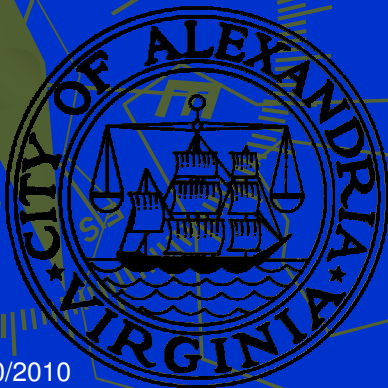


# Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities

## The Office of Historic Alexandria

Fort Ward Park  
Presentation to Ad Hoc Committee



3/20/2010

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# Department Mission

## ▶ RPCA

- The mission of Recreation, Parks & Cultural Activities is to promote a vibrant, safe and attractive city of opportunity through the development of effective and efficient recreation programs, facilities and parks for all citizens and residents to enjoy.

## ▶ OHA

- The Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA) is responsible for the stewardship and promotion of the historic City through the preservation of the City's historic and archaeological sites, artifacts and records, and for the use of these resources in accordance with professional standards of scholarship and museum procedures.

# Possible Park Mission Ideas

## ▶ RPCA

- The Fort Ward Park serves to preserve the area in and around the museum and historic site as a passive and casual use park that reflects the landscape of the historic period interpreted, significant tree canopy, drainage ways and remaining natural habitat.

## ▶ OHA

- The Fort Ward Museum and Historic Site interprets American history of the 1860-1870 period, focusing on the Civil War defenses of Washington, D.C., Fort Ward as a military site, wartime Alexandria, and the experiences of Alexandrians during the Union occupation of the City. As an integral part of its mission, the Museum collects, preserves and interprets historic artifacts relating to the American Civil War and explains the significance of artifacts in the context of exhibitions and study collections.



# FORT WARD PARK CONTEXT





# Factors for Success

- ▶ Effective coordination and collaboration between departments providing services in and to the park
- ▶ Preserve existing historical artifacts
- ▶ Future improvement consistent architecturally with historic theme
- ▶ Future improvement has to be consistent with capacity of existing infrastructure
- ▶ No net increase in storm water run off
- ▶ Maintain strong importance of the park as a walking and jogging area for the community

# Departments Delivering Service

## ▶ RPCA

- Daily and seasonal park maintenance and management to support passive and casual park uses

## ▶ OHA

- Museum, fort and park historical preservation, interpretation and operation

## ▶ T&ES

- Park roadway maintenance, pick-up and disposal from park dumpster, and stormwater management

## ▶ General Services

- Building maintenance and repair



**EXISTING PARK CONFIGURATION**

**Picnic Pavilion**

**Civil War Historically Significant Areas**

**Playground**

**Amphitheatre**

**Restroom 2**

**Reserved Picnic Areas  
St. Stephens queuing**

**Cemetery**

**Adams Grave sites**

**Restroom/Office**

**Parking Area 2**

**Fort Ward Museum**

**Parking Area 1**

# Park Operations

- ▶ Mowing
- ▶ Leaf removal / snow removal
- ▶ Tree work-pruning and removal
- ▶ Watering and Irrigation
- ▶ Erosion Control
- ▶ Trash Pickup
- ▶ Cleaning and Restocking of Restrooms
- ▶ Reservations/picnic groups
- ▶ Park rules enforcement
- ▶ Park Building Maintenance
- ▶ Opening and Closing of Roadway Loop for walkers and parks control



# Park Infrastructure needs

- ▶ Maintain roadway
- ▶ Maintain amphitheatre and storage area
- ▶ Maintain staff facilities/office space
- ▶ Maintain and renovate restrooms
- ▶ Maintain parking areas – adequate for daily use
- ▶ Explore parking for special events
- ▶ Maintain existing pavilion
- ▶ Review playground location

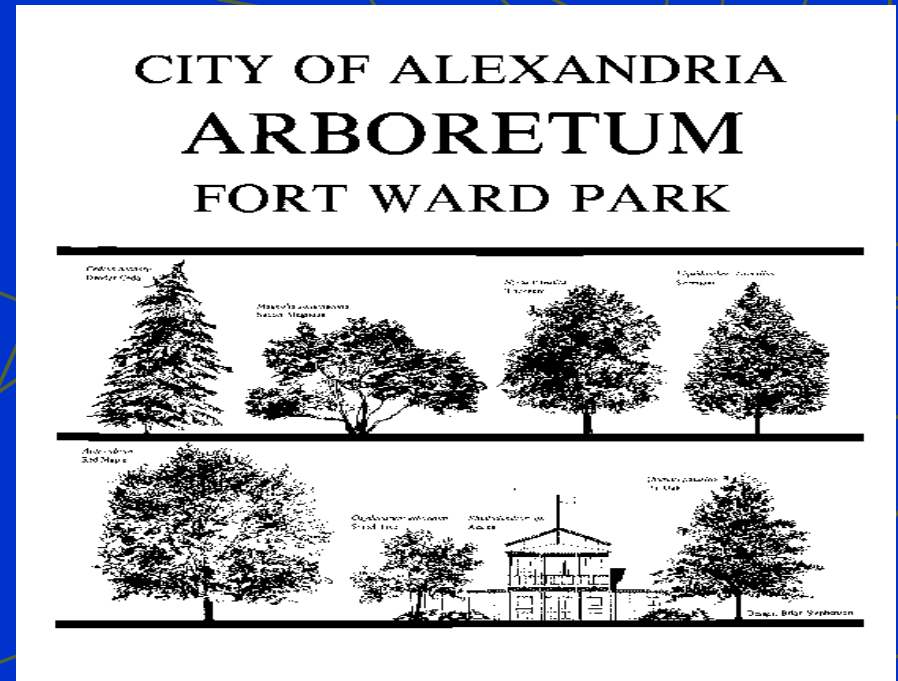
# Improvements 2009-2010

- ▶ Weekend Manager on Duty Program
- ▶ Revised Reservation Policy and increased rental fees
- ▶ Reduction of Reservation Areas to Five reserved areas with a limit of 350 people in the rental areas in any 4 hour block
- ▶ Check-in Booth
- ▶ Speed Bumps and Signs for walkers
- ▶ Information Kiosks with posted regulations
- ▶ Moved the Horticulture /Nursery function off site
- ▶ Relocated Park Maintenance facilities

# Fort Ward Arboretum

Fort Ward Park was designated as the City's Arboretum in 1983 to provide and include:

- ▶ The City's major horticultural center.
- ▶ Diverse collection of woody plants.
- ▶ Known for its handsome collection of azaleas, rhododendrons and camellias.
- ▶ Formerly the center for City Arbor Day activities and an annual Azalea Festival.





# Current Condition and Maintenance

## ▶ Condition

- Early succession secondary growth forest.
  - ▶ Predominately Virginia pine, black locust, black cherry and Eastern red cedar.
  - ▶ Some mature hardwoods; oak, ash and hickory.
  - ▶ Approximately 120 different species including non natives added to the collection over the years.

## ▶ Maintenance

- Limited to the removal of hazardous trees.
  - ▶ Primarily black locust and black cherry
  - ▶ Pines and leyland cypress subject to storm damage.

# Urban Forestry Master Plan 2009 Recommendations for Fort Ward

- ▶ Develop a master plan for the park in which woody plants and trees are used to add to the resources of the historic site.
- ▶ Install collections of woody plants that are well adapted to Alexandria gardens.
- ▶ Promote the educational opportunities that the arboretum can provide to the visitors, residents and students of Alexandria.

# Special Event Management.

## RPCA manages the annual Jazz Festival and Twilight Concert Series

- No picnic reservations permitted during special events
- Parking agreements with Minnie Howard and St. Stephen's schools for special events