

Open Space, Natural Lands, and Urban Green Space Acquisition Guidelines

The overall approach for funding allocation and coordination with the Conservation Futures Tax (CFT) program for the acquisition of open space and natural lands through the countywide parks levy is as follows:

1. Early each calendar year, the Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP) will set a proposed allocation for open space from levy funds for the following fiscal year.
2. Staff will generate proposals for the use of these funds, taking into account opportunities to leverage resources with funding from Conservation Futures, as well as from other local, state, and federal funding sources.
3. An overall proposal allocating the open space funds to specific projects will be developed and discussed with the Conservation Futures Advisory Committee (CFAC) that is responsible for developing CFT funding recommendations. These discussions are expected to occur in the spring, the same timeframe during which the CFAC annually reviews CFT project proposals. This will create an opportunity for the CFAC to provide an advisory recommendation regarding allocation of these parks levy funds.
4. Taking the CFAC's recommendations into account, DNRP will develop a proposed budget for these parks levy funds.
5. The DNRP proposed budget for parks levy funding will be reviewed by the County Executive, and ultimately County Council, as part of the overall budget process for the following year.