

# Athletic Field Program

## Program Description

The Athletic Field Program facilitates the development, maintenance, and replacement of athletic fields throughout the County. This program also includes synthetic turf fields, field lighting replacement, and other sports programs. The Program represents a coordinated effort between the Park Authority, the Department of Neighborhood and Community Services (NCS), and Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS).

## Program Initiatives

The Board of Supervisors identified the maintenance and development of athletic fields at Fairfax County Public Schools and Park Authority properties as a critical requirement. In FY 2006, the Board approved the implementation of an Athletic Services Fee, dedicated primarily for the enhancement of maintenance of school athletic fields, the implementation of synthetic turf fields, and custodial support for indoor sports organizations. A significant General Fund contribution to athletic field maintenance is approved annually as well.



The maintenance of athletic fields generally includes trash removal, provision of portable toilets, field lighting, fencing, irrigation, bleachers and player benches, mowing, infield prepping and renovations, full-service turf grass programs (fertilizer, soil amendments, soil samples, weed, and insect control) for parks and high schools, and aeration and seeding for all other schools. Maintenance efforts also include a schedule for recently completed irrigation and lighting replacement projects at County/FCPA fields and irrigation systems on FCPS fields. These maintenance efforts improve safety standards, enhance playing conditions, and increase user satisfaction. Funding in the amount of \$8,543,338 has been included for the athletic field maintenance and sports program in FY 2024. This level of funding is supported by a General Fund transfer of \$7,068,338 and revenue generated from the Athletic Services Fee in the amount of \$1,475,000. Of the Athletic Services Fee total, \$800,000 will be dedicated to the turf field replacement program, \$275,000 will be dedicated to custodial support for indoor sports organizations, \$250,000 will be dedicated to maintenance of school athletic fields, \$75,000 will be dedicated to synthetic turf field development, and \$75,000 will partially fund the Youth Sports Scholarship Program. The Athletic Service Fee revenue is based on a rate of \$5.50 per participant per season and \$15 for tournament team fees for diamond field users and indoor gym users, and a rate of \$8.00 per participant per season and \$50 tournament team fees for rectangular field users. The increase for rectangular field users will specifically support the turf field replacement fund.

There are 103 synthetic turf fields throughout the County, of which 24 are FCPS stadium fields and 79 are County Park/FCPS non-stadium fields. There are over 130,000 youth and adult participants annually on rectangular fields that benefit from synthetic turf fields. Synthetic turf fields allow for year-round use in most weather, which increases playable hours, provides playing surfaces and conditions that are similar to grass fields, and eliminates the need for watering, mowing, and fertilizing. Increased annual funding has been provided to begin to address the growing need for field replacement and to establish a 10-year replacement schedule. The first synthetic turf field replacement efforts began in 2013 for the first two fields developed. Most manufacturers provide an eight-year warranty for a properly maintained synthetic turf field; however, it is a generally accepted practice to assume a life expectancy of the synthetic turf field of no more than 10 years. Due to the growth in the number of synthetic turf fields, staff are reviewing options to fund the growing annual demand for turf field replacements.

## Current Project Descriptions

1. **Athletic Fields - APRT Amenity Maintenance (Countywide):** This project provides for annual routine maintenance of girls' softball field amenities on selected Fairfax County Public School sites. These amenities, such as dugouts, fencing, and irrigation systems, were added or constructed by the County based on recommendations by the citizen-led Action Plan Review Team (APRT) to reduce disparities in the quality of fields assigned to boys' baseball and girls' softball organizations. Routine maintenance is necessary both to maintain equity and to ensure safety. Funding of \$50,000 for this project has been included in FY 2024. This project is supported entirely by the General Fund.

2. **Athletic Fields - FCPS Field Maintenance (Countywide):** This is a continuing project to provide for the mowing of athletic fields at FCPS elementary and middle schools. This project is designed to improve the quality of the school fields playing condition, improve safety standards, and increase user satisfaction. The program provides for mowing of the fields, as well as the aeration and over-seeding of the fields. These services are provided by the FCPA through established service contracts. Funding of \$1,465,338 for this project has been included in FY 2024. This project is supported entirely by the General Fund.



3. **Athletic Fields - FCPS Lighting Upgrades (Countywide):** This project provides for the continuous upgrades associated with athletic field lighting at Fairfax County Public Schools middle and high schools. Funding supports the replacement and repair schedule for existing lighting systems. The school system's Office of Design and Construction Services ensures lighting standards are maintained. Funding supports ongoing installation, replacement, and repair projects, and is coordinated by the DNCS. Funding of \$250,000 for this project has been included in FY 2024. This project is supported entirely by the General Fund.

4. **Athletic Fields - Park Field Maintenance (Countywide):** This is a continuing project to provide maintenance on athletic fields managed by FCPA. Funding is included for continued personnel and operating costs associated with the program including electricity for lighted facilities, maintenance of lighting systems, water for irrigated facilities, irrigation system maintenance, minor ball field repairs, and capital equipment. This program is designed to improve playing conditions and to achieve safety standards. Funding of \$2,878,000 for this project has been included in FY 2024. This level of funding represents an increase of \$89,000 to support full year maintenance responsibilities at the new Patriot Park North complex. This project is supported entirely by the General Fund.

5. **Athletic Services Fee - Custodial Support (Countywide):** This is a continuing project to provide custodial support for indoor gyms used by community-based indoor athletic organizations during their assigned primary scheduling season. Funding of \$275,000 for this project has been included in FY 2024. This project is supported entirely by the Athletic Services Fee.

6. **Athletic Services Fee - FCPS Diamond Fields (Countywide):** This is a continuing project to supplement the level of maintenance by FCPA on athletic fields at FCPS sites, by providing a consistent mowing frequency schedule for high school diamond fields, as well as diamond infield preparation twice a week for elementary, middle, and high school fields. This project also provides funding for post-season field treatment standards and a maintenance schedule for recently completed irrigation and lighting replacement projects at County/FCPA fields and irrigation systems on FCPS fields. Funding of \$1,000,000 for this project has been included in FY 2024. This project is supported by \$250,000 in the Athletic Services Fee revenue and \$750,000 from the General Fund.
7. **Athletic Services Fee - Sports Scholarships (Countywide):** The Youth Sports Scholarship Program provides support for youth from low-income families who want to participate in community-based sports programs. Funding of \$300,000 for this project is included in FY 2024, including \$75,000 based on revenue generated from the Athletic Services Fee, and \$225,000 supported by the General Fund.
8. **Athletic Services Fee - Turf Field Development (Countywide):** This is a continuing project to facilitate the development of synthetic turf fields at Park and FCPS sites. Funding of \$75,000 for this project has been included in FY 2024. This project, supported entirely by the Athletic Services Fee, was previously funded in the amount of \$200,000; however, funding of \$125,000 was redirected to the Turf Field Replacement Program beginning FY 2017.
9. **Athletic Services Fee - Turf Field Replacement (Countywide):** This project provides for the establishment of a synthetic turf field replacement program. There are a total of 103 synthetic turf fields throughout the County, of which 24 are FCPS fields and 79 are County fields. Funding is required to begin to address the growing need for field replacement and to establish a replacement schedule over the next 10 years. Staff has developed a 10-year replacement plan for the current inventory; however, additional funding will be required in the future to continue the gradual replacement of turf fields as they reach the end of their useful life. An amount of \$2,250,000 is included for the turf field replacement program in FY 2024, including \$800,000 from the Athletic Services Fee revenue and \$1,450,000 from the General Fund. Staff are reviewing options to fund this program as the number of synthetic fields developed continue to increase and must be replaced in the 10-year cycle.

# Project Cost Summaries

## Athletic Field Program

(\$000's)

Project Number	Project Title	Source of Funds	Budgeted or Expended Through FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025	FY 2026	FY 2027	FY 2028	Total FY 2024 - FY 2028	Total FY 2029 - FY 2033	Total
1	Athletic Fields - APRT Amenity Maintenance 2G79-220-000	G	C	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$50	\$250	\$250	\$500
2	Athletic Fields - FCPS Field Maintenance 2G51-001-000	G	C	\$1,465	\$1,465	\$1,465	\$1,465	\$1,465	\$7,325	\$7,325	\$14,650
3	Athletic Fields - FCPS Lighting Upgrades PR-000082	G	C	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$250	\$1,250	\$1,250	\$2,500
4	Athletic Fields - Park Field Maintenance 2G51-002-000	G	C	\$2,878	\$2,878	\$2,878	\$2,878	\$2,878	\$14,390	\$14,390	\$28,780
5	Athletic Services Fee - Custodial Support 2G79-219-000	X	C	\$275	\$275	\$275	\$275	\$275	\$1,375	\$1,375	\$2,750
6	Athletic Services Fee - FCPS Diamond Fields 2G51-003-000	G, X	C	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$5,000	\$5,000	\$10,000
7	Athletic Services Fee - Sports Scholarships 2G79-221-000	G, X	C	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$300	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$3,000
8	Athletic Services Fee - Turf Field Development PR-000080	X	C	\$75	\$75	\$75	\$75	\$75	\$375	\$375	\$750
9	Athletic Services Fee - Turf Field Replacement PR-000097	G, X	C	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$2,250	\$11,250	\$11,250	\$22,500
<b>Total</b>				<b>\$8,543</b>	<b>\$8,543</b>	<b>\$8,543</b>	<b>\$8,543</b>	<b>\$8,543</b>	<b>\$42,715</b>	<b>\$42,715</b>	<b>\$85,430</b>

Notes: Numbers in bold italics represent funded amounts. A "C" in the 'Budgeted or Expended' column denotes a continuing project.

Key: Source of Funds	
B	Bonds
G	General Fund
S	State
F	Federal
X	Other
U	Undetermined