

Subject: Trail Snow Clearing

**FY 2015 Proposed Budget
Budget Work Session Follow-up**

April 14, 2014

The following information is provided in response to requests raised by bicycle advocacy groups regarding snow clearing on multi-use trails in Arlington.

Currently, the Department of Parks & Recreation (DPR) does not treat or plow bike and pedestrian trails as a priority service. The current DPR snow response time for clearing trails is typically two or three days after the snowfall stops on those trails denoted as Priority 1. DPR's primary focus during and immediately after a snow event is to clear sidewalks and parking lots at the Libraries when they are open. If the storm starts and County facilities (including Libraries) are closed, DPR will gauge the response to have everything cleared when the building opens to the public and then address the clearing of trails.

With additional funds DPR could expand the service level on trails that would pre-treat trails before any storm, start clearing the trails throughout the snow fall, and post treat any areas that may refreeze post storm (with the same prioritization/response time currently given to primary (red) and secondary (blue) arterial streets). This service level could be met with a combination of ongoing and one-time funding.

- One-time funding of \$227k for two pieces of snow removal equipment (\$127k) and construction of an equipment storage facility (\$100k).
- Ongoing funding - DPR proposes to shift existing personnel and supply resources (salt and sand) from clearing Libraries parking lots and sidewalks to perform snow removal on trails. New ongoing funding would be necessary to contract out the snow removal at Libraries (\$68,415) and for the annual expenses for the maintenance and replacement of the snow removal equipment (\$14,700); the amount of ongoing funding totals \$83,115.
- Recommendation - To cover these costs in FY 2015, the County Manager recommends one-time funding of \$309,900.

Trails Snow Removal Proposal

Toolcat 5600 (2)	\$ 126,785
Storage Building	\$ 100,000
Snow removal contract for Libraries	\$ 68,415
Rental Book for equipment	<u>\$ 14,700</u>
Total Request	\$ 309,900

Subject: Trail Snow Clearing

Washington & Old Dominion (W&OD) Trail Regional Trail

The Northern Virginia Regional Park Authority (NVRPA) owns and maintains the Washington & Old Dominion (W&OD) Trail. Arlington County is currently having discussions with NVRPA to allow snow clearing on the W&OD trail. If Arlington is not permitted to perform snow clearing on that trail, an alternative solution could be to clear the parallel trail, Four Mile Run Trail. This solution however is problematic since the Four Mile Run Trail does not directly connect to the W&OD trail at East Falls Church, one of the gateways to the County's extensive trail system.

Trail Usage

The table below shows average daily trail usage on one of the most heavily commuted trails for spring/summer and fall/winter (Custis Trail). For the last 5 years the traffic on this trail drops by almost half in the fall and winter months during normal commuting hours. Additional trail usage statistics can be found on the County's BikeArlington website at: <http://www.bikearlington.com/pages/biking-in-arlington/counter-dashboard/>

Weekdays	6am - 9am	10am - 3pm	4pm - 7pm
All	406	182	438
Spring/Summer	566	247	620
Fall/Winter	273	108	286
Percent decrease from Spring/ Summer to Fall/Winter	-52%	-56%	-54%