
FAIRLINGTON GLEN LANDSCAPING MANUAL

A Reference for Glen Landscape Administrators



JUNE 20, 2025
FAIRLINGTON GLEN
Cardinal Management Company

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Budget and Accounting

Routine (Non-Discretionary) Expenditures

Routine landscaping, such as bush trimming, mowing, and leaf removal, are provided under our main landscaping contract and charged to *Account 58000 Landscaping Maintenance Contract*.

Check the expiration date of the main landscaping contract, and keep notes that will benefit us when you negotiate a new one.

Non-Routine (Item-By-Item Discretionary) Expenditures

Most discretionary (outside our main contract) spending is charged to *Account 58050 Landscaping Non-Contract*.

Work related to maintenance and reserve projects is charged to *Account 58172 Tree Service*, unless the work will be done under the contracts for those projects.

Damage from contractor negligence or weather is charged to *Account 58070 Landscape Replacement*.

The Glen has established a special budget line for special projects in *Account 61572 Special Projects/Improvements*.

Onsite crew can do small jobs that are charged to personnel and maintenance accounts.

Long Term Projects

From its beginning through 2025, the Glen had no way to accumulate funds over multiple years for big landscape projects. Authority to spend unspent budget funds expired at the end of the budget year. This is proper annual budgeting practice, but it restricts landscape planners to yearly short term planning.

In its 2026 budget, the Glen will be establishing a long-term budgeting process. The Glen will establish a new asset account for accumulated landscape funds, *Account 25565 Landscape Use: Replacement*. This account will be filled annually by budgeted contributions to a new expenditure *Account 90103 Grounds Reserve Account*.¹

This fund will be for planned long-term projects, not for spending in “Year 2” funds for yearly projects that were budgeted for “Year 1” but remained unspent at the end of that year. For proper use of these accounts, landscapers will have to take care: (1) not to lose track of the funds in *Account 25565*; (2) to plan for the long term use(s) of the funds in *Account 25565*; and (3) to provide for annual contributions to *Account 90103* that will be sufficient to fund any long term plans.

¹ *Account 90103* is the Cardinal Management account that most closely reflects what we seek to do. For clarity, we had to give it our own name, but Cardinal allows this. It is a savings account, not a reserve account, because it is not for the replacement of depreciable capital assets.

Special Situations

Unforeseen essential tree trimming due to big storms will be charged to our contingency reserve if the work would exceed budget.

Management has sometimes improperly charged expensive capital improvements, such as drain installation, to the landscape budget. Keep an eye on this.

Chemicals

The use of chemicals for landscaping has long been controversial in the Glen.

Herbicides and Pesticides.

Glen policy is to avoid chemical herbicides and pesticides.

Organic means of controlling weeds and invasives:

- Some so-called weeds are actually beneficial plants like violets and clover which we should incorporate into our lawns. Clovers produce a combination of tap roots and fibrous roots that help aerate the soil and also fix nitrogen, improving soil health. Common violets, found throughout the Glen in spring, are the host plant for a wide range of butterflies known as fritillaries.
- Some other villages in Fairlington apply spot treatments of Fiesta (chelated iron) to control broadleaf weeds. This appears to be safe for people and pets but will kill off beneficial clover.
- In some cases, large areas that have been overtaken by invasives, like lesser celandine (also called *fig buttercup*), may need to be treated with herbicides. Use herbicides and pesticides ONLY when and where they are absolutely needed and only as instructed on the label.

Organic means of controlling insect pests:

- Use environmentally friendly and/or organic pesticides when necessary, such as horticultural oils and soaps and botanical insecticides whenever possible.
- Other pest prevention ideas include removing plant debris and diseased plants to prevent the spread of disease from one season to the next.
- Install native plants that attract beneficial predatory insects which prey on harmful pests, offering an environmentally friendly and sustainable solution to pest control. For example, ladybugs are known to be highly efficient predators, capable of consuming a significant number of aphids in a short period. Native plants like yarrow, coreopsis and butterfly weed attract ladybugs as well as pollinators. Some villages in Fairlington have also purchased ladybugs and deployed them en masse as pest control. Note that these should be ladybugs native to our eco-region and not foreign species.

Fertilizers and Lawn Care.

The continual removal of leaves every autumn gradually depletes our soil, resulting in patches where grass cannot grow in soil that is mostly clay and stones. The following means of eliminating soil depletion are acceptable:

- Leaf Compost Tea is an organic, water-based treatment that restores the soil health (Soil Web of Life), by providing natural nutrients and microorganisms to the soil, which then supports turf growth and health through its living ecosystem. Leaf Compost Tea is derived from decomposed leaf debris, after being processed by adding water in an agitator to create a brine that is very high in organic nutrients. The Fairlington Villages is now applying Leaf Compost Tea to their grounds.
- Practice grass-cycling. When mowing the lawn, cut the grass at the highest setting and allow the clippings to filter down into the turf as a natural fertilizer. Conduct fewer cuts during the hottest season (July and August) to reduce injury to the turf grass blades.
- Use Turf Alternatives where turf grass cannot grow well, such as in deep shade, on hillsides that are steep, or slopes with severe erosion and/or compacted soil. Alternatives can include native ferns (ex. ostrich fern), sedges (ex. Pennsylvania sedge) and ground cover (ex. green & gold).
- When planting new grass, consider more drought resistant turf varieties labeled by the Turfgrass Water Conservation Alliance.
- Consider leaving the leaves in areas that are not subject to foot traffic or near sidewalks like under trees adjacent to the grassy back lots. This will help to improve soil health and is critical in supporting native insect and bird populations.

Mosquito Control.

Like other villages in Fairlington, the Glen discourages the use of commercial “mosquito spray” companies in alignment with our policy avoiding chemical applications. Spraying is an ineffective method of [mosquito control](#) and has been shown to kill beneficial insects like pollinators and harm birds. Residents must make every effort to remove areas of standing water where mosquitoes breed.

For those areas of standing water that persist, like French drains, a safe and effective means of mosquito control involves the application of BTI "Mosquito Dunks" or "Mosquito Bits." They work by releasing a bacteria called [Bacillus Thuringiensis Israelensis](#) (naturally occurring in soil) in standing water where mosquitoes breed. BTI spores that are eaten by mosquito larvae release toxins into the mosquito's gut, causing the larvae to stop eating and die, thus reducing the number of mosquitos that reach maturity. These applications are safe for people, pets, pollinators, and aquatic life. The Glen has been purchasing and applying BTI granules since 2022.

The Circle

The County owns the landscaped portion of the circle near the intersection of S. Stafford Street and S. 36 streets. Pursuant to a 1989 agreement between the Glen and the County, the County allows the Glen to landscape the circle. To see this agreement, double click on the icon below or see the Appendix at the end.

The circle is watered by a County line that is likely controlled from the manhole serving Court 6 (see the Glen's Maintenance Manual).

Cost Saving Techniques

Use the on-site crew to do small landscape work off-budget. If necessary, hire temporary workers to help them. Temporary work is budgeted to Account 52431 Temporary Help.

Our discretionary (item-by-item) contractors tend to overcharge. If you have the volunteers, try to shop around.

King Street Perimeter

This perimeter should be landscaped with care because it has a history of plantings that failed. Sometimes plants would last for two or three years only to die-out suddenly the following year. The following guidelines will help:

- Plant as far back from the fence as you can consistently with aesthetics may help.
- After a contractor suggested that the problem was due to too much water in the planted area, the Glen installed a French drain in a wetter area fronting King Street behind court 8. The French drain appears on the Glen's plat. This might have worked because subsequent plantings in that area have survived.
- Plant only trees or bushes with a long history of surviving there, prioritizing native species. Consult [Plant NOVA Natives](#) for recommendations. Ask neighboring residents about what seems to last/die-off in that area. In particular, avoid planting English or Cherry Laurel bushes, shown in the dying bush photo (2024) below:



- Pines trees are inexpensive and are an effective barrier against noise, but they should be planted in

clumps so their root systems can support each other against wind blow-downs. Native eastern red cedars are another tree to consider as they are relatively fast growing and sturdy.

Landscape Committee

The role and authority of the Landscape Committee is discussed in the Glen's Handbook. Volunteers should be asked to review this.

Run an organized meeting that focuses on what needs to get done. Discourage lengthy oral presentations, but give everyone an equal chance to speak.

Most Glen residents are easy to deal with; but if anyone gets rude, please contact the Board. It's their task to protect employees and volunteers from abusive residents.

Try to find somebody to serve as a tree liaison to Arlington County, which maintains the street trees. The street trees sometimes brush against buildings, block street lighting, and threaten parked cars.

RSVP notices under door mats can help you to resolved controversial issues. For example:
"Sarah Jones has asked us to remove the Oak tree in your court. Unless a majority of respondents RSVP "no" within 2 weeks, we will remove it without further notice. Yes ___? No___?"

Native Plants & Non-Permitted Invasive Plants

If a non-native plant dies or is removed, it will be replaced with a native plant, and newly added plants will be native. Planting natives offers a better return on investment for the Glen because these plants are adapted to local conditions and more likely to survive with lower maintenance costs, while also sustaining our local ecosystem.

The Glen, however, will not remove a healthy, functioning plant merely because it is classified as non-native, i.e., without an independent and demonstrable reason for the particular plant's removal, such as tendency to spread unchecked or inability last in our area.

[Plant NOVA Natives](#) is an excellent resource for identifying plants native to our region and understanding their care requirements.

When choosing plants, please cross-reference Arlington County's list of [invasive plants](#) as well as the [Commonwealth of Virginia](#)'s list.

Consider sourcing plants from local native only nurseries. Some excellent options include:

- [Earth Sangha](#) (offers discounts for HOAs)
- [Nature By Design](#)
- [Bona Terra](#)

Planning

The Glen's budget for the year must be observed.

Unspent funds do not carry-over into the following year. If you seek to spend budgeted funds late in year 1

before the work can be done in that year, pay for the work in advance, and the cost will be charged to year 1 rather than in year 2.

Begin to develop our proposed landscape expenditures in January.

Leave room in the budget for fall work. Fall is the best time to plant grass – allows roots to grow all winter.

Guidelines and Priorities:

1. Plan for expensive but needed tree trimming that keeps trees off of roofs and gutters.
2. Avoid pressure to spend where it benefits only a small number of people.
3. Pay attention to areas where residents are unlikely to spend their own money, such as perimeter areas or the areas around the recreational facilities.
4. Allow room in your budgets for the tree trimming required for the annual painting, which usually begins in the summer.
5. Work That Has Been Neglected:
 - a. Plan for filling swails and re-sloping land for proper drainage. In areas where water naturally collects, where feasible, consider installing a rain garden with native plants that can absorb pooling water.
 - b. Plan for soil replenishing because the removal of tree leaves is gradually draining glen soils of nutrients.

Plantings Guidelines

Do not plant trees on top of storm drain lines. Consult the Glen's plat, which is available on the Glen's website.

Avoid planting trees and bushes too close to houses.

If you are reluctant to remove a tree close to a unit, prune its lower limbs so it will grow tall and straight.

Quaker Lane Perimeter

Photinia Shrubs.

In December, 2003, Arlington County planted a hedge of photinia shrubs in the right-of-way along Quaker Lane, from 33rd Street S. to 36th Street S. The hedge has been maintained by separate agreements between (a) the adjacent Glen and Meadows condominium associations and (b) the Arlington County Department of Parks and Recreation. The Glen's original agreement with the County was signed in 2004.

In 2022, after the photinias showed signs needing replacement, the Glen updated its agreement with the County, using an online process administered through the following website:
<https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Programs/Sustainability-and-Environment/Get-Involved/Adopt-Park/Adopt-a-Park-Application>. A signed copy of this new agreement is on file with the County.

Under the Glen's agreement with the County, the Glen is responsible for ongoing trimming of trees/shrubs fronting the Glen. The trimming must be done as needed, in accordance with American National Standard Institute (ANSI) A300 standards. The Glen must also deal with plantings that encroach on the public-right-of-way.

The Glen must notify the County via e-mail 14 days before beginning work on the trees.

Arlington County retains ownership of the planted shrubs.

Any problems or needed shrub replacements may be reported to Arlington County through the County's Report-a-Problem tool (<https://www.arlingtonva.us/Government/Topics/Report-Problem>).

The Fence.

The fence has been damaged by trees falling during storms and snow. Repairs to this fence are a maintenance expense (not a landscape expense), but management and the Landscape Committee should be alert to the possibility of damage before it occurs.

Utility Wires

Throughout the Glen, there are cable wires that can affect Glen landscaping.

Comcast.

The following provision of our contract with Comcast bears on landscaping:

Grantor(s) agree for themselves and their heirs and assigns that the Company Wiring on the Premises shall be and remain the personal property of the Grantee and may not be altered, obstructed or removed without the express written consent of the Grantee. The Grantee, and its contractors, agents and employees, shall have the right to trim or cut trees and/or roots which may endanger or interfere with said Company Wiring and shall have free access to said Company Wiring and every part thereof, at all times for the purpose of exercising the rights herein granted; provided, however, that in making any excavation on said Premises of the Grantor, the Grantee shall make the same in such manner as will cause the least injury to the surface of the ground around such excavation, and shall replace the earth so removed by it and restore the area to as near the same condition as it was prior to such excavation as is practical.

... .

Verizon.

Verizon also has FIOS cable wires running through the Glen. Some wires run attached to poles through the trees in the Quaker Lane perimeter. These wires can be damaged by Glen trees.

When FIOS was installed in 2017-2018, Verizon, unlike Comcast, did not sign a basic easement agreement with the Glen. Verizon merely gave us a map of its planned locations. Verizon probably considered its installation as being of right under an easement obtained by its predecessor when it was a regulated supplier of telephone service to the Glen before it was converted to condos in the mid-1970's.²

If such an easement exists, it would govern Verizon's and the Glen's obligations concerning the maintenance of grounds and plantings that may affect, or be affected by, FIOS cables and wires. The Glen does not have a copy of such an easement. The original may be in the County land records. It is likely similar to the Comcast agreement above.

² To begin FIOS service, Verizon had to get County permission for matters under County control, and the relevant documents may give the Glen additional rights.

APPENDIX: County Circle

March 10, 1989

Arlington County
Operations Division
ATTN: Mr. Randy Bartlett, Chief
Suite 706
#1 Courthouse Plaza
2100 Clarendon Boulevard
Arlington, Virginia 22201

Dear Mr. Bartlett:

This will confirm our discussion during our meeting at the Abingdon School this past Tuesday evening regarding Fairlington Glen's proposed plan for landscaping the traffic circle at Stafford and 36th Streets.

The Fairlington Glen, one of the six southside condominium associations, proposes to contract for the landscaping of this circle in the amount of \$3000+. However, prior to expending association funds, we wish to have the approval of the appropriate county agency. The circle is publicly owned, however it has been maintained by our association over the years.

We are proposing to plant various ornamental grasses, coneflowers, nandinas and liriope with the addition of decorative rocks and flower beds.

The traffic circle is a focal point within our Village, and sets the tone as it also serves as a primary entry point to Fairlington itself from Quaker Lane.

Your speedy confirmation and approval of this request would be appreciated. Once the program is completed, the Fairlington Glen will continue to expend monies on its upkeep as required.

Sincerely,



Alan G. Bow
Board Secretary
Fairlington Glen
(Mailing Address: 505 Fontaine Street, Alexandria, VA 22302)

BCC: BOARD PACKAGE