

**City of Alexandria, Virginia
FY 2025 Proposed Operating Budget & CIP
Budget Questions & Answers**

March 20, 2024

Question:

In the Proposed CIP, the Tree & Shrub Maintenance project has no funding planned for FY 2025. Please explain this change in funding from the previously approved CIP. In addition to the Tree & Shrub Maintenance project, what other resources are included in the proposed operating budget and CIP related to planting and maintaining trees in Alexandria?

Response:

In the proposed capital improvement program (CIP), the Tree & Shrub Maintenance project's contemplated FY 2025 budget was reduced from \$367,000 in last year's Approved CIP to zero. The funding for FY 2025 was eliminated in the proposed CIP due to the project having unspent and unencumbered balances from previous capital budget appropriations, totaling over \$400,000. This unspent funding, along with encumbered but unspent funds, will be used for tree planting, tree well enlargement, and invasive removal in FY 2024 and FY 2025.

As a strategy to smooth out the significant and increasing costs of the CIP program, accounts with large existing balances that were requesting additional funds in FY 2025 were scrutinized. It was determined, through this review, that the Tree and Shrub account had sufficient funding to finish commitments remaining in FY 2024 along with work to be completed in FY 2025.

Although funding was reduced in FY 2025, the project retains planned funding for FY 2026 through FY 2034, totaling \$4,016,000. Along with the Tree & Shrub Maintenance project, the proposed CIP includes investment in urban forestry in the Proactive Maintenance of the Urban Forest project. Proposed FY 2025 funding in this project totals \$348,000 and \$3,988,000 is contemplated over the 10-year plan. Between these two projects, \$8,004,000 of capital funding is proposed to be invested over the 10-year plan.

In addition to the CIP, the proposed operating budget includes support for urban forestry efforts. This includes four staff positions in the Department of Recreation, Parks, and Cultural Activities (Park Services Division); three urban foresters and one urban forest manager. All four of these positions are currently filled.

The table below provides a summary of the last three years of approved operating and capital budgets, along with the proposed FY 2025 budget, for programs related to urban forestry.

	FY 2022 Approved	FY 2023 Approved	FY 2024 Approved	FY 2025 Proposed
<u>Operating Budget</u>				
Urban Forestry Maintenance Program	\$ 1,390,445	\$ 1,392,698	\$ 1,553,973	\$ 1,620,382
<u>Capital Budget Programs</u>				
Tree & Shrub Maintenance				
<i>Tree Plantings</i>	\$ 213,000	\$ 507,900	\$ 173,000	\$ -
<i>Tree Well Repairs & Improvements</i>	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ 40,000	\$ -
<i>Invasive Species Removal</i>	\$ 120,800	\$ 50,000	\$ 23,200	\$ -
<i>Other</i>	\$ -	\$ 35,000	\$ -	\$ -
Subtotal: Tree & Shrub Maintenance	\$ 373,800	\$ 632,900	\$ 236,200	\$ -
Proactive Maintenance of the Urban Forest	\$ 206,000	\$ 328,400	\$ 338,300	\$ 348,000
Total Investment	\$ 1,970,245	\$ 2,353,998	\$ 2,128,473	\$ 1,968,382

While the City has invested significant general fund dollars to its urban forestry efforts, the City has also received developer contributions to support this program. The current balance of unspent developer contributions allocated to urban forestry efforts is approximately \$77,000.