair, FCPF Board of Directors**

Good afternoon and thank you for the opportunity to address the Board on the Recommended Budget. My name is Laura Eakin Erlacher and I serve as Vice Chair of the Fairfax County Park Foundation Board of Directors.

I follow in the footsteps of others in my family to continue the legacy that began in 1951 when LeRoy Eakin Sr., my great grandfather affectionately known as “Daddy Roy”, donated 14 acres of land that became Fairfax County's first park. This was followed by the Eakin family’s gift of 240 additional acres which ultimately became the Fairfax County Park Authority.

Today, our popular parks, trails and open space are being utilized more than ever. Park benefits ranging from the tranquility of nature and to active exercise, support the collective mental and physical health of those in our community.

We know that tax dollars alone cannot support all that the Park Authority strives to accomplish. Donations to the Fairfax County Park Foundation support Park Authority staff in developing new as well as improving current programming and this support extends to new and existing facilities increasing outreach to more and more children and adults in the community.

Each year, the Park Foundation is proud to recognize meritorious individuals and organizations with the Eakin Philanthropy Award, presented each fall at the Elly Doyle Park Service Awards that honors the significant work of park volunteers. The recipients' generosity and commitment to our parks inspire others by example and further enrich our parks.

The Park Foundation's volunteer Board of Directors represents those in our community who offer a wealth of business experience, fundraising abilities, and a shared passion for our parks. *Our Board is part of a large cadre of more than 8,700 committed volunteers who help FCPA programs flourish.*

Our volunteer board and dedicated Foundation staff remain committed to continuing service as your partner to engage citizens and to support the long-term success of our valued park system.

As a board member at the Foundation's inception over twenty years ago, with a decade out of the area, to now, I'm more committed and enthusiastic about ensuring the Fairfax County community where I grew up spending countless hours at Park Authority fields, trails and rec centers, continues to thrive because of the Fairfax County Park system. You can make a lasting difference by funding the Mobile Nature Centers staff and other important requests of the Fairfax County Park Authority.

With my gratitude and on behalf of the foundation, Thank You.