



MONTGOMERY COUNTY PLANNING BOARD
THE MARYLAND-NATIONAL CAPITAL PARK AND PLANNING COMMISSION

November 1, 2021

The Honorable Mark Elrich
Montgomery County Executive
Executive Office Building
101 Monroe Street
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Mr. Elrich:

The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission is pleased to submit its proposed FY23-28 Capital Improvements Program (CIP) for the County's nationally recognized Gold Medal park system¹. 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 and spending precious dollars where they are needed most.

You will find that the Parks CIP is in line with the County's Policy Goals (the Five E's):

- Educational Opportunities for All – the parks are the living, breathing environmental classroom for all county residents.
- Equity – the Commission has furthered its work to deliver projects where they are needed most by viewing our communities through a more focused equity lens and using our Equity Focus Area Tool (for more information please see **Exhibit A**).
- Economic Development Across the County – studies show that parks generate billions of dollars in economic activity and create jobs in their communities.
- Environmental Sustainability to Fight Climate Change – the Parks Department is committed to supporting the County's Climate Action Plan by implementing best practices in environmental sustainability. Maintaining and enhancing the network of natural systems throughout the parks helps mitigate flood events, provides cleaner water, reduces temperatures, mitigates urban heat islands, cleans the air, and maintains flora and fauna that are vital to these systems.
- Efficient and Effective Public Services – the Parks Department's innovative and efficient approaches in work processes, technologies and tools help ensure that capital dollars are spent efficiently.

The recommended FY23-28 CIP for Parks also helps the County implement its priority outcomes identified last fall through summer in the following ways:

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.

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 so students can learn about the environment, local history, and healthy lifestyles.
- 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.
- Providing a venue for people to meet and get to know their neighbors.

A Growing Economy

- Making Montgomery County a preferred community to live, work and play by providing destination facilities including a world-class trail system, well-maintained athletic fields, the Josiah Henson Museum, and Brookside Gardens.
- Creating vibrant parks in urban settings.
- Investing in maintenance of existing parks contributes to the stabilization of neighborhoods.
- Partnering with local communities and businesses to provide recreational and cultural experiences.

A Greener County

- Protecting and restoring natural and historical resources. Implementing stream restoration projects and stormwater improvements that support water quality goals.
- 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 Power Line Trail and North Branch Trail that will add vital links to the existing trail network that will connect Washington DC to Olney.

A More Affordable and Welcoming County

- Renovating and refreshing existing parks such as Hillandale Local Park, Long Branch-area parks and Wheaton Regional Park. 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 densely populated areas 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 to make ADA upgrades and facilitate the enjoyment of our parks for people of all abilities.

Safe Neighborhoods

- 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.
- Implementing Vision Zero projects 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.
- Activating and retrofitting park facilities to create safer neighborhoods.

Effective, Sustainable Government

- Initiating cost-effective park renovations through our Park Refreshers program. 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:

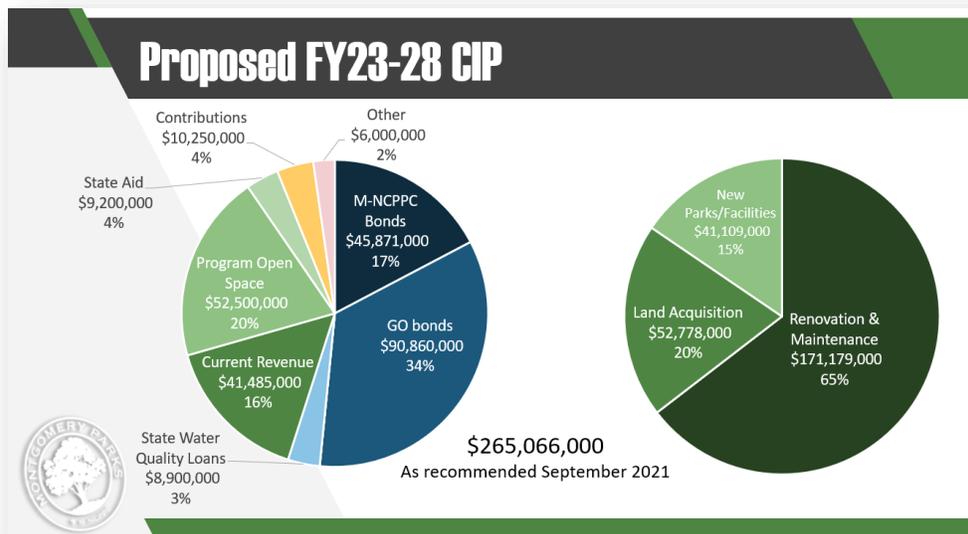
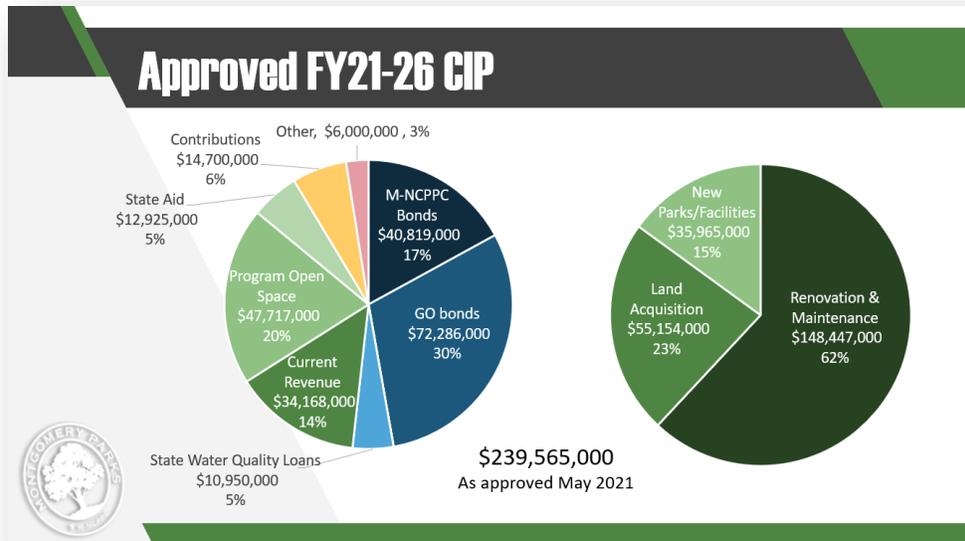
- The Planning Board's overall CIP Strategy and Criteria (**Exhibit B**)
- The Vision, Mission, Values, and Philosophy of Montgomery Parks (**Exhibit C**)
- Responding to fiscal constraints identified by the Planning Board, County Executive, and the County Council throughout the CIP process

Within this framework, the Planning Board has also addressed:

- Mandates
- Aging infrastructure
- Emerging issues (**Exhibit D**)
- 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 FY21-26 CIP to the Department's Submission for the FY23-28 CIP². The overall CIP request approved by the Planning Board in October brings the CIP to \$265,066,000 for FY23-28. This is a 10.6% increase above the currently approved FY21-26 CIP of \$239,565,000. Included in the FY23-28 CIP are appropriation requests that collectively make up the FY23 Capital Budget of \$45,131,000.



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 November 1, 2021 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 \$80,850,000 or 30.5% in non-County and non-Commission funds.

As we transition from the current FY21-26 CIP into FY23-28, certain funding sources increase while others decrease. This is because funding for FY21-22 is no longer part of the CIP, while funding for FY27-28 is added to the CIP, and funding for the middle years, FY23-26, is often adjusted as well.

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

Funding Source	Increase from the FY21-26 CIP	Percent Increase	Comment
Current Revenue: CUPF	\$600,000	50.0%	Reflects the funding switch in FY21-22 (prior CIP) from this funding source to GO Bonds in the Ballfields Initiatives capital project for renovations at school sites.
Current Revenue: General	\$6,152,000	24.2%	This includes an increase in Facility Planning: Nonlocal of \$200k in FY23 and in FY24 to support additional facility planning for the Capital Crescent Trail and for Long Branch Initiatives. It also includes an increase in the level-of-effort for PLAR: Nonlocal-Minor Renovations of \$5.082M total during the six-years to reflect rising renovation costs and growing candidate list of infrastructure renovation projects. The remaining \$670k is attributed to capital projects that were funded at similar levels in FY23-26, but where the funding in the current CIP in FY21-22 was less than funding added in FY27-28 in the new FY23-28 CIP.
Current Revenue: M-NCPPC	\$100,000	3.8%	In the prior CIP, FY21 funding in Facility Planning: Local Parks were reduced by \$100k for affordability. This capital project is otherwise funded at the same level in all years.
Current Revenue: Water Quality Protection	\$700,000	46.7%	This reflects a funding switch in the Stream Protection: SVP capital project from Long-Term Financing to current revenue, but otherwise the project is funded at the same level overall.
G.O. Bonds	\$18,574,000	25.7%	The focus of this request is on projects that maintain the park system, address life-cycle issues, reflect rising renovation costs, and address climate change. These include:

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Conservation - Non-Local Parks - \$50k each year, FY23-25 • Minor New Construction - Non-Local Parks - \$930k • Northwest Branch Recreational Park-Athletic Area – Introducing \$130k into the last two years of the CIP that was being held in outer years beyond the last CIP • PLAR: NL - Court Renovations - \$1.281M • PLAR: NL - Play Equipment - \$1.655M, this includes funding for the renovation of the Adventure Playground at South Germantown Recreational Park before the capital project reverts to the base-level of funding in FY26 and beyond • Trails: Hard Surface Design & Construction - \$1.7M • Trails: Hard Surface Renovation - \$1.755M • Urban Park Elements - \$1.5M • Wheaton Regional Park - \$11.01M <p>The rest is attributed to capital projects that were funded at similar levels in FY23-26, but where the funding in the current CIP in FY21-22 was less than funding added in FY27-28 in the new FY23-28 CIP.</p>
M-NCPPC Bonds	\$5,052,000	12.4%	<p>This is primarily attributed to the Council’s decision to increase in the Spending Affordability Guidelines to \$8.0 million per year. The focus of this request is on projects that maintain the current park system. These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Energy Conservation – Local Parks – \$71k • Park Refreshers - \$1.757m • Planned Life-cycle Asset Replacement (PLAR) LP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Court Renovations - \$1.546M ○ Minor Renovations - \$376k ○ Park Building Renovations - \$730k ○ Play Equipment - \$431k ○ Resurfacing Parking Lots & Paths - \$436k • Urban Park Elements - \$849k • Minor New Construction – Local Parks - \$645k <p>The rest is attributed to capital projects that were funded at similar levels in FY23-26, but where the funding in the current CIP in FY21-22 was less than funding added in FY27-28 in the new FY23-28 CIP.</p>

Program Open Space	\$4,783,000	10.0%	Increases in Legacy Urban Space - \$2.075M and Park Refreshers – \$5.458M. At the same time, \$1.75M leaves the CIP with the FY21-22 Funding in the Hillandale LP renovation project as well as another \$1M net decrease in the Acquisition program between FY21-22 in the current CIP and FY27-28 in the new CIP.
TOTAL	\$35,961,000		

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

Funding Source	Decrease from the FY21-26CIP	Percent Decrease	Comment
Contributions	\$4,450,000	30.3%	This is primarily attributed to funds in FY21-22 that are leaving the CIP in Developer Contributions in Bethesda and in the Mid-county planning areas as well funding in Stream Protection: SVP and Trails: Natural Surface and the Black Hill Regional Park: SEED Classroom capital projects.
Current Revenue: Enterprise (M-NCPPC)	\$235,000	6.8%	Based on the Enterprise Division’s projected revenues, \$2.95M leaving the CIP in FY21-22 with \$2.75M being added in later years.
Long-Term Financing	\$2,050,000	18.7%	This is attributed to the funding switch in Stream Protection mentioned earlier to Current Revenue: WQPC and higher amounts of debt leaving the CIP in FY21-22 that is being added in later years.
State Aid	\$3,725,000	28.8%	This reflects all the FY21 and 22 State grants leaving the CIP as we transition into FY23-28, but will likely be replaced with additional aid in FY23-24 as we continue to work with the Montgomery County Delegation in the next two legislative sessions of the Maryland General Assembly.
TOTAL	\$10,460,000		

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.

Category	Amount	Percentage of Six-Year CIP
Renovation and Maintenance	\$171,179,000	65%
Land Acquisition	\$ 52,778,000	20%
New Parks and Park Facilities	\$ 41,109,000	15%

The recommended FY23-28 CIP has a strong focus on stewardship of existing resources and infrastructure but also maintains 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 affect the operating budget.

Proposed new projects are minimal. The Park Acquisitions PDF is a new capital project but is revenue neutral. This project simply combines the funding, expenditures and appropriation requests from two existing acquisition capital projects (Acquisition: Local Parks and Acquisition: Non-Local Parks) into one CIP project for FY23 and moving forward.

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

Developing the CIP is complex due to the various stakeholders involved in the process. However, all activities fall into at least three categories: Project origination, prioritization of projects, and consideration of constraints. This process is outlined in more detail in **Exhibit E**.

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. While it is important to keep adequate funds available across the various 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 a suitable tool to fund these projects.

Park Acquisitions

As mentioned earlier, the Park Acquisitions PDF is a new capital project but is revenue neutral. This project simply combines the funding, expenditures and appropriation requests from two existing acquisition capital projects (Acquisition: Local Parks and Acquisition: Non-Local Parks) into one CIP project for FY23. In the meantime, existing appropriations through FY22 will be spent down in the following projects that are marked as pending closeout in the interim:

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.

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.

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 spent on properties that are identified in an approved and adopted master plan for a public purpose. ALARF funding and tracking is managed in the operating budget, but a PDF is provided in the CIP because acquisitions are typically a capital expenditure. This PDF is intended to provide a snapshot of the ALARF funding. As of June 30, 2021, the balance in the ALARF account is approximately \$10.4 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 issue a bond sale in the future to replenish available funds.

Bethesda Park Impact Payment

This project will hold and spend 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, nearly \$18 Million in PIPs have either been approved or are anticipated in site plans by the Planning Board through FY23. The Parks Department will use these funds to support the priority park projects identified in the Bethesda Downtown Plan.

Mid-County Park Benefit Payments

In 2020, this was a new CIP project that will have \$3,500,000 of appropriation through FY24 to receive park benefit payments from developments in the White Flint, Grosvenor-Strathmore, and Rock Spring areas. In lieu of dedication of park land and as a condition of development approvals, the Planning Board may accept substantive contributions toward acquisition of new land to meet these master plan recommendations. These funds are intended to create new park resources, as opposed to the renovation/modification of existing parks. Funds that are allocated for planning, design, and construction of parks will be transferred to the appropriate development capital project within the CIP. Expenditures will be based on the park priorities within each of the master/sector plan areas, availability of land for acquisition, site improvement needs, and the Parks Departments' design and construction schedule.

Legacy Open Space

The Legacy Open Space (LOS) program was created to implement the Legacy Open Space Functional Master Plan (2001) by committing \$100M in funding to preserve the best remaining open spaces, watersheds, and historic properties across the county. Since its inception, the program has successfully protected over 3,850 acres through acquisition and has allowed the LOS program to leverage an additional \$16 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.

Legacy Urban Space

This project is funded with state Program Open Space and other grants is for the acquisition of valuable open space in the county's most densely populated areas. Envisioned at \$150 million over ten years, this project helps to implement the Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan methodology for more equitably linking parks to populations in urban areas and is modeled after the visionary Legacy Open Space capital project. Acquisitions will be prioritized based on multiple factors, including providing service to lower income and racially diverse areas, addressing the largest public space deficits, seizing on opportunity acquisitions, and locations of highest population growth and associated park needs. Sites within the EPS Study Area that are identified for park acquisition in other sector, master or functional plans also may be acquired with this PDF. The County Council encourages the Commission to seek supplemental appropriations if approved CIP funding is insufficient.

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

Project Name	Location	Description	Budget	Status
Black Hill Regional Park: SEED Classroom	Boyds	Converting maintenance yard to an environmental-friendly educational site using the principles of Sustainable Education Every Day (SEED) Classroom design and construction.	\$650,000	Design FY21 Construction FY22
Blair HS Field Renovations and Lights	Silver Spring	Renovation of two fields for multiple sports for both school use and community use. Two Phases: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phase one - track field with improvements to include irrigation, drainage, grading, bermudagrass, portable goals and lights. • Phase two - multi-purpose field directly behind the school with improvements to include irrigation, grading, bermudagrass, softball infield improvements, portable goals and lights. 	\$2,900,000	Construction FY22-23
Brookside Gardens Master Plan Implementation	Silver Spring	Next phases of infrastructure work – Visitors Center & Conservatory (POR), renovations to the Formal Gardens, and facility planning for Propagation Area B of the maintenance area.	\$1,700,000	Design FY22 Construction FY22-23
North Branch Trail	Rockville	Hiker-biker trail, 2.2 mi, through Lake Frank and the North Branch of Rock Creek	\$4,672,000	Construction FY22-23

Northwest Branch Recreation Park Athletic Area	Cloverly-Norwood	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.	\$4,600,000	Design FY26 Construction is in the Beyond Six Years (FY27+)
Ovid Hazen Wells Recreational Park	Clarksburg	Expands the active recreation area including relocating the carousel from Wheaton Regional Park and providing supporting recreational amenities and parking to create a destination recreational area.	\$8,200,000	Design ongoing Construction FY22-25
Power Line Trail	West County	State Grant-funded project to design, construct, and equip portions of the ultimate 13-mile paved and natural surface trail within the Pepco powerline corridor that connects South Germantown Recreational Park to Cabin John Regional Park as well as community and park connectors along the corridor.	\$10,000,000	Design FY22 Construction FY23-25
S. Germantown Recreational Park: Cricket Field	Germantown	Adding the second cricket pitch envisioned as part of phase II of this overall project	\$3,118,000	Design FY23 Construction FY24-25
Wheaton Regional Park Improvements	Wheaton	Renovations to implement the ongoing Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan. Originally, the project was limited to the Shorefield area, but the scope of the master plan is comprehensive to the regional park.	\$14,010,000	Incorporates funding that was shown in the Beyond Six Years (FY25+), and adds \$9M ;Facility/concept plan for Shorefield Area approved June 2017

Unfunded Standalone Projects (funded FY27+)

These projects lack funding in FY23-28 but anticipate future funding in FY29 and beyond.

Project Name	Location	Description	Budget*	Status
Elm Street Urban Park	Bethesda	Renovation of an existing urban park, adds work to have been done by developer	\$942,000	Funding shown Beyond Six Years (FY27+), Project Plan by former developer approved 2010
Warner Circle Special Park	Kensington	Renovation of historic buildings and surrounding park	\$6,177,000	The Department is currently negotiating an adaptive reuse of the building. Funding of \$4,952,000 shown Beyond Six Years (FY27+)

Stand-alone projects that were completed through FY21:

1. Little Bennett Regional Park Day Use Area

Projects that are in progress and should be substantially complete by the end of FY22: below:

1. Hillandale Local Park
2. Josiah Henson Historic Park

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 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 funded, 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 may factor 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:

Project	CIP Status FY23-28
1. ADA Compliance – Local and Non-Local	Maintain overall 6-year funding levels. 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.
2. Ballfield Improvements	Continue funding for school field renovations at \$300k/yr and maintain other capital project funding at \$2M/yr to manage growing demand, use, and backlog of projects.
3. Cost Sharing – Local and Non-Local	No change. Supports design, staff chargebacks, permitting, and construction activities associated with capital investments by outside entities on parkland.
4. Energy Conservation – Local and Non-Local	Six-year total increases in local parks (\$71k) and non-local parks (\$410k) 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	Six-year total increase (\$235k) based on anticipated revenues for projects at Enterprise facilities in Wheaton and Damascus.
6. Facility Planning – Local and Non-Local	Maintain existing funding with a two year increase of \$200/yr in non-local parks to address increased planning efforts for the Capital Crescent Trail Renovation and Long Branch area parks.
7. Minor New Construction – Local and Non-Local	Six-year total increases in local parks (\$645k) and non-local parks (\$410k) to provide new amenities within existing parks, meet emerging trends, and addressing amenity deficits.
8. Park Refreshers	Six-year total increases of \$1.757M M-NCPPC Bonds and \$5.458M POS to support local park renovations, including preparation of requests to the state for Program Open Space funding.
9. Planned life Asset Replacements – Local and Non-Local Subprojects: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play Equipment • Minor Renovations • Court Renovations 	Rehabilitates and replaces aging infrastructure and amenities. Play Equipment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six-year total increase in local parks (\$81k--\$431K increase in M-NCPPC Bonds while \$350k State Aid leaves CIP in FY21-22) and in non-local parks (\$1.655M for South Germantown Adventure Playground) Minor Renovations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six-year total increase in local parks (\$26k, \$376k increase in M-NCPPC Bonds while \$350k State Aid leaves CIP in FY22) and in non-local parks (\$4.732M). This is the most widely used capital project and covers any renovation or replacement in local and non-local parks of aging, unsafe, or

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resurfacing Parking Lots and Paths • Boundary Markings • Park Building Renovations 	<p>obsolete infrastructure or its components involving a variety of park amenities.</p> <p>Court Renovations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six-year total increase in local parks (\$1.546M) and non-local parks (\$1.281M) to address significant backlog of sports court renovations, retrofits, and conversions. <p>Resurfacing Parking Lots and Paths</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No increase in local parks and six-year increase in non-local parks (\$436k) to address renovations of parking lots, entrance roads, access routes, and paved walkways. <p>Boundary Markings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain existing funding. • This project funds surveying activities in the park system. <p>Park Building Renovations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six-year total increase in local parks (\$730k) and no increase in non-local parks 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.
<p>10. Pollution Prevention and Repairs to Ponds and Lakes</p>	<p>Maintain funding of the current CIP to provide water quality enhancements and environmental restoration.</p>
<p>11. Restoration of Historic Structures</p>	<p>Maintain overall 6-year funding levels 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.</p>
<p>12. Small Grant/Donor Assisted Capital Improvements</p>	<p>Maintain overall 6-year funding levels to support projects funded primarily with non-County government funding sources, e.g., grants, donations, gifts, fund raising projects, and sponsorships.</p>
<p>13. Stream Protection</p>	<p>Maintain funding of the current CIP to provide water quality enhancements and environmental restoration. Involves a funding switch in each year between long-term financing to current revenue to address work that periodically arises beyond the scope of loan funded projects.</p>
<p>14. Trails: Hard Surface Design & Construction</p>	<p>Six-year total increase of \$1.7M to construct hard surface trails and community connections to existing trails, as well as trail signage and other trail amenities.</p>
<p>15. Trails: Hard Surface Renovation</p>	<p>Six-year total increase of \$1.405M for renovations to existing hard surface trails.</p>
<p>16. Trails: Natural Surface & Resource-based Recreation</p>	<p>Maintain overall 6-year funding levels.</p>

17. Urban Park Elements	Six-year total increase of \$2.349M for new amenities within urban parks.
18. Vision Zero	Maintain overall 6-year funding levels for improvements to trails, roads, access routes to enhance safety and calm traffic.

Conclusion

The FY23-28 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 FY23-28 CIP.

Sincerely,



Casey Anderson
Chair

Attachments:

- Exhibit A: Equity Emphasis Areas, FY23-28 CIP, page ©1
- Exhibit B: CIP Strategy and Evaluation Criteria, FY23-28, page ©2
- Exhibit C: Vision, Mission, Values, Philosophy, page ©4
- Exhibit D: Emerging Issues, FY23-28 CIP, page ©6
- Exhibit E: Process and Guiding Documents, FY23-28 CIP, page ©12
- Exhibit F: Planning Recommendations for Standalone Projects, page ©16

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Exhibit A

Equity Emphasis Areas, FY23-28 CIP



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.

The quality and accessibility of urban parks is a basic component of equity in the delivery of public services. Parks are so integral to what makes a community desirable and healthy that ensuring equity in decisions about developing capital budgets for park and recreation facilities is essential to achieving our goals for racial and socioeconomic justice. The Parks Department has made major strides in recent years in incorporating quantitative measures of equity in its capital budget recommendations, and we're committed to continuing to ensure that parks and recreation opportunities are accessible and equitably distributed.

Parks used the Equity Focus Area tool, recently created by a team that included parks staff and was led by the Research and Technology Division of the Planning Department, in developing this CIP. The team presented an early version of this tool to the Planning Board during the last CIP review. The EFA tool identifies areas characterized by high concentrations of lower-income people of color, who may also speak English less than very well. This data-driven tool will allow us to assess potential racial and social inequities in our CIP program.

Figure 1. Equity Focus Area (EFA) Map. As of 2020, the population within the EFA is approximately 275,875 people or 26.5% of the county population.

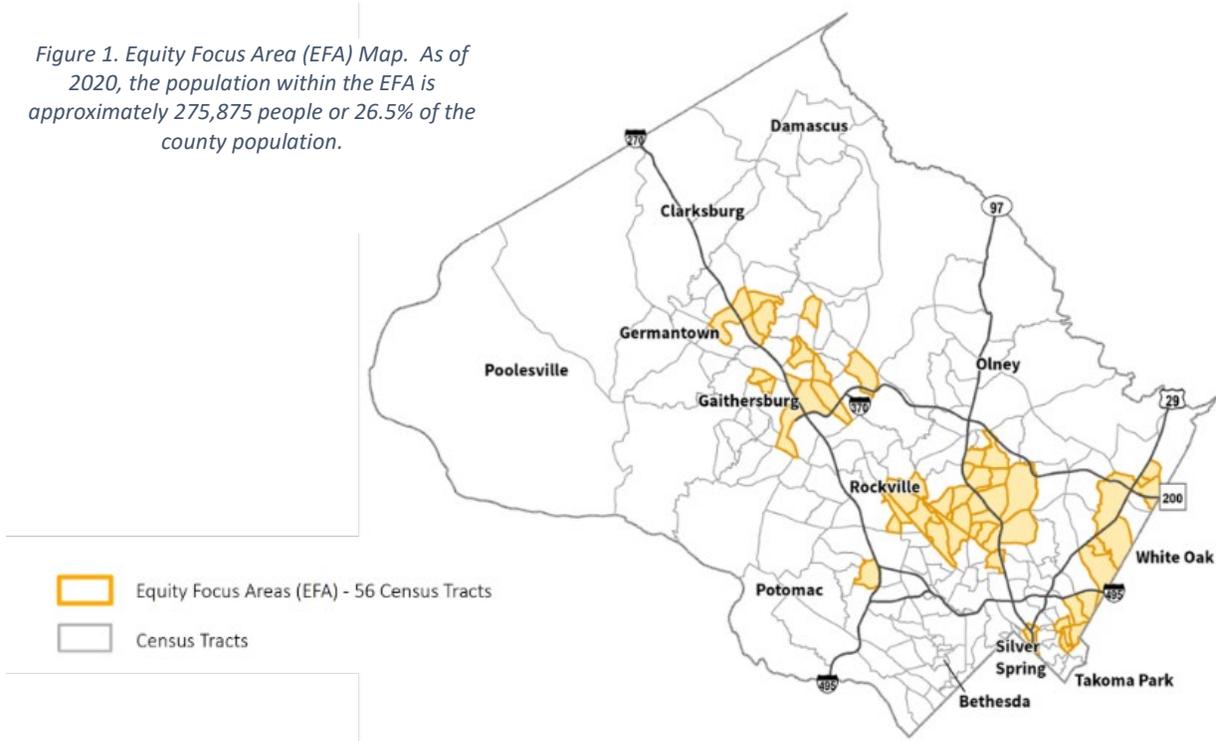


Exhibit B

CIP Strategy and Evaluation Criteria, FY23-28



These criteria and areas of focus guided the evaluation and prioritization of projects for the Capital Improvements Program for FY23-28.

Immediacy and Efficiency

The project:

- Addresses public health, safety, and welfare
- Prevents degradation of existing facilities and avoids costly future repairs
- Preserves natural, cultural, or historic resources that are under threat
- Achieves compliance with code requirements and/or laws
- Needs to be timed with related projects by other agencies
- Increases revenue, achieves cost savings, and/or improves operational efficiency
- Leverages an opportunity, such as a partnership, donation, or grant

Equity and Need

The project:

- Promotes racial equity and social justice by improving park access, services, or facilities in Equity Focus Areas (EFAs)
- Provides facilities to an under-served geographic area or population group
- Implements recommendations of adopted plans (e.g. Thrive 2050, PROS, Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan, park master plans, area and sector plans, functional plans)

Project Priorities

The project:

- Renovates or expands both natural and hard surface trail systems
- Improves availability and quality of ballfields
- Activates and improves Urban Parks, focusing on urban areas with older infrastructure and limited open space

Acquisitions and Access

Acquisitions will:

- Target urban park needs and high-density areas
- Provide opportunities for natural resource-based recreation
- Improve connections between parks and expand trail networks
- Protect, restore, or enhance natural resources

Project Delivery

Increased focus on:

- Park Refreshers rather than large-scale park redevelopments
- Utilizing level-of-effort projects to maintain what we have and more quickly implement park modifications to meet changing community needs
- Use of in-house staff resources and interdepartmental partnerships
- Simplified Facility Planning that allows flexibility to adapt to changing needs through project development



Vision, Mission, Values, and Philosophy¹

Vision An enjoyable, accessible, safe, and green park system that promotes community through shared spaces and treasured experiences.

Mission Protect and interpret our valuable natural and cultural resources; balance demand for recreation with the need for conservation; offer various enjoyable recreational activities that encourage healthy lifestyles; and provide clean, safe, and accessible places.

- Values**
- **Stewardship:** Manage the county park system to meet needs of current and future generations.
 - **Recreation:** Offer leisure activities that strengthen the body, sharpen the mind, and renew the spirit.
 - **Excellence:** Deliver high quality products, services, and experiences.
 - **Integrity:** Operate with a honest and balanced perspective.
 - **Service:** Be courteous, helpful, and accessible internally and externally.
 - **Education:** Promote learning opportunities.
 - **Collaboration:** Work with residents, communities, public and private organizations, and policymakers.
 - **Diversity:** Support and embrace cultural differences and offer suitable programs, activities, and services.
 - **Dedication:** Commit to getting the job done the right way, no matter what it takes.

Philosophy **One Commission, One Philosophy: Thriving in a Culture of Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion**

M-NCPPC, a leader in land use planning, parks, and recreation, celebrates the diversity of our workforce and the communities we serve. Diversity combined with a commitment to equity and inclusion communicates our organizational values, enriches the lives of our employees, and bolsters innovative thinking essential to success.

M-NCPPC recognizes diversity as a dynamic mix of personal and cultural characteristics, perspectives, and relationships as a vital organizational resource. In the workplace, diversity includes all differences that define each of us as unique individuals. These differences include culture, ethnicity, race, sex, gender identity, nationality, age, religion, abilities, sexual orientation, experiences, opinions and beliefs, and any protected groups.

¹ <https://www.montgomeryparks.org/about/parks/>

M-NCPPC believes equity is an active commitment to unbiased treatment while providing access and opportunity for people of all backgrounds to participate and thrive in the workplace.

M-NCPPC strives to enhance inclusion with a true sense of belonging that encourages the participation of all individuals by removing barriers, building a culture of connectedness, and recognizing that every voice adds value to our organization.

Exhibit D

Emerging Issues, FY23-28 CIP



There are several issues, subjects, and themes that have been shaping the FY23-28 CIP:

Equity and A Strategy for Long Branch Area Parks

The quality and accessibility of parks is a basic component of equity in the delivery of public services. Parks are so integral to what makes a community desirable and healthy that ensuring equity developing capital budgets for park and recreation facilities is essential to achieving our goals for racial and socioeconomic justice. Parks has made major strides in recent years in identifying Equity Focus Areas (EFAs) and prioritizing capital budget recommendations accordingly, and we're committed to continuing to ensure that parks and recreation opportunities are accessible and equitably distributed.

We are continuing to analyze all our parks with an equity lens by utilizing the EFA tool combined with our Energizing Public Spaces (EPS) analysis and direct analysis of our parks. As a result, Parks has begun development of a Long Branch Parks Initiative to improve and add amenities to parks in this EFA area in coming years.

The Parks in Long Branch are some of the oldest we have in our park system. While we have ample parkland in this area, we are park rich but amenity poor. Staff have begun the process of analyzing the needs throughout these parks and have been identifying ways to efficiently increase the service delivery strategy in this area. These include:

- Prioritizing the Long Branch Trail Renovation, which is beginning construction
- Utilizing FY21 end of year money to add amenities to Flower Avenue Urban Park including social gathering spaces, game tables, swing benches and general aesthetic upgrades
- Designing a mini-refresher project at Long Branch-Garland LP, including expansion of the park into the Domer Avenue right-of-way and a signature bridge across Long Branch
- Began design of four trail bridge replacements with environmental enhancements, and in the planning stages for a northern extension of Long Branch Trail north of Piney Branch
- Developing a Park Improvements Concept Plan for Long Branch Local Park and pursuing grant funding to support implementation
- Initiating detailed design and pursuing grant funding to allow full build out of the Long Branch Wayne and Long Branch Local Park renovations.
- Hosting a stakeholder meeting this fall to kick off the Long Branch Parks Initiative and learn about the community's needs and strategize for additional community outreach.

Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan

Park Planners are currently working on a comprehensive update to the 1987 Wheaton Regional Park Master Plan. While it remains one of the county's most popular regional parks, it is now 60 years old and needs rehabilitation, improvements, and new amenities.

Today, the communities surrounding the park are very diverse and this update will focus on providing facilities and amenities that better serve their needs. In addition, this master plan update will seek to improve access for bicycles and pedestrians. Wheaton Regional Park not only serves residents of the entire county, but also functions like a local park to many residents who live nearby and can easily walk or bike there to enjoy its numerous facilities and amenities.

Staff will also focus on enhancing opportunities for natural and cultural resource interpretation, improving efficiencies in operations and maintenance, and making the park feel safer and more welcoming. Staff anticipates presenting a draft plan to the Planning Board in early 2022.

Currently, the Wheaton Regional Park Improvements PDF (P871904) starts funding design work in FY25. However, Parks has identified several infrastructure rehabilitations, trail/wayfinding improvements, and amenities improvements that can begin implementation sooner that staff knows will support recommendations expected in the Master Plan update. Parks is recommending increased funding for known needs with the FY23-28 CIP, with the anticipation of future modifications to implement long term recommendations.

Trails

One of the central goals of the Department of Parks is to develop a world-class trails network. This means delivering exceptional experiences for all of our trail users through a robust and connected network of high-quality, multi-use trails. It also means ensuring that everyone feels welcome on our trails and that our trails are accessible to everyone. We do this by building them throughout the entire county, ensuring they are well maintained, and publicizing information about our network of park trails.

Our network consists of over 70 miles of paved trails and 200 miles of natural surface trails. Thanks to the recent CIP increases, we have been able to make key investments. For example, using the increase to the Trails: Natural Surface & Resource-based Recreation PDF (P858710), we constructed a significant new bridge in Paint Branch Stream Valley Park and built a natural surface trail connecting Martin Luther King Jr. Recreational Park within the White Oak community southeast of Columbia Pike. The increase to the Trails: Hard Surface Renovation PDF has allowed us to advance additional resurfacing projects, including several important improvements Sligo Creek Trail, Long Branch Trail, and Rock Creek Trail.

However, due to the popularity of our aging existing trails and high demand for trail expansion, connections, and amenities, we will need additional resources to meet our goals and provide the opportunities for exceptional trail experiences desired by our patrons. Furthermore, increased storm events due to climate change are creating greater need for emergency

rehabilitation work along our trails throughout the Stream Valley Parks. Parks is recommending increased funding in certain trail-related LOE PDFs.

South Germantown Recreational Park Adventure Playground Replacement

While the park system contains hundreds of community playgrounds and we conduct several playground replacements each year, our Regional and Recreational Parks have fewer but much larger and more complex playgrounds reflecting the fact that these are destination parks with much larger user groups. The SGRP Adventure Playground has exceeded its service life, and Operations is finding it much more difficult to maintain in recent years. Additionally, the existing play equipment models are outdated and no longer supported by the suppliers. Therefore, Parks has initiated preliminary design work for the replacement of this important amenity. We expect to complete the design in FY23 and begin construction of the replacement facility, which will require a short-term funding level increase in the PLAR: NL – Play Equipment (P998709) PDF. Parks is recommending increased funding in FY23-25 to implement this important project.

Aging Infrastructure and Emerging Trends

Our park system was built over many decades and much of our existing infrastructure has exceeded its intended service life. Increased park usage, development pressures, and intensified weather events continually affect what we own and maintain on behalf of the community. Furthermore, changing demographics, urbanization, and societal norms call for constant adjustments to our amenity selection and design practices to meet the needs of residents while protecting our natural resources. Parks accomplishes much of this work through various Level-of-Effort PDFs, but particularly through the Planned Lifecycle Asset Replacement (P968754 and P968755), Minor New Construction (P99863 and P998799), and Urban Parks Elements (P871540) PDFs, which allows us to combine rehabilitation with modernization and modifications to meet current and future needs. Parks is recommending increased funding in these LOE PDFs.

Program Open Space

A significant source of funding for development and acquisition of parks (~20%) comes from the State in the form of Program Open Space. This funding source comes from the 0.5% transfer tax on every real estate transaction in the state. M-NCPPC is the local governing body for Montgomery County and receives an annual allocation that may be used for open space acquisition and park development in the Parks CIP or as a pass-through to municipalities. State law requires that the first half of POS funding be set aside for acquisition. This leaves the remaining half to fund the Montgomery Parks development program and some pass-through funding to municipalities.

The fundamental challenge for POS is that the State budget system only sets the funding level for the next fiscal year, which requires us to rely on forecasting and analyzing past performance

to program the outer years of the CIP. Looking at past performance and considering the State's more recent projections, a moderately conservative assumption would be to program around \$9M of POS funding per year in FY23-26.

In the FY23-28 scenarios that the Board will consider in September work sessions, staff expects to recommend POS programming between \$8-9 million per year, based on the state forecasts. One significant variable will be the rate at which the state will pay back past POS funding that was diverted to other parts of the state budget in prior years. In FY22, for affordability reasons, the Governor initially opted not to include paybacks from prior years in his budget, but the state ultimately fully funded the pay back for this year.

Water Quality Protection Charge-backed Long-Term Financing

In the Spring of 2016 during the County Council's review of the FY17-22 CIP the Council concluded that all water quality related capital projects in the county-wide CIP could be funded with Water Quality Protection Charge (WQPC) funds, including Parks projects (Pollution Prevention PDF and the Stream Protection PDFs). Prior to this, the Parks water quality projects were funded with GO bonds. Two years later, in 2018 the Council incorporated this change in the FY19-24 CIP, replacing all water quality bonds with low interest loans from the State of Maryland's Water Quality Financing Administration, and Parks was directed to submit a loan application to the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE). The debt service on these loans would be backed by the WQPC revenues and both M-NCPPC and the County were instructed to make separate loan applications to the State.

Department staff submitted a \$4.8M application in January 2019, and the application was initially approved by MDE, but later that fall, MDE placed its review and the application process on hold over concerns that the M-NCPPC application was to be backed by WQPC revenues that were under the auspices of Montgomery County Government (MCG), not M-NCPPC.

Since that time, the Commission and MCG have been in extensive discussions to draft a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that would resolve the situation and allow the projects and loan administration process to continue with the State. M-NCPPC and the MCG are continuing their coordination with the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) on the MOU which will switch the applicant of the loan to Montgomery County Government and will allow the original loan application to otherwise proceed to the Board of Public Works. Parks is proposing funding switches in the Stream Protection: SVP capital project to support water quality projects where the loan may not.

Federal Grants

Pandemic relief legislation and other changes in Congress this year have created a number of opportunities for federal funding to support local governments. M-NCPPC has worked to leverage external state and federal funding options to pursue additional funds outside of the normal channels, including working with Congressional representatives from various districts to

support projects in their respective districts. While not guaranteed to be awarded, the Commission has pursued several different funding avenues related to the Community Project and Infrastructure grant funding made available recently. The projects that Parks has submitted for funding are summarized below, and include Federal Community Project Funding grants, infrastructure earmarks, and Land and Water Conservation Fund grants offered by the Maryland Department of Natural Resources via the National Park Service. These grants all have matching requirement assumptions ranging from 20-100 %. If awarded, the Commission will request budget amendments to fund the anticipated matching requirement for these federal funding initiatives. Additionally, depending upon the success level of receiving these grants, staff may also return to the Commission to discuss staffing solutions that would address any potential implementation issues above and beyond the solutions presented to the Planning Board in earlier worksessions.

Congressional District/Community Project Funding Applications:

- Wheaton Regional Park: pavement and drainage rehabilitation, \$500,000
- Long Branch Stream Valley Park: Pedestrian bridge replacements, \$500,000
- Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park: tributary restoration at University and Channing, \$600,000
- Sligo Creek Stream Valley Park: Tributary restoration at Burnett and Sligo mainstem, \$500,000
- Rock Creek Stream Valley Park: trail rehabilitation and bridge replacement, \$400,000
- Edgewood Neighborhood Park: Community gardens, parking lot and walkway rehabilitation, \$300,000
- McKnew Local Park: playground replacement and parking lot/walkway rehabilitation, \$400,000
- Meadowood Local Park: access road, parking lot, outfall and court renovation, \$400,000
- Damascus Recreational Park: parking lot and restroom rehabilitation and new lighting, \$600,000
- South Germantown Recreational Park: trail and roadway rehabilitation, \$500,000

Congressional District/Infrastructure Earmark Applications:

- Fleet Electrification: Purchase of electric vehicles and related infrastructure to Park maintenance yards, \$3,700,000 (applied in Congressional Districts 3, 6 and 8).
- Capital Crescent Trail/Little Falls Parkway: trail and roadway renovations, \$12,000,000
- Northwest Branch Trail: trail and roadway renovations, \$8,000,000 (applied in Congressional Districts 3 and 8).
- Powerline Trail: paved trail extension between Muddy Branch and Cabin John Regional Park, \$12,000,000 (applied in Congressional Districts 6 and 8).

Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) Grants via the Maryland Department of Natural Resources:

- Long Branch Local Park: upgrade/renovation of outdoor recreation amenities and park improvements, \$1,000,000
- Long Branch-Wayne: upgrade/renovation of outdoor recreation amenities, playground and park improvements, \$1,000,000

Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant (in partnership with Prince George's County Parks)

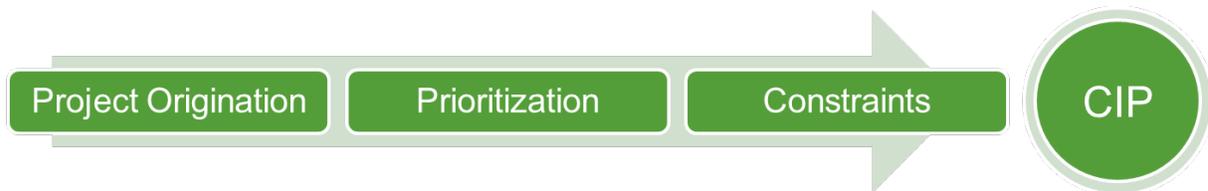
- Sligo Creek trail, trail crossings, and bridge rehabilitation, \$4,875,000
- Rock Creek trail, trail crossings, and bridge rehabilitation, \$3,000,000
- Northwest Branch Trail and access road rehabilitation and bridge replacements, \$2,250,000
- Hard Surface Trail Signs, Wayfinding & Emergency Response Information, \$300,000

Exhibit E

Process and Guiding Documents, FY23-28 CIP



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.
- **Thrive Montgomery 2050** – A re-write of the county's General Plan (under Council review) that envisions park as more active, urban and social as part of the plan's three overarching objectives:
 - Economic competitiveness
 - Racial and social equity
 - Environmental sustainability
- **Energized Public Spaces Functional Master Plan** – This countywide functional plan was approved and adopted in March 2018 with a methodology that identifies and prioritizes public space and park needs in relation to population and the existing supply of park amenities. The plan is helping Montgomery Parks better identify needs, anticipate trends, and promote important goals such as health and social equity. It also provides tools to make recommendations on parks and public spaces for areas not undergoing a master plan process. In the long-term, an interactive inventory of accessible public spaces and mapping of the areas with the highest needs will help Parks staff better prioritize scarce park resources.
- **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 D** provides a list of the relevant recommendations in these plans for each of the proposed stand-alone projects.

Project Requests

Department staff, particularly those in the field, make regular condition assessments of the existing park infrastructure, amenities, and natural resources. Based on their observations, assessments, analyses, and feedback from users and officials, they recommend capital projects to renovate and maintain the existing park system as well as enhancement projects that meet new demand and growth in the parks.

Resident Ideas

The park system is the largest single 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 that may include:

- Campaigns – concerted efforts to reach out to the public and solicit their feedback through surveys, presentations, events and activities. The Department seeks to engage members of the community who traditionally have not participated in park development initiatives. The PROS plan includes a statistically valid survey that solicits information from residents about their park-related needs and preferences.
- 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. Park 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 will submit 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. However for the FY23-28 CIP, the County Executive held these earlier than normal in October of 2020.
- Specific requests made to the department, letters, emails, calls, etc.

Input from Elected Officials

Residents of the County elect officials in all levels of government from the local level to state and federal government to represent their interests in government. From time to time, the Department hears from these officials about projects or initiatives where their constituents have interests or concerns or where the representative is leading an initiative or project in his or her respective district to improve the quality of life. Also, the Department coordinates annually with state representatives on opportunities to secure state funding for projects that allow limited County and Commission funding to be used on other projects. Last year, Montgomery County legislators in the General Assembly have sponsored seven state grant projects across seven districts for a total of \$1.425 million. The Parks Department will continue to coordinate with legislators in the upcoming legislative session for FY23 projects.

Additionally, the Department has been continuing to coordinate with federal officials. Pandemic relief legislation and other changes in Congress this year have created a number of opportunities for federal funding to support local governments. M-NCPPC has worked to leverage external state and federal funding options to pursue additional funds outside of the normal channels, including working with Congressional representatives from various districts to support projects in their respective districts. While not guaranteed to be awarded, the Commission has pursued several different funding avenues related to the Community Project and Infrastructure grant funding made available recently. The projects that Parks has submitted for funding are summarized in **Exhibit D (page ©10)**.

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 Strategy Team and later engages the Planning Board in various work sessions.

The Board begins its work with a series of work sessions: two strategy sessions in April and July, as well as work sessions in September and October. 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.

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. On October 5, 2021, the Council raised SAG for M-NCPPC bonds to \$8.0 M/yr in all years of the CIP which will allow us to increase funds in the following projects:

- Energy Conservation – Local Parks
- Minor New Construction
- Park Refreshers
- Planned Life-cycle Asset Replacement (PLAR) LP:
 - Park Building Renovations
 - Play Equipment
 - Resurfacing Parking Lots & Paths
 - Tennis/Multi-Use Court Renovations
- Urban Park Elements



Planning Recommendations for Standalone Projects

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.

Blair HS Field Renovations and Lights

Master Plan(s) Four Corners Master Plan in 1996.

A portion of the Blair High School property will be dedicated to community recreational use.

PROS The subject site is located within Kemp Mill planning area and the adjacent planning area is Kensington/Wheaton. Those two planning areas together show seven athletic field needs by 2030. The possible service delivery strategy included adding field lighting to increase capacity and coordinate with MCPS for the additional capacities.

Vision 2030 (2011) Implementation strategy of objective 5.6 recommends identifying opportunities to increase the capacity of existing fields by adding irrigation. Identify opportunities to increase the number of rectangle athletic fields, partnering with schools (volume 2, page 28)

Thrive 2050 (on-going) The Park Chapter states that Parks should improve equity, social interaction and public health. The Parks Department has made major strides in recent years in incorporating quantitative measures of equity in its capital budget recommendations, and this approach should be expanded to include analysis of programs and facilities managed by

other agencies, such as Montgomery County Public Schools, the Department of Recreation, and the Department of Libraries.

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.

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.

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-NCPPC 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.

Power Line Trail

Master Plan(s) Thrive Montgomery 2050

Envisions a world-class trail network that is integrated into transportation planning and connecting residents to jobs and centers of activity. The 2015 Pepco/Exelon merger agreement granted access to transmission line property for recreational and transportation use by the public. This northwest to southeast corridor connects existing natural surface stream valley park trails and contributes to east-west trail connectivity which is rare in the county. Trails, connectors, improvements, signage, trailheads, and amenities increase trail usage for recreation and promote walking and biking as alternatives to vehicular transportation. In park user surveys, hiking and biking on trails is the most frequent recreation activity reported. Biking and walking paths top respondents' lists of desired facilities or greatest facility shortages.

PROS 2017 Park, Recreation and Open Space (PROS) Plan

With other institutional facilities (partner and/or co-locate with schools, libraries, park facilities, or other leisure service providers etc.), when appropriate, in highly accessible locations along multi-modal

transportation corridors (e.g., public transportation routes, trails, major roadways, etc.) (p98).

2016 Countywide Park Trails Plan

Pepco Potomac Corridor Trail was recommended within lower county non-park ownership. The detailed commitment and condition were included for PEPCO to coordinate with DNR, M-NCPPC to create pilot trail project (p33, 37, 79).

Vision 2030 (2011)

Identify new multi-use natural and hard surface trails, with a priority on locating these in underserved areas and where population density is currently or projected to be high but existing trails are located more than ½ mile apart or when trail access is limited. Identify gaps in the regional trail system. Prioritize trail connections to create a linked series of loops of varying lengths in the trail system. As part of the update of the Countywide Park Trails Plan, re-examine the feasibility of proposed regional trail alignments as well as community connectors, and for those determined infeasible, identify alternatives as necessary (p29)

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.