

**Fort Ward Park and Museum Area
Interagency Annual Report for FY2025
(July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025)**

Introduction: In accordance with the Fort Ward Park and Museum Area Management Plan, adopted in 2015, and an interdepartmental MOU adopted in 2018 and updated in 2021, representatives from City departments that are responsible for managing Park operations have met quarterly to discuss issues and coordinate projects related to management of the Park's grounds, facilities and historic areas. These departments are: Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities (RPCA); the Office of Historic Alexandria (OHA); Department of General Services (DGS); and Transportation and Environmental Services (TES). This annual report summarizes the accomplishments and status of projects and initiatives for FY2025.

RPCA:

Playground Accessibility Project. In FY 2025, the consultant completed the 100% construction plans for the playground, and the plans were approved by the City. The Purchasing Division issued an Invitation to Bid for construction, with bids due in late June. Construction is anticipated to begin in fall 2025. A pre-construction community meeting will be scheduled prior to the start of work.

Natural Resources Management. The Forest Conservation located south of the picnic shelter area, across the drainage channel was planted in November 2024. Alexandria Archaeology monitored the installation. A two-year watering contract is included to ensure tree establishment. Native tree species include mockernut hickory, fringe tree, flowering dogwood, persimmon, post oak, blackhaw viburnum, river birch, black cherry, and sweet crab apple. The conservation area fulfills stormwater management requirements for picnic shelter pathway project. The conservation area is demarcated with stanchions and signage.

Fort Ward Accessible Parking Improvements. This project will provide an ADA compliant parking space in each vehicular parking area. Construction of the ADA parking spaces in the front entrance gravel parking lot was completed. The work included asphalt repaving of the entrance apron, drainage improvements, and ADA parking space striping and signage. Alexandria Archaeology monitored the construction. Work on the museum parking lot is scheduled for Fall 2025.

OHA:

Archaeology. Alexandria Archaeology continued to consult on and monitor several ground disturbance projects in the Park and contribute historical information on Fort community historic resource areas.

- **Playground Relocation Project.** Staff provided feedback on impact to historical resources near the Park's playground construction area.
- **ADA Park Improvements.** Archaeology consulted on ADA improvement impacts implemented by RPCA to historical resources in the parking lot areas near the Museum and Park entrance.

- **Monitoring Projects in the Park.** Alexandria Archaeology continued to be on-call for monitoring any ground disturbing activities that could potentially impact sensitive archaeological resources in the Park.

Park Memorial projects.

- **Jackson Cemetery Memorial planning:** In collaboration with Jackson family descendants, staff selected a vendor and finalized text and design for a Jackson Cemetery Memorial.

Oral History interviews. Two Seminary community StoryCircles were conducted and recorded with eight participants for inclusion in the Oral History Center's collection, managed by OHA.

Museum improvements and preservation projects in outdoor historic areas.

- Painting of notable features of the historic Civil War fort: Fort Ward Ceremonial Gate, well reconstruction, magazine and filling room doors in the Northwest bastion, and Officers' Hut.
- OHA staff consulted with RPCA natural resources staff on invasive vegetation in the historic fort.
- Dataloggers installed in the Museum to accurately monitor and record climate conditions for historic collections.

Support from the Friends of Fort Ward. The Museum's friends group sponsored the annual Civil War Christmas in Camp event and funded a Civil War musical performance by the 8th Regiment Green Machine Band for Civil War Camp Day.

DGS:

General Services oversaw the painting of the exterior of the reconstructed Officers' Hut.

TES: No significant projects this fiscal year.