The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission is pleased to submit its proposed FY21-26 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) for the County's nationally recognized Gold Medal park system. We pride ourselves as stewards of a system that offers recreational and educational opportunities, enhances property values, builds community, and protects the natural environment.

While we have maintained the park system to a high level over many years, our facilities continue to age. In response to increasing demands and deteriorating infrastructure, this CIP places a greater emphasis on maintaining and enhancing our existing park system. It also supports our efforts to efficiently allocate resources by delivering smaller scale projects on a faster timeline.

In addition to the core criteria of immediacy, need, and efficiency, the Planning Board has included a stronger emphasis on equity than in prior CIPs. More information about the equity lens can be found in Exhibit A and a summary of our overall guiding evaluation criteria for this CIP is included in Exhibit B.

The recommended FY21-26 CIP also helps implement the County priorities in the following ways:

**Thriving Youth and Families**

- Putting the right parks in the right places, particularly in areas that have been disadvantaged and underserved.
- Fostering healthy living through our park system.
- Extending the classrooms into nature that otherwise would be confined to school buildings for an ever-growing population of students where kids can learn about the environment, their history, how to live a healthy lifestyle and connect with their community.
- Providing safe facilities such as ice rinks, skateboard parks, playgrounds, ballfields, tennis courts and nature centers where children can learn, interact and exercise.
- Providing facilities for children of all abilities, through system-wide assessments and planning retrofits for accessibility.
- Connecting children and families to their past through projects like Josiah Henson Historic Park.

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1 In 2015, The Department of Parks received its unprecedented sixth Gold Medal Award from the National Recreation and Parks Association. The award honors communities throughout the United States that demonstrate excellence in parks and recreation.
A Growing Economy

- Providing a venue for people to meet and get to know their neighbors.
- Making Montgomery County a preferred community to live, work and play by providing destination facilities including Brookside Gardens, the Josiah Henson Museum, dedicated cricket fields, and a world-class trail system, athletic fields & urban parks.
- Adding value to housing and development.
- Creating vibrant parks in urban settings, such as the Woodside Urban Park in the Silver Spring Central Business District or Caroline Freeland Local Park in Bethesda, that attract residents across the county and beyond to support economic growth.
- Investing in maintenance of existing parks contributes to the stabilization of neighborhoods and benefits the entire community.
- Partnering with local communities and businesses to provide recreational and cultural experiences.

A Greener County

- Protecting and restoring natural and historical resources that help us understand our place in a greater context and teach us the value of stewardship.
- Reducing carbon footprint by providing low impact, alternative transportation options.
- Preserving streams and creating storm water improvements to support water quality protection measures.
- Creating environmentally sustainable parks using nationally developed guidelines for sustainable landscapes.

Easier Commutes

- Creating alternative options for walking and biking on a network of hard and natural surface trails.
- Connecting neighborhoods and destinations.
- Filling in trail “gaps” to provide a more comprehensive and connected trail network, such as the North Branch Trail that will add vital links to the existing trail network that will connect Washington DC to Olney.
- Providing an ADA-accessible transportation option.

A More Affordable and Welcoming County

- Renovating and refreshing existing parks such as Hillandale Local Park, Long Branch-Wayne, or Carroll Knolls.
- Delivering long awaited improvements in existing parks like Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park and providing recreational opportunities in areas of the county with a high rate of growth.
- Acquiring sites to create urban parks in areas of highest population to promote a quality of life where people can live, work and play.
- Modernizing neighborhood recreation facilities.
- Implementing the Department’s Transition Plan for ADA accessibility county-wide to make ADA upgrades and facilitate the enjoyment of our parks for people of all abilities.
- Providing recreational opportunities for families of all income levels.
- Provide well-developed park facilities and well managed properties that encourage appreciation of the outdoors, exercise and good health.
Safe
• Implementing Vision Zero adopted by the County in 2016 to achieve a transportation system with no fatalities or serious injuries involving road traffic.
• Implementing Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) practices in all projects to reduce crime and create safe public places.
• Providing active, safe parks for families, children and adults to play and providing alternatives to unsafe behavior patterns.
• Meeting parking demand on site or adjacent to parks to avoid pedestrian conflicts on streets.
• Activating and retrofitting park facilities to create safer neighborhoods.

Effective, Sustainable Government
• Initiating more refreshers and renovations of parks that deliver parks efficiently, more frequent and that cost less.
• Responding to public needs and interests regarding various park facilities, including ballfields, playgrounds, trails, dog parks, skate parks, cricket fields and courts.
• Partnering with local communities and businesses to provide recreational and cultural experiences.
• Providing parks infrastructure maintenance upgrades.
• Utilizing the Department’s digital tools for managing CIP projects (asset management, finances and paperless reviews) and park permits.

This CIP incorporates an increase for level-of-effort projects that are used to maintain and support the existing park system and provides a current snapshot of what the Board believes is necessary for the Department to adequately steward the county park system. This request includes the Park Refresher CIP project that provides smaller scale renovations and improvements more quickly than the traditional model of larger scale renovations that otherwise might have to wait years to get through facility planning and obtain funding.

Programming projects in the current tight fiscal context requires relying heavily on the priorities including:
• Equity lens (Exhibit A)
• The Planning Board’s Overall CIP criteria and Strategy (Exhibit B)
• Responding to fiscal constraints identified by the Planning Board, County Executive, and the County Council throughout the CIP process

Within this framework, the Planning Board has also addressed:
• Mandates
• Aging infrastructure
• New trends
• Natural and Cultural Resources Stewardship
• Promises and commitments made to county residents
• Preserving funding increases to priority CIP projects such as Planned Lifecycle Asset Replacements, Park Refreshers, Trails Renovations, and Ballfields
Summary of the CIP

Below you will find summary charts comparing the currently approved FY19-24 CIP to the Department’s Submission for the FY21-26 CIP\(^2\). The overall CIP request approved by the Planning Board in October includes the revenues and increases mentioned above and brings the CIP to $253,859,000 for FY21-26. This is a 7.7% increase above the FY19-24 CIP of $235,809,000.

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\(^2\) The CIP was submitted electronically via Basis, the County’s mobile ready, web-based application that allows departments to load their capital budget submission requests, update funding sources and add projects to the County on October 31, 2019 and officially received by OMB on November 1, 2019 consistent with the Maryland Land Use Code, Section 18-112.
Funding Sources

While developing this CIP, the Board continued its effort to better prioritize projects to maximize our investment in the county's park system. This included incorporating state funding from Program Open Space and contributions from private partners that augment local public funding. In the proposed CIP, the Commission has pursued or will pursue $55,560,000 or 22 percent in non-County and non-Commission funds.

As we transition from the current FY19-24 CIP into FY21-26, certain funding sources increase while others decrease. This is because funding for FY19-20 is no longer part of the CIP, funding for FY25-26 is added to the CIP, and funding for the middle years, FY21-24, is often adjusted as well.

This CIP assumes increases in appropriations and revenues during the six years coming from the following sources:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>Increase from the FY19-24 CIP</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributions</td>
<td>$2,597,000</td>
<td>This additional appropriation allows the Department to receive contributions and spend them on various projects in the CIP. The primary increase here is in the Small Grant/Donor assisted Capital Improvements project.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Revenue: CUPF</td>
<td>$2,600,000</td>
<td>Reflects the increase in the Ballfields Renovations at school sites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Revenue: General</td>
<td>$4,088,000</td>
<td>This funding source is provided annually within the Operating Budget from general, special, or enterprise revenues and performance fluctuates. The CIP increase supports work programs such as Planned Life-cycle Asset Replacements (PLAR) and Restoration of Historic Structures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Current Revenue: M-NCPPC</td>
<td>$600,000</td>
<td>This increase is for Facility Planning in Local Parks which has become more active as we have been implementing the Park Refresher Program and other CIP projects and efforts including PLAR and Urban Park Elements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| G.O. Bonds\(^3\) | $10,844,000                  | The focus of this request is on projects that maintain the current park system. These include:  
  - Ballfield Initiatives - $4.9m  
  - Energy Conservation - Non-Local Parks - $560k  
  - PLAR-NL:  
    - Play Equipment - $1.2m  
    - Resurfacing Lots and Paths - $2.7m  
    - Court Renovations - $1.7m  
    - Park Building Renovations - $1.2m  
  - Trails: Hard Surface Renovation - $1.3m  
  - Trails: Natural Surface & Resource-based Recreation - $100k  
  - Wheaton Regional Park Improvements - $3.0m \(^3\) GO bonds for FY19-24 were $68.078m. However, adding FY25&26 at the same funding level as FY24 in the approved CIP ($11.776m) sets a new baseline for measuring GO bond increase in FY21-26 at $69.956m.
It also includes funding new work in existing parks:
- Black Hill SEED Classroom - $700k
- Second Cricket Pitch at South Germantown Recreational Park - $3.1m
- Funding the full first phase of Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park - $3.0m
- Vision Zero - $1.1m
- Minor New Construction - Non-Local Parks - $2.4m

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Long-Term Financing</th>
<th>$1,900,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>This reflects the County and M-NCPPC’s full transition to using state loans from the Water Quality Finance Administration for water quality projects and continuing the current level-of-effort into FY25 and 26. The debt service for these loans will be backed by the county’s Water Quality Protection Charge.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>M-NCPPC Bonds</th>
<th>$3,389,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>On October 1, 2019, the Council approved the first two years of the Board’s request to increase Spending Affordability Guidelines (SAG) to $8.0 million per year. This allowed the Board to consider increases for projects that maintain the current park system and include:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
- Energy Conservation - Local Parks – $407k
- Minor New Construction - $125k
- Park Refreshers - $1.308m
- Planned Life-cycle Asset Replacement (PLAR) LP:  
  - Minor Renovations - $24k
  - Park Building Renovations - $370k
  - Play Equipment - $455k
  - Resurfacing Parking Lots & Paths - $464km
  - Tennis/Multi-Use Court Renovations - $324k
- Urban Park Elements - $950k

This CIP submission conforms with this spending affordability guideline. |

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revenue Bonds</th>
<th>$10,000,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In anticipation of a new ice rink in Ridge Road Recreational Park.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>$36,018,000</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

This CIP assumes decreases in appropriations and revenues during the six years coming from the following sources:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Funding Source</th>
<th>Decrease from the FY19-24 CIP</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Contributions: Bethesda Park Impact Payments</td>
<td>$5,000,000</td>
<td>Overall, the CIP Project has actually increased to $15 million since its inception in FY20. However, the original $10 million is in FY20 which is not calculated in summary numbers for the</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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4 On October 1, 2019, the Council approved Spending affordability Guidelines for M-NCPPC Bonds. The six-year total was raised from $39.5 million for the six years in the FY19-24 CIP to $42.7 million for FY21-26. It includes raising the FY21 and FY22 levels to $8 million per year from $6.6 million per year, leaving FY23 and FY24 at $6.6 and $6.7 million respectively, and establishing FY25 and FY26 at levels similar to FY24.
Expenditure Categories

The Parks CIP projects generally fit in one of the following categories:

- **Renovation and Maintenance** — repair, renovation, and lifecycle replacement of existing park facilities and supporting infrastructure. This includes natural, cultural, and historical resources on parkland.
- **New Parks and Park Facilities** — responding to unmet park and recreation needs.
- **Land Acquisition** — continued commitment to expansion of parkland through Legacy Open Space and park acquisition programs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage of Six-Year CIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Renovation and Maintenance</td>
<td>$147,082,000</td>
<td>58%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Land Acquisition</td>
<td>$ 51,615,000</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Parks and Park Facilities</td>
<td>$ 54,561,000</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The recommended FY21-26 CIP reflects a strong focus on stewardship of existing resources and infrastructure while maintaining a balanced response to the growing population and demands of the county. The Renovation and Maintenance category is the largest piece of the CIP, underlining the importance of maintaining and/or renovating existing infrastructure, continuing service delivery, and reducing maintenance costs that impact the operating budget.

Proposed new projects are minimal. The Black Hill Seed Classroom spends funds leveraged by State Aid received in FY20. Two existing projects, the South Germantown Cricket Field Project and Ovid Hazen Wells Project,\(^5\) were increased to accommodate next phases of work and deliver on long-held expectations of county residents. However, the most significant increases in the CIP are in level-of-

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\(^5\) In the current FY19-24 CIP, $3 million of phase 1 was left in the "beyond six years" column due to affordability issues at the time. Design for all of phase one has continued with the intent that in the FY21-26 CIP the funding in the outer years would be moved into the new CIP.
effort projects that address life cycle needs of existing infrastructure or reflect cost increases from more stringent environmental permitting requirements and regulations, and costs for materials and labor.

Standalone projects in the current CIP that are not yet under contract and continue into the new CIP are candidates for budget increases due to inflation. However, for affordability reasons and to offset some of the increases that we are requesting in other areas of the CIP, we have opted not to escalate this small handful of projects that otherwise would have increased the CIP.

CIP Evaluation Process and Guiding Documents

The CIP Process is a very complex process due to the various players and groups involved in the process. However, all activities fall into at least three categories: Project origination, prioritization of projects, and consideration of constraints.

Project Origination

Project ideas come from various sources. They include public planning efforts, Department staff, residents (directly or via elected officials), interest groups, and other opportunities.

Plans that Inform the CIP

The Commission's CIP incorporates the relevant goals, objectives, and implementation strategies of various plans. There are various strategic plans and master plans that provide guidance to the CIP:

- **Park and Recreation Open Space (PROS) Plan** — Guidance on facility needs for defined geographies such as team areas and planning areas; approved by Planning Board and State.
- **Vision 2030 Plan** — Guidance on general areas of greatest overall facility needs based on Level of Services (LOS) areas as defined by the Vision 2030 Plan; guidance on what facilities should be increased, decreased, or repurposed (some countywide, some linked to the four Level-of Service areas).
- **Area Master Plans** — Guidance on parkland acquisition and occasionally locations of certain facilities; approved by Planning Board and County Council
- **Park Master Plans and Park Functional Master Plans** — Guidance on what facilities should be included in a specific park; approved by Planning Board.
- **Site Selection Studies** — Guidance on location of specific facilities, (i.e., dog parks, skate parks).

The majority of the proposed CIP is supported by these plans, many of which are adopted by the Council, Planning Board, and in the case of the PROS Plan, the state. The recommendations in these plans are then used to guide and inform facility plans that ultimately materialize into CIP projects. Exhibit C provides a list of the relevant recommendations in these plans for each of the proposed stand-alone projects.
Project Requests

Staff continue to utilize the Department’s CIP and Major Maintenance request database that is housed in the Commission’s Enterprise Asset Management System (EAM). This system allows the Park Development and Facilities Maintenance Divisions to work collaboratively to evaluate and address the needs of the park system. The database uses an automated rating system that is based on several different evaluation criteria generally reflecting those approved by the Planning Board. Each criterion is weighted, points are added up, and a justification score is assigned to each project request making it easier to prioritize them within the CIP. This provides an initial prioritization that is then fine-tuned using the CIP Strategy approved by the Board. The criteria used by the database include:

- Renovates Aging Infrastructure (Reduces unexpected capital, operating or maintenance expenses of existing infrastructure)
- Protects Natural or Cultural Resources (Protects environmentally or culturally significant sites)
- Supports Plans or Studies (Supported by approved plans including park/area master plans, surveys, condition or needs assessment studies, PROS, etc.)
- Enhances Safety (Eliminates hazard; repairs deteriorated condition thus reducing Commission’s liabilities)
- Generates Revenue (User fees, permits, admission fees, etc.)
- Meets Public Request (Requested by public through testimony, correspondence, etc.)
- Required by Mandates (Federal/State/Local regulations, i.e., ADA, NPDES)

Operating Budget Impact, or OBI, is also factored into the justification score.

Ideas from Residents

The park system is the largest amenity for residents of Montgomery County. As such, the Department is always looking for new ways to engage residents and listen to their feedback and ideas for improvements to the park system. This feedback comes from a variety of sources:

- **Campaigns** – concerted efforts to reach out to the public and solicit their feedback through presentations, events and activities. The Department continually seeks to engage members of the community who traditionally have not participated in park development initiatives.
- **Social Media** – providing content to engage and inform county residents and to give residents a venue for responding on topics that are important or of value to county residents.
- **Public hearings and forums** – most planning and development efforts incorporate outreach to local residents affected to get their reaction, input and ideas on the effort.
  - Parks and Recreation Forum – The CIP process includes a Parks and Recreation Forum before the Planning Board and the Countywide Parks and Recreation Advisory Board where residents can address both bodies with written and/or spoken comments about things they would like to see in the county-wide park system.
  - Montgomery County CIP forums – During the CIP cycle, Montgomery County Government also holds a series of CIP forums hosted by each of its Citizen Advisory Boards (CAB) to obtain feedback from citizens on the county-wide CIP
for all departments and agencies. Parks staff attends each forum to serve as a resource for answering questions about Parks projects and our agency’s CIP. After the Forum Series, each CAB typically submits a letter to the County Executive outlining their interests, issues and priorities in the CIP. These are usually held in late June or early July.

- Specific requests made to the department, letters, emails, calls, etc.

**Prioritization**

When new projects are received from the various sources mentioned above, they are aggregated out to a candidate list pertaining to each of the current CIP projects. Newly proposed projects that would warrant a separate capital project are added to the candidate list for facility planning. From there, the Department discusses the new project requests internally with its CIP Evaluation Committee and later engages the Planning Board in various work sessions.

**CIP Evaluation Committee**

The Department of Parks CIP Evaluation committee consists of the Parks Director, Deputy Directors and representatives from various divisions to prioritize CIP projects based on established criteria and readiness. The Committee looks at how current funding levels are meeting or not meeting the needs and priorities of the park system, identify any additional priorities and make recommendations about funding to better meet the needs of the park system. Using guidance from the Planning Board, the Committee makes recommendations and gives feedback for the Planning Board to consider in strategy sessions and work sessions.

**Planning Board Review**

The Board begins its work with a series of work sessions: two strategy sessions in April and July, as well as two work sessions in September. In these sessions, the Board works with the Department to firm up Evaluation Criteria and guiding principles that set the foundation for discussing specific projects and funding in future work sessions. During these work sessions, the Board considers constraints including the fiscal climate of the county, prior spending affordability guidelines (SAG) adopted by the County Council, and guidance from the County’s Office of Management and Budget (OMB). This is also the time for the Board to provide direction and feedback to staff as they make recommendations for funding and timing of projects to be included in the CIP. Upon considering recommendations from staff in September, the Board takes action on final scenarios for groups of projects that are adopted collectively as the CIP in early October.

The Board has emphasized to staff the need to focus first on funding level-of-effort projects that maintain the existing system, bring life-cycle schedules into check, meet mandates, and recognize the additional cost of doing business. After funding level-of-effort projects and park refreshers the Department continues to push for funding as many of our standalone projects as possible. Only two of these stand-alone projects are new: The Black Hill SEED Classroom that received $250,000 of state funding in FY20, and the Capital Crescent Trail Crossing at Little Falls Parkway. All other existing stand-alone capital projects have been in the CIP (some in multiple CIP cycles already) in queue with active constituencies awaiting their completion.

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6 For affordability reasons, the Board opted to move funding for this project to the beyond six years column while the Department revisits the facility plan that the Board reviewed on June 13, 2019.
Constraints

One of the biggest challenges in the CIP cycle is how to balance needs and affordability. In late September and October each year, the County Council considers Spending Affordability Guidelines (SAG). While this is early in the CIP cycle for the Council, it is up to the minute and timely for OMB as they are reviewing CIP proposals from County departments. However, it is very last minute for the Board, since we must start our CIP review very early to meet our November 1 deadline to submit the CIP. We work with our own Commission staff to look at affordability issues for our own bonds and consider information OMB presents in County forums during the summer on the fiscal climate of the county. We then do our best to balance needs and requests for CIP projects within what we anticipate will be a reasonable request within that context. The Council determines what is affordable when they take action on SAG in early October and in final CIP resolutions the following May.

CIP Projects: Acquisition and Development

The Parks CIP consists of two broad categories: Acquisition Projects and Development Projects.

Land Acquisition Projects

The parks acquisition program purchases lands that are critical to expanding the recreational, conservation, and urban parks that serve the growing and changing population of Montgomery County. Since the last CIP, a new capital project and funding source has been created to support new urban parks in the rapidly growing Bethesda CBD (Bethesda Park Impact Payment, or PIP), and the overall acquisition program is focused on providing parks within walking distance to all residents of the County, including traditionally underserved communities. While it is important to keep adequate funds available across the five acquisition projects to purchase key properties, the requested funding levels may not be adequate for certain significant and expensive park acquisitions, especially for urban land. When appropriated funds are not adequate to achieve a specific park acquisition, the Department will submit a supplemental appropriation request to the County Council. Since the costs and timing of the most expensive urban park acquisitions are unknown, the supplemental appropriation process is an appropriate tool to fund these projects.

Acquisition: Local Parks

The Local Park Acquisition PDF identifies capital expenditures and appropriations for Community Use Parks, including neighborhood, local, neighborhood conservation, and community use urban parks as defined by the 2017 PROS Plan. The funding source for this project is primarily Program Open Space with a small amount of M-NCPPC Bonds for program support expenses. The POS appropriation request is for $2 million per year for FY21 and 22; while the actual POS funding from the State is not guaranteed and depends on the State’s budget, this appropriation level appears to be a prudent and reliable assumption.

Acquisition: Non-Local Parks

The Non-Local Park Acquisition PDF identifies capital expenditures and appropriations for acquisitions of land for countywide parks, including regional, recreational, special, stream valley and conservation parks. This PDF also is used for acquisition of Countywide Urban Parks as defined in the 2017 PROS Plan, including Civic Greens, Countywide Urban Recreational Parks,
Urban Greenways, and Plazas. The PDF provides latitude to acquire properties consistent with master plans and Commission policies as properties become available or are required to meet immediate needs. The funding source for this project is primarily Program Open Space with a small amount of Current Revenue for program support expenses. The POS appropriation request is $2 million per year for FY21 and 22; while not guaranteed and depending on the State’s budget, this appropriation level appears to be a prudent and reliable assumption. To support potential urban parkland acquisition, supplemental appropriation requests may be submitted for additional County funds, if necessary.

Advanced Land Acquisition Revolving Fund (ALARF)

The Advanced Land Acquisition Revolving Fund (ALARF) was established in the Commission’s CIP to enable acquisition of rights-of-way and other property needed for future public projects such as parks, road, etc. ALARF funds can only be expended on properties that are identified in an approved and adopted master plan for a public purpose. As of June 30, 2019, the cash-on-hand balance in the ALARF account is approximately $6.5 million. As land purchase contracts using ALARF are negotiated and approved by the Planning Board, the County Council will receive requests for approval of these expenditures. As the balance in the revolving fund drops below the level needed for priority acquisitions due to expenditures and diminishing land sales, the Commission may require a bond sale in the future to replenish available funds.

Bethesda Park Impact Payment

This project will hold and expend Park Impact Payments (PIPs) submitted to M-NCPPC as a condition of Planning Board approvals of certain developments within the Bethesda CBD. The PIPs may be use for acquisition of parkland, renovation of existing parks, and development of new parks within the Bethesda CBD. To date, almost $14 Million in PIPs have been approved in Site Plans by the Planning Board, and over $7.9 Million in PIPs have been submitted. The Parks Department will use these funds to support the priority park projects identified in the Bethesda Downtown Plan.

Legacy Open Space

The Legacy Open Space (LOS) program was created to implement the Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan (2001) with the overall goal of preserving the best remaining open spaces in a variety of categories across the county. Since its inception, the program has successfully protected over 3,700 acres through acquisition into the park system, ranging from key natural resources and water supply protection sites to heritage and urban open spaces. The consistent level of funding for this program has allowed the LOS program to leverage an additional $31 million in non-County funding, including State and municipal funds and the direct donation of five properties (116 acres valued at over $2.8 million) to the park system. The Urban Open Space category is receiving additional attention as Montgomery County is transforming into a more urban community. So far, the LOS program has acquired 11.5 critical acres of scarce open land in our densest urban communities. Parks continues to focus on the LOS Urban Open Space category by identifying the most significant proposed urban parks in new master plans and designating those sites in the Legacy Open Space program.

The FY21 and FY22 funding levels requested in this CIP are slightly lower than the previous funding request to accommodate the tight budget this CIP cycle while still retaining a consistent
funding stream for this valuable program. Note that this request does not include additional funds to accommodate costly urban parks, so significant urban park acquisition opportunities may result in supplemental appropriation requests when necessary.

Development Projects

The CIP contains several stand-alone projects, or distinct individual projects that generally are reviewed and approved by the Board as facility plans before the Council is asked to approve design and construction funds.

Continuing Standalone Projects funded from the current CIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brookside Gardens Master Plan Implementation</td>
<td>Silver Spring</td>
<td>Next phases of infrastructure work – Visitors Center &amp; Conservatory (POR), renovations to the Formal Gardens, and facility planning for Propagation Area B of the maintenance area.</td>
<td>$1,700,000</td>
<td>Design FY22 Construction FY22-23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hillandale Local Park</td>
<td>Silver Spring</td>
<td>Renovation of existing 25.35-acre park</td>
<td>$5,700,000</td>
<td>Facility Plan approved July 2015, FY19-20 Design, FY20-22 Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Josiah Henson Historic Park</td>
<td>N Bethesda</td>
<td>2.77-acre park with conversion of historic house to museum. Includes visitor center, drop-off area and outdoor exhibits</td>
<td>$7,762,000</td>
<td>Facility Plan approved June 2013, Design ongoing; FY19-21 Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Bennett Day Use Area</td>
<td>Clarksburg</td>
<td>New nature-based recreation area. Facilities will include a multi-purpose outdoor classroom; amphitheater; group picnic, shelter and fire ring areas; play complex; trails; access road and parking lot.</td>
<td>$8,740,000 (Phase 1) $14,567,000 (Phase 1&amp;2) Estimated for Phase 1&amp;2</td>
<td>Park Master Plan 2007, FY19 Design; FY21-23 Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Branch Trail</td>
<td>Rockville</td>
<td>Hiker-biker trail, 2.2 mi, through Lake Frank and the North Branch of Rock Creek</td>
<td>$4,672,000</td>
<td>Facility Plan approved June 2013, FY20-21 Construction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Branch Recreation Park Athletic Area</td>
<td>Clowerly-Norwood</td>
<td>Phase II to include Lighting and irrigation for adult fields, playground, maintenance building, restroom building and two picnic shelters, sensory loop trail, landscaping and miscellaneous amenities.</td>
<td>$4,600,000</td>
<td>Concept Plan approved January 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Project Name</td>
<td>Location</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Budget</td>
<td>Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park</strong></td>
<td>Clarksburg</td>
<td>Relocates carousel from Wheaton Regional Park and provides supporting recreational amenities and parking to create a destination recreational area.</td>
<td>$8,300,000 (Phase 1) $19,000,000 (Phase 1 &amp; 2)</td>
<td>Facility Plan (Phase 1) approved Sept 2015, Phase 1 Design FY19; Phase 1 Construction, FY21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Wheaton Regional Park Improvements</strong></td>
<td>Wheaton</td>
<td>Parking lot renovations and expansions, drainage improvements, access improvements, restroom building improvements amenity modernizations/renovations, activation the Shorefield House area, and other infrastructure and facility improvements</td>
<td>$5,000,000</td>
<td>Facility/concept plan for Shorefield Area approved June 2017</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

New Standalone Projects FY21-26

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Black Hill SEED Classroom</strong></td>
<td>Clarksburg</td>
<td>A Sustainable Education Every Day (SEED) classroom to provide sustainable education program in Black Hill Regional Park. The building is designed for net-zero energy and net-zero water and can help children to learn how the building functions and better understand the flows of energy and water.</td>
<td>$850,000</td>
<td>Facility Plan presented to Board July 11, 2019, also FY20 Bond Bill $250k received in Minor New Construction Non-local Parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>South Germantown Cricket Field (Phase 2)</strong></td>
<td>Germantown</td>
<td>Provides a second, Full-size cricket field, additional parking, amenities and irrigation.</td>
<td>$3,118,000</td>
<td>Concept Plan approved July 2015</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Unfunded Standalone Projects (funded FY27+)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Name</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Budget</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Capital Crescent Trail/Little Falls Crossing</td>
<td>Bethesda</td>
<td>Includes improvements to the trail crossings, intersections, roadway, lighting, and stormwater management</td>
<td>$2,500,000</td>
<td>Facility Plan reviewed June 13, 2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elm Street Urban Park</td>
<td>Bethesda</td>
<td>Renovation of an existing urban park, adds work to have been done by developer</td>
<td>$942,000</td>
<td>Project Plan by former developer approved 2010</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Magruder Branch Trail Extension</td>
<td>Damascus</td>
<td>Approximately ¾ mile hard surface trail connecting existing trail to the Damascus Town Center</td>
<td>$2,629,000</td>
<td>Facility Plan approved October 2017</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little Bennett Regional Park Trail Connector</td>
<td>Clarksburg</td>
<td>Approximately one mile of hard surface trail from Snowden Farm Parkway to the Day Use Area</td>
<td>$2,780,000</td>
<td>Facility Plan approved September 2015</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seneca Crossing Local Park</td>
<td>Germantown</td>
<td>18-acre local park with rectangular playing field, playground, sand volleyball courts, skate spot, trails, parking, picnic shelter.</td>
<td>$8,773,000</td>
<td>Facility Plan approved October 2011</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Warner Circle Special Park</td>
<td>Kensington</td>
<td>Renovation of historic buildings and surrounding park</td>
<td>$6,177,000</td>
<td>Facility Plan approved 2011; Funding of $4,952,000 shown Beyond Six Years</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Stand-alone projects that were completed through FY19:
1. Laytonia Recreational Park
2. Western Grove Urban Park

Projects that are in progress and should be substantially complete by the end of FY20:
1. South Germantown Recreational Park Cricket Field (Phase 1)
2. Rock Creek Maintenance Yard

Level-of-effort Projects

In addition to stand-alone projects, the CIP also includes several level-of-effort projects that generally have a consistent and continuous level of funding from year to year and fund smaller sub-projects that do not require facility planning. While the Department evaluates and prioritizes the sub-projects within these PDFs with a particular focus on the first two years of the program, the Department may revisit and adjust priorities on an on-going basis. This is so that new sub-projects are fairly prioritized and evaluated against existing projects.
The Board's continued shift toward renovation and maintenance projects in the CIP is mainly accomplished by using level-of-effort projects. Properly funding these projects maintain the existing park system, bring life-cycle schedules into check, meet mandates and address the additional cost of doing business.

Unlike stand-alone construction projects where the County regularly factors in inflation with each CIP review, there is no policy that regularly recognizes natural cost increases in level-of-effort projects, leaving departments and agencies having to advocate continually for adjustments to the projects.

The level-of-effort development projects included in the CIP are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project</th>
<th>CIP Status FY21-26</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. ADA Compliance - Local and Non-Local      | Maintain overall 6-year funding levels. The local park project was adjusted in the early years for affordability but increased in subsequent years. This project ensures that parks and park facilities are built and maintained in compliance with Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Accessibility Guidelines (ADAAG) standards  
  - Current funding allows for 4-5 projects per year per fund *(should be 10-15).*  
  - ADA funding also supports other CIP Initiatives: New Method Projects, playgrounds, parking lots, trails, etc.                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| 2. Ballfield Improvements                     | Increase funding for School Renovations from $250k/yr to $600k and increase overall park system-wide fields program $750k per year to manage growing demand, use, and backlog of projects                                                                                                                                                                            |
| 3. Cost Sharing - Local and Non-Local        | No change                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
| 4. Energy Conservation - Local and Non-Local | Increases $113k/yr in FY21-22 in local parks and $60k/yr in non-local parks. To modify existing park buildings and facilities to control fuel and utilities consumption. Increased to support the County's zero-carbon emissions goal for 2030. Increase to eventually fund approximately 7-10 project per year.                                                                                   |
| 5. Enterprise Facilities Improvements         | Current Revenue in the six-year program decreases $5.1 million due to the Enterprise Division's projected revenues in FY21-26, some revenue FY19-20 no longer part of the new CIP, and funding some work with revenue bonds. Revenue Bonds increase $10 million in the six-year program in anticipation of a new ice rink in Ridge Road Recreational Park.                                                                 |
| 6. Facility Planning - Local and Non-Local    | Local Park funding is increased $100k/yr. Increase is requested because of high implementation, the park refresher program creating more projects, and for planning assistance in other capital projects and efforts such as Planned Life-cycle Asset Replacement projects and Urban Park Elements.                                                                                           |
### 7. Minor New Construction – Local and Non-Local

Local Parks increase from $300-350k/yr to $360-450k/yr. Non-local parks increase from $350-400k/yr to $700-800k/yr. These PDFs currently have a candidate list estimated at about $2.7m, which at current funding would take 18+ years to complete.

### 8. Park Refreshers

M-NCPPC Bond Funding is increased $218k/yr on average, whereas program open space funding is similar to the current CIP. This is to address design and other administrative costs required to prepare projects for presenting to the State for POS funding.

### 9. Planned Life Asset Replacements – Local and Non-Local

Subprojects:
- Play Equipment
- Minor Renovations
- Court Renovations
- Resurfacing Parking Lots and Paths:
  - Local Parks
  - Boundary Markings
  - Park Building Renovations

Increases vary by fiscal year, but local parks increase $169k/yr on average while non-local parks increases $1.5 million/yr on average.

**Play Equipment**
- Increase local park baseline funding of $1.28- $1.4m/yr to $1.3-1.5m/yr
- Increase non-local baseline funding of $190-410k/yr to $500k/yr
- In local parks, this allows for an additional 1-2 projects per year above the current 5-6
- In non-local parks, this allows at least one smaller playground to be completed per year (non-local playgrounds range in cost from $400,000 to $1,600,000)

**Minor Renovations**
- Local Parks – maintains a similar funding level to current CIP
- Non-local Parks – increases by $252k/yr.
- Provides for infrastructure improvements for a variety of park amenities and infrastructure, such as bridge repairs/replacements.
- This is the most widely used funding source and covers any renovation or replacement in Local and Non-Local Parks to aging, unsafe, or obsolete infrastructure or its components involving a variety of park amenities such as pedestrian bridges, water fountains, underground fuel tanks, boardwalks, benches, doors, handrails, fences, steps, underground utilities, light fixtures, sprinkler systems, restrooms and shelters, drainage and erosion control, etc.

**Court Renovations**
- Non-local Parks – increase baseline funding of $120k/yr to $400k/yr.
- Local Parks - increase baseline funding of $350-400k/yr to $400-500k/yr.
- Additional funding will help to implement ADA improvements, recommendations from the Sports Court Working Group for court repurposing, as well as lighting

**Resurfacing Parking Lots and Paths**
- Non-local Parks - increase baseline funding of $341-859k/yr to $1.0m/yr.
- Local Parks - Increase funding from $300-350k/yr to $350-500k/yr
- This covers paving projects that include pavement (asphalt and concrete), pavement markings, parking blocks, signs, drainage, curbs, gutters, sidewalks, pathways, walkways, and design and construction costs. We currently maintain the area equivalent of about 440 acres of paving in the park system, or an equivalent of about 64,000 parking spaces. At current funding, the life-cycle replacement schedule the Department can address an area equivalent of about 150 spaces per year, which is a system-wide lifecycle of at least 450 years, when it should be about 25 years, or an area equivalent of about 2,500 spaces per year.
- Funding addresses significant backlog and would also allow for 2-3 significant paving projects in regional or recreational parks annually.

**Boundary Markings**
- Maintain existing funding.
- This project funds surveying activities in the park system.

**Park Building Renovations**
- Increase local park funding from $300k/yr to an average of 362k/yr
- Increase non-local park funding from $225-375/yr to 500k/yr
- To address renovations in aging park buildings with failing infrastructure and to comply with current code requirements.
- Non-local park projects are focused on roof replacements that are typically over $400k each.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>10. Pollution Prevention and Repairs to Ponds and Lakes</th>
<th>Maintains funding of the current CIP</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. Restoration of Historic Structures</td>
<td>Increase the effort from $500k/yr to $550-850k/yr. To repair, stabilize and renovate priority historical structures and sites that are located on parkland. Park projects under this umbrella typically cost around $400k or more allowing less than one project per year. The Parks Department maintains a large inventory of historic structures, many of which are vacant and in need of restoration. Current funding levels leaves many resources unoccupied and subject to the elements, animals and vandalism. The current candidate list has 8 projects estimated at about $2.5m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Small Grant/Donor Assisted Capital Improvements</td>
<td>Increase appropriation from $300k/yr to $1.1m/yr to accommodate increased support of projects from non-County government funding sources, e.g. grants, donations, gifts, fund raising projects, and sponsorships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Stream Protection</td>
<td>No Change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Trails: Hard Surface Design &amp; Construction</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Trails: Hard Surface Renovation</td>
</tr>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Trails: Natural Surface &amp; Resource-based Recreation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>Urban Park Elements</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>Vision Zero</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Conclusion**

The FY21-26 CIP addresses the critical needs of the county's park system. The development of the CIP was a comprehensive and heavily coordinated effort among many stakeholders, including the Planning Board, Parks staff, County, and public. Our award-winning park system is visited and enjoyed by millions each year and surveys show that parks are the most popular public amenities across the County. Through this capital budget, the Commission seeks to adequately maintain our existing park system, conserve open space and valuable cultural resources, provide new recreational facilities, and preserve and enhance the environment. The Planning Board asks for your support of the Montgomery County Department of Parks' proposed FY21-26 CIP.

Sincerely,

Casey Anderson
Chair

**Attachments:**

- Exhibit A: Equity Lens for FY21-26, page ©1
- Exhibit B: CIP Strategy and Evaluation Criteria FY21-26, pages ©2-3
- Exhibit C: Planning Recommendations for Standalone Projects, pages ©4-24

CA:ctm

cc: Montgomery County Council
Equity has been a prioritization factor and part of the CIP since the FY 07-12 CIP was adopted in 2005. However, determining what it means and how it is tracked and implemented has been an evolving discussion over time.

In the first CIP strategy session in April, the Planning Board affirmed criteria and an overall strategy for the FY21-26 CIP (Exhibit B) which included a mapping tool that was in development and would overlay CIP projects on base maps to aid in the equity analysis. The base maps included Park Equity (PROS 2017), Income, and Racial/Ethnic Predominance.

After discussing the tools with the Board and considering the complex task ahead of reviewing the 900+ candidate projects in the Commission’s Enterprise Asset Management System (EAM), the Department created a single base map that combined the Income map with the Racial/Ethnic Predominance map. This base map was used as the primary base map for continuing the review of project programming in the CIP.

It is important to note that this tool for equity has limitations and is not yet able to model at a granular level. It provides much better answers than we have had in the past, but it does not answer all questions. The Department continues to do additional work outside of the CIP framework to develop a more sophisticated method of modeling and understanding equity in the county. Until then, this tool is being used with care. Scoring of CIP projects are to be buttressed with other analysis outside of the tool, including knowledge of the vicinity, needs of its residents, and the context of the facility in question. Despite its limitations and being a tool in development, it has helped us focus funding more on parks that serve areas of higher equity needs.
These criteria and areas of focus guide the evaluation and prioritization of projects for the Capital Improvements Program for FY21-26

**Immediacy**
- The project repairs or replaces facilities necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare.
- The project preserves natural, cultural or historic resources that might otherwise be lost or degraded if prompt action is not taken.
- The project upgrades facilities to comply with current code requirements and laws.
- The timing of the project is dependent on coordination with related projects of other County agencies or interest groups.
- The project is included in the first phase of a master plan.

**Need**
- The project is already programmed in the CIP and is therefore already promised to a community.
- The project provides facilities to an under-served geographic area.
- The project provides facilities to an under-served population group.
- The geographic distribution of proposed projects is equitable.
- The project provides facilities to serve unmet needs countywide.
- The project serves a need identified by the surrounding community.

**Efficiency**
- The project increases revenue, results in cost savings, and/or improves operational efficiency.
- The project leverages an opportunity, such as a partnership, contribution, donation or grant.
- The project has a high cost/benefit ratio by serving a large number of people for a reasonable cost.
- The project prevents further degradation of existing facilities which could be costly to repair later.

**Equity**
- The project provides services or facilities to communities where there is a predominance or majority of racial or ethnic minorities.
- The project provides services or facilities to higher populations of lower income residents with low levels of access to parks.
- Tools that may be used to determine Equity include Park Equity scores as per the 2017 PROS Plan, the methodologies in the Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan for Parks in Mixed
Use & Higher Density Residential Areas (EPS FMP), and M-NCPCC maps for Racial and Ethnic Predominance and Percent Area Median Income

**New vs. Renovation**
- The predominant emphasis in the CIP should be on maintaining the current system and infrastructure

**Public Access to Natural Areas**
- Serves park users and protects natural resources
- Improves and expands trail networks
- Provides natural resource-based recreation opportunities

**Trails**
- Increasing trail construction and renovation efforts, both natural and hard surface

**Ballfields**
- Making ballfields available and convenient to a growing park constituency

**Urban Parks**
- Increasing focus on activations and improvements
- Focusing more on urban areas where infrastructure is often older and open space is limited.
- Addressing changing needs and interests of urban populations

**Acquisitions**
- Targeting urban parks and high-density areas
- Seeking potential for natural resource-based recreation as well as enhancing the natural environment

**Project Delivery**
- Fewer large-scale renovations
- More targeted, phased renovations of park components by utilizing level-of-effort projects
- Using in-house staff resources where possible
- Taking advantage of interdepartmental partnerships
- Focusing on Level-of-efforts on maintaining what we have and implementing improvements to parks quickly

**Facility Planning**
- Activating urban parks
- Focusing on smaller projects and studies
Black Hill Regional Park: SEED Classroom

**Master Plan(s)**

Clarksburg Master Plan and Hyattstown Special Study Area, Approved 1994 and amended in 2011

The 1994 Clarksburg Master Plan establishes a long-range vision of Clarksburg as the northernmost population center along the I-270 Corridor. Across West Old Baltimore Road from Black Hill Regional Park’s main entrance, the Master Plan calls out a new community for Cabin Branch Neighborhood (page 64) that will include 1,900 residential dwelling units, 500 senior units, and retail and employment use, as well as a future elementary school site. Black Hill Nature Center and Visitor Center serves more than 35,000 visitors every year. In 2015 alone, the number of people attending the nature center program doubled. As Cabin Branch Neighborhood currently being under construction, the need for additional programming space is expected to become greater and the existing 25-person auditorium is falling short of demand to serve the growing community.

Black Hill Regional Park Master/Management Plan, Approved May 2002

The 2002 Master Plan has four core provisions for the park (page 1 of Public Presentation in the Appendix A, Volume 1). One of them is to renovate, expand, or replace older facilities in the park (including the Black Hill Visitor Center). It recommended that “to the extent possible, facility renovation, expansion and replacements of existing recreational development is proposed to occur within…pockets of already developed areas”.

**PROS**

The 2017 PROS Plan indicates the importance of educating citizens and staff about nature resources (page 147) and references Vision 2030 Strategic Plan about the needs to expand nature programs (page 116). SEED Classroom program is the number one priority as a “Living Classroom” at Black Hill Nature Center in the Park Foundation’s fundraising list (Page 55).

Using existing park and recreation facilities and lands more fully is a major goal of the 2017 PROS Plan (page 5). SEED Classroom will meet this goal by activating existing dormant developed land to optimize the land usage and create new program that will benefit the growing communities.
Vision 2030 (2011)

Vision 2030 Strategic Plan recommends expanding outdoor nature programs. This function was ranked among the top priorities by the statistically valid Vision 2030 Strategic Plan survey (Executive Summary page 6; and Volume 2, page 16). The Needs Assessment Survey ranked Nature Centers with outdoor education areas seventh (7th) in priority for investment (Volume 2, page 18).

Vision 2030 Strategic Plan recommended that the Department of Parks develop an environmental literacy program for County residents of all ages that fosters a fundamental understanding of the systems of the natural world, the relationships and interactions between the living and non-living environment, and the ability to deal sensibly with complex issues that involve weighing scientific evidence, uncertainty and economic, aesthetic and ethical considerations. It recommends the development of environmental education programs that meet Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) and State environmental literacy curriculum standards (Volume 2, page 20).

In the table on page 84 of Appendix E, 2010 survey results show the Nature Center program as the Core Service with Drop-in Experience. This service has been recognized to have higher demand in Potomac and Rural Areas.

Brookside Gardens Master Plan Implementation

Master Plan(s)

The Brookside Gardens Master Plan (2005) provides a long-term vision for the renewal of Brookside Gardens. The master plan identifies fifteen phases of development for implementation. The Board requested that the draft Master Plan proposed in 2002 be broken into fifteen smaller, lower cost phases with an emphasis on landscape renovations. Since that time, the priority has shifted to replacement of structures due to failing infrastructure. Staff also recommends grouping associated phases together to gain cost efficiencies in planning and implementation and to minimize disruption to operations during construction.

Phases IX, X and XIII: Tent Terrace, Visitors Center Renovation and New Conservatory

The original Conservatory has reached its expected lifespan and is experiencing failure of the glass shell which results in significant leaking during rain, escaping heat, and poor climate control. The paths in the North House do not meet ADA standards. The 48-year old shell is not tempered glass and so poses a significant hazard to staff and visitors. The Conservatory is located in a 100-year flood plain, and as recent storms demonstrated, vulnerable to rising waters, not only in the
parking lot, but within the building itself. The Master Plan proposes to move the Conservatory to the heart of the Gardens, adjacent to the Visitors Center, where it will be more accessible for visitors and close to key visitor services and amenities. Associated phases with the new conservatory include renovations to the Visitors Center to join the two buildings, an access road to allow services and visitors to move around the building, and an outdoor tent terrace for special events and rentals. The current funding is requested to develop a program of requirements, concept design and cost estimate for future improvements. Funding for final design and construction would be requested as a future project.

**Phase XIV: Feature Garden Renewal: Accessibility Renovations to Formal Gardens**

This phase includes partial renovation of the core Formal Gardens, including the Perennial Garden, Yew Garden, Maple Terrace and Wedding Gazebo. These gardens are original landscape features, along with the Conservatory, when Brookside Gardens opened in 1969. Relatively untouched since then, the gardens do not meet ADA standards and the series of steps leading through the area have been retrofitted with temporary non-compliant ramps. The original flagstone paving is failing and has become a tripping hazard. Other infrastructure failings include deteriorating steps, lack of handrails, poor drainage, and inadequate electrical service and lighting. This project, in conjunction with proposed funding in the ADA Compliance: NL PDF, will retrofit the permanent infrastructure of these gardens to meet accessibility requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act. Unique facilities within the park system, such as Brookside Gardens, were identified as high priorities for accessibility renovations in the Department’s ADA Transition Plan.

**Phase XIV: Feature Garden Renewal: The Rose Garden**

Like the Formal Gardens, the Rose Garden is an original garden feature, dating to 1969. It is one of the most popular garden areas with visitors, and the paving, arbors and steps are failing. A recent significant bequest from a long time Gardens’ volunteer will help support the renovations cost. This relatively small project of $350,000, with a donor gift of approximately $250,000 to supplement the funding, will make a large impact on the visitor experience.

**PROS**

N/A

**Vision 2030 (2011)**

Brookside Gardens is located in the East Transit Corridor area. The Plan indicates that the East Transit Corridor area has the highest population of all planning areas and also has the greatest concentration and access to recreation components, with an overall higher level of service than the South or North Central areas, but a lower level of service than the Potomac/Rural area.
The Vision 2030 survey shows that natural areas are one of the top five facilities to expand or improve. Outdoor nature programs, and community events and festivals ranked among the top seven programs to add, expand, or improve. The survey also shows that renovating existing facilities is top priority for residents when it comes to future spending, more so than investing in new facilities.

**Capital Crescent Trail Crossing at Little Falls Pkwy**

**Master Plan(s)**

Montgomery County Vision Zero Two-Year Action Plan, Approved and Adopted November 2017

Montgomery County is one of the first counties in the United States to adopt Vision Zero policy, which originated in Sweden in 1997 and is credited with significant reductions in fatal and severe collisions there. Montgomery County adopted a Two-Year Action Plan with the goal of reducing severe and fatal collisions by 35 percent for vehicle occupants, bicyclists and pedestrians by November 2019. The long-term goal is to completely eliminate fatalities and severe injuries by 2030 by reducing crash frequency as well as severity.

Vision Zero policy consists of several common principles: 1. Transportation–related deaths and severe injuries are preventable and unacceptable. 2. Human life takes priority over mobility and other objectives of the road system. The road system should be safe for all users, for all modes of transportation, in all communities, and for people of all ages and abilities. 3. Human error is inevitable; the transportation system should be designed to anticipate error so the consequences are not severe injury or death. Advancements in vehicle design and technology, roadway engineering, personal electronic devices, etc., are necessary components for avoiding the impacts of human errors. 4. People are inherently vulnerable, and speed is a fundamental predictor of crash survival. The transportation system should be designed for speeds that protect human life. 5. Safe human behaviors, education, and enforcement are essential contributors to a safe system. 6. Policies and practices at all levels of government need to align, making safety the highest priority for roadways.

The Action Plan commits to utilizing non-traditional, evidence based “safe system approaches” to improve safety. Examples include narrowing travel lanes, reducing vehicle travel speeds, additional educational outreach, and enforcement. The interim road diet installed at the trail crossing along Little Falls Parkway in January 2017 is included on Page 20 as a highlighted example of corrective action to “improving dangerous intersections”.

Department of Parks Submission, FY21-26 CIP
Supporting Documents
Westbard Sector Plan, Approved and Adopted July 2016

Westbard is a community in the southwestern part of Montgomery County, approximately two miles from the Bethesda and Friendship Heights commercial areas. The Capital Crescent Trail runs the length of Westbard. The Westbard Shopping Center is planned for mixed use redevelopment in the future, which will include new commercial space, residential homes, and other amenities. The planned Westbard redevelopment spurred approval of an updated Westbard Sector Plan in July 2016.

The Westbard Sector Plan considers the Capital Crescent Trail to be a major amenity as follows: “A tremendous asset in the community is the Capital Crescent Trail (CCT) on the old B&O Railroad right-of-way. This pedestrian and bicycle trail is a major regional connection that also provides limited local service in the Westbard area. Increasing local connectivity to and from the CCT will allow it to be more integrated into the community.”

The Sector Plan makes many short- and long-term recommendations for the Capital Crescent Trail. A sampling of the recommendations include the following:
• Create a road connection between River Road and Westbard Avenue, adjacent to the Capital Crescent Trail, to provide access to businesses and improve access to the Capital Crescent Trail.
• If a future Master Plan recommends additional density on the Whole Foods site, it should also explore options for a park or open space at this site and a trail connecting this site with the Capital Crescent Trail.
• If the Washington Episcopal School redevelops, renovate the associated portion of Willett Branch to restore the flood plain and provide a trail connection to the Little Falls Stream Valley and Capital Crescent Trail.
• Provide plantings to complete Westbard’s Greenway network along the Capital Crescent Trail and Little Falls Parkway.

Regarding transportation improvements in the area, the Sector Plan states on page 32: “While the automobile still needs to be accommodated, data trends, at least in this area, indicate a shift in mode choice or commuting patterns away from the automobile. This shift provides the opportunity to use the existing and proposed rights-of-way for needed transportation facilities, other than just road capacity.”

The Sector Plan visualizes the framework for future transportation network development in the area, and includes recommendations for redevelopment of River Road, Westbard Avenue, and other roadways in
the area. Consideration for additional bikeways, pedestrian paths, and public transportation networks is included. The Sector Plan includes results from traffic modeling of future traffic growth in the area as follows:

In the 2012 SSP year 2040 TPAR analysis, the Bethesda-Chevy Chase Policy Area is shown to be adequate for the roadway test. Given that the Westbard Sector Plan area is a small subset of a much larger policy area and the planned growth in Westbard is anticipated to be relatively minor compared to what is zoned but not built, the transportation network is considered to be in balance with the land use and densities proposed by the Westbard Sector Plan.

Little Falls Parkway is classified as a “limited access park road that runs along the eastern boundary of the Sector Plan area with truck restrictions”. As a park road, Little Falls Parkway is excluded from modeling and planning purposes as a primary means of traffic conveyance (as opposed to state highways and Montgomery County Department of Transportation owned 6 roads). Page 37 of the Sector Plan endorses Little Falls Parkway with a target 35 mph speed limit and two total lanes of traffic.

**Bethesda Downtown Plan, Approved and Adopted May 2017**

The Bethesda Downtown Plan provides guidance and recommendations for development in the downtown Bethesda area for approximately twenty years from the date of adoption. The Plan envisions a sustainable downtown area supported by the three major highways (Old Georgetown Road, Wisconsin Avenue, and East-West Highway), a strong public transportation network, and well developed and accessible pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure.

While Little Falls Parkway is outside of the formal downtown Bethesda area, the Plan has numerous recommendations for bikeways that will result in improved access to the Capital Crescent Trail from downtown Bethesda. The Bethesda Downtown Plan Recommends a Network of Bikeways and Lanes Connecting to Capital Crescent Trail. As bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure in downtown Bethesda is improved in the future, it will result in additional recreational and commuter users on the Capital Crescent Trail.

**Montgomery County Bicycle Master Plan, Approved and Adopted November 2018**

The Bicycle Master Plan is a comprehensive update and amendment to all existing County bike plans, including the 1978 Master Plan of Bikeways, the 2005 Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan, and bikeway recommendations in past functional plans, master plans, and...
sector plans. The Bicycle Master Plan is a “key element in Montgomery County’s Vision Zero Two-Year Action Plan to eliminate traffic-related fatalities and serious injuries”.

The Bicycle Master Plan contains recommendations for a low stress network of bikeways and bicycle infrastructure throughout Montgomery County, including creation of a Breezeway Network, a high capacity system of arterial bikeways between major activity centers. The Capital Crescent Trail, which follows an abandoned rail corridor and connects several major activity centers from Silver Spring through Bethesda into Washington D.C., is considered a major future Breezeway in the Plan:

Breezeways feature intuitive and safe intersection and driveway crossings that minimize delay for pedestrians and bicyclists. The crossings are developed to prioritize non-motorized travel by making it easier and safer to travel through intersections. Breezeway crossings include elements that both separate bicycle movements from motor vehicles and make bicyclists and pedestrians more visible to other road users. Crossings will:
- Slow motor vehicle traffic.
- Improve bicyclist and pedestrian visibility.
- Reduce bicyclist and pedestrian exposure.
- Reduce or eliminate conflicts.

The Plan has several other long-term recommendations for the Capital Crescent Trail:
- Widening the trail to 15 feet with 2-foot-wide shoulders between Massachusetts Avenue and Bethesda Avenue, with a 5-7-foot-wide walkway and an 8-10-foot-wide bikeway.
- Added lighting along the trail between Bethesda Avenue and the Silver Spring Transit Center.
- Strongly considering trail lighting between River Road and Bethesda Avenue during the facility planning process.
- Studying an improved connection from the Capital Crescent Trail to MacArthur Boulevard. Regarding mid-block trail crossings, such as the Capital Crescent Trail crossing at Little Falls Parkway, on Page 83 the Plan recommends “Traffic calming that removes traffic lanes and/or reduces the design speed of the road” as a viable solution to improve safety, in addition to trail re-alignment and grade separation.
Elm Street Urban Park

Master Plan(s) The Bethesda CBD Sector Plan (1994) acknowledges the existing two-acre Elm Street Urban Park as one of five urban parks in the Bethesda Sector Plan area. It states that the park is scheduled for renovation and notes that some of the existing facilities may be replaced “with others preferred by the community and with more green space.”

PROS N/A

Vision 2030 (2011) Elm Street Urban Park is located in the South Central area, which has the lowest level of service of all planning areas for parks and recreation compared to the density of population, even though this area shows a relatively high concentration and access to recreational facilities.

Vision 2030 Survey results from the South Central planning area show increasing demand for playgrounds. The Elm Street plan calls for an improved playground with poured-in-place resilient surfacing. The survey also shows that renovating existing facilities is top priority for residents when it comes to future spending, more so than investing in new facilities.

Hillandale Local Park

Master Plan(s) The White Oak Science Gateway Master Plan (2014) recommended renovation of the park: “The existing Hillandale Local Park needs renovation and reconfiguration. The play area is hidden from view, parking and vehicular circulation are disjointed, and the Park Activity Building is underused. While removal of the Park Activity Building provides opportunities to redesign the park, the site has little or no room for reconfigured parking and additional needed facilities. This Plan recommends exploring opportunities with the FRC and the adjacent Hillandale Volunteer Fire Station for possible expansion of Hillandale Local Park’s land area to allow for additional facilities to meet community needs.”

PROS Hillandale Park is classified as a Local Park which is described by the PROS Plan as “Larger parks that provide ballfields and both programmed and unprogrammed recreation facilities.” The PROS Plan provides an inventory of facilities taken in 2005 and projects the need for additional facilities by the year 2020. The field needs by the year 2020 for the Eastern County area indicate an unmet need for multi-purpose rectangular fields.
**Vision 2030 (2011)**

Hillandale Local Park is located in the **East Transit Corridor** area. The Plan indicates that the East Transit Corridor area has the highest population of all planning areas and also has the greatest concentration and access to recreation components, with an overall higher level of service than the South or North Central areas, but a lower level of service than the Potomac/Rural area. The survey results from the East Transit Corridor planning area show increasing demand and need to maintain high levels of service for multi-purpose fields, playgrounds, picnic shelters, and natural and hard surface trails.

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**Josiah Henson Historic Park**

**Master Plan(s)**

**Josiah Henson Park Master Plan** adopted by Planning Board in December 2010 “Moderate Option” concept was approved for conversion of site into museum and visitors center serving as heritage and educational destination telling story of Henson, slavery and abolitionist links to Harriet Beecher Stowe. Montgomery County Master Plan for Historic Preservation, 1979; Property listed as a designated resource, #30/6, “Uncle Tom’s Cabin.” The Planning Board approved the name change from “Uncle Tom’s Cabin” to Josiah Henson Special Park in the December 2010 park master plan. Original parcel and house on it protected are under the Historic Preservation Ordinance, Chapter 24-A of the Montgomery County Code as administered by the Historic Preservation Commission (HPC).

Approved and Adopted **White Flint Sector Plan, April 2010**

The plan states:

> The redesign of Wall Local Park should incorporate the sizable trees and include a pedestrian connection to the Josiah Henson/Uncle Tom’s Cabin site, a cultural site of international significance, about one quarter-mile south on Old Georgetown Road and one half-mile from the Metro Station

**PROS**

2012 Park Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan, July 2012

States that the Department of Parks’ Cultural Resources Program will continue to make historical, archaeological, and landscape properties useful to residents and visitors now and in the future in the following ways: Continue to tell the county’s story through its best 8-10 public interpretive sites, Including...Josiah Henson Special Park. It identifies this specific project as follows: Other future programs for the public include a museum dedicated to the subject of slavery and the life of Josiah Henson at the Josiah Henson Special Park.
Vision 2030 (2011) recommended the Department of Parks implement the cultural/historic interpretation plan based on *From Artifact to Attraction: A Strategic Plan for Cultural Resources in Parks* and the prioritization system in the *Cultural Resources Asset Inventory*, both of which place Josiah Henson Historic Park as the top priority.

### Little Bennett Regional Park Day-Use Area

**Master Plan(s)** The *Little Bennett Regional Park Master Plan (2007)* proposes recommendations for the following: nature-based retreat, trails, the day use area, interpretive emphasis, and park character along MD Route 355, which are incorporated into the recommendations for the gateway and day use area. Specific recommendations for the day use area are outlined below.

**Gateway Features**
The plan recommends developing a gateway into the park that welcomes visitors and focuses on natural learning and natural themes. The plan states the following:

*Although Little Bennett Regional Park is over 3600 acres, it is in many ways a “hidden treasure.” Park owned houses from the original park acquisition obscure views into the park. The absence of any type of public entrance along MD 355 limits public access and public awareness of the park’s presence. This Gateway Area Concept Plan welcomes people to a Day Use Area and provides them an overview of the natural and cultural interpretive opportunities awaiting them.*

Activities proposed for the gateway area are nature-based and largely unstructured and include picnic areas, meadow habitats, native plant education areas, a group campfire, an amphitheatre, an adventure playground and trails. A Visitors Center with an interpretive focus is proposed.

The master plan provides a concept plan on page 15 of the plan to guide development of the area:

- *Provide a welcoming entrance into the park that respects the natural terrain and preserves vistas of the natural landscape.*

- *Provide an enhanced landscaped buffer along MD 355 to heighten the sense of enclosure in the gateway area.*
• Provide meadows and garden areas as a “preview” of the types of plants, trees, birds and butterflies that may be found in the park interior.

• Provide recreational opportunities that focus on casual enjoyment of the out of doors and are linked to the park’s landscape.

The master plan also provides a concept plan to guide development of the day use. The approved facility plan has been scaled back from the original concept plan to better fit with the ecological and cultural context of the park and to cut back costs.

PROS
N/A

Vision 2030 (2011)
Little Bennett Regional Park is located in the Potomac/Rural planning area on the border line with the North Central planning area (which includes Clarksburg). The Plan indicates that the Potomac/Rural and the North Central areas have the lowest concentration and access to all recreational components. The Plan also indicates that the largest percentage of population growth in the next twenty years is projected to be concentrated in the North Central area. The results of the Vision 2030 survey give high priority to improving or expanding programs related to health and wellness, outdoor nature programs and children and youth activities. The survey results also give high priority to facilities including trails, playgrounds and natural areas. For the Potomac/Rural area specifically, the survey results show a demand for outdoor nature programs and natural surface trails.

Little Bennett Trail Connector

Master Plan(s)
The Clarksburg Master Plan (1994)
establishes a strong commitment to the vision of Clarksburg as a transit and pedestrian oriented community surrounded by rural open space, and emphasizes the protection of environmental and historic resources. A key goal of the Clarksburg Master Plan is to connect park facilities and natural areas to the greenway network. The Clarksburg Master Plan includes a bikeway plan that supports its objectives regarding greenways and transit. The bikeway plan objectives include: provide a logical relation to the Countywide Bikeway Plan and Master Plan of Boyds, Germantown and Damascus areas; integrate the bikeway system with greenways; emphasize bikeway access from neighborhoods to shopping and employment areas as well as to key community facilities; and emphasize bike paths that are separated from streets and roads.
The trail will extend the Clarksburg Greenway hard surface trail and the MD Route 355 hiker-biker trail north towards Hyattstown; provide pedestrian access from the Clarksburg Town Center to the Little Bennett Regional Park Campground, future Day Use Area and natural surface trail system; and provide bikeway and trail connections via Comus Road to a future Class III bikeway on Shiloh Church Road and to a future natural surface trail connection through the Ten Mile Creek Legacy Open Space to Black Hill Regional Park. The trail will promote pedestrian connectivity and expand recreational opportunities in upper Montgomery County. The Little Bennett Regional Park Master Plan also recommends the proposed trail connector. The plan recommends extending a hard surface trail connection along Route 355 on the east side of the road from Snowden Farm Parkway to Hyattstown and indicates a preference on page 19 that the trail be set back within the park 50 feet from the right-of-way. The plan describes this trail on page 14 as follows:

*A hard surface trail is proposed along the park frontage of MD 355. This trail will meet Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines and will provide access to the gateway area of the park as well as historic features closer to Hyattstown.*

**The Ten Mile Creek Area Limited Amendment to the Clarksburg Master Plan** states:

The trail connector for the corridor along MD Route 355 was coordinated during the facility plan for the Little Bennett Regional Park Day Use Area with staff of the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) to ensure consistency, efficiency and safety. Staff confirmed that Route SP-72 Countywide Shared Use Path will be located on the west side of MD Route 355 within the road right-of-way and be completely independent from the park recreational trails. The transportation bikeway will support the future Corridor Cities Transitway providing non-vehicular access for the community. Park trails on the east side of MD Route 355 will serve recreational purposes and serve as a sidewalk for the future countywide shared use path and bikeway system.

**PROS**

The 2012 PROS Plan states that some current or proposed high density areas are not very well-served for trails, such as the I-270 Corridor. It recommends filling in gaps in the regional trail system.

**Vision 2030 (2011)**

Trails were identified in the Vision 2030 surveys as one of the highest rated facilities in importance and rated as one of the top priorities to add and expand.
Magruder Branch Trail

Master Plan(s)

The Damascus Master Plan (2006) recommends extending the Magruder Branch Trail. The master plan “strongly supports the continuation of the trail northward to a northern terminus in the Town Center. Attention must continue to be given to providing safe road crossings for those using the trail at all crossing locations.” This Plan particularly notes the need for providing a safer trail crossing at Sweepstakes Road, and ensuring a safe crossing of Bethesda Church Road and Damascus Lane when that segment is developed.

The trail extension is shown in the 2005 Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan. The park trail provides connections to proposed on-road Class II or III bikeways on Ridge Road (Rte 27) and Damascus Road (Rte 108), as well as connections to a proposed Class I shared use path on Woodfield Road (Rte 124). These recommendations, as well as park trail connections to Class I shared use paths on Bethesda Church Road and Valley Park Drive, are recommended.

The 1998 Countywide Park Trails Plan, as amended through 2008, notes that key projects are the Matthew Henson Greenway trail, Black Hill trail in Black Hill Regional Park, the extension of the Magruder Branch trail to Damascus town center and Muddy Branch hard surface trail.

PROS

The 2012 PROS Plan recommends more hard surface trails in the Upcounty area. And to increase trail connectivity by filling gaps in the regional trail system between recreational facilities as well as and connecting activity and population centers.

Vision 2030 (2011)

Magruder Branch Trail is located in the Potomac/Rural area, which includes the entire Agricultural Reserve. This large area is fairly well-served when adjusted for population density; however, this park will likely draw users from other areas such as the I-270 corridor and Bethesda/North Bethesda. The Vision 2030 maps show that the I-270 corridor and surrounding areas have the greatest park and recreation needs based on population density.

The Vision 2030 survey shows that trails are one of the top five facilities to improve or expand. The survey also shows that trails, specifically hard surface trails, have the highest usage among all park facilities.
### North Branch Trail

**Master Plan(s)**
- The Upper Rock Creek Trail Corridor Plan (2008)
  This trail was recommended in the Trail Corridor Plan to close a gap to Rock Creek Regional Park.

**PROS**
- Use of hard and natural surface trails is the County’s most popular recreation activity.

**Vision 2030 (2011)**
- The Vision 2030 survey shows that trails are one of the top five facilities to improve or expand. The survey also shows that trails, specifically hard surface trails, have the highest usage among all park facilities.

### Northwest Branch Recreational Park

**Master Plan(s)**
- The Aspen Hill Master Plan (1994) indicates that a future master plan is needed for the park to determine the type and quantity of facilities that should be developed in the future. It also indicates that issues of accommodating Storm Water Management and the ICC should be addressed, as well as the feasibility of a recreation center.

**The 1998 Countywide Park Trails Plan** shows a natural surface trail corridor in the Northwest Branch extending from the D.C. Line to the Patuxent River. It recommended a comprehensive trail study in the corridor once the ICC alignment is determined.

**2005 Rachel Carson Greenway Trail Corridor Plan**: The Northwest Branch trail was renamed the “Rachel Carson Greenway Trail.” A Plan was prepared for the corridor that mandated specific recommendations related to Trail Planning, Interpretation and the Environment.

**PROS**
- Needs for the larger Georgia Avenue Team Area include 8 adult sized rectangular athletic fields.

**Vision 2030 (2011)**
- Northwest Branch Recreational Park is located in the East Transit Corridor planning area. The Plan indicates that the East Transit Corridor area has the highest population of all planning areas and also has the greatest concentration and access to recreation components, with an overall higher level of service than the South or North Central areas, but a lower level of service than the Potomac/Rural area. Vision 2030 Survey results from the East Transit planning area show increasing demand for playgrounds, multi-purpose fields, picnic shelters, and trails, all of which are included in design of the park.
Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park

**Master Plan(s)**

**Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park Master Plan Update (2014)**

This plan determined that the carousel should be located in the Active Recreation Area of the park and recommended that it be supported by other family destination amenities in addition to existing picnic areas and playground areas. Additionally, the master plan identified a potential location for the carousel on undeveloped land within the Active Recreation Area. This was a change from the 1995 Master Plan, which recommended that the carousel be located in the central Event Area.

With respect to trails, the master plan recommends a 10-15 foot wide hard surface trail connection be developed through Ovid Hazen Wells Park to connect the existing Clarksburg Greenway Trail to future trails to the east of the park. This hard surface trail will function as a major trail connector to other facilities such as Little Bennett Regional Park, Black Hills Regional Park and the Clarksburg Town Center and will connect the existing internal areas of the park.

**1994 Clarksburg Master Plan and Hyattstown Special Study Area**

This plan proposes a trail system that links the three major parks in the study area: Little Bennett Regional Park, Black Hill Regional Park and Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park. It provides future residents of Clarksburg easy access to outdoor experiences, creates a trail system that links to the Town Center and key community facilities, and proposes that the greenway system be part of the M-NCPNC park system.

**2008 Countywide Park Trails Plan**

This plan aligns with the 1994 Clarksburg Master Plan’s trail recommendations for linking Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park with Little Bennett Regional Park, Black Hill Regional Park, Clarksburg Town Center, and Damascus.

The master plan also recommends that parkland be acquired at the corner of Skylark Drive and Piedmont Road as a future potential site for the Clarksburg Community Recreation and Aquatic Center. Should this site not be selected for the community center, additional active recreation facilities can be expanded in this portion of the park.

**PROS**

The 2012 PROS Plan recommends additional playgrounds, tennis courts, and basketball courts for the Clarksburg Planning Area. In addition, a combined recreation center and aquatic facility is needed in the North Central planning area where Ovid Hazen Wells Park is located. The I-270 Corridor is estimated to need 29 rectangular fields and 5 diamond fields.
by the year 2020, and other facilities that are estimated to be needed by 2022 on a countywide basis include:

- cricket fields - two in the Upcounty area;
- natural surface and hard surface trails to fill gaps in the regional trail system, as well as where they would serve high density population centers, and/or where they would connect to recreational facilities and activity centers;
- natural areas;
- dog parks, community gardens, picnic shelters and areas, and community open space;
- skateboarding facilities within safe walking distance of middle or high schools, in areas of high population density;
- volleyball courts, in groups of two to six, where there is room in regional or recreational parks.

**Vision 2030 (2011)**

Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park is located just outside of the North Central subarea near Clarksburg which has the second lowest level of service for parks and recreation per population and the lowest population density of all four subareas of the County by a large margin.

User surveys identified facilities of highest importance, which included trails, playgrounds and natural areas. The Plan recommends increasing levels of service for multi-purpose fields, playgrounds, dog parks, community gardens, and aquatic and community recreation centers.

**Seneca Crossing Local Park**

**Master Plan(s)**

The Germantown Master Plan (1989) recommends the development of Seneca Crossing Local Park situated very near both the Clarksburg (PA 13) and Goshen/Woodfield/Cedar Grove (PA 14) planning areas, just outside of the area covered by the 2009 Germantown Employment Area Sector Plan.

The Master Plan identifies the park area as part of the North Germantown Greenbelt Conservation Area. The greenbelt is intended “to provide an effective visual and physical border which establishes the edges of the Germantown community.” Its primary purpose is to protect the stream valleys, steep slopes, and wooded areas around Germantown, while providing locations for active recreational facilities.

The 2008 Countywide Park Trails Plan provides recommendations for park trails in Germantown in Corridor 8 for the Upcounty area. The plan proposes a hard surface trail through Seneca Crossing Local Park that will connect westward on Brink Road to an existing trail through Ridge...
Road Recreational Park, eventually extending through the North Germantown Greenway to Black Hill Regional Park. The trail at Seneca Crossing will connect on the east to the future shared use bikeway on MD 83 (Mid-County Highway) that will connect to Great Seneca Stream Valley Park and the Inter-County Connector. This trail will also be part of the road bikeway network.

The 2005 Countywide Bikeways Functional Master Plan identifies four bikeways along roads that would connect to this park: Sundown Road/Brink Road, Mid-County Highway (MD 83), Ridge Road (MD 27), and Frederick Road (MD 355).

**PROS**

The Plan classifies local parks under the category of Community Use Parks, which provide everyday recreation needs for residents close to home.

Due to the location and size of Seneca Crossing Local Park, in addition to serving the needs of the immediate community, it may also serve residents of the overall Germantown planning area as well as residents of the adjacent areas of Goshen, Gaithersburg, Clarksburg, and Damascus.

The plan also indicates that in the I-270 Corridor Team Area (which includes this park), there is a need for two adult softball fields, three baseball fields, 19 adult, multi-purpose rectangular fields, and 10 youth, multi-purpose rectangular fields by the year 2020. Additional facilities that are needed countywide include skate parks, dog exercise areas, regional trails, picnic areas and natural areas within parks. Seneca Crossing Local Park will provide some of these needs through the provision of two large, multi-purpose rectangular fields, a multi-age playground, a skate spot, and picnic areas.

**Vision 2030 (2011)**

Seneca Crossing Local Park is located in the North Central area. The Plan states that the Level-of-Service is the second lowest when population density is considered. Coupled with the projected growth over the next 20 years, the demand for park and recreational services in this area will also increase.

Vision 2030 recommends adding the following recreational facilities: multi-purpose rectangular fields, playgrounds, picnic shelters, skate spots, trails, and volleyball courts (co-located with two or more,) all of which are proposed in the park facility plan.
South Germantown Recreational Park: Cricket Fields

**Master Plan(s)**

**Cricket Field Site Selection (2015)**

This site selection analysis recommends sites for the 2 fields in the I-270 Corridor to: 1) replace an existing temporary field at the Maryland Soccerplex that will soon be displaced by a soccer field; and, 2) to meet projected future needs.

**PROS**

The **2012 Park Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan** estimated a need for four dedicated cricket fields large enough to serve all skill levels by the year 2022. **PROS** specifically recommended that Parks “provide 2 fields in the I-270 Corridor, and 2 in East County...”

**Vision 2030 (2011)**

N/A

Warner Circle Special Park

**Master Plan(s)**

**Kensington Sector Plan (2009)** recommends “rehabilitating the Warner Circle historic buildings for public use and the historic landscaped grounds on the Warner Circle property for use as an important public open space within the Kensington Historic District. An adaptive reuse planning process for Warner Circle will determine appropriate use of the open space. “

**Master Plan for Historic Preservation (1979)** identifies this park as a designated resource within the Kensington Historic District

**PROS**

The Warner property is among the top 25 historic structures in the 2011 Cultural Resources Asset Inventory. It is part of our responsibility. The top 25 properties in the inventory should be considered the priority sites for funding, preservation, and potentially programming.

**Vision 2030 (2011)**

Warner Circle Special Park is located in the **East Transit Corridor** area. The Plan indicates that the East Transit Corridor area has the highest population of all planning areas and also has the greatest concentration and access to recreation components.

Vision 2030 Survey results show that the East Transit Corridor area has the highest demand out of all areas for adding new classes and programs. This park has the potential for additional programs and interpretive classes. The survey also shows that renovating existing facilities is top priority for residents when it comes to future spending, more so than investing in new facilities.
Wheaton Regional Park Improvements

**Master Plan(s)**

**Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan** - The Master Plan for Wheaton Regional Park was completed in 1987. While the Master Plan update is ongoing, priorities identified within the Shorefield Area include the need to address picnic area overcrowding and the inefficient layout of the parking and vehicular circulation. The plan recommends reducing the impact of overflow parking on neighborhood streets by providing more on-site parking. Other opportunities include providing public access to the historic Stubbs Barn and improving internal park circulation and signage.

**East Silver Spring Master Plan** – Recognizes the importance of a trail connections to the regional park.

-the park is identified as an important bridge between the Sligo Creek and Northwest Branch Stream Valleys.

**Wheaton CBD and Vicinity Sector Plan** - Recognizes the park as a destination for the regional trail network.

Emphasizes that public services and facilities, including Wheaton Regional Park, are safe and accessible and will meet the present and future needs of all residents.

The recommendation to improve access to Wheaton Regional Park with entry features where roadways lead to the park, and wayfinding kiosks at central locations such as the Metro station and public parking facilities will increase use of the existing park.

**ADA Transition Plan** - Recommendations Montgomery Parks has developed an ADA Transition Plan which defines a strategy and timeline for the implementation of Physical Access and Program Access improvements throughout the park system. This Transition Plan is in accordance with the Settlement Agreement that Montgomery County entered in 2011 with the Department of Justice, outlining its plan to promote and confirm its commitment to inclusion and accessibility. The goal of Montgomery Parks is to provide an inclusive park system for all. The ADA Transition Plan outlines a methodology for prioritizing park improvements. Parks are evaluated based on a variety of characteristics including population density, proximity to public transportation, park type (countywide verses community) and amenity uniqueness. Based on these criteria, Wheaton Regional Park was ranked number three and was identified for inclusion in Phase One, CIP FY17-22 for 4 non-local parks. Thus, the proposal to address accessibility improvements in the...
Shorefield Area of Wheaton Regional Park supports the priorities outlined in the ADA Transition Plan.

**PROS**

The 2017 Park, Recreation, and Open Space (PROS) Plan serves as the planning policy for parks and recreation in Montgomery County. It assesses needs and recommends strategies for the delivery of park and recreation facilities, protection of natural resource areas, and preservation of historic/cultural areas and agricultural lands. In support of a multi-pronged outreach strategy to engage diverse communities about the future of parks and recreation, Montgomery Parks conducted a Needs Assessment to solicit comprehensive feedback from residents. Three major themes emerged from the extensive outreach and analysis: building community through parks, planning for future generations, and optimizing what we have. Repairing and renovating existing park facilities was considered a funding priority by 49% of the survey respondents. Thus, the proposed Shorefield Area work plan, which aims to increase parking and improve the overall park experience, is in concert with the planning policy and guidance for park development outlined in the 2017 PROS Plan, as well as in the VISION 2030 strategy described above.

**ADA Transition Plan Recommendations** - Montgomery Parks has developed an ADA Transition Plan which defines a strategy and timeline for the implementation of Physical Access and Program Access improvements throughout the park system. This Transition Plan is in accordance with the Settlement Agreement that Montgomery County entered in 2011 with the Department of Justice, outlining its plan to promote and confirm its commitment to inclusion and accessibility. The goal of Montgomery Parks is to provide an inclusive park system for all. The ADA Transition Plan outlines a methodology for prioritizing park improvements. Parks are evaluated based on a variety of characteristics including population density, proximity to public transportation, park type (countywide verses community) and amenity uniqueness. Based on these criteria, Wheaton Regional Park has been ranked number three and has been identified for inclusion in Phase One, CIP FY17-22 for 4 non-local parks. Thus, the proposal to address accessibility improvements in the Shorefield Area of Wheaton Regional Park supports the priorities outlined in the ADA Transition Plan.

**Vision 2030 (2011)**

Completed in 2011, Vision 2030 is a strategic plan for park and recreation services in Montgomery County over a twenty-year period. Vision 2030 provides general direction to other plans including the Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) plan, Park Master Plans and the Capital Improvements Program. The Vision 2030 Plan defines two overarching principles for prioritizing resources: (1) provide a balance of maintenance and renovation with new development and (2) develop a
cost recovery and resource allocation approach. Extensive public outreach was conducted to ensure that the plan reflects a broad consensus among the public, staff and County leadership. Survey results showed strong support for maintaining and enhancing the parks and facilities that are already in place. In fact, thirty percent of survey respondents choose making improvements to existing facilities as their top funding priority. Echoing that sentiment, the Planning Board and the PHED Committee suggest that the CIP focus on renovation.