

NOVA Parks Strategic Plan Development RFP

ADDENDUM #1: Questions Received as of April 24, 2026

- 1. Do you think there might be strategic pillars and objectives from your previous plan (2023-2027) you may wish to retain/evolve? Other than your scorecard, do you have materials measuring the progress/outcomes on that plan?**

We expect that the Board will be interested in retaining some objectives from the current plan, or potentially evolving them as we move forward into our next plan. The attached memo was sent to the board in March assessing the status of the current plan.

- 2. Have you already designated a strategic planning project team within NOVA parks to work closely with the strategic planning consultant, and if so, who is on that team? Typically we meet with the project team biweekly throughout the engagement.**

We have established a committee of a few members of our HQ Leadership Team and several park managers who are reviewing the proposals we have received and making recommendations to me. We expect to retain that committee during the planning process to work closely with our selected partner.

- 3. Do you have a steering committee (i.e. a slightly larger group of internal stakeholders from staff and Board) in mind that you would like to be involved in the strategic planning process on a more intermittent basis i.e. at key milestones of the planning process?**

Our current thinking is that we will convene committees within our staff to engage on various aspects of the plan (likely aligned with our various businesses) and perform regular check-ins with the board throughout the process.

- 4. What is the budget range?**

NOVA Parks' Board is still considering our budget (they adopt in May). We have two different budget items in the proposed budget that we will likely draw from to fund this work. Those items total to \$70K.

5. Do you want any interviews among your internal stakeholders, or just the 4 strategic planning sessions among sub-groups of staff?

We envisioned 4 strategic planning sessions among sub-groups of staff, but we're open to alternative suggestions

6. Beyond the 10 interviews with officials and partners, do you want any other community engagement, i.e. community workshops, survey, or other forms of engagement (such as speaking to visitors on site at your locations)?

For the past plan, we conducted a survey of the public and the results were provided as an input to the planning process. We expect to include something similar, which may be supported in-house.

7. Regarding the (4) to (5) staff groups the consultants will work with virtually to help with the drafting, revising and editing of the plan goals and objectives (approximately 30 hours), we typically work with staff on action planning, once the broader goals and objectives of the plan have been determined by the Board (and/or the strategic planning steering committee, which can include select staff) at the strategic planning workshop/retreat. At that point, staff work to develop more refined objectives and develop more granular tasks to achieve the objectives. Does that approach align with your thinking?

Yes. That makes sense.

8. We typically conduct an environmental scan. Since this is not mentioned in the RFP, is this something you would like as part of the strategic planning process?

Yes.

9. Are you considering out of state applicants?

Yes, we are definitely happy to consider out-of-state bidders. As noted, there are portions of the work that will need to occur in-person, but the remainder could be done from anywhere.



MEMO

To: NOVA Parks Board of Directors
From: Justin M. Wilson, Executive Director
Date: March 11, 2026
Re: Strategic Planning Process

Recommendation: Approve the schedule and process for the development of the next NOVA Parks Strategic Plan and accept the update on the status of the current strategic plan.

Strategic Plan Alignment: N/A

Financial Impact: The proposed FY 2027 Budget includes \$25,000 to support expenses related to the development of this new plan. The financial impact of implementation of the plan will be assessed during plan development.

Discussion: In July of 2022, the Board adopted our 2023 – 2027 Strategic Plan. This plan laid out an aggressive vision for NOVA Parks as an agency by 2027.

A year from now, staff will present a budget proposal for Fiscal Year 2028. That proposal will be informed by the strategic direction for the next era of NOVA Parks. Over the next year, we will craft a Strategic Plan for FY 2028 – FY 2032.

The operating budget proposed for Fiscal Year 2027 includes resources to support a strategic planning process to occur over the next year. Those resources will support both in-house and consultant support to partner with the NOVA Parks Board in development and adoption of this new plan.

As the process is underway, we will provide updates to the board and executive committee at regularly scheduled meetings.

While we will adapt and adjust the timing as it progresses, we suggest the following schedule and milestones for this process:

City of Alexandria

Sean Kumar
Scott Price

Arlington County

Paul Ferguson
Michael A. Nardolilli

Fairfax County

Patricia Harrison
Stella Koch

City of Fairfax

Mark Chandler
Douglas Stewart

City of Falls Church

Paul Baldino
David Gustafson

Loudoun County

James Bonfils
Eric Woodall

Date / Timeframe	Milestone / Activity
March 19, 2026	NOVA Parks Board Endorses Strategic Plan Process
April 15, 2026	All-Staff Meeting (Initial Staff Input on Strategic Plan)
Before July 2026	Selection of Strategic Plan Consultant
July – August 2026	Public Surveys & Stakeholder Interviews (Board members, local elected officials, appointed officials, NOVA Parks staff, partner organizations)
September – October 2026	Board Strategic Plan Retreat
November 2026 – January 2027	Plan Development
February 2027	Public Release of Final Draft Strategic Plan
March 2027 Board Meeting	Adoption of FY 2028 – FY 2032 Strategic Plan

Before we can plan for what the future may hold, we must also assess our progress in achieving the vision we crafted in 2022.

Our current plan is divided into five strategic pillars (Environment, Belonging, Our Team, Building the Future and Revenue & Efficiency). Within each pillar there are a series of goals and specific objectives that support the achievement of those goals.

The plan includes 88 specific objectives. As of today:

- We have completed 39 objectives.
- Another 39 are in progress and on track to be completed by the end of 2027
- The remaining 10 items are at-risk of not being achieved for various reasons.

These are the objectives that are at-risk of not being achieved:

Objective Number	Description
1.1.1	Plant more than 50,000 new trees by 2027.
1.5.1	Continue to measure NOVA Parks’ annual Carbon Footprint with the goal of a sustained two percent annual reduction by 2027.
1.6.1	Invest in low-impact, green building techniques for new structures of over \$1 million.
4.1.1	Develop financing plans for Strategic Initiative Projects <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financing for W&OD Visitor Center and Gateway wetlands park will be developed by 2023. • Financing for Pohick Bay Camping will be developed by 2024. • Financing for Occoquan Adventure Center will be developed by 2025. • Financing for Hemlock improvements will be developed by 2026.
4.2.1	Partner with the Northern Virginia Transportation Authority to design and expand the capacity of the W&OD Trail in congested urban areas,

	<p>building on the success of the Falls Church section.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arlington Section design by 2024. • Vienna Section design by 2027. • Reston/Herndon Section design by 2027.
4.2.2	Develop plans for Arlington County Dual Trails along the W&OD and initiate community engagement by 2024, and construct when permits are approved.
4.4.2	Engage with the leaders in the City of Fairfax to plan and implement the Gateway Regional Parks Wetlands Project by 2024.
4.5.2	Create new and improved trails with an investment of over \$6 million by 2027.
4.6.1	Engage public in visioning the future of Cameron Run in coordination with the City by 2025.
5.1.4	Create destination camping facilities by 2026.

These are the objectives that are on-track for completion:

Objective Number	Description
1.2.2	Expand and acquire at least five new properties by 2027.
1.3.2	Open the Cattail Ordinary property as a passive use park by 2027.
1.3.3	Improve habitat by identifying and restoring at least ten areas with native plantings by 2027.
1.5.5	Install new electric vehicle charging stations at a minimum one park by 2024 and at five parks by 2027.
1.6.2	Expand solar energy use to three additional parks by 2027.
1.6.3	Reduce carbon footprint with more efficient HVAC systems throughout the system with \$100,000 per year in Capital funding for upgraded systems.
1.7.3	Build community partnerships to generate invasive species volunteers at four new parks by 2027.
2.1.2	Partner with the Korean American Cultural Committee on efforts around the Korean Bell Garden focusing on the 2026 fifteenth anniversary.
2.1.3	Identify groups to partner toward increased Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion by 2027.
2.2.1	Build and maintain a minimum of (6) significant partnerships with organizations focused on telling a more inclusive history with cultural resonance by 2027.
2.3.1	Develop and engage existing friends groups and community partners to better advance the park system by 2025.
2.4.1	Expand Black & Hispanic birding programs by hosting programs at a minimum of (3) new locations by 2026.
2.4.2	Expand cultural festivals/activities with at least three new groups by 2027.
2.4.4	Provide a minimum of seven innovative and experiential history programs dedicated to the diverse stories and events connected to NOVA Parks sites by 2027.

2.5.2	Substantially improve ADA accessibility throughout the parks with \$400,000 per year in budgeted improvements starting in 2023.
2.5.3	Create a scholarship program to remove economic barriers for select NOVA Parks outdoor activities and camps by 2023.
2.5.4	Expand and update customer service training for the front-line team to include diversity awareness by 2024.
2.6.1	Initiate leadership planning for regional efforts to mark the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence in 2023, and support through 2026.
2.7.1	Review park policies and practices to identify and remove systemic barriers to inclusion by 2024.
3.1.1	Diversity hiring training for team engaged in recruitment at least every other year starting in 2023.
3.1.2	Review progress based on team diversity percentages data from 2023, 2025, and 2027.
3.1.3	Create proactive recruitment strategies to build the workforce for tomorrow by 2023.
3.1.7	Expand outreach to area universities to attract interns and recruit team members by 2025.
3.2.4	Review and implement effective seasonal and part-time compensation annually, keeping ahead of changes to minimum wage, starting in 2023.
3.3.2	Develop a plan for multiple annual team building events by 2023.
3.3.3	Develop a program for recruiting full-time team members from the ranks of seasonal and part-time employees by 2023.
3.5.1	Develop preferred training goals for key operational positions by 2024.
4.3.1	Maintain Capital Maintenance funding at a level to support the upkeep of current facilities.
4.3.2	Expand funding for energy improvements like HVAC, insulation, Solar, EV, and Charging stations starting in 2024.
4.3.3	Invest in the preservation and restoration of historic structures.
4.3.6	Improve Campground WiFi by 2024.
4.3.7	Study improved technology in the areas of both waterpark pumps stations and golf course irrigation by 2026.
4.5.1	Continued implementation of NOVA Parks ADA Plan for existing facilities while ensuring all new amenities meet required standards for accessibility.
5.1.1	Enhance the performance of NOVA Parks' light shows with a goal of increasing revenue by 3% annually from 2023 to 2027.
5.1.3	Offer facilities/programs for corporate team building/retreats by 2027.
5.3.1	Implement three new process automation improvements by 2027.
5.3.2	Team training to include agency budget development and accounting by 2027.
5.3.4	Fully support all debt service obligations through the Enterprise Fund for the River View and Climb Upton by 2023.
5.5.1	Create key information dashboards for Park Managers by 2024.

These are the objectives that are completed:

Objective Number	Description
1.1.2	Create or redesign trail systems at Beaverdam and along the Bull Run/Occoquan trail with the goal of making them environmentally sustainable. Phased improvements will be measured in 2023, 2025, and 2027.
1.2.1	Update the criteria for determining lands to target for acquisition by 2023.
1.3.1	Target land acquisitions that offer the potential for significant habitat restoration by 2025.
1.4.1	Implement resource banking at select NOVA Parks, including Piscataway Crossing, Bull Run, Algonkian, Springdale, and Gilberts Corner Regional Parks, by 2025.
1.5.2	Introduce electric vehicles into the fleet starting in 2024.
1.5.3	Introduce electric mowers into use by 2024 (if commercial-grade units are available).
1.5.4	Convert golf carts at Brambleton from gas to electric by 2024.
1.5.6	Implement three new IT solutions that reduce vehicular trips and/or paper use by 2025.
1.7.1	Complete the prescribed invasive species management plan at Upton Hill and Occoquan by 2023.
1.7.2	Implement accelerated invasive species work along the W&OD Trail by 2024.
1.8.1	Develop six nature-focused interpretive efforts geographically spread throughout the region that educate and engage the public in interactive ways about ecosystems by 2024.
1.8.2	Expand program offerings through the Roving Naturalist to engage the next generation of conservationists by 2024.
1.8.3	Develop and Implement a Trash Free Park program that will include a pilot section of the W&OD by 2025.
2.1.1	Partner with NAACP chapters and similar organizations to further build inclusive programs by 2025.
2.2.2	Promote Black history displays at Bull Run Regional Park by 2023.
2.4.3	Unveil Native-American displays at Piscataway Crossing Regional Park by 2023.
2.4.5	Identify and perform outreach to Title 1 schools and economically disadvantaged populations to improve quality of life through parks, programs, and resource conservation in areas near regional parks by 2027.
2.5.1	Enhance engagement with friends groups and other partner organizations with the hiring of a Manager of Community Engagement by 2023.
2.6.2	Develop a calendar of events and displays related to the themes of liberty and justice by 2024.
2.7.2	Provide Spanish website translation by 2025.
3.1.4	Create Customer Service Training 2.0 by 2024.

3.1.5	Create Employee Committee to make recommendations on seasonal recruitment and retention by 2024.
3.1.6	Further develop an incentive system for team referrals by 2023.
3.2.1	Conduct a full-time compensation study by 2023.
3.2.2	Take measures to address competitive compensation based on the study by 2023.
3.2.3	Study pension plan changes designed to attract and retain employees by 2024.
3.3.1	Improve our team morale by empowering the employee committee on uniforms to make recommendations toward having outstanding uniforms by 2023.
3.4.1	Create an internal newsletter to engage and inform our team of accomplishments and initiatives by 2023.
3.4.2	Reinstate the annual All-Team Meeting to increase team engagement and communication by 2023.
3.5.2	Develop professional development and skills training opportunities for all team levels by 2025.
4.3.4	Install a new fire suppression system in the Carlyle House by 2023.
4.3.5	Fund endowment for Capital with non-recurring revenue sources starting in 2023.
4.4.1	Open Reservoir Park at Beavertdam in Ashburn in partnership with Loudoun Water by 2024.
5.1.2	Increase retail sales revenue by 5% annually by 2024.
5.2.1	Expand digital marketing and the use of data to reach new and existing customers by 2023.
5.2.2	Promote the unique brand identity of NOVA Parks by 2025.
5.3.3	Fund an endowment to support capital projects from non-recurring revenues like telecom and natural resource banking starting in 2023.
5.4.1	Expand the use of preventive maintenance software to ensure quality park facilities for the community by 2025.
5.6.1	Implement an intranet for NOVA Parks by 2024.