

W.S.  
5-26-09

# Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

Matrix Efficiency and Best Practices Study

May 26, 2009



# Goals of the Matrix Analysis

- Perform a management study of all areas of RPCA operations
- Analyze organizational structure, service levels, programs and services offered, cost recovery policies, and capital investment needs
- Develop recommendations and an implementation plan

# Major Themes of the Matrix Report Findings

- RPCA Management Structure
- Recreation Programs and Services
- Park and Open Space Management
- Strategic Approach to the Arts
- Capital Planning

# Current Implementation Status

- To date, RPCA has put in place more than \$400k worth of the expenditure reductions specifically identified in the Matrix report.
- A major opportunity for future savings to the City lies with the Department's intention to move forward with new cost recovery models for numerous RPCA program areas.
- The RPCA FY 2010 operating budget included more than \$2.8 million in expenditure reductions. It is important to note that many efficiencies and service reductions far beyond the scope of the Matrix Report were made in order to balance the budget.



# Status / Categories of Matrix Recommendations

- Category 1: Enacted
- Category 2: Implementation Underway
- Category 3: Concur with Recommendation
- Category 4: Continuing to Study the Issue
- Category 5: Disagree with Recommendation

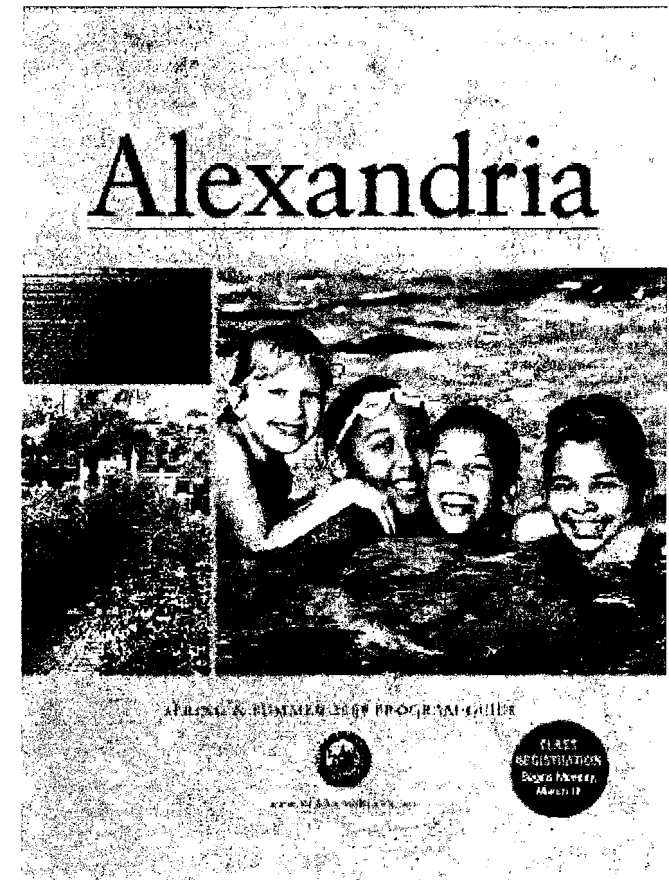
# RPCA Management Structure

- Adjustments to RPCA Senior Management Structure
  - Recommendation 1: Eliminate the Deputy Director of Arts and Marketing (category 4)
  - Recommendation 2: Reclassify Division Chief of Administrative Services to Deputy Director (category 5)
  - Recommendations 3 & 9: Transfer a Division Chief from Park Operations to Recreation Services (category 1)



# RPCA Management Structure

- Administrative Services Division with multiple upgraded positions
  - Recommendations 2 & 10-12:  
Model the Division after those in other large, complex City Departments (category 4 & 5)



# Recreation Programs and Services

- Enhanced Programming at the Neighborhood Recreation Centers
  - Recommendations 31-32, 36-37, & 42-43: Overall programs offered for youth, teens, and adults at the neighborhood centers should be expanded (category 3; budget implications not covered in the Matrix Report)
- Cost Recovery Based Program Concept
  - Recommendation 61: Recreation Services Programs should increase overall cost recovery (category 3)



# Recreation Programs and Services

- Out of School Time Programming for Youth
  - Recommendations 57-58: RPCA should turn over after-school childcare programs to non-profit agencies (category 4)
- Efficiencies and Service Level Changes
  - Recommendation 64: Create a more efficient model for providing custodial coverage at RPCA facilities (category 1)



# Park and Open Space Management

- Increase Frontline Staff and Adjust Contracted Service Levels
  - Recommendation 117: Standardize the level of horticultural service provided across the City to realize overall cost savings (category 2)
  - Recommendation 119: Move horticultural services from contracts to in-house (category 4)
  - Recommendations 120-124: Increase the overall level of frontline park maintenance staff while reducing park supervisory staff levels (category 3 & 4)



# Park and Open Space Management

- Fully Fund the Urban Forestry Program
  - Recommendation 105: Add two Tree Trimmer positions (category 3)
  - Recommendation 106: RPCA should increase the regular pruning schedule for mature street trees to a 5 to 7 year cycle (category 3)
  - Recommendation 112: Urban Forestry should develop a formal policies and procedures plan (category 1)



# Strategic Approach to the Arts

- Office of the Arts Created in September of 2008 (Recommendation 8; Category 1)
- Develop a Vision for the Arts
  - Recommendation 176: Already completed a community visioning plan for the arts (Lord Report)
- Public Art
  - Recommendation 178: Create a Public Art Master Plan (category 3)
  - Recommendations 181-183: Develop Funding Mechanisms (category 4)
    - Interdepartmental focus group to draft a policy for presentation to Council in Fall 2009
    - Incorporate from the beginning as part of the design process and establish clear guidelines for developers
    - Establish a Public Art Trust Fund (category 3)





# Strategic Approach to the Arts

- Provide Consistent and Quality Arts Programming Throughout the City
  - Recommendation 187: Collaborate with Recreation Services on arts education opportunities (category 2)
- Sponsorships
  - Recommendation 212: City should develop a formal Sponsorship Policy (category 4)
    - The Office of the Arts and Special Events are actively pursuing sponsorships today and will be working to develop a Departmental policy in the future
- Marketing & Public Relations Plans
  - Recommendation 194: Office of the Arts should develop a comprehensive Marketing Plan (category 3)
  - Recommendation 185: Publish a list of available “cultural spaces” in Alexandria (category 2)



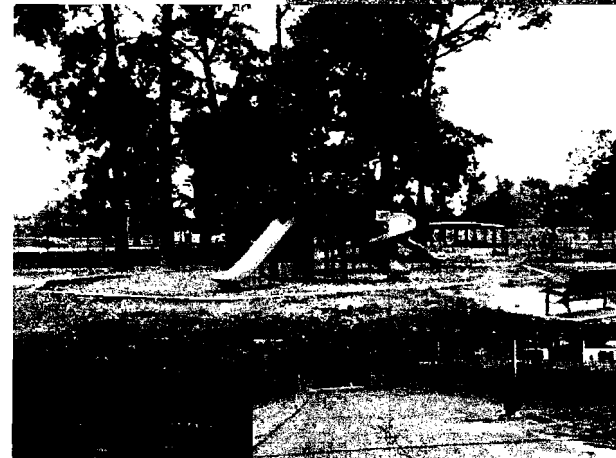
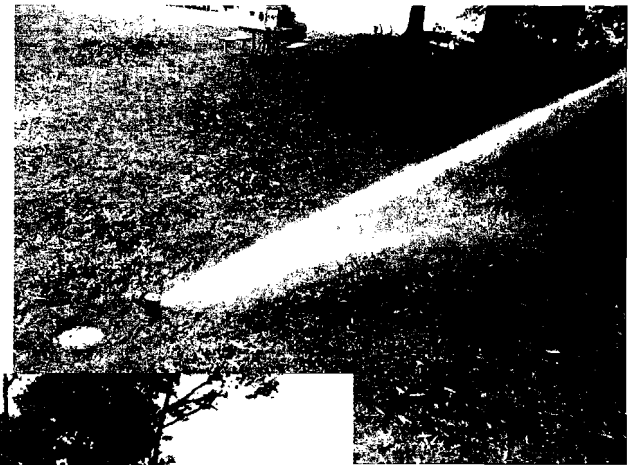
Poet Laureate Program



# Capital Planning

- Upgrade RPCA Infrastructure

- Recommendation 137: Acquire a computerized maintenance management system (category 2)
- Recommendation 150: Develop a 5-year plan for rehabilitating City parks (category 3)
- Recommendation 46: Develop recommendations for rehabilitation, replacement, or expansion of the City's public swimming pools (category 2)



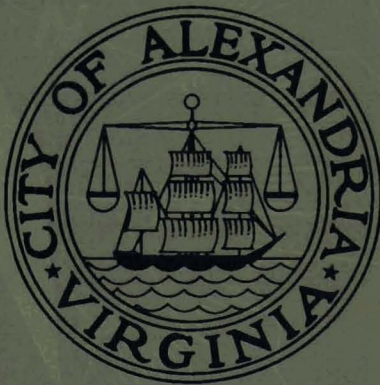
# Council Discussion

Thank you

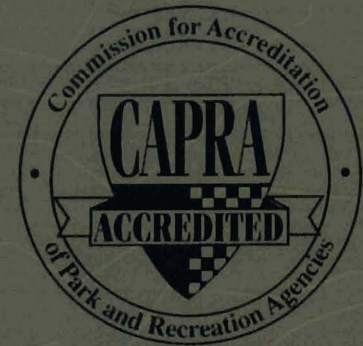
Questions and Comments

Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural  
Activities  
and  
The Office of Historic Alexandria

Fort Ward Park Update



City Council Work Session  
May 26, 2009





# Fort Ward Park – “Now”





# Fort Ward Park – “Then”





# Fort Ward – Pictures from the Past





# Fort Ward Park





# FORT WARD PARK





# Fort Ward Park

- ▶ 37 Acre Park
- ▶ Museum and Fort
- ▶ Adjacent 5 Acre Athletic Field/Tennis Court Area
- ▶ 115 Parking Spaces
- ▶ 64 Picnic Tables, 1 Shelter, 9 Seating Benches, 34 Trash Cans
- ▶ Dog Exercise Area
- ▶ Walking Path
- ▶ Amphitheater
- ▶ Restrooms

# Community Meetings 2009

February 18, 2009

March 4, 2009

March 18, 2009



## City of Alexandria, VA

City Hall, 301 King St. Room 3500, Alexandria, VA 22314

### News Release

#### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 12, 2009  
PIO#078-09/jlh

#### For More Information, Contact:

Jennifer Harris, Communications Officer  
703.838.5078 or [Jennifer.harris@alexandriava.gov](mailto:Jennifer.harris@alexandriava.gov)

#### City of Alexandria Schedules Community Meeting to Present Draft Action Plan on Fort Ward Park

The Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities and the Office of Historic Alexandria invite the public to attend the third community meeting regarding a draft action plan to address community concerns about current facilities and operations at Fort Ward Park, located at 4301 West Braddock Road. The meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, March 18 at 7 p.m. in the cafeteria of T. C. Williams High School, 3330 King St.

City staff will present findings generated from the two previous meetings, and the public will have the opportunity to comment on the draft action plan. Residents unable to attend the meeting can view the presentation online beginning Thursday, March 19, and may submit written comments to the Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities, Attention: Laura Durham, 1108 Jefferson St., Alexandria, VA 22314, or by e-mailing [laura.durham@alexandriava.gov](mailto:laura.durham@alexandriava.gov). The deadline for written comments is Friday, March 27.

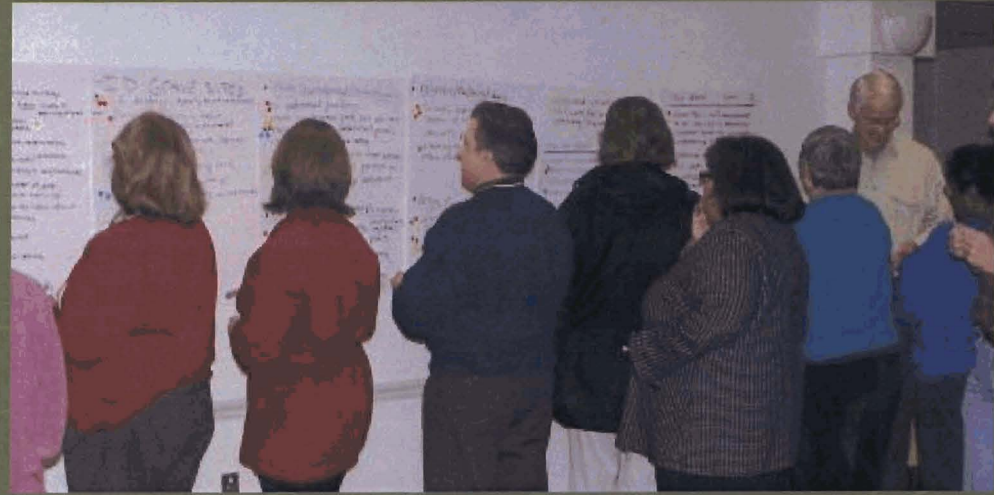
The City of Alexandria is committed to compliance with the City's Human Rights Code and the Americans with Disabilities Act. To request a reasonable accommodation or to request materials in an alternative format, please call Laura Durham, Open Space Coordinator, at 703.838.5095, ext. 350 (TTY 703.838.4902), or e-mail [laura.durham@alexandriava.gov](mailto:laura.durham@alexandriava.gov).

[www.alexandriava.gov](http://www.alexandriava.gov)



# Community Meetings 2009

- ▶ Group Discussions
- ▶ Priority Exercise





# Community Meeting Findings

## Fort Ward Park Priorities and Issues Identified by Community

HISTORIC/CULTURAL USES	#	PARK OPERATIONS	#	ACTIVE RECREATIONAL USES	#	PASSIVE/CASUAL USES	#	ENVIRONMENTAL/NATURAL RESOURCES	#	OTHER	#
1. African American History		1. Maintenance Facility		1. Picnics		1. Pedestrian Uses		1. Arboretum		1. Park Planning	
a) Signage of historical African American community, historic markers	19	a) Move maintenance yard, but do not replace w/ additional picnic or public access area	8	a) Noise-Noise problems with picnics, parties. Prohibit/ban amplified sound.	41	a) Maintain walking/running paths	6	a) Re-establish arboretum at Fort Ward as part of master plan	16	a) Develop Mission Statement	10
b) Restoration of community graves and artifacts	15	b) Regular cleaning and upkeep. Additional screening and buffer.	4	b) Alcohol-prohibit/ban alcohol/ABC permits	17	b) Walking Park is a plus	3	b) Master plan for Arboretum-include education and plant collections	12	b) Empower Working Group/Committee. ID short /long term goals, managed growth/stewardship	9
c) Exhibit for museum	15	c) Gravesites located inside yard, overlaps w/ yard, does facility need to be moved?	3	c) Overcrowding-control, reduce picnics, reservations, group size-no large groups.	15	c) Pedestrian/vehicular are shared-safety concerns. Have a pedestrian only 'loop'	3	2. Trees and Landscaping		c) Postpone facilities plan until master plan complete	6
d) African American History-Input and Research	11	d) Programming for Nursery-Now and when its gone	2	d) Limit/eliminate picnics in areas adjacent to residents	5	d) Identify walking and driving road	2	a) Replant trees lost to attrition	6	d) Rebalance use, ID how Park is used, under/ over utilized areas, prioritize use- passive/active	6
		e) Nursery used as staging then for growing.	1	e) Noise abatement w/ adequate staffing on weekends	4	e) Sidewalks	1	b) Trees/arboretum are non-existent	5	e) Communications w/ Public- Open Comm. w/ neigh.	5
2. Identification of Historic Areas		2. Rehabilitate Restrooms	14	f) Temporarily stop/reduce picnics to assess needs and to allow areas to regenerate	2	2. Parking availability for casual use	6	c) Azalea beds, festival	6	f) No changes in Park without public process or input, esp. adjacent neighborhoods	4
a) Grave sites, Pre-post Civil War, African American History, Regional significance, others	17			g) Increase reservation fees	1			d) Tree work, maintain existing azaleas, plants	3	2. Volunteer Ideas	
b) Identify w/ signage- visible and clear.	11	3. Security		h) Requirements for reservations-Alexandria residents/non-residents	1	3. Other		e) Document trees/historic trees	1	a) Users take home their own trash - "leave no trace"	5
c) Identify areas/gravesites through research, GPS	8	a) Security for Park	5	2. Parking/Vehicles		a) More Historical emphasis	3	3. Drainage		b) Coordinate volunteer corp. for park	2
3. Market/ Promote "Park Story"/ History		b) Closing times/Gates	3	a) Parking issues-spill-over into adjacent neighborhoods from events/picnics	7	b) More passive use	2	a) Drainage along east property line/ throughout park	4	c) Community Service Plan	1
a) Recognize historic significance of site. Valuable levels within park.	10	c) Police	1	b) Vehicular traffic-eliminate vehicles or relocate?	4			b) No more paving, impervious surfaces	4	d) Adopt a Garden to beautify	1
b) Tours: African American Community, Oral History, Walking Tour, Cell Phone technology	8	4. Communications/Assistance		c) Control access into park	4			c) Utilize stormwater as irrigation around loop	1	e) Users donate time	1
c) Begin planning, preparations for 150th Anniversary of the Civil War.	2	a) Who do you go to? What is the process for contacting authorities?	4	d) No additional parking	2					3. Misc.	
d) Appoint a committee to begin short/long term interpretive plan for 150th Civil War Annav.	3	b) Staff not on duty to help with concerns/ needs	2	3. Special Events						a) Drug Use/ Crime, Rats/Vermin, Parking (and speeding) for St. S./St. A.	3
e) History needs to be more accessible	1	5. Cemeteries/Gravesites		a) Large events, such as Jazz Festival- not historic, negative impact, unrelated to history	4					b) Pay Phone on Westside	3
f) Interpretive program	1	a) Damage to grave sites	3	4. Facilities						c) Park is a regional attraction and community asset	1
4. Interpretive Trail- of cultural, natural, Af. American resources	16	b) Better maintenance of Cemetery	2	a) No additional pavilions	5					d) Utility survey needed	1
5. Resource Management		c) Vegetative Screening	1	b) Lighting-lights are on and park is empty	3						
a) Preserve history in museum. Concerns about flooding in basement.	3	6. Park Amenities		c) Rehab/Upgrade Amphitheatre	1						
b) Message to "respect park and its' resources" ( Picnic users)	3	a) Site amenities/furnishings should be appropriate for a historic area.	4	d) Electrical Outlets for Special Events (controlled)	1						
c) Assess if historic and cultural resources are compatible w/recreation use	2	b) No Loud signage, etc.	3	5. Management							
d) Mission Statement to define Parks historical purpose/importance.	2	7. Other Maintenance/Operations		a) Determine max. limit to balance use and historic resources	3						
e) Go back to the original concept of park-historic with azalea beds, passive users.	2	a) Leaf blower noise-why are leaves picked up?	1								
		b) Incorporate green practices in maintenance	1								
		c) City vehicles take up visitor parking spaces	1								
		d) Do not increase parking.	1								

☐ Immediate & Short term actions  
☒ Ref responses from priority exercise

Dated 3/18/09



# Community Findings - Key Issue Areas

- ▶ Historic and Cultural
- ▶ Park Operations and Maintenance
- ▶ Active Recreation
- ▶ Passive/Casual Use
- ▶ Environmental/Natural Uses



# Historical/Cultural Uses

- ▶ African American History of Park
- ▶ Identification of Historic Areas
- ▶ Promotion of Park History
- ▶ Interpretive Trail
- ▶ Resource Management





# Park Operations and Maintenance

- ▶ Maintenance Facility
- ▶ Rehabilitate Restrooms
- ▶ Communications/Assistance
- ▶ Security
- ▶ Cemeteries/Gravesites
- ▶ Park Amenities





# Active Recreational Uses

- ▶ Picnics
- ▶ Parking/Vehicles
- ▶ Special Events
- ▶ Available Facilities
- ▶ Site Management





# Passive/Casual Uses

- ▶ Pedestrian Paths
- ▶ Parking Availability for Casual Use





# Environmental/Natural Resources

- ▶ Arboretum
- ▶ Trees and Landscaping
- ▶ Drainage





# Other Issues

- ▶ Park Planning
- ▶ Volunteer Ideas
- ▶ Miscellaneous Concerns: Drug Use, Crime, Rats, Pay Phones, Utilities

# Balancing User Needs





# Balancing User Needs

- ▶ Interim actions and plan for Spring/Summer 2009 season
- ▶ RPCA and OHA coordinated future park planning efforts

# Spring 2009 Actions

## Park Management

- Park manager on duty (weekends and holidays)
- Picnic reservation system
  - - 4 hour block rentals with deposit
  - - defined interim park capacity, 350 maximum
- Improved signage for alcohol and noise
- Removal of picnic area 1 shelter and rental use



# Spring 2009 Actions

## ► Park Operations and Maintenance:

- Relocation of some of the horticultural and maintenance operations,
- Clean-up of maintenance yard,
- Seasonal weekend assistant park manager added,
- Defined maintenance hut use,
- New trash can and pick-up program for museum use
- Amphitheater area used for maintenance operations,
- Planned protection of known grave sites and stones,
- Drafting MOU between ROCA and OHA – working group meeting now, interim “no ground disturbance” policy,
- Defined interim general mowing, maintenance and repair program



# Spring 2009 Gravesite Protection



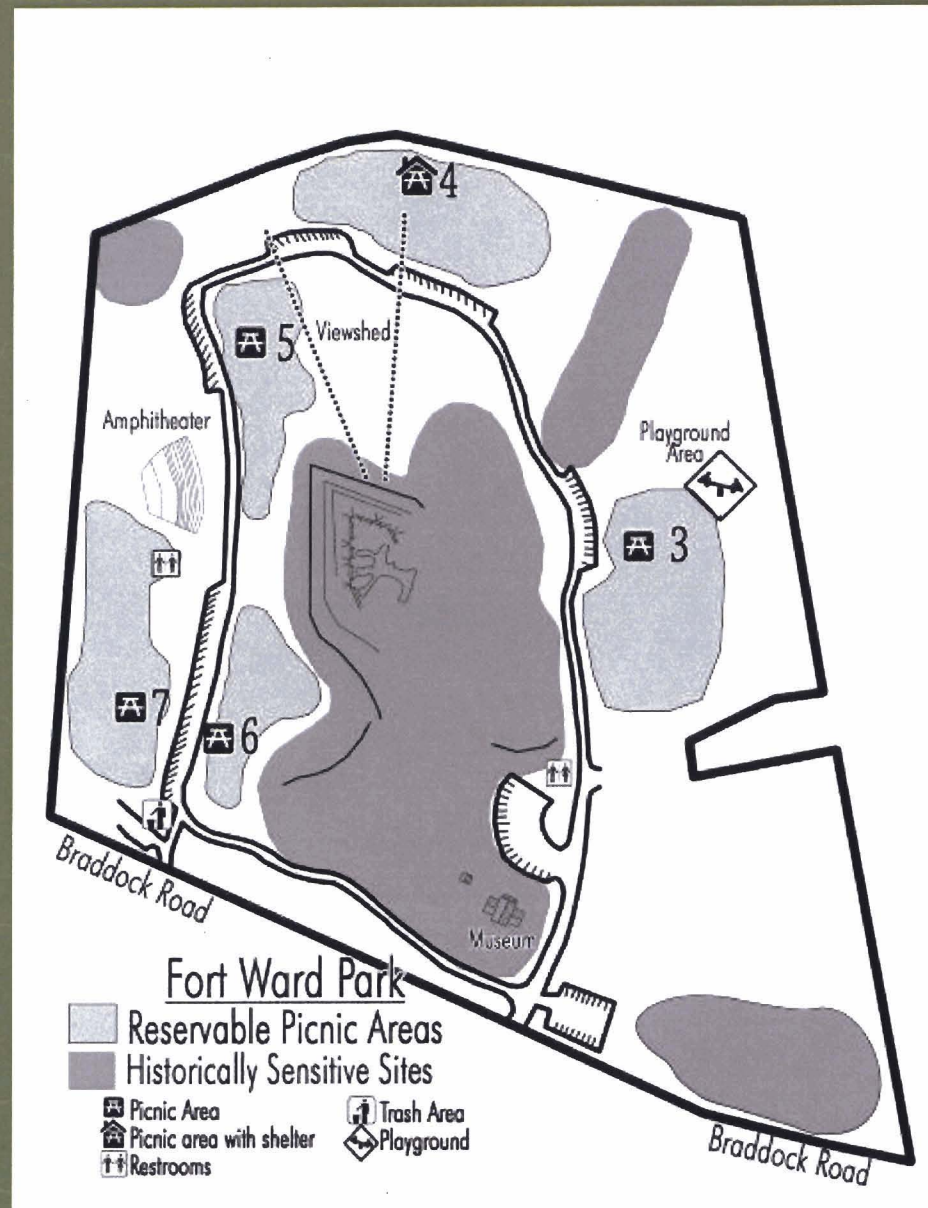
**Gravesites April 2009**



**Gravesites May 2009 – roped off**



# Spring 2009 Reservation Map





# Park Entrance

## Spring 2009





# Park Entrance

Spring 2009





# Parking/Traffic Improvements





# Maintenance Yard



**January 2009**



**May 2009**



# Maintenance Yard



Clare & Robert Adams Grave Site

**January 2009**



**May 2009**



# Maintenance Yard



**January 2009**



**May 2009**



# Picnic Area 1



**Spring 2008**



**Spring 2009**



# Picnic Area 4



**April 2008**



**May 2009**



# Picnic Area 5



**April 2008**



**May 2009**



# Fort Ward Athletic Field



**April 2008**



**Spring 2009**



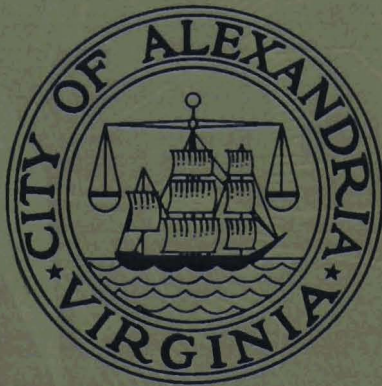
# Conclusion

## Next steps

- ▶ Fort Ward Park and Museum work group – OHA
- ▶ OHA cultural resource investigation – summer graduate research intern
- ▶ Archeological phase one survey to begin FY2010
- ▶ RPCA gather data on park use throughout 2009 season
- ▶ Potential establishment of a stakeholders' advisory group
- ▶ Future master planning effort for the park



Thank you



City Council May 26, 2009

