

HISTORIC OAK HILL STATE PARK FEASIBILITY STUDY

REPORT TO THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

JANUARY 3, 2025



Summary

Oak Hill represents a tremendous opportunity as a new state park that combines a landscape embodying a broad spectrum of Virginia's histories, with much-needed outdoor recreation access. Located near a major population center and supported by a wide array of community partners, the property's exceptionally well-maintained historic structures and landscape will require minimal investment to open to the public and provide opportunities for significant on-site revenue generation to support its operations from day one.

1. Conserving Oak Hill's roughly 1,200 acres may well be the last viable opportunity to secure public open space of this size and significance in Northern Virginia.^{i ii iii}
2. A National Historic Landmark Property, Oak Hill possesses an astounding collection of resources in enviable condition; their stories have never been publicly told or experienced. There is significant interest to interpret this landscape and its community.
3. As the last surviving privately-held, founding-era, presidential home and retreat, Oak Hill State Park's creation would be one of the most significant preservation actions of America's 250th.
4. An impeccable record of site stewardship and world class recreational experiences makes Virginia State Parks the ideal recipient of these lands; no other entity comes close. Virginia State Parks possesses the required management and expertise in outdoor recreation and revenue generation to successfully operate Oak Hill.
5. Loudoun County is a strong supporter of the potential park, having obligated \$22M to date; its healthy heritage tourism economy and adjacent conserved lands expand the future park's reach and experience.
6. As of January 1, 2025, **\$41.35M is committed to Oak Hill State Park**, towards a total goal of \$52M.
7. An initial \$20M of startup funds would establish an Oak Hill Management Fund, to be stewarded by a local community foundation to cover operating costs. **Expenditure and revenue projections include:**
 - Average operating cost projections = \$1.4M annually across years 1-10.
 - Average capital costs projections = \$1.2M annually years 1-5, and \$1.9M annually years 6-10.
 - **Average annual revenue is projected at \$2.8M by year three, building to an average of \$4.35M in years 6-10. Management Fund balance and cash reserves are projected to exceed \$30M by year five.**
8. **A diversity of revenue streams** would support operations and capital expenditures. **Projected returns looks promising even when based on conservative assumptions** (See Figure 2: Oak Hill Funding Model):
 - Management Fund annual payouts are projected at \$1M (year 1) and \$1.45M/yr. (years 6-10).
 - Additional funds would be raised through earned and philanthropic revenues:
 - Earned revenue projections (admissions, ticketing, accommodations, lease revenues, etc.) range from an initial \$750K annually to over \$2M annually years 6-10.
 - Philanthropic revenue projections (Including Grants) = \$400K annually during startup (years 1-5) to \$700K annually years 6-10.
9. Long-term operability and fundraising would benefit from the creation of a friends group/ **citizen support organization**.

THE OPPORTUNITY

In early 2024, the Virginia General Assembly charged the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) to:
...conduct a study of the potential acquisition and development of Oak Hill, the former home of James Monroe, the fifth President of the United States, as a state park. The study shall (i) assess the challenges in acquiring and developing the property, (ii) identify upfront costs and ongoing and future obligations of the Commonwealth, (iii) assess the involvement and contribution of Loudoun County, where the property is located, and (iv) assess potential philanthropic contributions and/or other [contributions].^{iv}

The opportunities and challenges of establishing an Oak Hill State Park are herein provided to the Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation. Conducted by a multidisciplinary consultant team of landscape architects, architects, archaeologists, historians, and strategic consultants, this study is informed through site investigations, resource observations, conditions assessments, and projected cost analyses in consideration of Oak Hill as a potential future state park. A review of other state, regional, and national comparable sites informed the project's viability. Subject matter experts in fundraising and programming worked to assess revenue streams that authentically align with the resources and experiences of this timeless landscape, and its compelling context within the Northern Virginia Region.

Founded in 1936, Virginia State Parks currently operates 43 parks encompassing over 75,000 acres and welcomes nearly 8 million guests each year. Featuring vast outdoor recreation spaces, historic sites, and amenities, the system provides significant economic benefits for the Commonwealth. The total economic activity stimulated by Virginia State Parks during 2023 was approximately \$535.3M.^v Virginia State Park's annual systems-wide operating budget of over \$60M^{vi} is in large part (roughly half) supported through self-generated day use fees, overnight accommodations, retail sales, and other lines of business.

If established, the park presents the following opportunities:

- **Oak Hill simply invites experience...** its abundant and pristine resources must be experienced to be believed;
- **Its conservation secures vanishingly rare public open space, encourages recreation, and provides sustaining returns;**
- **Oak Hill's many layers of historical significance welcomes visitors to discover, reflect, and return;**
- **The potential park represents a unique opportunity to expand the Commonwealth's park system adjacent to a major population center;**
- **Investment in Oak Hill's stewardship and activation will produce essential public benefits for the Commonwealth including but not limited to:**
 - Conservation of Oak Hill's currently unprotected open space, wildlife habitat, views to the Bull Run Mountains, and significant cultural features as **a public resource for generations to come** is quite possibly the last greatest opportunity to do so in the region.
 - Increased tourism leveraging its proximity to the Dulles (IAD) International gateway and connections to related destinations producing **tangible economic returns**.
 - The **health and wellness** benefits affording visitation to public open space, and sites of natural and cultural value;
 - **Broader and deeper understanding** of and connection with our shared spaces and histories through park planning, programming, and interpretation.

Conversely, failure to realize this opportunity risks incalculable loss to the Commonwealth.

The rare combination of a willing and engaged landowner, broad regional support, and a well-positioned partner in Virginia State Parks, provides the ideal conditions for the creation of Oak Hill State Park. Oak Hill will require expertise in historical interpretation, outdoor recreation, revenue generation, and community engagement. Virginia State Parks brings the required expertise and provides the focused management that a site like Oak Hill requires.

Historical Timeline

- Sinemurian Age (199-192 Ma)—Dinosaurs roam Oak Hill leaving a visible fossil record. (Ma=million years ago.)^{vii}
- Up through the Early 1700s—Manahoac, Haudenosaunee, and Conoy peoples likely present at various times.
- 1776—Lt. James Monroe, wounded at the Battle of Trenton, becomes a Revolutionary hero.
- 1794—Monroe, with his uncle Judge Joseph Jones, purchases Oak Hill.
- 1799-1802—Monroe serves as a transformative Governor of Virginia.
- 1808—Monroe inherits the Jones share of Oak Hill.
- 1809—Monroe transfers some enslaved people from Oak Hill to Highland.
- 1811-1816—Monroe frequents Oak Hill while serving in James Madison's cabinet.
- 1817-1825—President Monroe retreats at Oak Hill first staying in the Judge Jones House.
- 1820-1823—White House architect James Hoban builds Monroe's manor house using enslaved labor.
- 1823—Monroe crafts elements of the Monroe Doctrine at Oak Hill.
- 1825—Former President Monroe twice hosts the Marquis de Lafayette at Oak Hill.
- 1828—Monroe sells enslaved people to Casa Bianca plantation in Florida
- 1830—Former First Lady Elizabeth Monroe dies at Oak Hill.
- 1831—James Monroe dies in New York on July 4th.
- 1838—Monroe's executor sells enslaved people from Oak Hill to a Louisiana plantation.
- 1852-1870 – John Fairfax ownership sees buildout of agricultural complex, Civil War occupation, and the era of Reconstruction in Loudoun County, VA.
- 1870 – George Quimby Ownership.
- 1885-1920 – Successive periods of Fairfax-family ownership.
- 1920-1948—Frank Littleton enlarges the manor house, enhances agricultural operations, and adds the formal garden.
- 1948-Present—The DeLashmutt family's 76 years of stewardship and residency.

THE RESOURCE

The future park would include an 86-acre core historic complex at the center of the +/- 1,200-acre property. Largely comprised of pristine farmlands and woodlots, this land is among the last remaining sizable tracts suitable for public open space in Northern Virginia and **is the last privately-held founding-era Presidential home in America. The property's exceptional condition will allow DCR to offer initial park experiences with minimal investment.**

Landscape and Architectural Resources: Experiencing Oak Hill's vast natural and cultural resources reveals a scenic landscape that is home to a collection of outdoor spaces and buildings that are authentic, well-stewarded, and largely undiscovered! The landscape as experienced today encompasses three landscape or park spaces: the Domestic Landscape, the Work Yard Landscape, and the surrounding Natural/ Agricultural Landscape. These spaces reflect their historic past and provide a framework for planning the future park in ways that retain the property's "sense of place" while accommodating new and compatible recreational uses.

A. Domestic Landscape: This area of the historic core encompasses the designed and managed landscape associated with the grounds, gardens and buildings of historic Oak Hill. The buildings and spaces here include four Monroe-Era buildings (1812-1831), as well as 19th century buildings, each supporting domestic use, hemmed-in by the circa 1920s/30s boxwood hedge.

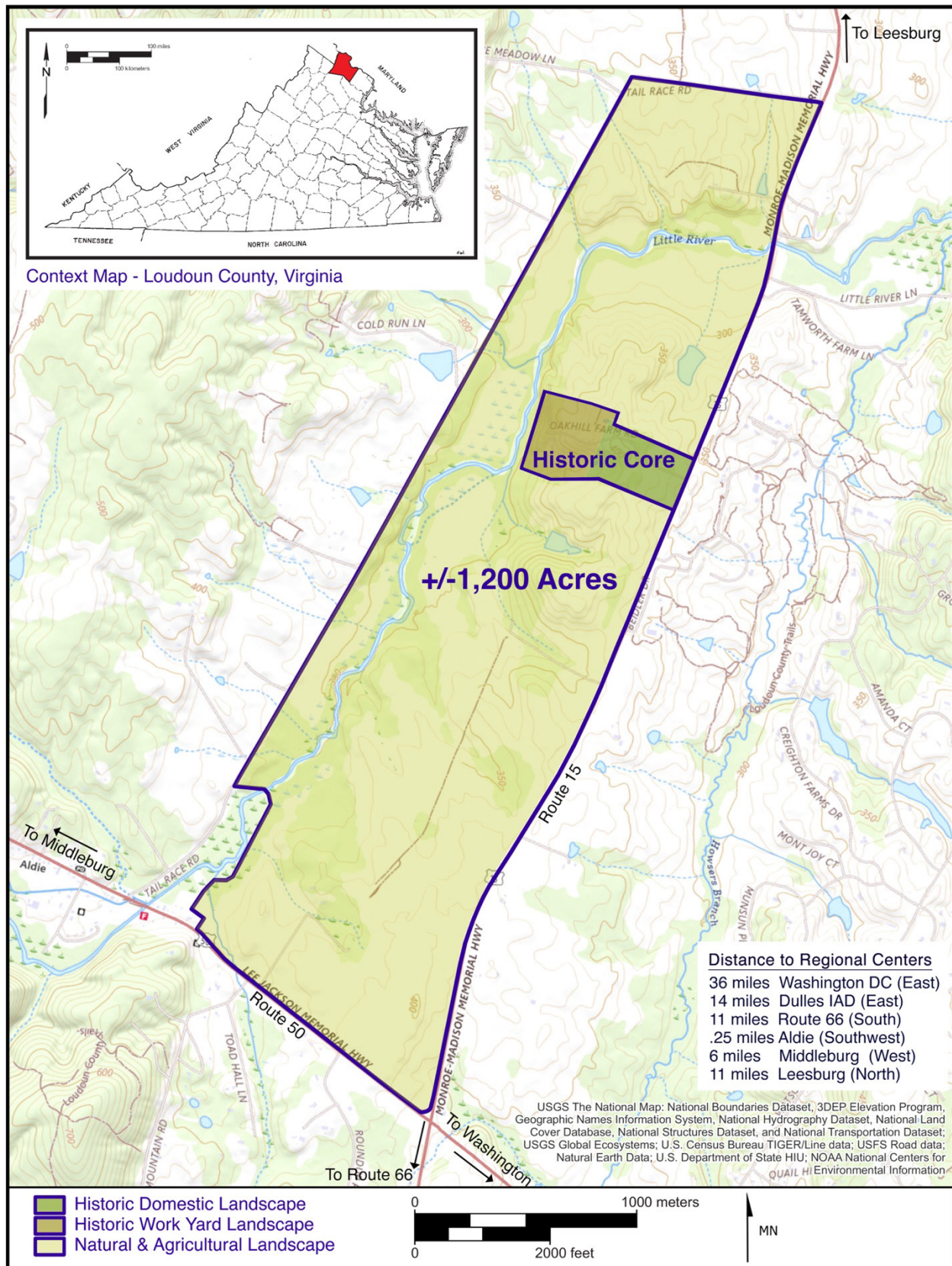
The Manor House. In its current state, the house is in remarkably good condition and largely retains its integrity to Monroe's occupation and residency. Designed by White House Architect, James Hoban, and built in 1820-23, the house served as James and Elizabeth Monroe's home and retreat during his presidency and throughout his retirement. During this period Monroe entertained dignitaries, including two visits from the Marquis de Lafayette. The house consists of a center block with an impressive portico facing south and wings extending to the east and west. The wings were enlarged in the early 20th century during the Littleton era, doubling their length and creating a second story, set back from the first. Despite these changes, the character of the original design was preserved. The house features a high level of design and material quality inside and out, with the main block being largely unchanged and featuring impressive original marble mantels and other interior finishes. The house has benefitted from the careful stewardship of subsequent owners, who have safeguarded the original materials and made significant investments in the house's condition.

B. Work Yard Landscape: This area of the historic core comprises lands immediately west of the domestic landscape and boasts one of the most impressive and well-stewarded collections of 19th and 20th century agricultural buildings found anywhere in the commonwealth. Work Yard buildings range in scale from substantial multi-level bank barns to smaller agricultural sheds and ancillary structures. Eight (8) tenant houses, all in good condition, contribute to the character of this area. Buried is any trace or footprint of the dwellings of the more than sixty enslaved men and women who inhabited this landscape during the Monroe era.

C. Natural and Agricultural Landscape: Most of this expansive property is characterized by spaces of scenic and natural beauty and cultivated fields and woodlots. Divided by the Little River and its tributaries, this timeless landscape boasts known Native American sites and vestiges of fords, mills, and the small quarry site where dinosaur fossils were first discovered in the 1920s.

Paleontology and Archaeological Resources

Oak Hill offers rare opportunities to understand our natural and cultural history. From Sinemurian-age dinosaur tracks and Early Archaic period (8000-6500 BCE) sites of habitation, to the present day, the landscape is remarkably intact with minimal modifications. The small number of owners since the property was purchased by James Monroe and his uncle, Judge Joseph Jones, in 1794, and the continuity of land management practices, have largely preserved the cultural resources present on the property.



Map A: Site Map identifying Oak Hill's +/- 1,200 acres and associated landscape character areas.

CHALLENGES

The study shall (i) assess the challenges in acquiring and developing the property...

Establishing Oak Hill State Park presents challenges as indicated below; DCR and its partners are well-prepared to meet them. Moreover, the significance, condition, and broad public interest in Oak Hill are key factors mitigating associated risks.

A. Acquisition Challenges

The property is located in rapidly developing Loudoun County, and as such, exhibits an exceptionally high market value of at least \$35 million, if not more.^{viii} The DeLashmutt family are willing sellers and supporters of Oak Hill's rebirth as a state park; they are willing to make a significant bargain sale of the property to see that it is brought into public ownership. While initial capital is secured through a generous grant from Loudoun County to cover the initial expenses for the purchase, the remaining acquisition challenges require completing agreements with, the Owners, Tenants, Lessees, and pending General Assembly approval of the park's establishment with DCR.

B. Development Challenges:

Preserving, maintaining, and interpreting the fragile natural and extensive cultural resources as a fully operational state park. This National Historic Landmark property is in remarkable condition, but the Commonwealth would do well during the start-up period (years 1-5) to invest the time, employ the expertise, and raise the money required to preserve and study these resources to inform its master planning efforts.^{ix} Additional investment is also needed to safely activate and operate Oak Hill as a park during the startup period. The discussion of resources (pg.5), costs (pg.9), and revenues (pg.13) provides summary assessments addressing this challenge.

Developing diverse and resilient revenue streams to support the park's launch and ongoing operations. This is the preeminent challenge associated with establishing and operating Oak Hill State Park. The national significance of Oak Hill's natural and cultural resources, combined with its Northern Virginia location, will enhance its ability to attract resources from a variety of private and public sources. The discussion of revenue potential (pg.13) provides a summary assessment of these income streams.

Establishing a long-term philanthropic and citizen support organization partner. This new park would require a strong, broad-based, and deeply talented philanthropic partner. Likely to be known as the "Friends of Oak Hill," this partnering entity would work in concert with DCR having the appropriate authorities and guardrails in place to ensure alignment. As indicated under revenue potential (pg.13), The Conservation Fund (TCF) would assist DCR to support the early establishment of the nonprofit organization.

Engaging a broad constituency within the county, throughout the Commonwealth, and beyond to undergird financial, programmatic, and operational initiatives. Early engagement would support the establishment of the friends group and DCR's master planning process. Ultimately, the friends group will provide the organizational structure to nurture and integrate diverse networks of Oak Hill constituents. The engagement discussion (pg.11) assesses Loudoun County's involvement within context of broader engagement initiatives.

Reconciling and aligning multiple land uses and diverse historical perspectives. Natural, recreational, and historical parks are inherently contested ground where diverse perspectives must be solicited and understood. Failure to reach reasonable resolutions and consensus risks alienating the future park's supporters and visitors and narrowing potential income streams. An informed and transparent planning process facilitated by the Commonwealth in concert with TCF and the developing the friends group will go a long way toward addressing this challenge (pg.13).

COSTS VS. REVENUE (\$M)

■ (Acquisition \$) ■ (Operations \$) ■ (Capital \$) ■ Revenue ■ Available Funds

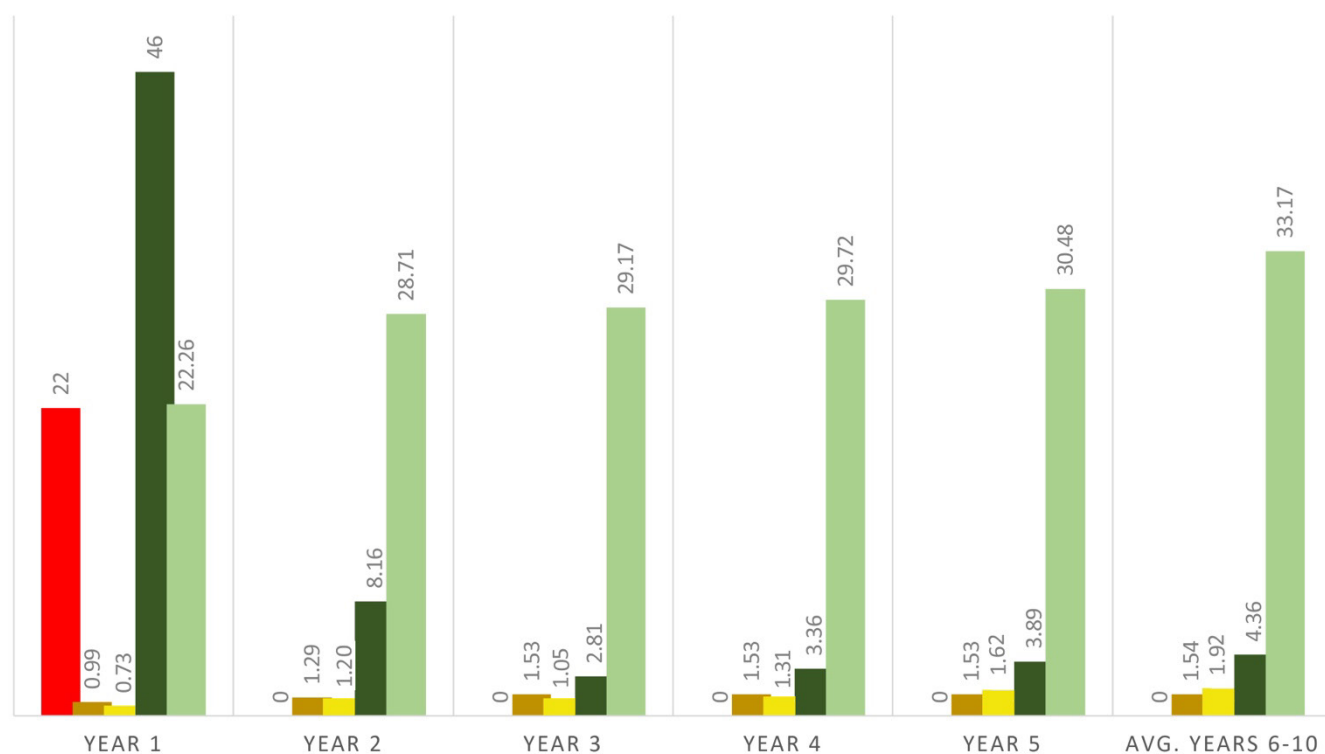


Figure 1: Chart analyzing upfront costs for acquisition (in year 1) and ongoing costs (operations and capital costs), versus early fundraising revenues (years 1 and 2), and ongoing revenues, and demonstrates the projected growth of end-of-year available funds held in cash reserves and the endowment fund. Costs and revenue dollars represented are in millions.

UPFRONT & ONGOING COSTS

The study shall (ii) identify upfront costs and ongoing future obligations of the Commonwealth.

A. Methodology: This assessment of “upfront and future obligations,” is informed by a conditions assessment of the property’s architectural, landscape, and archaeological resources. This understanding, coupled with a review of year over year expenditures, and DCR projections for operations, analysis and planning, further inform this determination of costs. (See *Figure 2 Oak Hill State Park Funding Model*, and page 13 for revenue projections).

B. Upfront Costs: Costs to **acquire, preserve, study, and plan** for future public enjoyment of Oak Hill are outlined below. While the property’s turn-key condition allows for public access from the point of acquisition (due in part to a generation of investment and stewardship by the current property owners), a landscape so rich in natural and cultural beauty requires study. Therefore, upfront costs covers the startup period wherein DCR and its partners acquire the land, explore its resources and the stories they hold, and engage stakeholders and the public in park visioning.

Acquisition Costs: Bargain sale of +/- 1,200 acres

\$35,000,000.00 ^x	Estimated Market Value
- (\$15,000,000.00)	Minus - Owner In-Kind Cost Reduction
\$20,000,000.00 ^{xi}	Negotiated Sales Price

At the time of this reporting, **The Conservation Fund (TCF) has secured a grant from Loudoun County for \$22M to cover the immediate costs of acquiring the property.** While Loudoun’s contribution will cover property acquisition, TCF is raising additional capital to support early establishment and the creation of a \$20M endowment supporting ongoing maintenance. DCR has set aside up to \$10M in non-general funds (State Parks-Acquisition & Development Fund^{xii}) to support the Park’s early establishment.

Operations & Capital Costs to Preserve, Study, and Plan: The operational and capital costs projected for the start-up period encompass the first five years of park operations, beyond acquisition. During this period, operational costs would include park staff, equipment, and general maintenance and costs associated with friends group startup. Capital costs (projected at an average of \$1.2M during startup) would include capital projects to preserve structures and landscape, initial activation/public access improvements, pre-planning and planning studies, and programmatic costs. A detailed breakdown of these costs is provided in *Figure 2, Oak Hill State Park Funding Model*.

Operations Costs: Years 1-5

(\$1,000,000.00) ^{xiii}	Average Annual Staffing Costs (3 FTEs initially – 7FTEs by Year 3)
(\$180,000.00) ^{xiv}	Average Annual Costs for Equipment and Repairs (Years 1-5)
(\$56,000.00) ^{xv}	Average Annual Costs for Utilities Gen. Maintenance & Repair (Years 1-5)
(\$80,000.00)	Average Annual Costs for For-Hire Consultation/Friends Group Operations (Years 1-5)
\$1,290,000.00 To \$1,530,000.00	Average Annual Operating Costs (Years 1-5)

C. Ongoing Obligations: Costs projected for years 6-10 would be characterized by increasing investments in activation and master plan implementation. With revenue projections benefiting from both a fully staffed 7 FTE State Park staff, and a fully engaged non-profit friends group, the funds available for implementation show a net positive funding model as demonstrated in *Figure 1, Costs vs Revenues* and *Figure 2, Oak Hill State Park Funding Model*.

D. Revenue Opportunities: Diverse opportunities exist for ongoing funding related to Oak Hill, including on-site revenue generation, Management Fund interest, private donations, and grants. Those opportunities are described in greater detail on page 13.

OAK HILL STATE PARK - FUNDING MODEL

Updated January 3, 2025

Revenue	FY 2026 Year 1	FY 2027 Year 2	FY 2028 Year 3	FY 2029 Year 4	FY2030 Year 5	Average Revenue & Expenditures Yrs 6-10
Contributed Revenue (Acquisition - Endowment Creation)						
LWCF*		\$ 6,000,000.00				
VLCF*	\$ 2,000,000.00					
Local Government (Loudoun County)*	\$ 22,000,000.00					
Mitigation*	\$ 7,000,000.00					
Private Philanthropy**	\$ 5,000,000.00					
State Parks NGF/0265*	\$ 10,000,000.00					
(* Denotes funds fully received, obligated) (**Denotes funds partially received, obligated)						
Management Fund - Endowment Payout						
Management Fund Endowment - Interest Payout (4.5% Annually)		\$ 1,002,000.00	\$ 1,292,200.00	\$ 1,312,700.00	\$ 1,337,600.00	\$ 1,450,650.00
Contributed Revenue - Philanthropy						
Membership, Philanthropy, Sponsorship		\$ 150,000.00	\$ 230,000.00	\$ 310,000.00	\$ 345,000.00	\$ 405,000.00
Grants Revenue (Contribute to Capital and Program Costs)		\$ 250,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 250,000.00	\$ 300,000.00
Earned Revenue - Fees, Rentals (Etc.)						
Ticketed Admissions - Historic Core (Special Tours, Events, Etc. Gardens & Grounds, vs. House Tours)			\$ 100,000.00	\$ 200,000.00	\$ 375,000.00	\$ 400,000.00
Parking Fees - Non Historic Core @ \$10.00/Car		\$ 350,000.00	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 750,000.00	\$ 1,000,000.00	\$ 1,200,000.00
Tenant Houses (6 of 11 Available for Accommodations)		\$ 360,000.00	\$ 390,000.00	\$ 427,000.00	\$ 466,250.00	\$ 472,000.00
Event Rental (Special Use Permits)				\$ 10,000.00	\$ 15,000.00	\$ 20,000.00
Merchandise/Retail				\$ 50,000.00	\$ 60,000.00	\$ 70,000.00
Farmland Lease Income		\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 50,000.00
Total Contributed & Earned Revenue	\$ 46,000,000.00	\$ 8,162,000.00	\$ 2,812,200.00	\$ 3,359,700.00	\$ 3,898,850.00	\$ 4,367,650.00
Acquisition & Operating Expenses						
Acquisition Costs	\$ (22,000,000.00)					
Operating Expenses - DCR						
Staffing & Non-Personal Services (Phased Hiring - 7 FTEs by Year 3)	\$ (544,800.00)	\$ (908,000.00)	\$ (1,271,300.00)	\$ (1,271,300.00)	\$ (1,271,300.00)	\$ (1,300,500.00)
Equipment & Equipment Maintenance	\$ (333,000.00)	\$ (245,800.00)	\$ (107,600.00)	\$ (107,600.00)	\$ (107,600.00)	\$ (35,000.00)
Utilities/ Gen Maintenance & Repair (Non Capital Improvements)	\$ (70,000.00)	\$ (60,000.00)	\$ (50,000.00)	\$ (50,000.00)	\$ (50,000.00)	\$ (52,000.00)
For/Hire Consultation (Non-Program Related)	\$ (50,000.00)	\$ (50,000.00)	\$ (50,000.00)			
Friends Group - Staffing Costs		\$ (25,000.00)	\$ (50,000.00)	\$ (75,000.00)	\$ (100,000.00)	\$ (150,000.00)
Friends Group - Operational Costs (Supplies, Services Etc.)		\$ (3,000.00)	\$ (3,000.00)	\$ (5,000.00)	\$ (5,000.00)	\$ (5,000.00)
Total Acquisition & Operating Expenses	\$ (22,997,800.00)	\$ (1,291,800.00)	\$ (1,531,900.00)	\$ (1,508,900.00)	\$ (1,533,900.00)	\$ (1,542,500.00)
Net Operating	\$ 23,002,200.00	\$ 6,870,200.00	\$ 1,280,300.00	\$ 1,850,800.00	\$ 2,364,950.00	\$ 2,825,150.00
Capital Expenses						
Capital Project Expenses - DCR						
One-Time Preservation/ Maintenance Costs - Building & Structures (Hard & Soft Costs)	\$ (50,000.00)	\$ (400,000.00)	\$ (400,000.00)	\$ (500,000.00)	\$ (700,000.00)	\$ (700,000.00)
One Time Preservation/ Maintenance - Site & Landscape (Hard/Soft Costs)	\$ (50,000.00)	\$ (150,000.00)	\$ (200,000.00)	\$ (400,000.00)	\$ (550,000.00)	\$ (500,000.00)
Initial Activation - Entry & Parking Lot	\$ (500,000.00)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Initial Activation - Signage	\$ (50,000.00)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Initial Activation - Natural Surface Trail	\$ -	\$ (200,000.00)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Initial Activation (Design & Permitting)	\$ (85,000.00)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -
Master Plan Implementation (Years 6-10)		\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ (500,000.00)
Capital Project Expenses (Analysis & Planning) - DCR						
Pre-Planning/ Cultural Resource Studies/Master Planning		\$ (450,000.00)	\$ (400,000.00)	\$ (325,000.00)	\$ (250,000.00)	\$ (50,000.00)
Programmatic Expenses - DCR/Friends (CSO)						
Program Costs			\$ (20,000.00)	\$ (50,000.00)	\$ (70,000.00)	\$ (100,000.00)
Event Costs			\$ (30,000.00)	\$ (40,000.00)	\$ (50,000.00)	\$ (70,000.00)
Total Capital Expenses	\$ (735,000.00)	\$ (1,200,000.00)	\$ (1,050,000.00)	\$ (1,315,000.00)	\$ (1,620,000.00)	\$ (1,920,000.00)
Net Total	\$ 22,267,200.00	\$ 5,670,200.00	\$ 230,300.00	\$ 535,800.00	\$ 744,950.00	\$ 905,150.00
Subtotal End Of Year Available Funds (Net Total + Cash Reserves & Endowment Funds)						
	\$ 22,267,200.00	\$ 27,937,400.00	\$ 28,167,700.00	\$ 28,703,500.00	\$ 29,448,450.00	\$ 32,044,975.00
Total End Of Year Available Funds (Subtotal Available Funds + Interest Earnings (3.5%))						
	\$ 22,267,200.00	\$ 28,716,750.00	\$ 29,172,775.00	\$ 29,724,550.00	\$ 30,488,800.00	\$ 33,173,250.00

Figure 2: Table identifying revenues and expenses projected for park operations and capital expenses.

ENGAGEMENT

Enlisting a broad coalition of individuals and groups during the future park's establishment is advised. Advancing these relationships through thoughtful outreach would support all aspects of acquisition, development, and park operations. Engagement is equally important to developing financial resources and the friends group necessary to support programming and development. We recommend beginning this process as early as possible—even before embarking on a formal master planning process. Virginia State Park's long track record of successful public engagement supporting planning and stewardship of its current 43 parks would be indispensable to this process.

A. Existing Partners

DCR already has two vested partners making significant contributions to a future Oak Hill State Park; the Loudoun County government, and The Conservation Fund (TCF).

Loudoun County - Loudoun County has already translated their long-held interest in preserving and opening Oak Hill as a public resource by approving the \$22M grant to TCF to acquire the property for purposes of a state park. The County's continuing interests in the park may include expanding the experiences and offerings of its already robust tourism economy to state, national, and international visitors; telling of Loudon's fuller story, especially its African American history; embracing Oak Hill's ongoing agricultural legacy; and potential involvement in future park planning through various county offices and commissions.

The Conservation Fund - TCF is playing a key role at Oak Hill. A trusted partner to DCR, TCF has a strong history supporting the development of other State Park projects, including at the natural and culturally significant Machicomoco State Park. TCF's pivotal partnership here is essential to the successful transfer of Oak Hill from private property to public resource and includes their serving as the primary liaison to the landowners; negotiating the \$22M grant agreement with the county; negotiating all agreements with the owners; and the phased transfer of the property to the Commonwealth. TCF is raising a \$20M endowment to support ongoing maintenance and to temporarily retain custody of the acreage outside of the historic core to mitigate wetlands, transition tenant and agricultural leases, and develop limited public access before transferring the entirety of these lands to the Commonwealth. To date TCF has successfully raised all funds necessary for acquisition, with substantial inroads securing the majority of startup costs (See Figure 3).

B. Communities Rooted in Oak Hill's Land and History

Oak Hill includes other historically significant stakeholders – each with rich ties to the property – whose voices may inform a deeper understanding and experience of the site. Key communities include the indigenous descendent community, the enslaved descendant community, Oak Hill owners descendant community, and long-time tenants and lessees of Oak Hill. Limited research and outreach conducted by the study team will support DCR's more formal stakeholder engagement and master planning. This approach draws on DCR's recent master plan engagement successes at Machicomoco State Park, and interpretive planning at Twin Lakes State Park and Green Pastures Recreational Area, each integrating Native America, and African American voices to inform master planning and interpretation.

C. Extended Community Stakeholders

A wider circle of constituents encompassing at least residents from Aldie and across Loudoun County, to civic and governmental organizations, and nearby sites. Regional, state, and national stakeholders may include recreation areas, other Monroe historic sites, and presidential historical organizations, each warranting continued engagement.



Acquisition + Start Up Funding

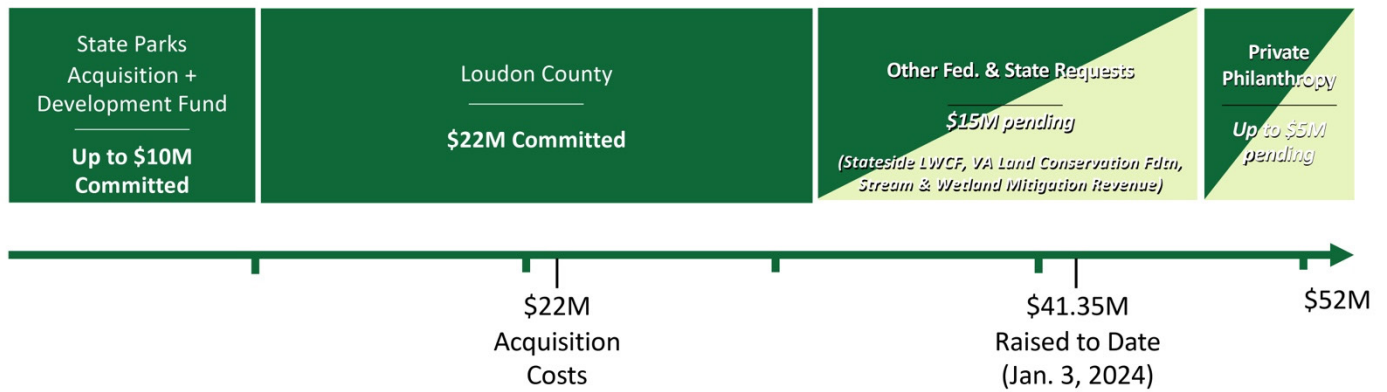


Figure 3: Diagram depicting funds raised to date (\$41.35M) against the target startup fundraising goal of \$52M. Funds raised to date are represented in dark green.

REVENUE PROJECTIONS (\$M)

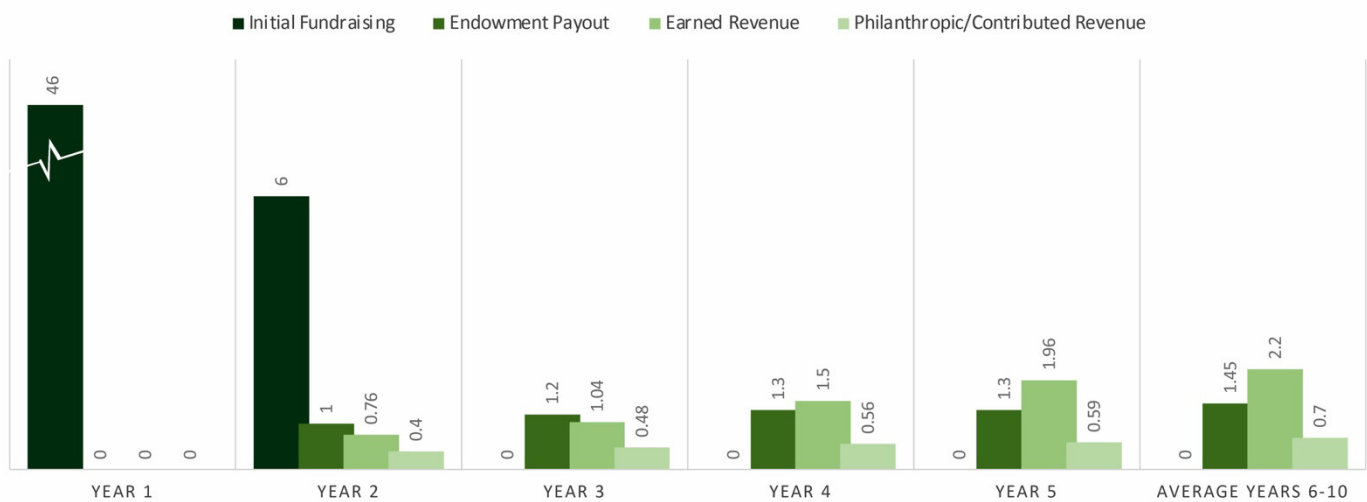


Figure 4: Chart depicting the positive footing Initial Fundraising provides the very conservative projections of yearly revenue streams inclusive of: Yearly Endowment Payouts (4.5% annually), Earned Revenue from tickets, sales, accommodations, etc., and Philanthropic (Contributed) Revenue acquired through private philanthropy, memberships, and grants. Revenue dollars represented are in millions.

REVENUE POTENTIAL

Revenues required to fund acquisition, start-up, and subsequent long-term operations of an Oak Hill State Park, will require performance in both earned and contributed revenues. The recommended funding model and projections include:

A. Endowment Fund Earnings

Raised through multiple sources of startup capital, TCF is establishing an endowment to support ongoing operations and maintenance. An initial \$20M endowment would be raised with annual interest earnings projected at 8%. Year-end surplus revenues would be kept in cash reserves and partially reinvested in the endowment at the close of each year. Annual payouts from the endowment would follow industry norms, would begin year 2 at +/- \$1M/yr and would represent roughly 4.5% of the fund total. The fund would be managed by a local community foundation and would comply with federal and state policies for the management of institutional funds and the Virginia code.^{xvi}

B. Earned Revenue Opportunities & Challenges

A future Oak Hill State Park may garner better-than-expected earned revenues given Virginia State Park's (VSP) long-tenure offering destination-quality recreational experiences affording increasing returns well-established on-site management protocols. Partnerships, engagement, and the establishment of the official non-profit CSO will further support the state's capacity for generating earned revenues.

Earned Revenue Opportunities	Earned Revenue Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Visitation: VSP is a demonstrated leader in destination recreational activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Regional state park comps (250K visitors annually by year 5)^{xvii} ◦ Likely amplified by Loudoun County's healthy heritage tourism economy, proximity to population centers, and Dulles Airport (IAD). • TCF initial activation: A limited offering of trails and public access during the startup phase, generating parking fees • Significant commemorative anniversaries (Marquis de Lafayette's Visits - 1825), and with local, state, and national observances of the U.S. Semiquincentennial (America's 250th). • Public access to the historic core Domestic and Work Yard landscapes would support limited special tours and events during early establishment. (\$15 ticket price) • Overnight Accommodations (Eight Tenant Houses) • Special Commemorative and Programmatic Events • Retail Operations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ VSP successfully operates retail operations at over 60 retail outlets across 43 parks. • Agricultural Leases <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Property is currently in cultivation; VSP has a long history of successful agricultural leases. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilities and open public access beyond initial establishment of perimeter trails, and parking would need to await the master planning process. • Internal readiness to pursue/promote, and generate income from special events programs, and commemorative offerings may require partnership during start-up phase. • The engagement required to incubate and launch the friends group as lead philanthropic partner will take several years and require support from partners.

C. Earned Revenue Approach & Recommendations

Virginia State Parks has a proven record of earned income for use of its world class recreational facilities. Within the future park these opportunities would correspond with the authentic and immersive experiences possible across Oak Hill's scenic, natural, and cultural landscape. Earned Revenue projections are represented in *Figure 4*, Page 12, and on the breakdown identified in *Figure 2*, *Oak Hill Funding Model*.

While confirmation of programs, uses, and recreational offerings would be informed by future and park master planning, the following revenue streams should be studied for their suitability at Oak Hill:

- Parking fees (\$10.00/ Car)
- Historic Core Admissions/Ticketed Events (+\$15.00)
- Special Use Permit Fees (\$ TBD)
- Tenant House Accommodations (8 @ \$300.00/night)
- Event Venue Rental (\$ TBD)
- Destination Merchandise / Retail
- Farmland Leases
- Additional Accommodations
- Agri-Tourism Revenues

D. Contributed Revenue Opportunities & Challenges

A future Oak Hill State Park is well positioned for long-term philanthropic support, although the Commonwealth must plan to address challenges it may face in pursuing contributed revenue:

Contributed Revenue Opportunities	Contributed Revenue Challenges
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Location in Loudoun County, a highly philanthropic community ● Market interest in a state that supports a robust history and cultural heritage economy ● Local enthusiasm for the project ● Timing aligned with America’s 250th Anniversary ● TCF as a trusted, proven partner in initial philanthropic efforts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Macroeconomic trends impacting overall philanthropic giving ● The potential for market saturation for historic sites ● History and culture rank low as overall philanthropic priorities in national giving trends ● Internal readiness to pursue long-term fundraising strategies and the time to incubate a new, permanent philanthropic partner

E. Contributed Revenue Approach & Recommendations

Philanthropic support of Oak Hill State Park is well-positioned within Loudoun County, ranked the 2nd most generous County in the Commonwealth.^{xviii xix} Contributed revenues are being considered in two phases, as represented in *Figure 4, Revenue Projections* on Page 12, and on the breakdown identified in *Figure 2, Oak Hill Funding Model*:

- Acquisition and Startup (Years 1-5): As the initial philanthropic partner, TCF is leading efforts to raise \$52M to acquire the property, establish an endowment for ongoing maintenance, and secure new equipment and improved public access.
- Ongoing Contributed Revenue (Years 6-10): Philanthropy will be essential to ensuring Oak Hill’s long-term financial sustainability. The study team concludes that there is significant potential for philanthropic support of Oak Hill State Park long term, and projections identified (*Figure 4*) are conservative.

Initial fundraising strategies include:

- Establishment of an official citizen support organization (CSO)
- Government Grants and Programs - including both federal and state sources.
- Private Philanthropy - including foundations, high net worth individuals, and memberships.
- Corporate Philanthropy & Strategic Partnerships - including philanthropic grants, sponsorship, cause marketing, and budget-relieving in-kind partnerships providing equipment, materials, or services.



F. Support Organization Structure & Recommendations - “Friends of Oak Hill”

The study team recommends that DCR and key stakeholders establish a new 501c3 nonprofit organization - a “Friends Group” - to serve as the official Citizen Support Organization (“CSO”) and long-term philanthropic partner for Oak Hill. A friends group would provide additional flexibility to engage in diversified revenue strategies, including both contributed and earned revenue activities, in support of Oak Hill. TCF has offered to support the development of this new organization, which the study team anticipates will take 12-18 months.

Since a friends group would likely take on a larger philanthropic role than is typical for Virginia CSO’s, DCR could take steps to ensure long-term partnership alignment, following best practices established by the National Park Service in its policies for philanthropic partnership:

- **Philanthropic Partnership Agreement** - Establish a comprehensive agreement that establishes authorities, policies, and priorities for friends group fundraising, including roles and responsibilities, reviews and approvals, access to the park site and assets for fundraising purposes, process for vetting potential donors, donor recognition plan and donor communications, policies for in-kind contributions and corporate partnerships, and guidelines around advocacy efforts.
- **Annual Work Plan** - The Park Manager and the friends group should develop, monitor, and report on an annual plan outlining budgetary priorities and fundraising activities.

G. Key findings – Revenue Potential & Operating Model

The revenue potential required to operate Oak Hill is greatly improved by Virginia State Parks’ strong record of on-site park management and expertise in offering revenue-generating recreational experiences. These strengths would be further supported by an official Citizen Support Organization (supported in part by TCF during early establishment) to provide diversified revenue strategies for contributed revenue and support civic engagement, programming and subject matter expertise.

Key Findings – Operations & Revenue Potential		
	Public/Private Operating Model	Revenue + Programming
Opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Entities that fall under a wider state-operated agency that specializes in park operations are more operationally sustainable and financially stable. • The most successful cultural sites have business-oriented delivery models. • Support organizations offer greater access to donations grants, awareness building, and communications support. • Public-private partnerships that clearly split roles and accountabilities more often operate with minimal disruption to their core functions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individuals and organizations are seeking historical places of respite, recreation and retreat. • Entities where services are best aligned with site opportunities are the most successful. • Accommodations, tiered admissions, agricultural leases, and venue rentals typically yield the highest revenue.
Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller historical properties are less operationally and financially stable and rely heavily on contributions (Contributed Revenue). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smaller historical properties without robust paid programming and rental opportunities (Earned Revenue) are more likely to operate at a loss. Oak Hill should focus on core revenue generating services and gradually expand.

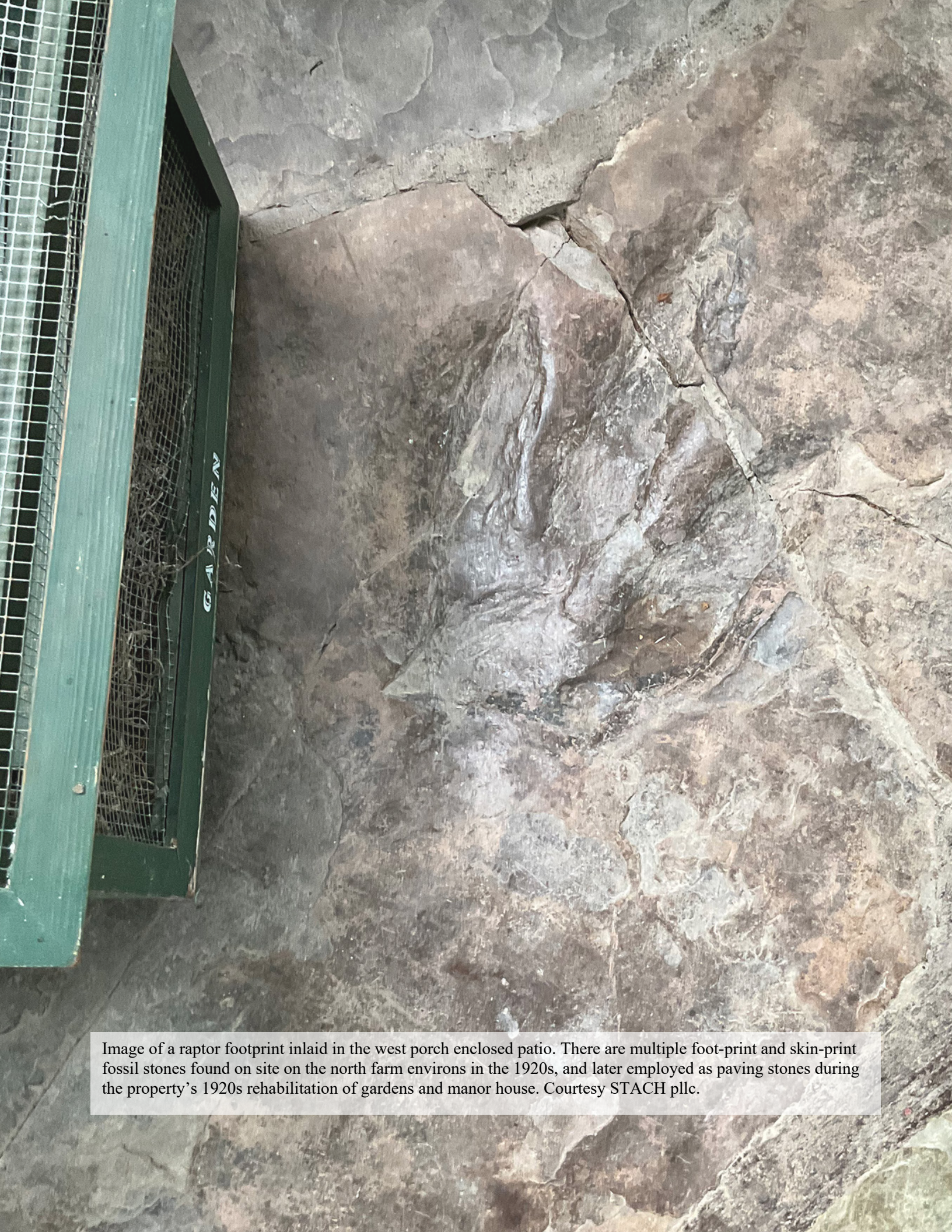


Image of a raptor footprint inlaid in the west porch enclosed patio. There are multiple foot-print and skin-print fossil stones found on site on the north farm environs in the 1920s, and later employed as paving stones during the property's 1920s rehabilitation of gardens and manor house. Courtesy STACH pllc.



Image looking southwest to Monroe-Era Spring House, and Judge Jones Cottage. Courtesy Ken Garrett.



Interior view of a Marquis de Lafayette mantel; Oak Hill Manor House. Image Courtesy Ken Garrett.



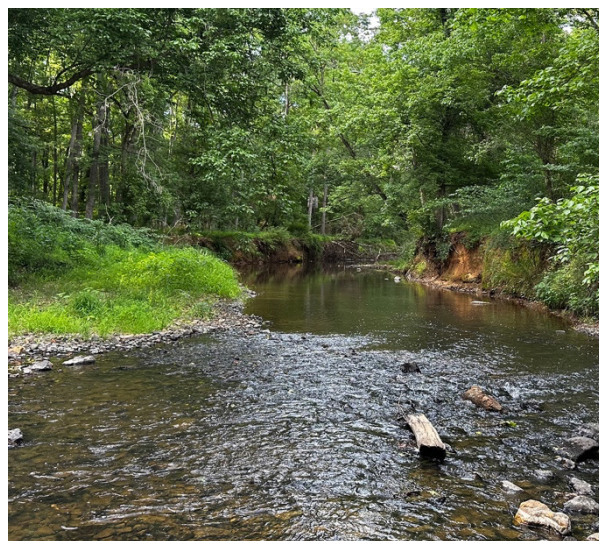
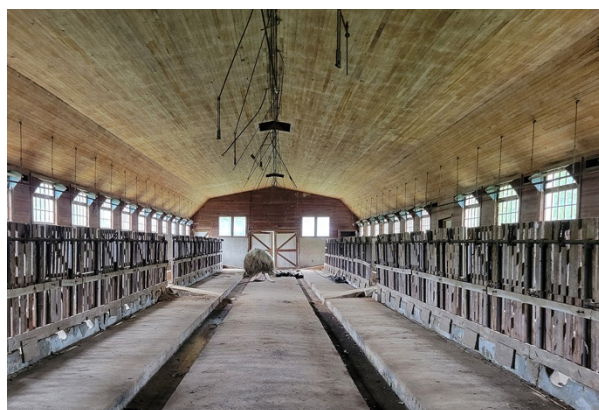
Interior view of formal dining room. Courtesy JKO Architects.



View from within the north entry court looking toward the Oak Hill Manor House. Landscape features visible within this image depict the 1920s rehabilitation of the site, including the addition of the perimeter boxwood hedge, stone walls and patios spaces encircling the house. Courtesy STACH pllc.

Aerial view along the north/south axis of the formal garden, looking northward with Oak Hill's historic domestic landscape and gardens in the foreground, and the encompassing scenic natural and agricultural landscapes beyond. The Little River stream corridor runs left to right in the distance, backed by distant views of the Bull Run Mountains. Image Courtesy Hugh Kenny, and the Piedmont Environmental Council (PEC).





Photos of Oak Hill's impressive collection of late 19th and early 20th century agricultural buildings, work yards, and tenant houses (two of eleven tenant houses shown). The composition of the Main Barn, Machine Shop, Dairy, and other farmyard structures and spaces visually convey the evolution of farm and work yard architecture in the Virginia Piedmont. The Little River courses through the property defining landscape character areas much as it did during Monroe's time. Courtesy STACH pllc.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS REPORT CREDITS

This *Summary of Findings* of the *Oak Hill State Park Feasibility Study* represents the collaborative work of a multidisciplinary team led by STACH pllc preservation landscape architects and planners working exclusively with properties of cultural, historical, and recreational value. Significant contributions to the project team include, Brockenbrough Associates (architects and engineers), Joseph K. Opperman Historical Architects, the William and Mary Center for Archaeological Research, and subject matter experts in history, programming, and strategic services by Brian Martin, Carlyn Swaim, and Stefanie Mathew.

ADDITIONAL PHOTO CREDITS (NOT OTHERWISE SOURCED)

Cover Image: Aerial photo looking north with Oak Hill's domestic landscape in the foreground. Courtesy Ken Garrett.

Page 2: Background image looking north along the Little River. Courtesy STACH pllc

Page 4: Background image looking toward south portico from within the formal gardens. Courtesy STACH pllc

Page 8: Image of interior mural painting of Natural Bridge. Courtesy JKO Architects.

Page 12: Background image of Main Barn Foundation Pillars. Courtesy JKO Architects.

Page 14: Image of North Pond. Courtesy The Conservation Fund.

Back Cover: Background image of agricultural fields west of the Little River. Courtesy STACH pllc.

END NOTES

ⁱ The 2017 Virginia Outdoors Plan identifies protection of the natural lands and scenic resources of the Bull Run Mountains as an important conservation target. VOP, 2017.

ⁱⁱ A 2021 Virginia Outdoors Plan Survey (Response Summary) identifies parks "within a 15-minute drive as considered close to home," as desirable, and lists lack of time and lack of parks nearby" as primary factors limiting park attendance. Accessed 12/12/24 <https://www.dcr.virginia.gov/recreational-planning/document/2021-online-vop-survey-results.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ US census data identifies Oak Hill within the context of Northern Virginia population centers as follows: Oak Hill and lands west of Rt.15 possess population densities (persons per square mile) of 65.8 within its census tract; Census tracts immediately east of Rt. 15 hold escalating population densities from 377, to 4,115 within a 15 minute drive eastward along Route 50. 2020 Census Demographic Data Map Viewer, United States Census Bureau, accessed 12/22/24. <https://maps.geo.census.gov/ddmv/map.html>

^{iv} SB30 Item 360M, 2024.

^v Economic and Fiscal Impacts of Virginia State Parks, 2023, Longwood University, March 2024.

^{vi} Economic and Fiscal Impacts of Virginia State Parks, 2023, Longwood University, March 2024.

^{vii} "Oak Hill track site: Early Sinemurian, Virginia," collected by C. Gilmore & N. Boss 1920, 1926, Paleobiology Database, https://paleobiodb.org/classic/displayCollResults?a=displayCollectionDetails&collection_no=104029

^{viii} The valuation of Oak Hill at \$35M is based on a 2024 appraisal of the +/-1,100 acres (LWCF application 2024) and \$7.5M for the core 86 acres (2021 appraisal) which includes the main house, gardens, and most of the buildings. Source: TCF.

^{ix} The Study Team has identified recommended studies to be undertaken early in Oak Hill's establishment including Oral Histories, Cultural Landscape Reports, Historic Structures Reports, Archaeological Investigations, Public Engagement and Fundraising Studies, are recommended early on to inform master plan development.

^x See note vii regarding valuation.

^{xi} The negotiated sales price of \$20M was confirmed through discussions with TCF leadership, December 2024.

^{xii} "The State Park Acquisition and Development Fund ...shall be used exclusively for the acquisition and development of state parks." Code of Virginia 10.1-202.B

^{xiii} Staffing costs based on comparable DCR State Parks staffing rates for 2024, reviewed November 2024.

^{xiv} Equipment costs as a function of staffing costs based on DCR State Parks comparable rates, reviewed November 2024.

^{xv} Utility & Maintenance Costs based on review of annual expenditures and estimated norms.

^{xvi} Endowment spending requirements are governed by the Uniform Prudent Management of Institutional Funds Act (UPMIFA), and the Virginia code.

^{xvii} The study team reviewed visitation statistics from state and national comparable parks and historic sites; Sky Meadows State Park (268K per 2022 MP), being the closest and fully operational unit. Oak Hill's proximity to more densely populated centers suggests the projections made remain conservative. Multiple Sources.

^{xviii} Smart Asset listing of the most generous places in the US by state/county. Accessed 11/20/24.

<https://smartasset.com/retirement/financial-advisor#virginia>

^{xix} VA ranked as 3rd most charitable state by giving, Accessed 11/20/24: <https://wallethub.com/edu/most-and-least-charitable-states/8555>